

The Monthly Maize Market Report was developed by researchers at IFPRI Malawi to provide clear and accurate information on the variation of maize prices in selected markets throughout Malawi. All prices are reported in Malawi Kwacha (K).

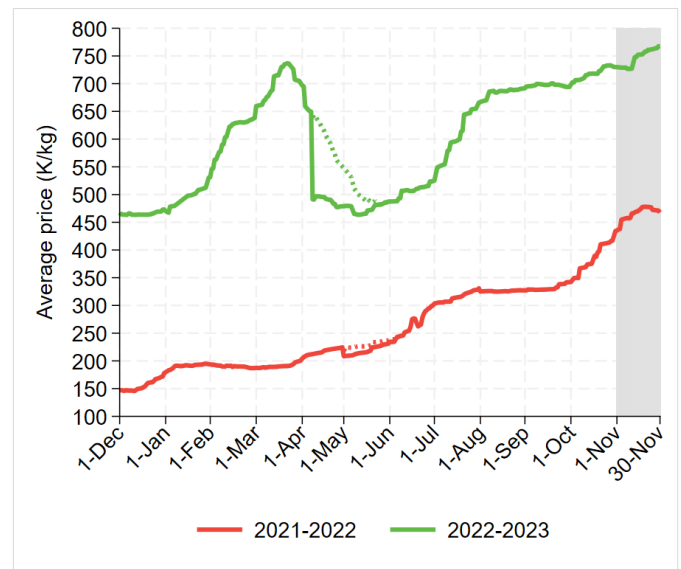
### Highlights

- Retail prices of maize increased by 4 percent in November.
- Maize prices were highest in the Southern region.
- ADMARC sales were reported in 6 of 26 markets monitored by IFPRI, mostly in the Southern region.
- Retail prices of maize in Malawi were higher than in neighboring countries, attracting informal imports.

### Prices increased by 5 percent in November

Figure 1 shows a trend in prices over the past 12 months, ending in November 2023, and, for comparison, over the 12 months ending in November 2022. At the beginning of the harvest season, we start reporting prices of newly harvested maize, which has a higher moisture content compared to maize from the previous harvest. High moisture content makes it unsuitable for storage or milling. During drying, it loses about 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. By the final week of November, the average retail price of maize settled at K762/kg, marking a 4 percent increase from the closing price observed in October (K732/kg) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Figure 1. Long-run trends in average maize retail prices

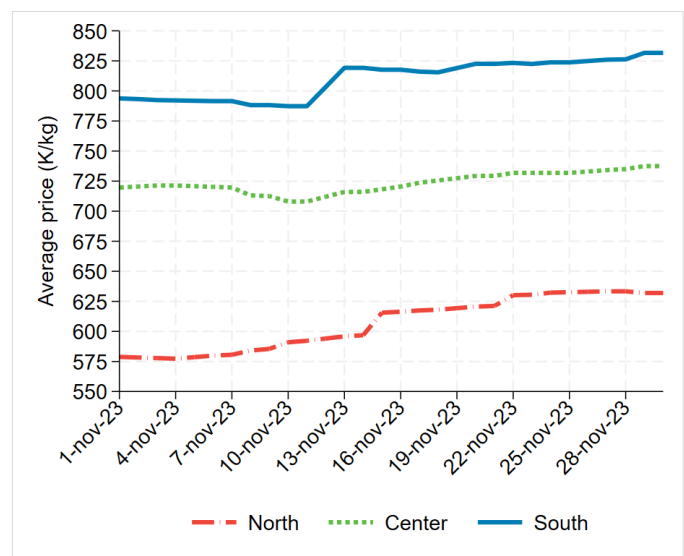


### Maize prices highest in the South

The modest price increase hides great differences between individual markets. Following the usual pattern, the Southern region marked the highest monthly average maize retail price at K810/kg (Figure 2). Chikwawa market recorded the highest retail price peak at K938/kg in the third week of November. The most significant increase in maize prices, reaching 17 percent, was also recorded in Chikwawa. Traders attribute this price surge to increased transportation expenses incurred while travelling long distances to get supplies.

While still trading at higher prices than almost anywhere else in the country, maize became cheaper in two Southern markets, Luchenza (Thyolo) and Mulanje, with declines of 5 and 4 percent, respectively, during November. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) initiated maize distribution in these areas as part of the lean

Figure 2. Average daily maize retail prices by region



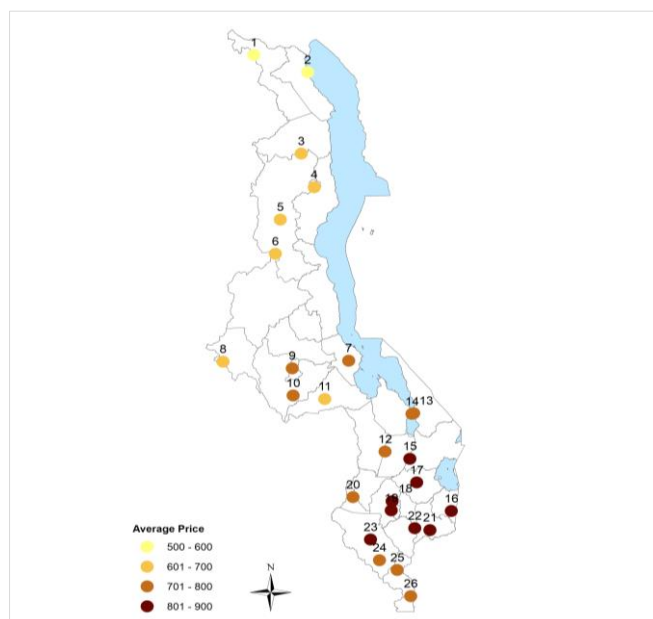
season response, likely reducing demand. Furthermore, some households are receiving maize as payment for manual labor on farms, further influencing the decreased demand and prices.

