Initial Market Price Bulletin for the month of **March 2018** (Reported in April 2018)

**HIGHLIGHTS:**
- **Wheat:** The current average wheat price in main cities’ markets of Afghanistan (AFN 23.0/Kg) is slightly lower by 2.9% compared to the same time last year (March 2017) and to the last 5-year average price of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017).
- **Wheat flour (High Price):** The current retail price (AFN 26.3/kg) is slightly lower by 7.3% compared to the same month last year (March 2017), and slightly lower by 9.8% compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months.
- **Rice:** is considered as the 2nd main staple food in Afghanistan. The current average retail price of Low Quality Rice (AFN 44.9kg) is slightly higher by 3.7% compared to the same month last year (March 2017), and significantly higher by 11.1% compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months.
- **Pulses:** The current retail price (AFN 84.3.4kg) is remained unchanged compared to the same month last year (March 2017), and significantly higher by 27.0% compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months.

**Terms of Trade (ToT)**

**Casual Labor and Wheat (ToT):** The Terms of Trade (ToT) between casual Labor and wheat is a proxy indicator or the purchasing capacity of households mainly relying on casual labor as main income, and purchase of wheat in the market. This ToT reveals how many Kilograms of wheat can be purchased with one-day casual unskilled labor wage, but does not say how many days a month a laborer can get to cover the family food needs. Labor wage/Wheat average ToT for the reporting month was 12.7 Kgs of Wheat. On average, this ToT significantly improved by 6.0% from February to March 2018, mainly due to decreased wheat flour price by 2.4% and increased labor wage (by 3.3%). The largest improvement occurred in Maimana (12.7%), Mazar (9.1%), Kabul and Nili (8.3%) due to decreased wheat price and increased labor wage. The variation in all other main cities markets was within normal range 1.7% to 4.1%).

In the last three proceeding years, this improvement was experienced in:
- February to March 2017 (by 0.6%)
- February to March 2016 (by 5.0%)
- February to March 2015 (by 2.9%)

- In comparison to the same month one year ago (March 2017), this ToT slightly deteriorated by 2.4%, mainly due to decreased labor wage (by 4.6%)
- On the two-year comparison (March 2016), this ToT significantly improved by 18.7%.
- Compared to the 5-year average of the same months (Marchs 2013-2017), this ToT slightly improved 3.6%.

**Casual Labor and High Price Wheat flour (ToT):** The Terms of Trade (ToT) between casual Labor and High Price Wheat Flour is a proxy indicator or the purchasing capacity of households mainly relying on casual labor as main income, and purchase of Wheat Flour in the market. This ToT reveals how many Kilograms of Wheat Flour (HP) can be purchased with one-day casual unskilled labor wage, but does not say how many days a month a laborer can get to cover the family food needs.

Labor wage/Wheat flour (HP) average ToT for the reporting month was 11.3 Kgs of Wheat flour which significantly improved by 6.7% from February to March 2018, mainly due to decreased wheat flour price by 2.7% and increased labor wage (by 3.3%). The largest improvement occurred in Kabul (11.9%), Nili (11.6%), Mazar (8.5%), Maimana (8.4%) and Jalalabad (7.4%), due to decreased wheat flour price and increased labor wage. The variation in all other main
cities markets was within normal range (0.0% to 2.6%). In the last three proceeding years, this improvement was experienced in:

- February to March 2016 (by 6.4%)
- February to March 2015 (by 2.3%)

While deteriorated in:

- February to March 2017 (by 0.2%)
- Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), this ToT slightly improved by 3.9%, mainly due to decreased wheat flour price by 7.3%
- On the two-year comparison (March 2016), this ToT significantly improved by 22.6%.
- Compared to the 5-year average of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), this ToT significantly improved by 10.4%.

**Sheep and Wheat (ToT):** The Terms of Trade between a one-year-old female sheep and Wheat is a proxy for the purchasing capacity of those households mainly relying on income from livestock (pastoralists). It says how many kilograms of Wheat can be obtained when selling a one-year-old female sheep.

Sheep/Wheat average ToT for the reporting month was 283.6Kgs of wheat against one-year alive female sheep, which slightly improved by 3.3% from February to March 2018, mainly due to decreased Wheat price (by 2.4%) and increased sheep price by (0.4%). The largest improvement occurred in Maimana (7.3%) and Mazar (6.5%), due to decreased of wheat price and increased labor wage. The variation in other main cities markets was within normal range (0.0% to 4.2%).

In the last three proceeding years, this improvement was experienced in:

- February to March 2017 (by 2.9%)
- February to March 2016 (by 0.1%)
- February to March 2015 (by 1.8%)

- Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), this ToT slightly improved by 8.4%, which is mainly due to increased sheep price (by 5.6%) and decreased wheat price by 2.9%.
- On the two-year comparison (March 2016) this ToT significantly improved by 22.7%.
- Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), this ToT significantly improved by 14.0%.

