

UPDATE ON MAIZE PRICES IN MALAWI

March 20, 2019

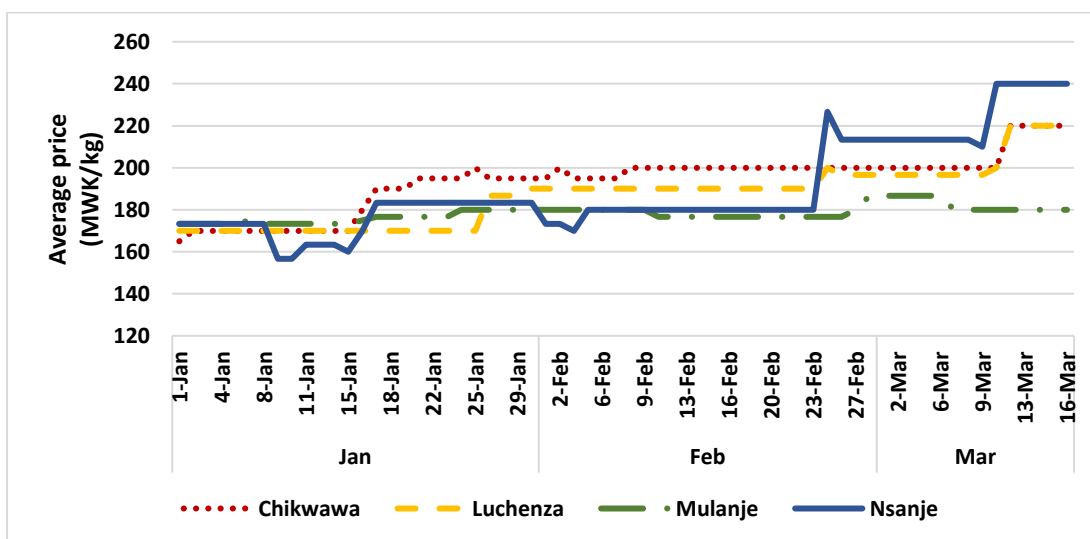
Since the beginning of March, Malawi has experienced heavy rainfall linked to Tropical Cyclone Idai, which has led to intense flooding in 14 districts across southern and central regions of the country. The most severely impacted districts are Chikwawa, Machinga, Mangochi, Phalombe, Thyolo, and Zomba— which each have more than 50,000 affected people according to the UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. On March 8, 2019, the President of Malawi, declared a state of emergency in flood-affected areas. National and international response activities are now underway. This comes on top of the ongoing lean season response in which 3.3 million people are receiving food and/or cash transfers.

Key messages

- Average maize prices have only increased by five percent since the beginning of March.
- Maize prices in southern markets (Chikwawa, Luchenza, and Nsanje) increased by MWK 20 to 25 per kg between March 10 and 11 (Figure 1) in response to the floods.
- Prices in Mulanje have slightly declined since the beginning of March, while those in Liwonde remain stable (Table 1).
- Prices in Lunzu (a major whole sale market near Blantyre) have risen by 10 percent (Table 1).
- Maize retail prices in southern and central Malawi remain higher than prices in North.
- Average maize prices in February and March 2019 are 50 to 56 percent higher than average prices in the same months in 2018 (Figure 3) but 20 percent and 3 percent lower than in February and March 2017.
- This week maize prices in Mulanje have risen to MWK 220, Luchenza fell to MWK 200, while in Chikwawa and Nsanje prices remain stable (Table 2).

Prices increased in March 2019

Figure 1: Daily maize prices in selected southern markets in quarter 1 (2019)



Notes: Other southern markets monitored include Lunzu, Mwanza and Liwonde; data is collected daily except on Sundays

Table 1: Average weekly maize prices (MWK/kg), March 2019 (Saturday to Saturday)

Market	2-Mar-19	9-Mar-19	16-Mar-19	Change
Chitipa	139	134	134	↓ -4%
Karonga	145	140	143	↓ -2%
Rumphi	150	150	152	↑ 1%
Mzuzu	160	160	160	→ 0%
Mzimba	140	140	158	↑ 13%
Salima	200	193	207	↑ 3%
Mchinji	168	170	173	↑ 3%
Mitundu	190	193	203	↑ 7%
Chimbiya	187	200	203	↑ 9%
Lunzu	200	200	220	↑ 10%
Mwanza	207	207	220	↑ 6%
Liwonde	183	185	185	↑ 1%
Luchenza	197	197	220	↑ 12%
Mulanje	187	180	180	↓ -4%
Chikwawa	200	200	220	↑ 10%
Nsanje	213	210	240	↑ 13%
All markets	179	179	189	↑ 5%

