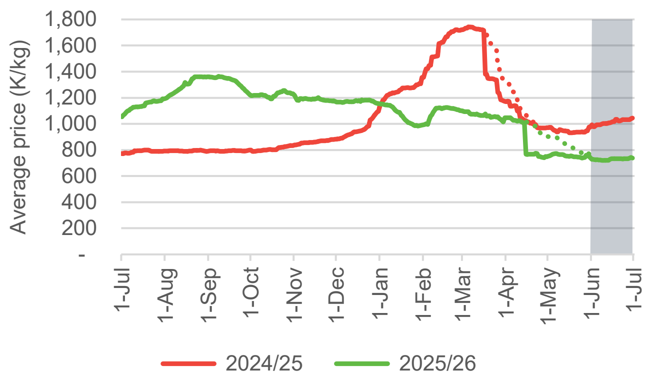
Highlights

- Retail prices of maize stagnated in the Southern and Central Regions.
- The continued arrival of newly harvested maize drove price declines in the Northern Region, reflecting its later harvest season compared with the rest of the country.
- Continued maize imports of maize from Mozambique and Zambia also helped keep Malawian prices down.

Average maize prices stagnated in June

Figure 1 shows a trend in prices over the 12 months ending in June 2026, and for comparison, over the 12 months ending in June 2025. At the beginning of the harvest season, we start reporting prices of newly harvested maize, which has a higher moisture content than maize from the previous harvest. High moisture content makes maize unsuitable for storage or milling. During drying, it loses up to 20 percent of its weight. Solid lines in Figure 1 represent observed maize prices. Dotted lines represent prices adjusted for moisture content, reflecting the true price trend.

Figure 1: Trends in maize retail prices



National average maize prices fell by a modest 2 percent from K745/kg in the final week of May to K727/kg in the final week of June, continuing the downward trend observed since October 2025 (Table 1 and Figure 1). Compared with the same month last year, when the national average maize price was K1,031/kg, June prices were 29 percent lower (Figure 1). Retail prices were also well below the minimum farmgate price of K900/kg, suggesting that many farmers likely sold their maize for less than what government mandates.

Prices were lowest in the north and highest in the south

The modest national average price decline was driven primarily by large declines in the Northern Region, where the arrival of newly harvested maize into markets depressed prices by 11 percent on average since the end of May. Price declines in parts of the Central and Southern Regions were mostly offset by comparable increases elsewhere in those regions. Combined, these developments further widened the gap between prices in the north and those in the south of the country (Table 1 and Figure 2).

Imports helped keep domestic prices low

Malawi's now nearly completed harvest does not seem to have been as good as in neighboring countries, so imports continued to dominate cross-border trade in maize, particularly along the Mozambique border (Table 2 and Figure 3). Import parity prices increased compared to previous month, partly because of the depreciation of the Malawi kwacha in informal exchange markets used for much cross-border trade (Figure 5). Import parity prices thus increased during June, but remained well below domestic prices, providing an effective cap on the retail prices of maize in Malawi (Figure 4).

Table 1: Weekly average retail prices (K/kg)

Market	Week ending on 31-May	7-Jun	14-Jun	21-Jun	28-Jun	Monthly change
1 Chitipa	718	523	504	543	514	-28%
2 Karonga	687	717	714	675	675	-2%
3 Rumphi	729	621	600	600	600	-18%
4 Mzuzu (city)	751	718	704	700	700	-7%
5 Mzimba (boma)	731	695	654	666	653	-11%
6 Mzimba (Jenda)	617	600	600	590	572	-7%
North	707	654	639	636	628	-11%
7 Salima	862	823	783	770	764	-11%
8 Mchinji	770	677	682	700	702	-9%
9 Kasungu	859	800	800	800	800	-7%
10 Lilongwe city (Nsungwi)	743	731	706	787	787	6%
11 Lilongwe (Mitundu)	625	605	645	650	650	4%
12 Dedza (Chimbiya)	571	550	560	577	591	4%
Center	748	714	706	737	738	- 1%
13 Balaka	740	701	693	693	705	- 5%
14 Mangochi (M'baluku)	829	798	792	820	820	- 1%
15 Mangochi (boma)	801	800	800	800	800	%
16 Machinga (Liwonde)	679	692	728	707	707	4%
17 Phalombe (Chiringa)	687	700	700	700	700	2%
18 Zomba (Mpondabwino)	784	800	826	860	869	11%
19 Blantyre (Lunzu)	771	733	719	690	696	-10%
20 Blantyre city (Mbayani)	775	760	759	750	750	- 3%
21 Mwanza	819	748	707	717	717	-12%
22 Mulanje	700	710	750	750	750	7%
23 Thyolo (Luchenza)	749	833	810	800	800	7%
24 Chikwawa (boma)	757	752	773	750	750	- 1%
25 Chikwawa (Ngabu)	798	791	799	780	780	- 2%
26 Nsanje (Bangula)	773	750	750	750	750	- 3%
27 Nsanje (boma)	796	766	810	813	823	3%
South	756	747	750	747	750	- 1%
Malawi	**745**	**719**	**716**	**726**	**727**	**- 2%**

