Initial Market Price Bulletin for the month of **January 2019** (Reported in February 2019)

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- **Wheat:** The current average wheat price in main cities’ markets of Afghanistan (AFN 24.2/Kg) is negligibly higher by 1.4% compared to the same time last year (January 2018) and negligibly higher by 0.6% compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months (January 2014 - 2018).
- **Wheat flour (High Price):** The current retail price (AFN 29.4/Kg) is slightly higher by 5.5% compared to the same month last year (January 2018), and negligibly higher by 1.3% 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 46.0/Kg) is negligibly higher by 1.1% compared to the same month last year (January 2018), and slightly higher by 7.6% compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months. The current average price of High Quality Rice (AFN 90.7/Kg) is negligibly higher by 0.2% compared to the same month last year (January 2018), and slightly higher by 8.7% compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months.
- **Pulses:** The current retail price (AFN 77.8/Kg) is slightly lower by 9.8% compared to the same month last year (January 2018), and slightly higher by 9.5% 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 12.2 Kgs of Wheat. On average, this ToT slightly deteriorated by 1.0% from December 2018 to January 2019, mainly due to increased wheat price (by 0.2%) and decreased labor wage by 1.0%. The largest deterioration only occurred in Kandahar by (13.5%) main reason of deterioration is due to increase of wheat price and decrease of labor wage. The variation in all other main cities markets was within normal range (-0.1% to 4.7%). In the last three proceeding years, this deterioration was experienced in:

- December 2017 to January 2018(by 1.8%)
- December 2015 to January 2016(by 3.9%)
- While improved in;
  - December 2016 to January 2017(by 1.0%)

- In comparison to the same month one year ago (January 2018), this ToT negligibly improved by 2.1%, mainly due to increased wheat price (by 1.4%)
- On the two-year comparison (January 2017), this ToT slightly deteriorated by 5.8%.
- Compared to the 5-year average of the same months (January 2014-2018), this ToT slightly improved by 6.4%.

**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 10. 1Kgs of Wheat flour which slightly deteriorated by 2.0% from December 2018 to January, mainly due to increase wheat flour price by (1.0%) and decrease of labor wage by 1.0%. The largest deterioration only occurred in Kandahar by (11.7%) due to decrease of labor wage and Jalalabad (5.0%) due to increase of wheat flour price. The variation in all main cities markets was within normal range (-4.1% to 3.8%). In the last three proceeding years, this deterioration was experienced in:

- December 2015 to January 2016 (by 1.3%)
- While improved in:
  - December 2016 to January 2017 (by 1.7%) and remained unchanged in December 2017 to January 2018.

- Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), this ToT slightly deteriorated by 3.6%, mainly due to increase of wheat flour by 5.5%.
- On the two-year comparison (January 2017), this ToT slightly deteriorated by 4.1%.
- Compared to the 5-year average of the same months (Januarys 2014 - 2018), this ToT slightly improved by 6.0%.

**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 232.3Kgs of wheat against one-year alive female sheep, which negligibly deteriorated by 1.4% from December 2018 to January 2019, mainly due to increased wheat price by (0.2%) and decreased sheep price by 1.3%. The largest deterioration occurred in Kandahar (9.0%) and Faizabad (6.8%) due to decrease of sheep price and increase of wheat price. The variation in other main cities markets was within normal range (-0.1% to 3.8%).

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

- December 2017 to January 2018 (by 1.9%)
- December 2015 to January 2016 (by 0.2%)
- While improved in:
  - December 2016 to January 2017 (by 0.6%)
- Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), this ToT significantly deteriorated by 14.1%, which is mainly due to decreased sheep price by 12.3% and increase of wheat by 1.4%.
- On the two-year comparison (January 2017) this ToT slightly deteriorated by 8.8%.
- Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Januarys 2014 - 2018), this ToT slightly deteriorated by 4.5%.

