

Food Security and Markets Monitoring Report

Situation Update

Despite the late start of the 2024/2025 rainfall season and the drier than normal conditions experienced during the October to December 2024 period, recent rains received early January 2025, have renewed hope for most farmers across the country. The Meteorological Services Department projects normal to above-normal rains until March 2025. According to the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water And Rural Development, over 1.4 million hectares are under maize, supported by government initiatives such as Pfumvudza/Intwasa, the National Enhanced Agriculture Productivity Scheme, and private sector contributions. Input distribution is said to have improved, with 64% of basal fertiliser and 120% of maize seed targets delivered, enhancing national food security efforts.

Efforts to cushion communities in the lean season are underway with the government implementing various relief programs in both rural and urban areas. These are being supported by several partners including the UN, NGOs and the private sector.



Highlights



In USD terms, the month on month inflation was 0.6% while the annual inflation was 2.5% for December 2024. In local currency, the month on month inflation rate was 3.7% down from 11.7% in November 2024 (RBZ).



The WFP Hunger Map Live continues to show a high food insecurity situation in the country with about 31% of the rural population facing insufficient food consumption and 74% engaged in crisis and emergency coping strategies in November 2024.



Price of food on the international market saw a slight downward movement of about 0.5% according to the FAO price index. The index stood at 127 points.



Maize meal was available in an average of 90% of the rural and urban markets. Other food commodities monitored were generally available in most markets except for chicken, eggs, and vegetables in formal rural markets as these are mainly sold at household level.



The USD and ZWG cost of the monitored food and non food essential needs basket remained the same in both urban and rural markets when compared to November 2024.



Food security situation

The WFP Real-time Monitoring, estimated about 31% or approximately 4.5 million (down from 5.7 million in November) rural people to be facing insufficient food consumption at the end of December 2024 (**Figure 1**) - typical of the festive season. Food consumption patterns tend to improve around the festive period in the month of December due to increased food purchases associated with the celebrations. The number of people resorting to 'crisis and above' food-based coping strategies was estimated at 74% up from 70% in the previous month (**Figure 1**).

The Meteorological Services Department (MSD) of Zimbabwe has reported widespread rainfall across the country, initiated by an atmospheric cloud system that has been active since late December 2024. This weather phenomenon is expected to persist into January 2025, contributing to enhanced moisture levels in the atmosphere. Regions including Matabeleland North, northern areas of Midlands, Harare Metropolitan, northern parts of Manicaland, and all Mashonaland Provinces have been experiencing scattered thundershowers during the first week of January 2025. The Southern Africa 10-day rainfall forecast (Figure 2), predicts that parts of south-western Angola, Namibia, northern Mozambique, Madagascar, and Tanzania are likely to experience significantly below-average rainfall, with some regions in Madagascar, Mozambique, and Tanzania potentially receiving less than 20% of their usual rainfall. In contrast, above-average rainfall is forecasted for the northern part of the DRC, parts of Eswatini, Lesotho, southern Mozambique, the south-western part of the Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe. These regions are expected to receive over 150% of their average rainfall, translating to more than 120mm of rain during the 10-day period ending 20 January in Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. This rainfall outlook underscores the need for continued vigilance and preparedness, especially as agricultural, infrastructural, and disaster management stakeholders navigate the challenges associated with significant rainfall activity during the peak of the rainy season. The MSD forecasts above-average rainfall for January, February, and March 2025 period.

Figure 1: Prevalence of Insufficient Food Consumption and Livelihood Coping by Province

