



MONTHLY UPDATE ON FOOD SECURITY AND PRICE IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

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Monthly Update on Food Security and Price is produced by the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit of the World Food Programme Country Office in the Kyrgyz Republic as a contribution to periodic food security monitoring in the country. This is the 21st issue of the update.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ The national average retail price of wheat flour increased in both urban and rural areas by 1% on a month-on-month basis in February 2014. The price was 14% lower on a year-on-year basis, but was 30% higher than the lowest point in the last three-years, which was recorded in May/June 2012. These findings showed consistency with National Statistics Committee's (NSC) price monitoring, which covers the main urban markets and showed a 1% increase in wheat flour prices on a month-on-month basis.
- ◆ The export price of wheat in Kazakhstan was stable during the last three months following a sharp 17% decrease in November 2013. On a year-on-year basis, the price in February 2014 was 36% lower.
- ◆ While domestic retail prices of wheat flour showed minor fluctuations in February 2014, daily wage rates of unskilled labour continued to decrease for a third month in a row and went down by 2% on a month-on-month basis in February 2014, according to WFP's monthly monitoring. This indicates that wheat flour continues to become less affordable for unskilled labourers.
- ◆ In February 2014, the national average price of milk increased 4% on a month-on-month basis as a result of significant increase (8%) in rural areas, reflecting reduced availability during the winter period. The national average price of sugar increased by 2% on a month-on-month basis in February 2014. The price of cooking oil remained unchanged.
- ◆ The national average prices of mutton and beef have shown increases for the last three months (3% and 5% respectively) and reached record levels. NSC data also showed similar trends for the same period (3% for mutton and 1% for beef). After a three-month consecutive increase, the national average prices of mutton and beef have reached record levels. On a year-on-year basis, mutton and beef prices were 7% and 13% higher respectively in February 2014.
- ◆ Fuel prices did not show a significant change in February 2014 although prices have been consistently higher in rural areas since WFP started price monitoring in rural areas in April 2012.
- ◆ Market stability during the early spring period is critical for vulnerable households, because food consumption, especially dietary diversity, tends to deteriorate due to depleted food stocks at the household level and increased expenditures on heating and agricultural inputs.
- ◆ In the months ahead, WFP will pay close attention to a number of risk factors: the potential impact of the depreciation of the national currency on food and fuel prices, higher prices for some food items in rural areas, the levels of household level food consumption and the occurrence of natural disasters such as avalanches and landslides.
- ◆ The price data of this report reflects WFP's actual monthly recording of prices in seven urban and thirteen rural markets around the country, as well as in urban settlements monitored by the NSC.
- ◆ Should any recipient of this bulletin require information from previous monitoring conducted by WFP since June 2009, please contact WFP Country Office in the Kyrgyz Republic at WFP.Bishkek@wfp.org

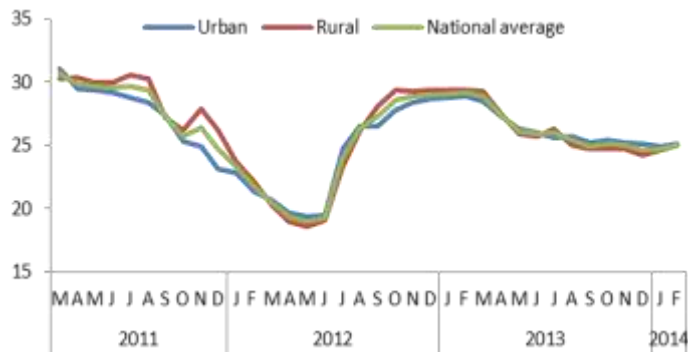
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WHEAT FLOUR PRICES (FEBRUARY 2014)

- ◆ The national average retail price of wheat flour increased in urban and rural areas by 1% on a month-on-month basis in February 2014 (Figure 1). The price was 14% lower on a year-on-year basis, but was 30% higher than the lowest point in the last three-years, which was recorded in May/June 2012. These findings showed consistency with National Statistics Committee's (NSC) price monitoring which covers the main urban markets and showed a 1% increase in wheat flour prices on a month-on-month basis in February 2014.