**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 194.7 Kgs of wheat flour against one-year alive female sheep, which slightly deteriorated by 2.1% from December 2018 to January 2019, mainly due to increase of wheat flour price by 1.0% and decrease of sheep price by 1.3%. The largest deterioration occurred in Faizabad (7.7%) and Kandahar (7.1%) due to decrease of sheep price and increase of wheat price. The variation in all other markets was within normal range (-4.1% to 3.8%). In the last three proceeding years, this deterioration was not experienced, while improved in:
• December 2017 to January 2018 (by 0.2%)
• December 2016 to January 2017 (by 2.3%)
• December 2015 to January 2016 (by 2.6%)

• Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), this ToT significantly deteriorated by 17.7%, mainly due to decreased sheep price (by 12.3%) and increase of wheat flour by (5.5%).
• On the two-year comparison (January 2017), this ToT slightly deteriorated by 6.5%.
• Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Januaryys 2014 - 2018), this ToT negligibly deteriorated by 4.0%.

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

• The monthly average price of wheat in main cities’ markets of Afghanistan was AFN 24.2/Kg in January 2019. The average price negligibly increased by 0.2% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The variation in all main cities was within a normal limit (-1.0% to 2.8 %). In the last three proceeding years, this increase was experienced in;
  
  o December 2017 to January 2018 (by 0.8%)
  o December 2015 to January 2016 (by 1.9%)

• While decreased in;
  
  o December 2016 to January 2017 (by 1.3%)

• Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), the average wheat price negligibly increased by 1.4%. The largest increase occurred only in Mazar by (12.2%) due to decrease of supply from source of points (Local and INT). The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-4.2% to 3.7%).
• On the two-year comparison (January 2017), the average price slightly increased by 3.4%.
• Compared to the last 5-year average price of the same months (Januaryys 2014 - 2018), the average price negligibly increased by 0.6%.

**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 29.4/Kg in the reporting month (January 2019). The average price negligibly increased by 1.0% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The largest increase occurred only in Jalalabad by (5.3 %) due to decrease of supply from source of point (Pakistan). The variation in all other main cities was within a normal limit (-3.7% to 4.3%). In the last three proceeding years, this increase was not experienced, while decreased in;
  
  o December 2017 to January 2018 (by 0.6%)
  o December 2016 to January 2017 (by 1.6%)
  o December 2015 to January 2016 (by 1.1%)

• Compared to the same month last year (January 2018), the current average price slightly increased by 5.5%. The largest increase occurred in Kabul by (15.0%) followed by Jalalabad (14.4%) and Maimana (11.3%) due to decrease of supply from source of points (Pakistan and Kazakhstan). The variation in all other main cities was within a normal range (-3.4% to 7.2%).
• Compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017), the average price of wheat flour negligibly increased by 2.4%.
• Compared to 5-year average price of the same months (Januaryys 2014 - 2018), the average price negligibly increased by 1.3%.

**Wheat flour (Low Price):**

• The monthly average price of Wheat flour (Low Price) in main cities’ markets was AFN 26.6/Kg in the reporting month (January 2019). The average price negligibly increased by 1.1% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The variation in all main cities was within a normal limit (-0.6% to 4.5%). In the last three proceeding years, this increase was not experienced, while decreased in;
December 2017 to January 2018 (by 0.1%)
December 2016 to January 2017 (by 1.6%)
December 2015 to January 2016 (by 0.5%)

- Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), the current average price slightly increased by 7.7%. The largest increase occurred in Maimana by (20.0%), Kabul (18.2%) and Jalalabad (11.0%) due to decrease of supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal range (-0.4% to 8.7%).
- Compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017), the average price negligibly increased by 3.8%.
- Compared to 5-year average price of the same months (January 2013 - 2018), the average price slightly decreased by 1.8%.

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 90.7/Kg in the reporting month (January 2019) which slightly decreased by 2.1% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The largest decrease only occurred in Nili by 9.1% due to increase of supply from Kabul and main source (Pakistan). The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-2.2% to 1.2%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced in,

  - December 2016 to January 2017 (by 0.4%)
  - December 2015 to January 2016 (by 0.5%)

While increased in;

  - December 2017 to January 2018 (by 4.2%)

- Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), the average price negligibly increased by 0.2%. The largest increase occurred only in Faizabad by 13.5 mainly due to decrease of supply and increase in prices in the source point (Pakistan). The variation in other remaining main cities was within a normal range (-5.3% to 0.8%).
- Compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017), the average price significantly increased by 19.9%.
- Compared to 5-year average price of some months (Januarys 2014 - 2018), the average price slightly increased by 8.7%.