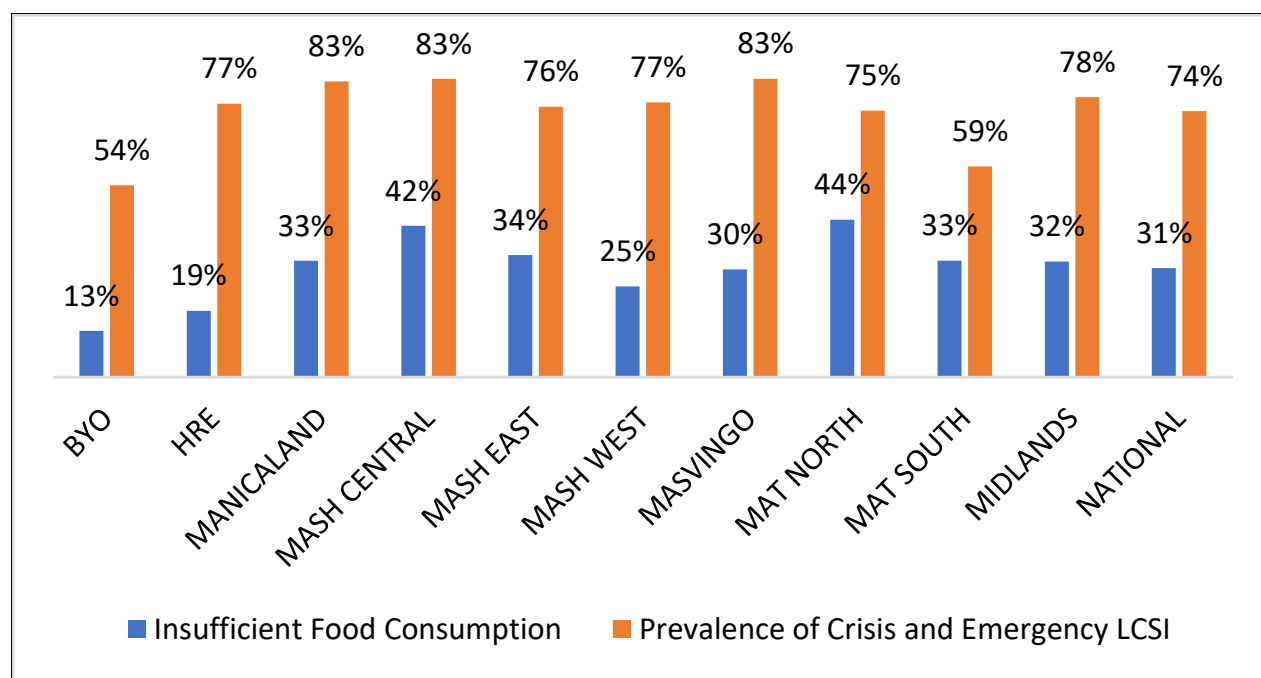
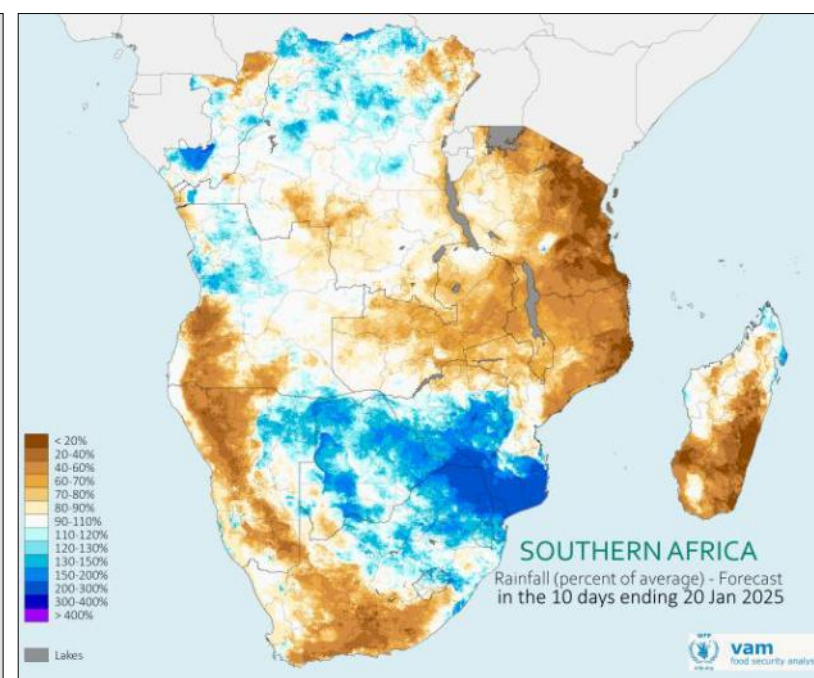


Figure 2: 10 Day rainfall forecast ending 20 January





Coping mechanism story



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**WE ARE SKIPPING
MEALS AND DOING
GOLD PANNING. IT'S
NOT ANY EASY JOB
BUT WE DON'T HAVE
A CHOICE**

Nelta Chiriga
Smallholder from Mwenezi

Urban and rural communities facing economic hardships and unpredictable rainfall patterns are turning to alternative means of survival. Many have ventured into small-scale mining, often referred to as "chikorokoza," to supplement their incomes. Women, in particular, are increasingly participating in this labor-intensive activity, driven by the need to provide for their families. However, the demands of mining are taking a toll on their health and limiting their time for childcare and other household responsibilities. At home, families are also resorting to coping mechanisms such as skipping meals, with parents prioritizing food for children while enduring hunger themselves. These strategies reflect the severity of economic and climate challenges, as well as the resilience of rural communities trying to navigate a tough environment.