Figure 1. Retail prices of wheat flour (KGS/kg)

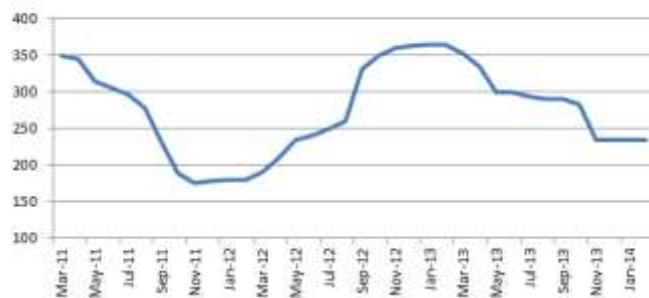


Source: WFP Monthly Market Monitoring

INTERNATIONAL PRICES (FEBRUARY 2014)

- ◆ The export price of wheat in Kazakhstan (Free on Board [FOB] rate) was stable during the last three months following a sharp 17% decrease in November 2013. On a year-on-year basis, the price in February 2014 was 36% lower (Figure 2).
- ◆ Despite stable export prices in Kazakhstan and the increased domestic harvest in 2013, the domestic retail price of wheat flour remained high (Figure 1). The weakening Kyrgyz Som (Figure 6) may have prevented wheat flour prices from stabilising or going down. The Kyrgyz Som has depreciated by 8% against the US dollar over the last 12 months (Figure 6).

Figure 2. Wholesale price of wheat, USD/ton



Source: milling wheat export price, Kazakhstan, Global Information and Early Warning System

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASING POWER (FEBRUARY 2014)

- ◆ While domestic retail prices of wheat flour showed minor fluctuations, daily wage rates of unskilled labour continued to decrease for a third month in a row and went down by 2% on a month-on-month basis, according to WFP's monthly monitoring (Figure 3). This indicates that wheat flour continues to become less affordable for unskilled labourers.

Figure 3. Retail prices of wheat flour and daily wage rates of unskilled labour

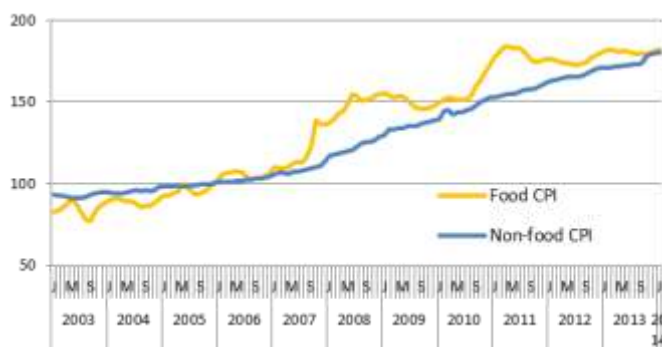


Source: WFP Monthly Market Monitoring

INFLATION (JANUARY 2014)

- ◆ Inflation in the Kyrgyz Republic has steadily increased since 2007, driven both by food and non-food price inflation items as indicated by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in Figure 4. The growth rate for non-food prices has steadily climbed since 2003 while the prices of food items have shown some fluctuations. In January, non-food CPI increased 0.5% while food CPI increased by 0.8%. On the annual basis, non-food CPI increased 6.6% and food CPI increased by 1.2%.

Figure 4. Consumer Price Index (food and non-food), base year = 2003



Source: WFP elaboration based on NSC data

FUEL PRICES AND EXCHANGE RATE (FEBRUARY 2014)

- ◆ Fuel prices were stable on month-on-month basis in February 2014 (Figure 5). On a year-on-year basis, the price of 92 octane petrol was 5% lower. Fuel prices have been consistently higher in rural areas since WFP started price monitoring in rural areas in April 2012. A close monitoring of prices in rural areas will be required as high fuel prices and transportation costs may continue to be transmitted to consumers.
- ◆ The national currency the Kyrgyz Som sharply depreciated against the US dollar by 3% during in February 2014 and by 8% over the last 12 months (Figure 6). A close monitoring is required of the situation in currency exchange markets and the impact on domestic retail prices.

PRICES OF OTHER BASIC COMMODITIES (FEBRUARY 2014)

- ◆ The national average prices of mutton and beef have shown increases for the last three months (3% and 5% respectively) and reached record levels. NSC data also showed similar trends for the same period (3% for mutton and 1% for beef). After a three-month consecutive increase, the national average prices of mutton and beef have reached record levels. On a year-on-year basis, mutton and beef prices were 7% and 13% higher respectively in February 2014.
- ◆ The national average price of milk increased 4% on a month-on-month basis as a result of a significant increase (8%) in rural areas, reflecting reduced availability during winter.
- ◆ The national average price of sugar increased 2% in February 2014, while prices for cooking oil remained unchanged.