Rice (Low Quality):

- The monthly average price of Rice (Low Quality) in main cities’ markets was AFN 46.0/Kg in the reporting month (January 2018), which negligibly decreased by 1.2% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The highest decrease only occurred in Faizabad by (6.0%) due to increase of supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal range (-4.3% to 4.0%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was experienced only in;

  - December 2016 to January 2017 (by 0.1%)

While increased in;

  - December 2017 to January 2018 (by 1.6%)
  - December 2015 to January 2016 (by 0.9%)
• Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), the average price negligibly increased by 1.1%. The largest increase only occurred in Faizabad (15.9%), mainly due to decrease of low quality rice supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal range (-8.6% to 4.8%).

• Compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017), the average price significantly increased by 10.1%.

• Compared to 5-year average price of same months (Januarys 2014-2018), the average price slightly increased by 7.6%.

Retail Price of Cooking Oil in Main Urban Cities:

The monthly average price of cooking oil in main cities’ markets was AFN 80.5/Kg in the reporting month (January 2019), the average price negligibly decreased by 1.9% compared to previous month (December 2018). The largest decrease only occurred in Nili by 9.2% due to increase of supply. The variation in all main cities was within a normal range (-4.1% to 0.1%). In the last three proceeding years, this decrease was only experienced in;

  o December 2016 to January 2017 (by 0.2%)

While increased in;

  o December 2015 to January 2016 (by 0.5%) and remained unchanged in December 2017 to January 2018.

• Compared to the same month one year ago (January 2018), the average price negligibly decreased by 1.6%. The highest decrease occurred only in Nili by (16.1%) due to increase of supply from source of point but there is an increase only in Kandahar by (11.7%) due to decrease of supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal limit (-9.6% to 2.5%).

• Compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017), the average price negligibly decreased by 0.2%

• Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Januarys 2014 - 2018), the average price negligibly increased by 1.0%.

Retail Price of Pulses, Salt, Sugar and No. of days averagely worked by a labourer:

Pulses: The monthly average price of pulses in January 2019 in main cities’ markets was AFN 77.8/Kg which negligibly decreased by 0.2% compared to the previous month (December 2018).

• Compared to the same time last year (January 2018), the price of pulses slightly decreased by 9.8%, the highest decrease occurred in Nili (26.0%), Hirat (21.7%) and Kandahar (14.6%), mainly due to increased supply. The variation in all other main cities was within a normal limit (-9.0% to 6.7%).

• Compared to the same time two years ago (January 2017), the price of pulses negligibly increased by 0.1%.

• Compared to 5-year average of the same months (Januarys 2014 - 2018), the prices of pulses increased slightly by 9.5%.

Salt: The monthly average price of salt in January 2019 in main cities’ markets was AFN 15.4/Kg slightly increased by 3.9% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The current average price of salt slightly increased by 9.1% compared to the same month last year (January 2018), and slightly increased by 9.8% compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017).

Sugar: The monthly average price of sugar in January 2019 in main cities’ markets was AFN 42.9/Kg, negligibly increased by 0.4% compared to the previous month (December 2018). The current average price of sugar slightly decreased by 4.5% compared to the same month last year (January 2018) due to increase of supply, and significantly decreased by 20.8% compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017).

Number of days averagely worked by a labourer: The monthly average number of days worked by a laborer during January
2019 was reported at 6.5 days. The highest number of working days was in Hirat (12 days), followed by Kandahar, Maimana, Mazar and Jalalabad (8 days) and Kabul and Faizabad (4 days). Compared to the previous month (December 2018), the significant decrease occurred in Nili by 100% (5 days), Kabul 63.6% (7 days), and Kandahar 27.3% (3 days), the variation in all other main cities remain unchanged.
- Compared to the same month last year (January 2018), the average number of working days significantly decreased by 22.4% (1.9 days).
- Compared to the same month two years ago (January 2017), the average number of working days for main cities significantly decreased by 21.2% (1.8 days).

### Market Watch:

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**Terms of Trade**

- Price increase above normal price fluctuation (△)
- Normal price fluctuation (-)
- Price decrease below normal price fluctuation (▼)

Price fluctuation is considered normal if the price change is within 5% for 1 month, or within 10% for 3 months, one year, two year and 5 years. △△-- Compared to month ago △△△-- Compared to January 2018 and △△△-- Compared to January 2017

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