Macro-economic situation

The ZWG Consumer Price Index (ZWG CPI) recorded a value of 166.30 in December 2024, a slight increase from the 160.41 recorded in November 2024. Month-on-month inflation saw a marked decline to 3.7 percent in December, representing a significant drop of 8 percentage points from the 11.7 percent recorded in November. This deceleration in inflation is attributed to a number of factors including stabilizing prices, supported by tight monetary and fiscal policies. Notably, the non-food sector played a key role, with inflation in this category decreasing from 9.7 percent in November to 3.2 percent in December. Month-on-month inflation in US dollar terms increased to 0.6%, reversing the previous month's near-zero growth. Weighted month-on-month inflation eased to 1.1%, compared to November's 2.2% increase.

At the end of December 2024, the foreign currency exchange rate was ZWG25.80 to 1USD which is comparable to ZWG25.46 to 1USD recorded at the end of November, 2024. The parallel market exchange rate remained the same at about ZWG37.00 in December 2024 when compared to November 2024 (**Figure 4 and 5**).

The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) stood at 127.0 points in December 2024, down 0.6 points (0.5 percent) from its November level, as decreases in the price indices for sugar, dairy products, vegetable oils and cereals more than offset increases in meat. The index stood at 8.0 points (6.7 percent) above its corresponding level one year ago, yet remained at 33.2 points (20.7 percent) below the peak reached in March 2022. For 2024 as a whole, the index recorded 122.0 points, 2.6 points (2.1 percent) lower than the average value in 2023.

Figure 3: Inflation rates (USD)

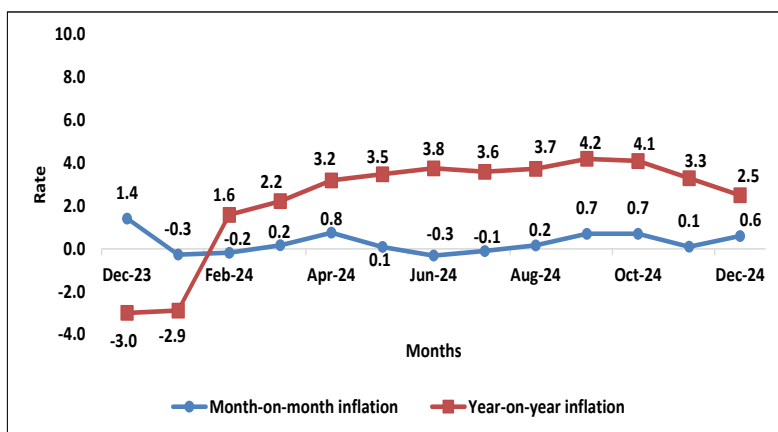


Figure 4: Exchange rate trends

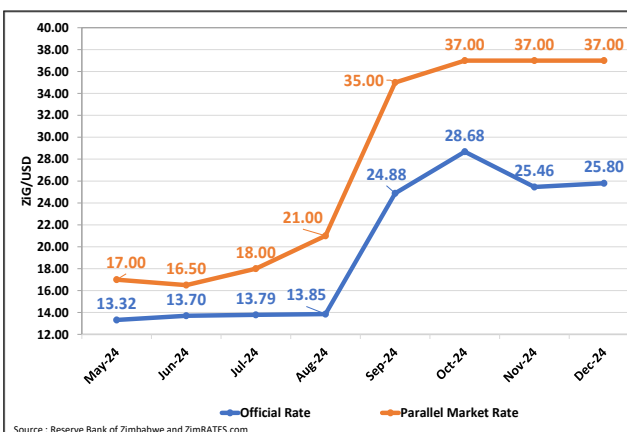
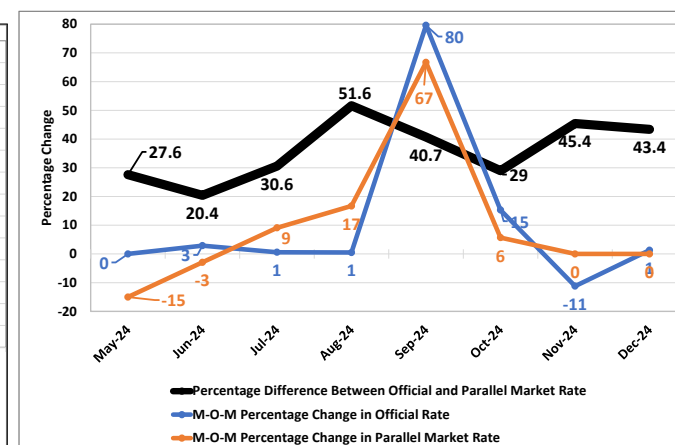