The monthly average in the Central region settled at K724/kg, marking 23 percent difference from prices observed in the Southern region. The Northern region recorded the lowest monthly average retail maize price at K607/kg, which is 35 percent less than the prices in the South. The lowest weekly average price was also recorded in Chitipa (K498/kg) in the region in the first week of November. However, as the month progressed, there was a gradual rise in weekly average prices, culminating in a double-digit increase (14 percent) by the final week. Traders report that this increase was influenced by the market's dependence on maize imports from Tanzania, which became more expensive due to the recent currency devaluation and increased fuel cost.

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

	Week ending on				Change
	28-Oct-23	7-Nov-23	14-Nov-23	21-Nov-23	
Chitipa <sup>1</sup>	541	498	540	606	617 ↑ 14%
Karonga <sup>2</sup>	574	581	571	575	575 ↑ 0%
Rumphi <sup>3</sup>	621	575	563	600	650 ↑ 5%
Mzuzu <sup>4</sup>	639	625	631	636	648 ↑ 1%
Mzimba <sup>5</sup>	647	609	635	664	679 ↑ 5%
Jenda <sup>6</sup>	609	585	608	629	625 ↑ 3%
Sallima <sup>7</sup>	751	750	757	790	789 ↑ 5%
Mchinji <sup>8</sup>	686	698	680	697	713 ↑ 4%
Nsungwi <sup>9</sup>	746	740	747	747	747 ↑ 0%
Mitundu <sup>10</sup>	717	714	701	700	710 ↓ -1%
Chimbiya <sup>11</sup>	692	700	676	690	706 ↑ 2%
Balaka <sup>12</sup>	727	780	779	800	807 ↑ 11%
M'baluku <sup>13</sup>	763	760	760	777	800 ↑ 5%
Mangochi <sup>14</sup>	752	745	757	787	793 ↑ 5%
Liwonde <sup>15</sup>	853	867	858	867	867 ↑ 2%
Chiringa <sup>16</sup>	800	800	818	850	841 ↑ 5%
Mpondabwino <sup>17</sup>	800	817	846	880	900 ↑ 13%
Lunzu <sup>18</sup>	784	793	796	800	826 ↑ 5%
Mbayani <sup>19</sup>	800	800	802	816	836 ↑ 4%
Mwanza <sup>20</sup>	747	747	766	774	757 ↑ 1%
Mulanje <sup>21</sup>	850	858	806	817	817 ↓ -4%
Luchenza <sup>22</sup>	883	850	833	833	837 ↓ -5%
Chikwawa <sup>23</sup>	759	780	856	938	887 ↑ 17%
Ngabu <sup>24</sup>	752	753	753	780	836 ↑ 11%
Bangula <sup>25</sup>	761	773	787	787	787 ↑ 3%
Nsanje <sup>26</sup>	765	762	767	776	775 ↑ 1%
<b>All markets</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>762</b> ↑ 4%

Figure 3. Location of markets



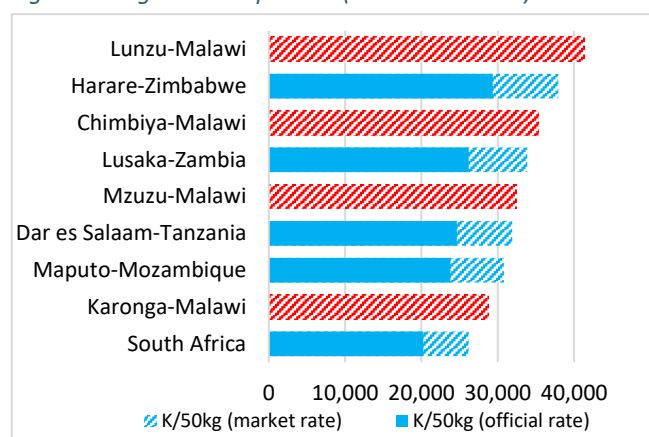
### Regional prices

The retail prices of maize in selected markets in Malawi were generally higher than those in neighboring countries at the official exchange rate (K1,700) (Figure 4). Lunzu market in Blantryre stood out, registering the highest price at the market exchange rate (K2,200) as well. In contrast, South Africa consistently maintained the lowest prices across both exchange rates.

### ADMARC Activities

ADMARC sales were reported in 6 of the 26 markets monitored by IFPRI, 1 in the Northern region (Karonga) and 5 in the Southern region (Balaka, Mbayani, Mwanza, Chikwawa and Ngabu). No ADMARC purchases were reported in any of these markets.

Figure 4. Regional comparison (November 2023)



Note: Weekly average price for the week ending on 28th November

### How data was collected

IFPRI Malawi has been monitoring retail maize prices and ADMARC activities in selected markets since November 2016. Currently, data is collected from 26 markets across the country, with monitoring occurring six days per week, excluding Sundays. At least three monitors report data from each market. Data is collected by means of phone calls to the monitors. Regional prices reported in Figure 4 are sourced from weekly reports from Commodity Insights Africa.