

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 1 percent in September.
- Maize prices were highest but relatively stable in the Southern region, while steadily increasing in the Central region and declining in the Northern region.
- ADMARC sales were reported in 13 of 26 markets monitored by IFPRI, mostly in the Southern region.
- Retail prices of maize in Malawi were higher than in South Africa, and Mozambique at both the market and official exchange rate, and lower than Zambia at the market exchange rate, used for most trade.

### Prices increased by 1 percent in September

Figure 1 shows a trend in prices in the past 12 months ending in September 2023, and, for comparison, over the 12 months ending in September 2022. 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 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 and thus the true price trend.

Weekly average maize prices rose by 1% from K689/kg in the final week of August to K695/kg in the last week of September (Figure 1 & Table 1).

### Maize prices highest but stabilized in the Southern region

As per usual pattern, the Southern region reported the highest maize retail prices averaging at K743/kg, with the highest weekly retail prices also documented in Southern region markets, specifically in Chiringa (Phalombe district) and Mpondabwino (Zomba district), where maize reached K800/kg. In the Central region, the monthly average maize price stood at K703/kg, and it exhibited a steady upward trend (Figure 2). Notably, Mitundu market in Lilongwe rural experienced the highest increase in weekly average prices of 8 percent between the final weeks of August and September.

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

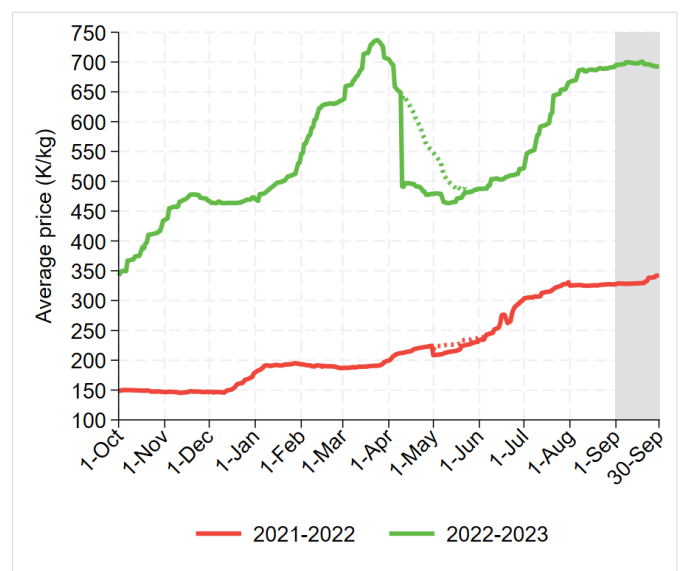
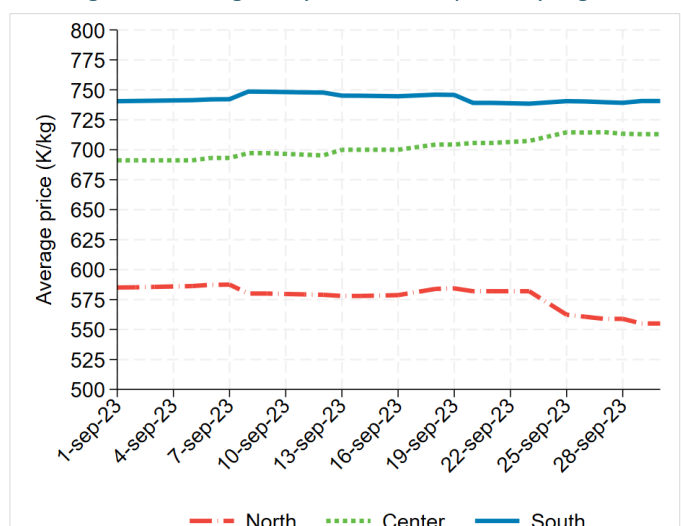