Figure 5: percentage change in exchange rates





Rural Market Performance Update: a review of availability and prices of basic food basket commodities (ZWG and USD)

The USD value of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) which represents minimum household requirements to meet their essential needs, was estimated at an average of \$24.18 which is comparable to \$23.70 in November 2024. This cost was similar to the cost 6 months ago and 14% higher than the cost a year ago. The local currency (ZWG) cost of the MEB was estimated at ZWG899.70 in December 2024 which is comparable to ZWG878.70 reported in November 2024.

Figure 6: Rural food MEB ZWG percentage change

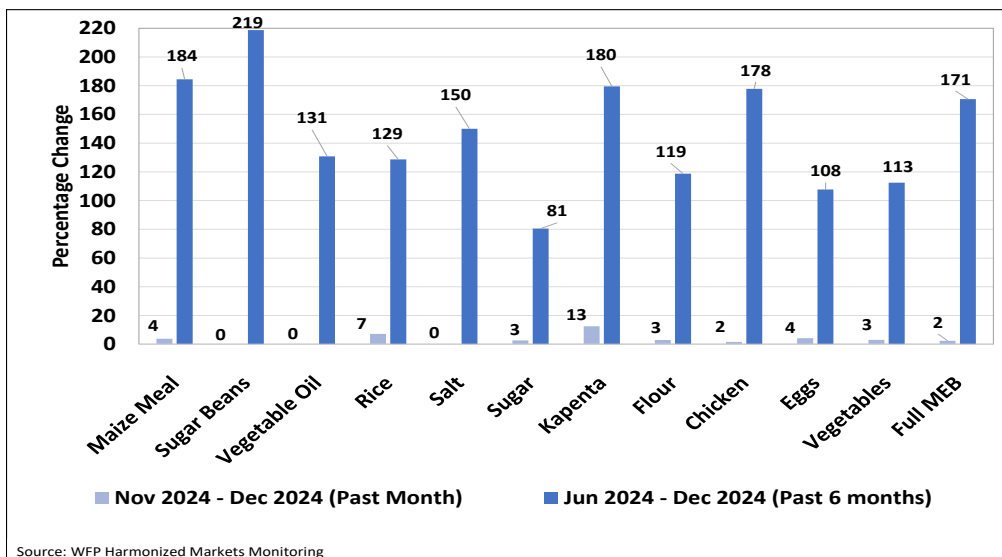
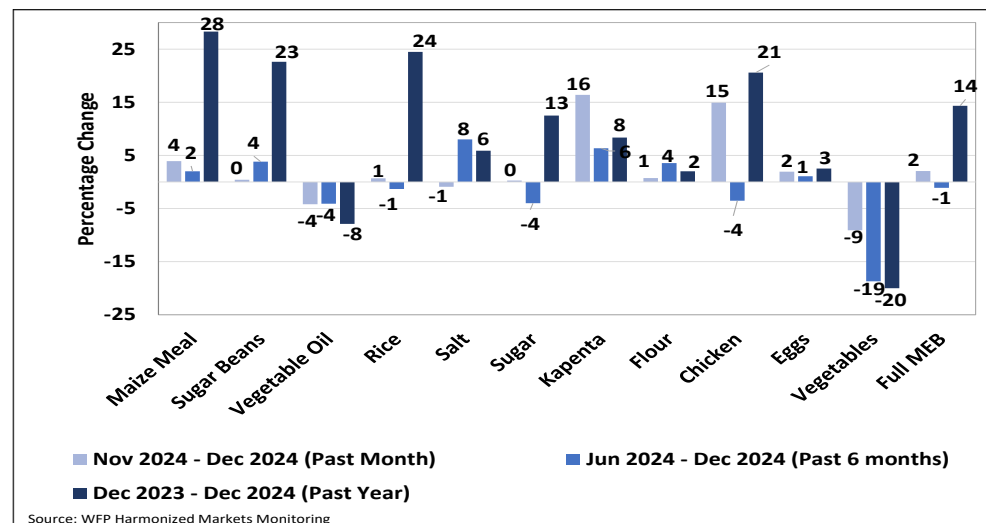