Figure 8. Retail prices of milk (Kyrgyz som per liter)

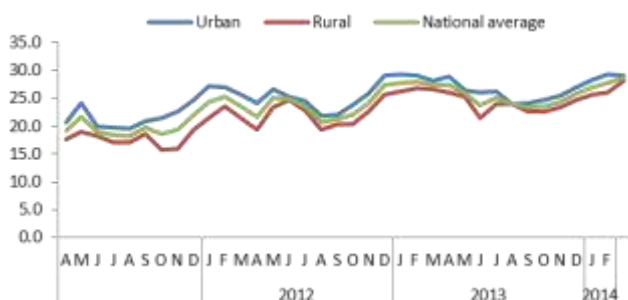
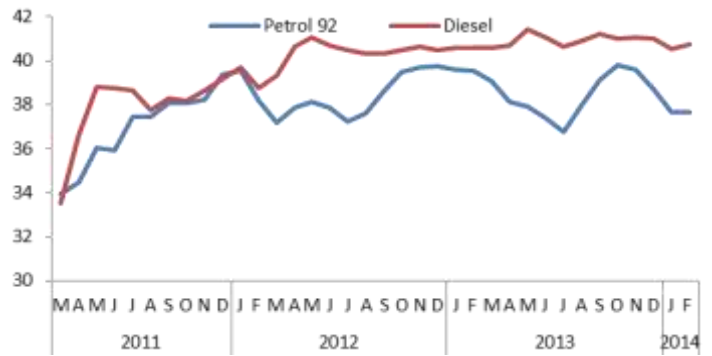
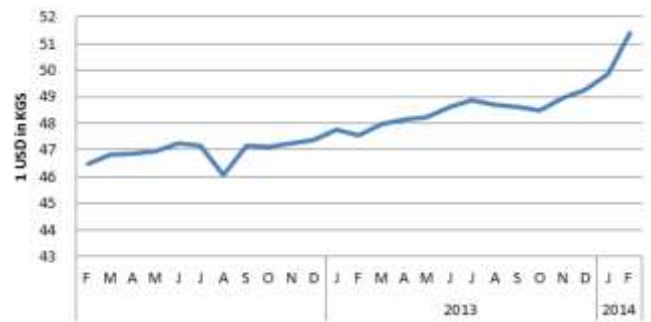


Figure 5. Retail prices of fuel (Petrol 92 and diesel, KGS/liter)



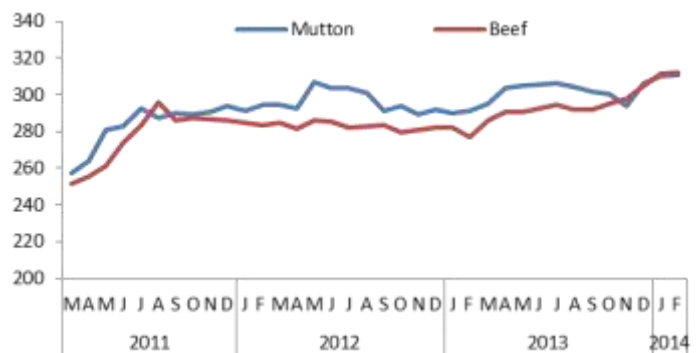
Source: WFP Monthly Market Monitoring

Figure 6. Exchange rate of Kyrgyz Som against the US Dollar



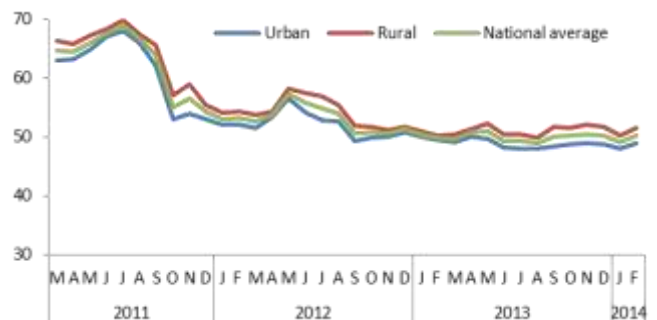
Source: National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic

Figure 7. Retail prices of beef and mutton (national average, in Kyrgyz som per kg)



Source: WFP Monthly Market Monitoring

Figure 9. Retail prices of sugar (Kyrgyz som per kg)