**Sheep and High Price Wheat flour (ToT):** The Terms of Trade between a one-year-old female sheep and High Price Wheat Flour is a proxy for the purchasing capacity of those households mainly relying on income from livestock (pastoralists). It says how many kilograms of Wheat Flour (HP) can be obtained when selling a one-year-old female sheep.

Sheep-Wheat flour (HP) average ToT for the reporting month was 251.4Kgs of Wheat flour against one-year alive female sheep, which slightly improved by 3.6% from February to March 2018, mainly due to decreased wheat flour price (by 2.7%) and increased sheep price by 0.4%. The largest improvement occurred in Jalalabad (7.4%) and Mazar (6.0%) due to decreased wheat flour price and increased sheep price in Mazar only. The variation in all other markets was within normal range (0.0% to 4.4%). In the last three proceeding years, this improvement was experienced in:

- February to March 2017 (by 2.3%)
- February to March 2016 (by 1.7%)
- February to March 2015 (by 3.4%)
• Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), this ToT significantly improved by 14.1%, mainly due to increased sheep price (by 5.6%) and decreased wheat flour price (by 7.3%).
• On the two-year comparison (March 2016), this ToT significantly improved by 25.6%.
• Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), this ToT significantly improved by 21.7%.

**Retail Price of Wheat Grain in Main Urban Cities:**

- The monthly average price of Wheat in main cities’ markets of Afghanistan was AFN **23.0/Kg** in March 2018. Compared to the past month (February 2018), the average price slightly decreased by 2.4%. The largest decrease occurred only in Maimana (by 6.8%) due to increase of supply. The variation in all main cities was within a normal limit (-4.0% to 0.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced in;
  - February to March 2016 (by 1.5%)
  - February to March 2015 (by 1.1%)
  While increased only in;
  - February to March 2017 (by 0.8%)

- Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), the average wheat price negligibly decreased by 2.9%. The largest decrease occurred Mazar (by 12.5%) and Maimana (10.9%) due to increase of supply from the source points but there is an increase only occurred in Hirat by (11.9%), mainly due to decrease of supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal range (-8.0% to 6.1%).
- On the two-year comparison (March 2016), the average price slightly decreased by 6.5%.
- Compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), the average price negligibly decreased by 2.9%.

**Retail Price of Wheat flour in Main Urban Cities:**

**Wheat flour (High Price):**
The monthly average price of Wheat flour (High Price) in main cities’ markets was AFN **26.3/Kg** in the reporting month (March 2018). The average price slightly decreased by 2.7% compared to the previous month (February 2018). The largest decrease occurred only in Jalalabad (by 6.9%) due to increase of supply from the source point (Pakistan). The variation in all other main cities was within a normal limit (-3.3% to 0.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced,
  - February to March 2016 (by 2.1%)
  - February to March 2015 (by 0.6%)
  While increased only in;
  - February to March 2017 (by 1.6%)

- Compared to the same month last year (March 2017), the current average price slightly decreased by 7.3%. The largest decrease occurred in Mazar (by 14.4%) and Kabul (10.7%) due to increase of supply from the source points (Pakistan and Kazakhstan). The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-8.7% to 1.3%).
Compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016), the average price of wheat flour slightly decreased by 7.8%.

Compared to 5-year average price of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), the average price slightly decreased by 9.8%.

**Wheat flour (Low Price):**
The monthly average price of Wheat flour (Low Price) in main cities’ markets was AFN 24.0/Kg in the reporting month (March 2018). The average price negligibly decreased 1.6% compared to previous month (February 2018). The largest decrease occurred only in Jalalabad (by 5.1%) due to increase of supply from the source point (Pakistan). The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-3.6 % to 0.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced in:

- February to March 2016 (by 1.8%)
- February to March 2015 (by 1.1%)

While increased only in;

- February to March 2017 (by 0.9%)

Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), the current average price slightly decreased by 5.4%. The highest decrease occurred in Kabul (by 12.0%) and Nili (10.3%) due to increased supply of wheat flour, the variation in all other remaining main cities was within a normal range (-8.0% to 4.5%).

Compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016), the average price slightly decreased by 5.7%.

Compared to 5-year average price of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), the average price slightly decreased by 6.6%.

**Retail Price of Rice in Main Urban Cities:**

**Rice (High Quality):**

- The monthly average price of Rice (High Quality) in main cities’ markets was AFN 89.8/Kg in the reporting month (March 2018) which negligibly decreased by 0.3% compared to the previous month (February 2018). The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-1.2% to 0.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced only in;

  - February to March 2015 (by 3.0%)

While increase in;

- February to March 2017 (by 3.3%)
- February to March 2016 (by 0.1%)

Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), the average price significantly increased by 12.8%. The largest increase occurred in Kabul (21.3%), Hrat (18.4%), Kandahar and Mazar (18.2%), Maimana (16.8%) and Jalalabad (11.6%), mainly due to decrease of supply and increase in prices in the source point (Pakistan). The variation in Faizabad and Nili was within a normal range (-0.8 – 5.0%%).

Compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016), the average price significantly increased by 16.6%.

Compared to 5-year average price of some months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), the average price significantly increased by 11.1%.
Rice (Low Quality):
- The monthly average price of Rice (Low Quality) in main cities’ markets was AFN 44.9/Kg in the reporting month (March 2018), which negligibly decreased by 0.7% compared to the previous month (February 2018). The largest decrease only occurred in Hirat (by 5.1%) due to increase of supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal range (-1.8% to 0.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced in:
  - February to March 2016 (by 0.1%)
  - February to March 2015 (by 1.4%)
While increased only in:
  - February to March 2017 (by 1.7%)
- Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), the average price slightly increased by 3.7%. The largest increase occurred in Maimana (by 13.5%) and Mazar (10.3%), mainly due to increase of low quality rice price in Pakistan and Kabul. The variation in all main other cities was within a normal range (-9.1% to 6.2%).
- Compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016), the average price slightly increased by 9.9%.
- Compared to 5-year average price of same months (Marchs 2013- 2017), the average price slightly increased by 3.8%.

Retail Price of Cooking Oil in Main Urban Cities:
The monthly average price of cooking oil in main cities’ markets was AFN 79.7/Kg in the reporting month (March 2018), the average price negligibly decreased by 1.3% compared to previous month (February 2018). The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-3.9% to 0.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was only experienced only in:
  - February to March 2015 (by 0.2%)
While increase in:
  - February to March 2017 (by 2.3%)
  - February to March 2016 (by 0.4%)
- Compared to the same month one year ago (March 2017), the average price slightly decreased by 3.0%. The highest decrease occurred in Nili by (10.6%) and Maimana (10.2%) due to increase of supply but there is a largest increase only occurred in Kandahar (by 15.1 %), main reason for the increase was increased price of oil by the traders and decreased supply of oil from source points. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal limit (-6.9% to 0.0%).
- Compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016), the average price slightly increased by 3.4%.
- Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), the average price negligibly increased by 0.1%.
Retail Price of Pulses, Salt, Sugar and No. of days averagely worked by a labourer:

**Pulses:** The monthly average price of Pulses in March 2018 in main cities’ markets was AFN 84.3/Kg negligibly decreased by 1.3% from last month (February 2018). The highest decrease only occurred in Hirat (by 6.1%) due to increased supply of Pulses. The variation in all main cities markets was within a normal range (-4.7% to 0.0%).
- Compared to the same time last year (March 2017), the price of pulses remained unchanged.
- Compared to the same time two year ago (March 2016), the price of pulses significantly increased by 25.2%.
- Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Marchs 2013 - 2017), the prices of pulses increased significantly by 27.0%.

**Salt:** The monthly average price of Salt in March 2018 in main cities’ markets was AFN 14.0/Kg negligibly increased by 0.6% compared to the previous month (February 2018). The current average price of salt negligibly decreased by 0.4% compared to the same month last year (March 2017), and negligibly increased by 0.8% compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016).

**Sugar:** The monthly average price of Sugar in March 2018 in main cities’ markets was AFN 41.2/Kg, being slightly decreased by 1.5% compared to the previous month (February 2018). The current average price of Sugar is significantly decreased by 26.3% compared to the same month last year (March 2017) due to increase of supply, and slightly decreased by 8.3% compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016).

**Number of days averagely worked by a labourer:** The monthly average number of days worked by a laborer during March 2018 was reported at 9.4 days. The highest number of working days were in Kabul (16 days), followed by Kandahar and Hirat (12 days), Nili (9 days), Mazar and Maimana and Jalalabad (8 days), and Faizabad (2.5 days). Compared to the previous month (February 2018), the significant increase occurred in Nili by 125% (5 days), Kabul by 60% (6 days) and Faizabad 25% (0.5 day) and the variation in other main cities remain unchanged.
- Compared to the same month last year (March 2017), the average number of working days slightly decreased by 3.8% (0.4 day).
- Compared to the same month two years ago (March 2016), the average number of working days for main cities slightly decreased by 5.3% (0.5 day).
### Market Watch:

#### Kabul:

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</tbody>
</table>

#### Nili:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Markets</th>
<th>Major Comm</th>
<th>Current Price per Kg</th>
<th>Price change [%]</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Markets</th>
<th>Major Comm</th>
<th>Current Price in AFN</th>
<th>Price change</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rice High Quality</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Rice High Quality</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rice Low Quality</td>
<td></td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>351.1</td>
<td>Rice Low Quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cotton Oil</td>
<td></td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Cotton Oil</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remain:** ▲: Price increase above normal price fluctuation  ▶: Normal price fluctuation  ●: Price decrease below normal price fluctuation

*Source: WFP/VAM market data from Afghanistan main cities (Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar, Jalalabad, Faizabad, Herat, Maimana and Nili). Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) – World Food Programme (WFP), Afghanistan*