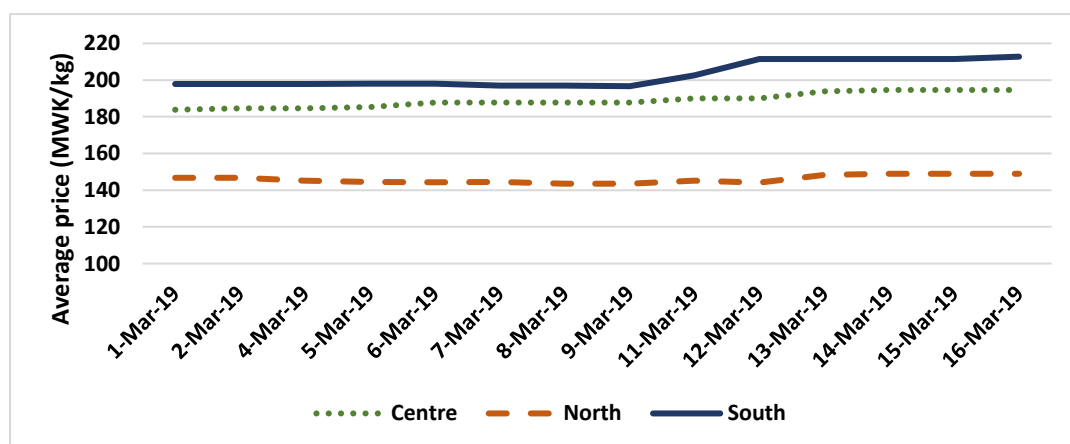
Notes: change refers to % differences between first and last column values

Table 2: Daily maize prices (MWK/kg) in selected markets in the South

	2-Mar-2019	9-Mar-2019	20-Mar-2019
Chikwawa	200	220	220
Luchenza	197	220	200
Mulanje	187	180	220
Nsanje	213	210	240

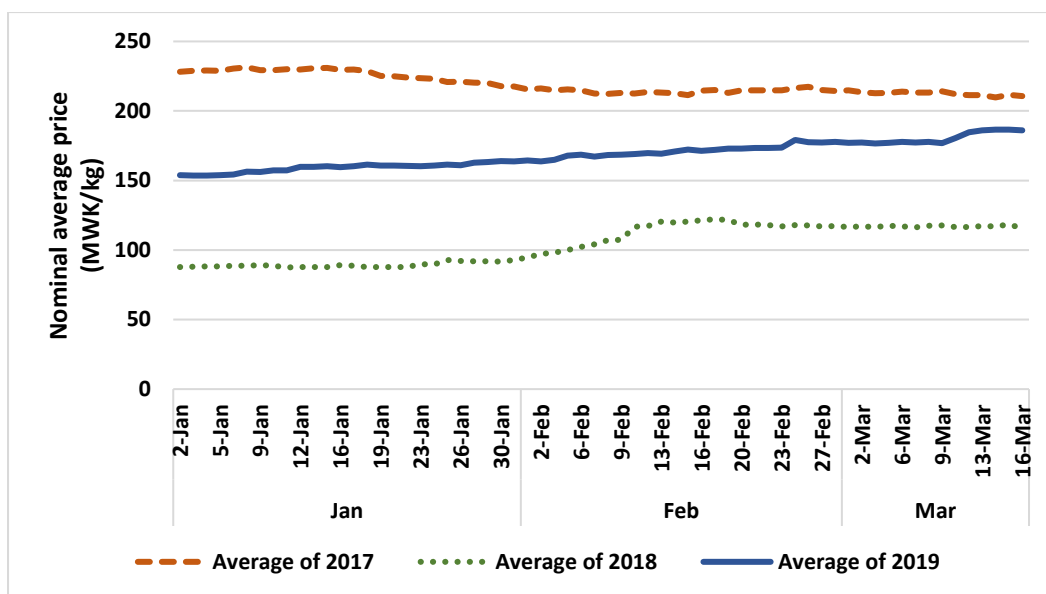
Daily maize prices by regions

Figure 2: Average daily maize prices across the regions (March 2019)



Notes: values are average prices from the markets by region

Figure 3: Average daily maize prices in Quarter 1, 2017 2018 and 2019



Notes: 2016 statistics are excluded because data collection only began in November 2016

How data was collected

IFPRI has been monitoring retail maize prices and ADMARC activities in selected markets since February 2016. Currently, the data is collected from 16 markets across the country, with monitoring occurring six days per week, excluding Sundays. At least three monitors report data from each of the markets. Data is collected by means of automated short message service (SMS) with follow-ups made by telephone if necessary. See: <http://massp.ifpri.info/monitoring-maize-prices-in-malawi/>



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