Figure 7: Rural food MEB USD percentage change



Availability of most commodities remained high and comparable to availability in November 2024 (**Table 1**). The slight reduction in availability of some commodities like vegetable oil and rice could be attributed to the increased demand during the festive season. Although not accounting for farmer to farmer sells, availability of vegetables, chicken and eggs continues to be poor as a result of low production due to water shortages across the country which have negatively impacted on production of vegetables, horticulture and livestock.

Prices in USD terms for most of the food commodities remained stable (**Figure 7 and Table 1**). The price of Kapenta and chicken rose by 16% and 15% respectively. In ZWG terms, prices generally remained stable when compared to November 2024 and increased by an average of 171% when compared to 6 months ago (**Figure 6**). Higher price increases were reported for kapenta (13%) and rice (7%).

Table 1: Commodity prices in USD and availability (%) in rural markets

ITEM	USD % price			ZWG % price		Availability	
	Nov USD	Dec USD	change	Nov ZWG	Dec ZWG	Nov Availability	Dec Availability
Maize Grain/Kg							
Maize Meal/Kg	0.65	0.68	4%	26.00	27.00	4%	89
Sugar Beans/Kg	2.43	2.44	0%	102.00	102.00	0%	68
Vegetable Oil/L	1.83	1.75	-4%	60.00	60.00	0%	100
Rice/Kg	1.21	1.22	1%	42.00	45.00	7%	98
Salt/Kg	0.55	0.54	-1%	20.00	20.00	0%	100
Sugar/Kg	1.44	1.44	0%	38.00	39.00	3%	99
Kapenta/Kg	9.36	10.90	16%	400.00	450.00	13%	70
Flour/Kg	1.01	1.02	1%	34.00	35.00	3%	89
Chicken/Kg	3.57	4.10	15%	123.00	125.00	2%	10
Eggs/Kg	2.80	2.85	2%	72.00	75.00	4%	40
Vegetables/Kg	1.10	1.00	-9%	33.00	34.00	3%	8



Urban Market Performance Update: a review of availability and prices of basic food basket commodities (ZWG and USD)

The cost of the full minimum expenditure (MEB) food basket in USD in urban markets was estimated at an average price of USD24.32 which is stable when compared to USD24.50 reported in November 2024. Compared to a year ago, the USD cost of the basket increased by 21%. In local currency the cost was estimated at an average price of ZWG908.38 which is comparable to ZWG 870.67 in November 2024.