Figure 2. Average daily maize retail prices by region

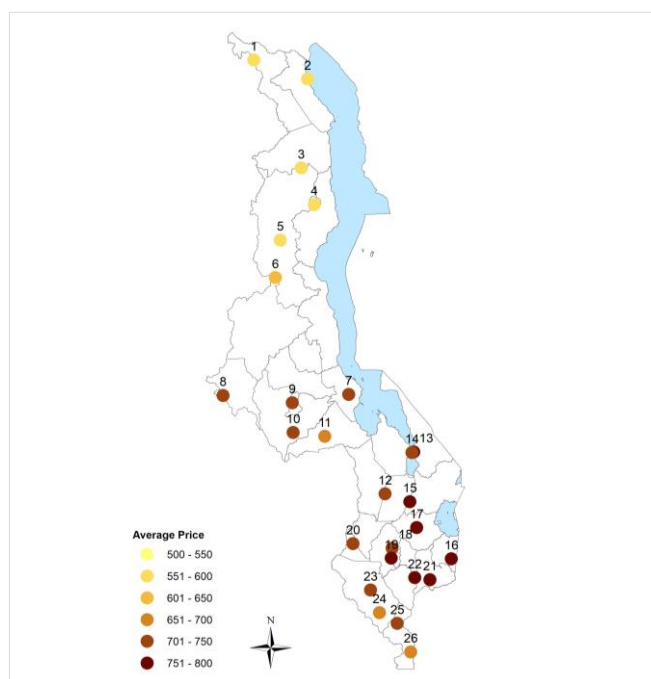


The Northern region had the lowest average monthly price of K577/kg. Towards the end of September, the region experienced a decline in prices (Figure 1). Unsurprisingly, the lowest price (K543/kg) and highest decline in prices was observed in Chitipa market (5 percent) within the region, where traders reported switching to Tanzania to procure maize as it has become cheaper than the local market.

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

	Week ending on					Change
	28-Aug-23	7-Sep-23	14-Sep-23	21-Sep-23	28-Sep-23	
Chitipa <sup>1</sup>	559	584	576	573	543	↓ -3%
Karonga <sup>2</sup>	573	571	559	559	560	↓ -2%
Rumphi <sup>3</sup>	527	554	550	550	550	↑ 4%
Mzuzu <sup>4</sup>	593	600	592	592	597	↑ 1%
Mzimba <sup>5</sup>	581	592	592	604	571	↓ -2%
Jenda <sup>6</sup>	617	617	607	612	587	↓ -5%
Salima <sup>7</sup>	693	700	713	720	726	↑ 5%
Mchinji <sup>8</sup>	686	713	706	697	695	↑ 1%
Nsungwi <sup>9</sup>	678	700	707	709	707	↑ 4%
Mitundu <sup>10</sup>	695	700	705	717	749	↑ 8%
Chimbiya <sup>11</sup>	644	646	657	674	681	↑ 6%
Balaka <sup>12</sup>	707	704	720	714	701	↓ -1%
M'baluku <sup>13</sup>	758	760	760	760	760	↑ 0%
Mangochi <sup>14</sup>	750	737	732	735	743	↓ -1%
Liwonde <sup>15</sup>	758	778	769	762	755	↓ 0%
Chiringa <sup>16</sup>	800	800	800	800	768	↓ -4%
Mpondabwino <sup>17</sup>	788	787	800	800	800	↑ 2%
Lunzu <sup>18</sup>	719	725	727	718	687	↓ -4%
Mbayani <sup>19</sup>	761	758	759	788	791	↑ 4%
Mwanza <sup>20</sup>	689	716	740	735	732	↑ 6%
Mulanje <sup>21</sup>	772	767	762	750	782	↑ 1%
Luchenza <sup>22</sup>	764	758	790	762	750	↓ -2%
Chikwawa <sup>23</sup>	766	740	758	740	733	↓ -4%
Ngabu <sup>24</sup>	700	700	700	700	700	↑ 2%
Bangula <sup>25</sup>	683	710	703	703	695	↓ 0%
Nsanje <sup>26</sup>	666	680	689	687	695	↑ 4%
<b>All markets</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>↑ 1%</b>

Figure 3. Location of markets



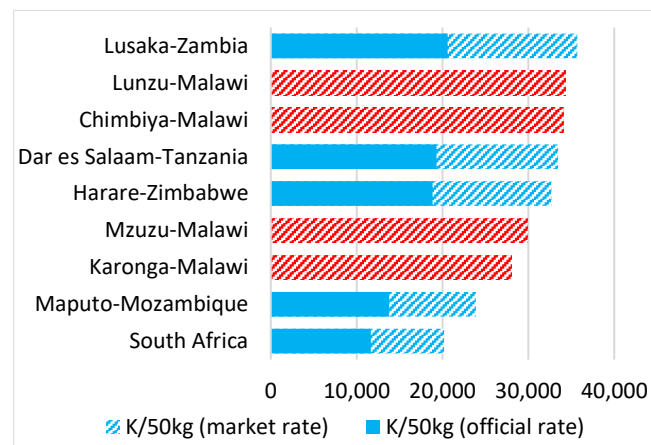
### Regional prices

Markets in Southern and Central Malawi had the highest maize retail prices in the region using the official exchange rate of K1,125/USD, and the second highest after Lusaka using the market rate of K1,950/USD (Figure 4). In contrast, Mozambique and South Africa had the lowest prices at either exchange rate.

### ADMARC Activities

ADMARC sales were reported in half of the 26 markets monitored by IFPRI, 1 in each of the Central and Northern regions and 11 in the Southern region. No ADMARC purchases were reported in any of these markets.

Figure 4. Regional comparison (August 2023)



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

### How data was collected

IFPRI Malawi has been monitoring retail maize prices and ADMARC activities in selected markets since October 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.