



The Food Price Monitor: East Africa is a monthly report developed for the Food Security Portal (FSP), facilitated by IFPRI, with the goal of providing clear and accurate information on price trends and variations in selected maize and rice markets throughout East Africa. The reports are intended as a resource for those interested in maize and rice markets in East Africa, namely producers, traders, consumers, or other agricultural stakeholders.

## Highlights

- ▶ Prices of maize across the selected East African countries including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda, and within the selected markets slowed down attributing to (i) perennial harvest season in July in Uganda, (ii) waiver of value-added tax on maize to cushion poor households in Rwanda, (iii) non-trade embargo imposed on Tanzanian maize creating a surge in domestic supply and (iv) trade ban on Ugandan maize by South Sudan for high aflatoxins level.
- ▶ The price of rice across the selected East African countries including Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, and monthly average percentage changes plunged in July except for Rwanda where they upsurged. These variations were in tandem with the decrease (increase) in inflation reported in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.
- ▶ The weakening of the local currencies against the US dollar caused the mixed variation of the wholesale and retail prices of imported varieties of rice including Pakistani, Tanzania No.1&2 and Tanzania, Thailand and Asia in Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda respectively. In addition, , the increase in demand in the post-Covid-19 pandemic era played a big role in influencing the price volatility of imported rice varieties seen across the East African region.
- ▶ Lastly, grain prices in the East African region will continue to ease given the aggressive monetary policy that the Central Banks are pursuing. This will eventually spill over to lower transportation costs that feed into the prices of food items like maize and rice grains in the markets. Also, as countries slowly recover from the COVID-19 and Russia-Ukraine war crisis, inflation is seen easing in all the East African countries monthly.

## Changing Maize Prices in East Africa

Following the benign prices of maize exhibited in June, the weekly average wholesale and retail prices of maize in July were volatile across the East African region (Figure 1). Illustratively, in Kenya, across the four weeks of June, weekly average wholesale prices were USD.536/MT in the first week, USD.527/MT in the second week, USD.510/MT in the third week and USD.472/MT in the fourth week. The weekly average retail prices in Kenya across the four weeks of July were USD.649/MT in the first week, USD.621/MT in the second week, USD.664/MT in the third week and in the fourth week USD.555/MT. This price instability observed in Kenya could be attributed to the acute scarcity of maize created by

a poor harvest in the country's maize-producing regions Ananzwa, (2023).

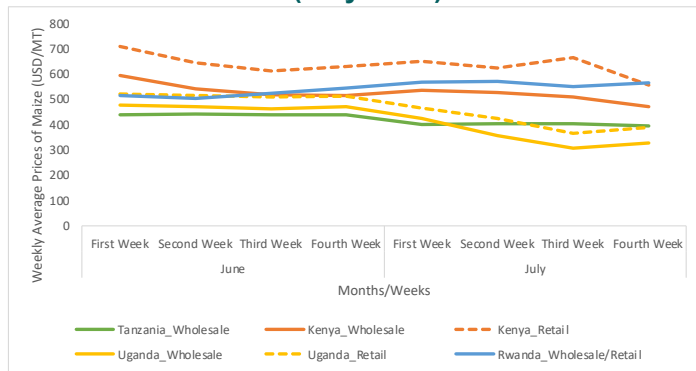
In Uganda, the wholesale prices of maize averaged USD.425/MT in the first week, then dropped to USD.356/MT in the second week and further to USD.307/MT in the third week and they rebounded in the fourth week to USD.328/MT. Relatedly, the weekly prices averaged USD.465/MT in the first week, then dropped to USD.424/MT in the second week, and further to USD.364 in the third week and regained in the fourth week at USD.389/MT. This is mainly attributed to the bumper harvest period experienced in July which usually drives down prices. The Bank of Uganda, (2023) alludes to this, they found that better agricultural supply is dampening inflation in Uganda. However, the continued ban on maize from Uganda to South Sudan

is another contributing factor. This is due to high aflatoxin levels in Ugandan maize impounded in South Sudan Borders in May (Esiara, 2023).

In Tanzania, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize were USD. 400/MT in the first week, then rose to USD.402/MT and 405/MT in the second and third weeks, respectively; in the fourth week, they declined to USD.395/MT. This was attributed to non-tariff trade barriers on maize from Tanzania to Kenya and Uganda<sup>1</sup> (Anami and Tairo, 2023). Further, in their report, the Tanzanian Members of Parliament (MPs) decried the low maize prices emanating from this trade decision by their East African Community counterparts, the MPs said that “maize prices had fallen by more than half, from Tsh90,000 (\$37) per 100kg bag to Tsh40,000 (\$16.5), with a kilogram of maize retailing at Tsh400 (\$0.16).”