Figure 8: Urban food MEB ZWG percentage change

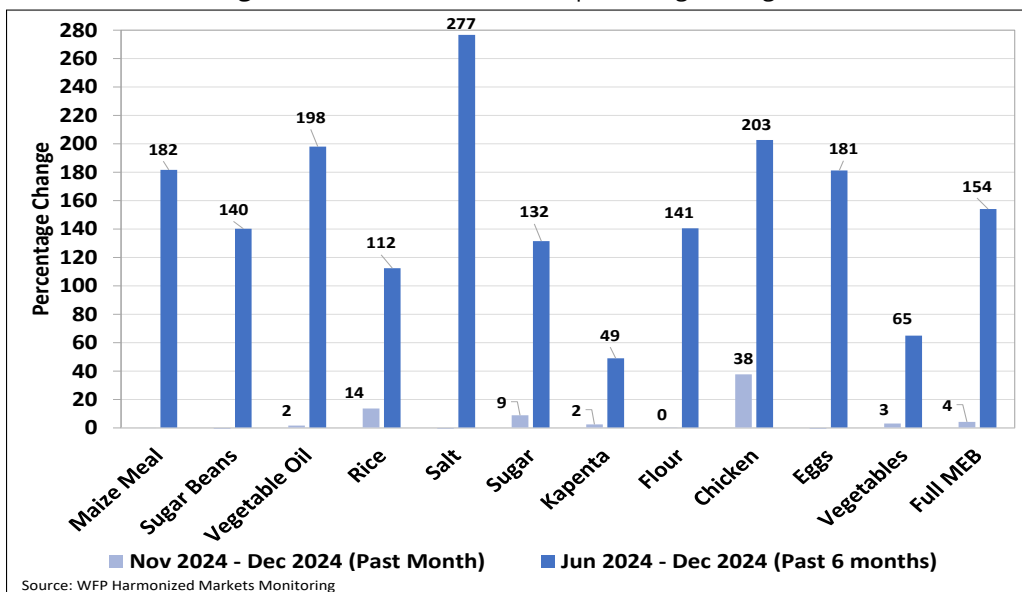
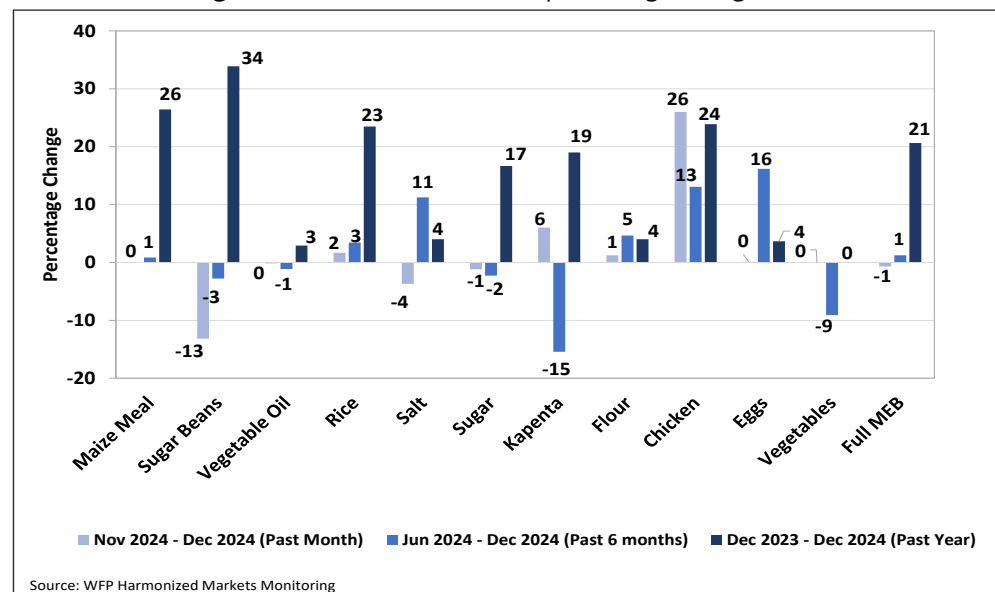


Figure 9: Urban food MEB USD percentage change



Availability of the monitored food items was generally high and stable when compared to the previous month. (Table 2).

Prices in USD were generally stable when compared to the previous month save for chicken whose price rose by 26% (Figure 9). This could be related to the increased demand over the festive season.

In local currency, prices were stable across commodities save for chicken, rice and sugar which rose by 38%, 14% and 9% respectively (Figure 8). Compared to 6 months ago, prices increased by an average of 154%. The price increases are likely a result of the increased demand for the particular products over the festive season.

The international market remains stable. The stabilization measures by the government are the likely result in price stability across most commodities in the immediate future.

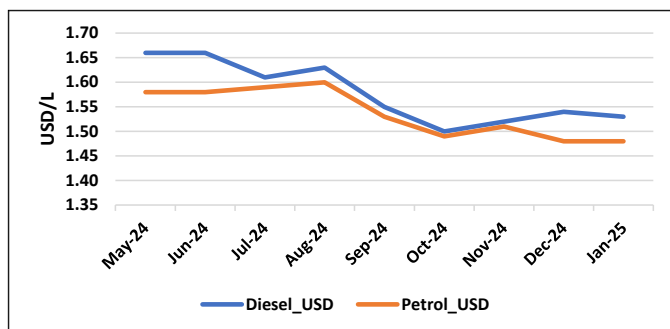
Table 2: Commodity prices in ZWG, USD and availability (%) in urban markets