Figure 2: Location of monitored markets

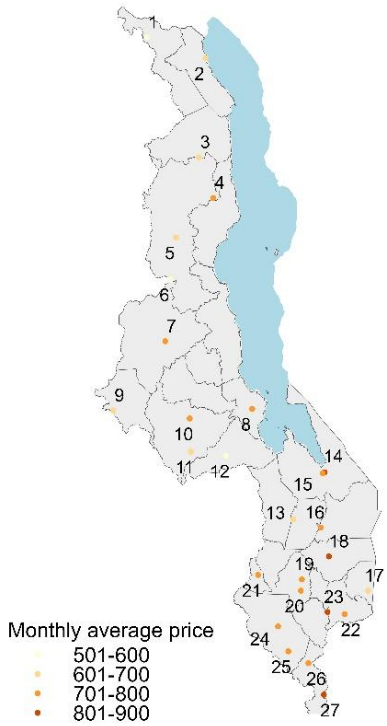
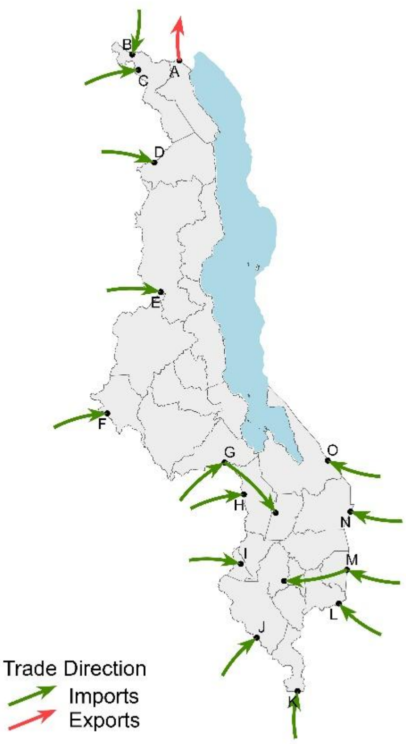


Table 2: Cross-border trade and import/export parity prices

District (border post)	Neighbor	Week ending on 7-Jun	14-Jun	21-Jun	28-Jun
A. Karonga (Songwe)	TZ	- -	〈〉 -	〈 750	〉 700
B. Chitipa (Mbirima)	TZ	〉 700	〈〉 -	〈 500	〈 450
C. Chitipa (Sopolera)	ZM	〈〉	〈〉 -	〉 450	〈 500
D. Rumphi (Hewe)	ZM	〈 450	〈〈 400	〉 500	〈 500
E. Mzimba (Mqocha/Jenda)	ZM	〈 400	〈 380	〈 367	〈 387
F. Mchinji	ZM	- -	〈 550	〈 500	〈 500
G. Dedza	MZ	〈〈 497	〈〈 550	〈 520	〈〈 540
H. Ntcheu (Tsangano)	MZ	〈〈 467	〈〈 467	〈 550	〈 550
I. Mwanza	MZ	〈〈 600	〈 567	〈 600	〈 600
J. Chikwawa (Mkumaniza)	MZ	〈 600	〈 533	〈 500	〈 600
K. Nsanje (Marka)	MZ	〈 720	〈 700	〈 700	〈 800
L. Mulanje (Muloza)	MZ	〈 557	〈〈 600	〈 613	〈 667
M. Phalombe (Kolowiko)	MZ	〈 517	〈〈 550	〈 600	〈〈 600
N. Machinga (Nayuchi)	MZ	〈〈 653	〈〈 623	〈 287	〈 550
O. Mangochi (Chiponde)	MZ	〈 700	〈〉 -	〈 700	〈 700

Notes: 〈 net imports passing through to other districts, 〈〈 net imports into border district only, 〈〉 similar volume of trade in both directions, 〉 net exports sourced from border district only, 〉〉 net exports sourced from other districts, - no cross-border trade. Import and export parity prices, i.e., the prices at which imported maize can be bought and those at which maize for export can be sold on the Malawi side of the border, are reported in K/kg.