Source: WFP Monthly Market Monitoring

OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS








- ◆ Despite stable export prices of wheat from Kazakhstan and a higher cereal harvest in 2013 in the Kyrgyz Republic, the retail price of wheat flour has yet to come down to levels recorded in May-June 2012. Domestic prices of wheat flour are also subject to other factors such as currency exchange rates, transportation costs and trade policy. Close monitoring of all these factors will be required.
- ◆ **The results of WFP's regular Household Food Security Assessments (HFSAs) since 2010 have** shown that household food consumption during early spring deteriorates due to depleted food stocks at the household level, higher food prices in markets, and, increased expenditures on heating and agricultural inputs. The next HFSA in spring 2014 will assess household level food consumption and access to food.
- ◆ The coming months are the time for the start of agricultural works by farmers. Climatic conditions will play a key role in the harvest outcome. According to the national meteorological agency, temperature and precipitation levels in March 2014 will be around the historical average in all areas. However, satellite estimates indicate seasonal snowfall deficits across the country, with much of the nation receiving less than 50% of normal seasonal precipitation. This could result in lower water availability for irrigation.

WFP IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

- ◆ In the months ahead, WFP will pay close attention to potential impact of the depreciation in the national currency on food and fuel prices, the higher price of some food items in rural areas, and natural disasters such as avalanches and landslides, which may hinder the transportation of food to remote areas. WFP will continue to implement community asset development for food security, including rehabilitation of irrigation networks, riverbank reinforcement works and vegetable growing, with view to building the resilience of vulnerable communities.
- ◆ WFP is also assisting the Government in developing a national school meals policy and implementation strategy. Technical assistance is provided to the government to sustainably improve the quality and efficiency of the existing school meal programme. At the same time, WFP is implementing projects to improve meals in selected pilot schools. In total, 250 schools are planned to be covered by the project over the coming year.

ANNEX 1—PRICES OF BASIC COMMODITIES IN RURAL AND URBAN MARKETS (FEBRUARY 2014)

Retail prices of basic commodities are monitored on a monthly basis in selected rural and urban markets in all oblasts (provinces) in the country. The latest retail prices are compared against prices in the previous month, three months ago, and one year ago.