ITEM	USD % price			ZWG % price		Nov Availability	Dec Availability
	Nov USD	Dec USD	change	Nov ZWG	Dec ZWG		
Maize Grain/Kg				-	-		
Maize Meal/Kg	0.67	0.67	0%	25.43	25.43	100	92
Sugar Beans/Kg	2.82	2.45	-13%	97.00	96.02	100	100
Vegetable Oil/L	1.76	1.76	0%	71.25	72.43	100	92
Rice/Kg	1.19	1.21	2%	35.74	40.63	100	92
Salt/Kg	0.54	0.52	-4%	25.92	25.00	100	96
Sugar/Kg	1.49	1.47	-1%	45.38	49.43	100	100
Kapenta/Kg	11.53	12.22	6%	427.50	438.16	80	82
Flour/Kg	1.03	1.04	1%	33.25	33.34	100	92
Chicken/Kg	3.50	4.41	26%	119.78	165.00	49	45
Eggs/Kg	2.84	2.84	0%	104.64	100.00	83	82
Vegetables/Kg	1.00	1.00	0%	32.00	33.00	67	50



Fuel price (USD and ZWG)

Figure 10: Fuel USD prices trends

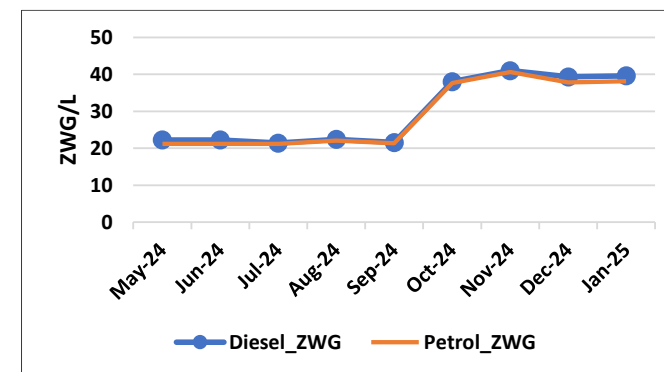


The price of diesel and petrol is currently pegged at \$1.53/L and \$1.48/L respectively. The price is comparable to the November price (Figure 10). In comparison with the same time a year ago, the USD prices were 11% and 5% less for diesel and petrol respectively.

In local currency the current (January) price of fuel was comparable to the December prices for both diesel and petrol (Figure 11).

Data Source: ZERA, 2024

Figure 11: Fuel ZWG price trends



Data Source: ZERA, 2024

Non-food commodities (USD and ZWG)

Availability of soap remained stable in both rural and urban markets when compared to November 2024 (Table 3).

In local currency, the price of soap in both rural and urban markets increased by an average of 7%. (Table 3).

NB: (The cheapest brand is monitored, however sometimes due to unavailability, different brands are monitored which could explain the high price differences).

USD prices for soap remained stable in both rural and urban markets.

Table 3: Non-Food Commodity prices in ZWG, USD and availability

Commodity	Availability			Price in USD				Price in ZWG			
	Nov	Dec	Avail % change	Nov (\$)	Dec (\$)	% change \$	Nov (ZWG)	Dec (ZWG)	% change \$		
Laundry Soap Rural	96%	97%	1% ↔	\$ 1.27	\$ 1.30	2% ↔	ZWD 33.80	ZWD 35.76	6%	↑	
Laundry Soap Urban	96%	98%	2% ↔	\$ 1.28	\$ 1.29	1% ↔	ZWD 31.00	ZWD 33.47	8%	↑	
Bathing Soap Rural	96%	96%	0% ↔	\$ 0.33	\$ 0.33	0% ↔	ZWD 13.14	ZWD 13.96	6%	↑	
Bathing Soap Urban	96%	100%	4% ↔	\$ 0.29	\$ 0.30	3% ↔	ZWD 11.42	ZWD 12.50	9%	↑	

Data Source: WFP Harmonised Markets Monitoring, 2024



Methodology



Data for this reporting period was collected between 1-31 December 2024 and is based on interviews with 52 traders of which 34 were in rural and 18 in urban districts. About 85% of the interviews were conducted face-to-face while other interviews were collected remotely.

Checking availability at market level: If a trader reports having sold a commodity within the last week, the commodity is considered available in their respective market. Availability at district-level is calculated as the share of markets with commodity availability across districts. Missing data indicate that none of the interviewed traders generally trades the commodity. For the full harmonized markets monitoring database, please visit: [Economic: Prices - Dataviz | WFP - VAM](#).

The harmonised markets monitoring initiative is conducted by WFP in partnership with members of the National Cash Assistance Working Group (NCWG).

Partners who collected this month's data:

AARDS, Plan International, Terre Des Hommes Italia, Welthungerhilfe and World Vision Zimbabwe



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