Figure 3: Cross-border trade



Notes: Arrows illustrate net imports and net exports in the week ending on 28 June 2026

Figure 4: Import parity and retail prices in 2025/26

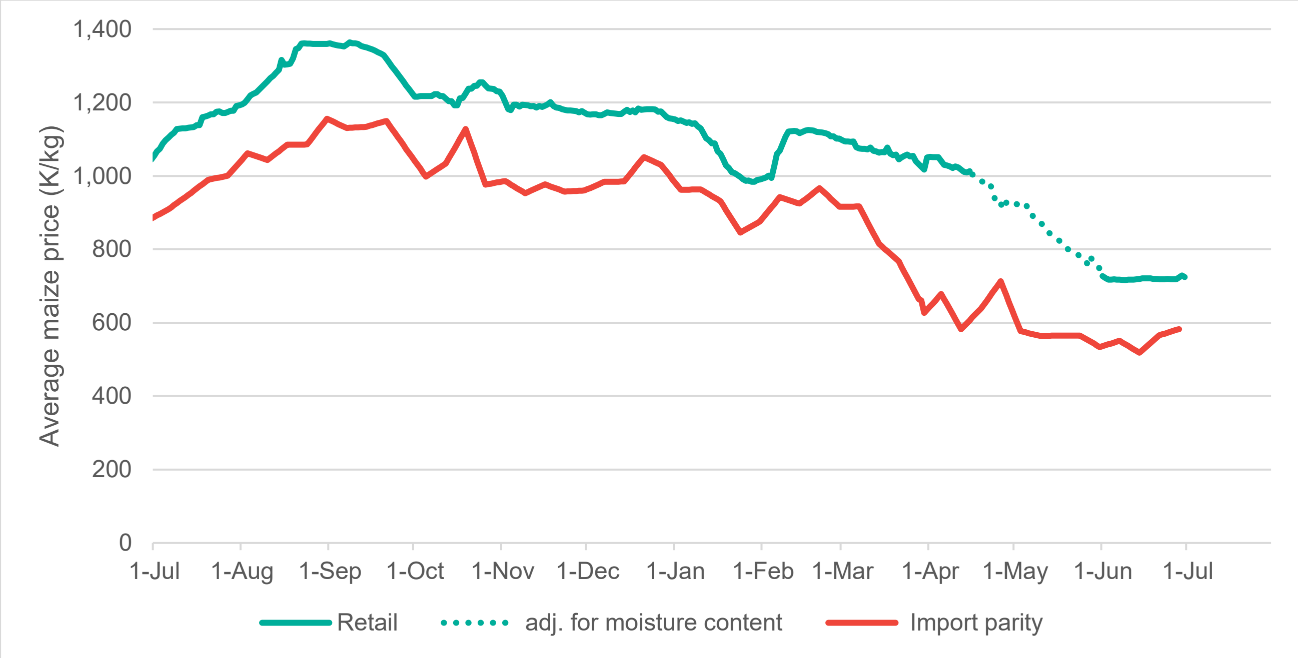
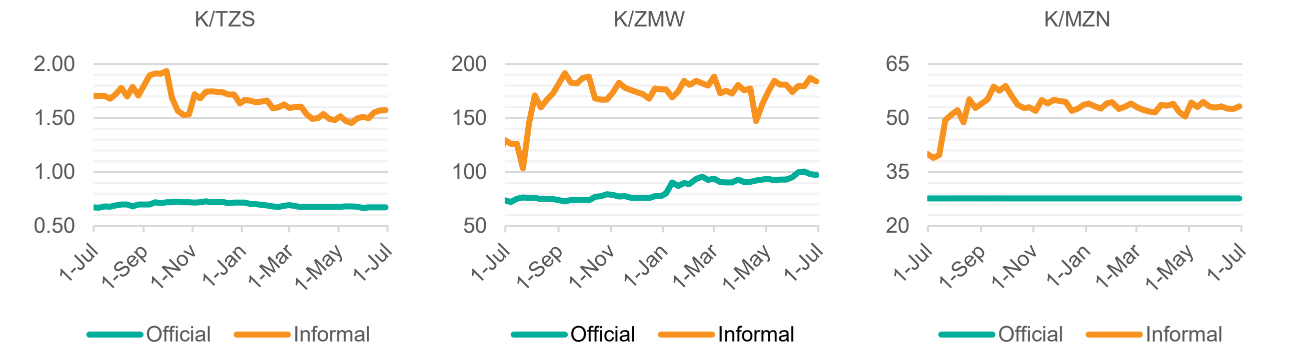


Figure 5: Exchange rates in 2025/26



Notes: Official rates are the selling rates published by the Reserve Bank of Malawi. Informal rates are reported by cross-border traders.

How data were collected

IFPRI Malawi has been monitoring maize retail prices in selected markets since November 2016. Price data are collected telephonically six times per week (excluding Sundays) from 27 markets across the country. Additionally, local import and export prices as well as the direction and terms of trade are collected on a weekly basis from 15 border locations. Three monitors (typically small grain traders) report from each location. All prices are reported in Malawi kwacha (K).

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