Area	Commodity	Current Price (KGS)	Change in Price (%)			Level of Fluctuation			Commodity	Current Price (KGS)	Change in Price (%)			Level of Fluctuation		
			1 m	3 m	1 yr	1 m	3 m	1 yr			1 m	3 m	1 yr	1 m	3 m	1 yr
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	28	1%	2%	-4%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	27	4%	4%	-13%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (mutton)	285	0%	2%	-5%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	300	0%	0%	7%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (beef)	310	0%	-5%	9%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	300	0%	0%	7%	▶	▶	▶
	Milk	33	0%	3%	10%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Potato	23	7%	15%	5%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	24	14%	9%	20%	▶	▶	▶
	Cooking oil	98	1%	3%	7%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	97	-3%	-3%	4%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	48	0%	2%	-4%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	53	2%	1%	13%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	37	-3%	-2%	-5%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	37	10%	-1%	-5%	▶	▶	▶	
Diesel	40	1%	0%	1%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	40	5%	0%	1%	▶	▶	▶	
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	24	2%	-1%	-12%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	24	1%	1%	-11%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (mutton)	275	1%	2%	8%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	280	-0%	-0%	8%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (beef)	278	0%	2%	7%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Milk	28	10%	22%	38%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	28	10%	38%	38%	▶	▶	▶
	Potato	21	-6%	37%	40%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	23	0%	36%	41%	▶	▶	▶
	Cooking oil	83	1%	-8%	-16%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	88	-2%	-7%	-10%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	48	2%	4%	3%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	48	2%	2%	2%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	36	0%	-2%	-7%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	36	0%	-2%	-3%	▶	▶	▶	
Diesel	39	2%	1%	5%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	39	1%	1%	8%	▶	▶	▶	
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	25	7%	7%	-18%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	25	9%	9%	-17%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (mutton)	290	-1%	7%	14%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	290	0%	5%	12%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (beef)	320	1%	7%	12%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	320	0%	7%	10%	▶	▶	▶
	Milk	20	0%	0%	-20%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	25	0%	25%	25%	▶	▶	▶
	Potato	17	4%	28%	28%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	15	0%	25%	29%	▶	▶	▶
	Cooking oil	100	3%	0%	-5%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	105	0%	0%	-5%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	51	1%	1%	1%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	54	0%	0%	-2%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	38	1%	1%	4%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Diesel	40	0%	0%	1%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	27	0%	0%	-10%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Meat (mutton)	320	0%	14%	10%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Meat (beef)	320	0%	7%	14%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Milk	30	0%	13%	20%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	30	50%	-	17%	▶	▶	▶
	Potato	25	-1%	23%	12%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Cooking oil	87	-4%	2%	-8%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	113	-2%	-6%	-4%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	47	4%	3%	3%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	55	10%	0%	17%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	37	-7%	-7%	-4%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	40	9%	-	4%	▶	▶	▶	
Diesel	39	-3%	-3%	-3%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	43	5%	-	7%	▶	▶	▶	
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	27	0%	0%	-8%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	26	6%	4%	-12%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (mutton)	330	0%	0%	10%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	330	3%	1%	6%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (beef)	320	0%	4%	14%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	320	0%	4%	10%	▶	▶	▶
	Milk	32	-10%	27%	6%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	30	0%	13%	0%	▶	▶	▶
	Potato	25	0%	14%	-17%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	27	7%	19%	-11%	▶	▶	▶
	Cooking oil	100	0%	1%	0%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	100	0%	0%	0%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	50	0%	-6%	0%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	50	0%	-6%	0%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	37	0%	-4%	-8%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	37	-4%	-12%	-11%	▶	▶	▶	
Diesel	40	0%	-4%	-3%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	41	-1%	-3%	-2%	▶	▶	▶	
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	24	1%	-1%	-13%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	25	0%	2%	-13%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (mutton)	320	0%	0%	7%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	320	0%	7%	14%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (beef)	320	0%	7%	14%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	300	0%	3%	20%	▶	▶	▶
	Milk	30	0%	0%	0%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	30	0%	0%	0%	▶	▶	▶
	Potato	24	-4%	20%	-14%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	25	0%	25%	-3%	▶	▶	▶
	Cooking oil	85	-4%	-6%	-12%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	85	-6%	-6%	-15%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	48	7%	-3%	-4%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	48	5%	-3%	-5%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	38	-4%	-9%	-7%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	38	-3%	-9%	-7%	▶	▶	▶	
Diesel	42	-1%	-2%	-1%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	42	-1%	-2%	-1%	▶	▶	▶	
	Urban															
	Wheat flour (1st quality)	23	0%	-7%	-22%	▶	▶	▶	Wheat flour (1st quality)	24	-1%	-4%	-21%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (mutton)	350	0%	0%	0%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (mutton)	350	0%	0%	0%	▶	▶	▶
	Meat (beef)	320	0%	7%	14%	▶	▶	▶	Meat (beef)	320	0%	7%	14%	▶	▶	▶
	Milk	32	0%	-5%	-14%	▶	▶	▶	Milk	27	0%	0%	-24%	▶	▶	▶
	Potato	23	0%	46%	-7%	▶	▶	▶	Potato	24	0%	40%	0%	▶	▶	▶
	Cooking oil	97	0%	-6%	-6%	▶	▶	▶	Cooking oil	98	0%	-3%	-8%	▶	▶	▶
	Sugar	52	0%	0%	-6%	▶	▶	▶	Sugar	53	0%	0%	-3%	▶	▶	▶
Petrol (Octane rating 92)	40	0%	-7%	-5%	▶	▶	▶	Petrol (Octane rating 92)	40	0%	-6%	-6%	▶	▶	▶	
Diesel	43	0%	-2%	-3%	▶	▶	▶	Diesel	43	0%	-1%	-4%	▶	▶	▶	

▲ Price increase above normal price fluctuation
▶ Normal price fluctuation
▼ Price decrease below normal fluctuation

Price fluctuation is considered normal if change within 5% for 1 month, 10% for 3 months, 15% for 1 year

ANNEX 2 - LOCATION OF THE MARKETS MONITORED BY WFP AND NSC

- ◆ Retail prices of basic food commodities are monitored and reported by the NSC in selected province and rayon capitals (coloured in red).
- ◆ WFP monitors prices of basic food commodities in seven markets in urban areas and thirteen markets in rural areas, where about 76% of people classified as 'poor' live.
- ◆ Increased and volatile food prices will affect food insecure and vulnerable families the most because they spend the largest proportion of their household budgets on food.



Administrative boundaries Monitored markets