In Rwanda, the weekly prices averaged USD.567/MT in the first week, USD.571/MT in the second week, USD.550/MT in the third week and in the fourth week USD.563/MT. This is largely due to VAT removal and price-setting of maize grains and their by-products by the Government of Rwanda to cushion poor households from the adverse effects of global inflation stemming from increased demand post-Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukraine war (Ndushabandi, 2023; Ashimwe, 2023).

**Figure 1: Average wholesale and retail price of maize in East Africa (July 2023)**



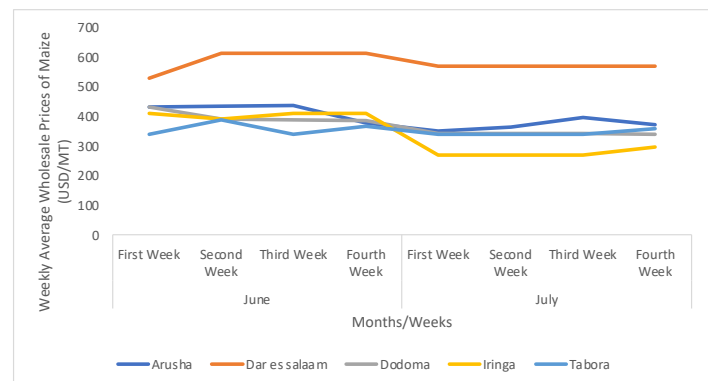
Source: Authors' construction using data from FSP (for Uganda and Tanzania), Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries (for Kenya), and e-SoKo (for Rwanda).

## Tanzania

In Figure 2, compared to June, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize in all the selected markets eased in July

except in the Arusha market where mixed trends were recorded. While Dar es Salaam market recorded the highest wholesale prices of maize. It was followed by Arusha and the Iringa market which recorded the lowest prices. Illustratively, in the Dar es Salaam market weekly average wholesale prices of maize fell from USD.613/MT in the last week of June to USD.570/MT in the first week of July and maintained the same price throughout the month. In Arusha, weekly average wholesale prices fell from USD.376/MT in the last week of June to USD.350/MT in the first week of July, then rose to USD.364/MT in the second week and rebounded to June levels in the third and fourth week at USD.396/MT and USD.373/MT respectively. In the Dodoma market, weekly average wholesale prices of maize declined from USD.386/MT in the last week of June to USD.343/MT in the first week and maintained that level until the third week but in the fourth week, the wholesale prices dropped further to USD.339/MT. In the Tabora market, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize fell from USD.366/MT in the last week of June to USD.340/MT in the first week of July, that price level was maintained until the third week but in the fourth week they surged to USD.359/MT. In the Iringa market, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize fell drastically from USD.409/MT in the last week of June to USD.270/MT and that price level was maintained until the third week but in the fourth week, the prices rebounded to USD.297/MT. The decline in the wholesale prices of maize largely observed in the first and mid-week of July could be attributed to the effectiveness of the non-trade embargo policy imposed on maize from Tanzania to other East African countries (Anami and Tairo, 2023)

**Figure 2: Average weekly wholesale prices of maize in selected markets in Tanzania (July 2023)**



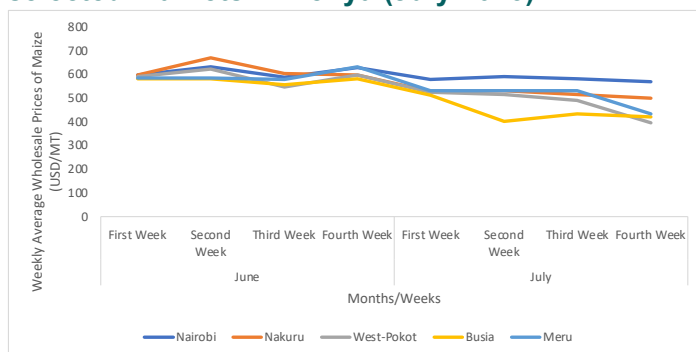
Source: Authors' construction using data from the Ministry of Investment, Industry, and Trade

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/business/tanzania-bears-brunt-of-maize-export-restrictions-4289704>

## Kenya

Likewise, compared to June, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize in all the selected markets in Kenya declined in July (Figure 3). For instance, in the Nairobi market, the weekly wholesale prices of maize dropped from USD.630/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.578/MT in the first week of July and resurged in the second and third week at USD.589/MT and USD.582/MT respectively but dropped again in the fourth week to USD.568/MT. In the Nakuru market, the weekly average wholesale prices dropped to USD.527/MT in the first week of July from USD.598/MT in the fourth week of June. They regained in the second week of July to USD.532/MT but dropped again in the third and fourth week of July to USD.514/MT and USD.500/MT respectively. In the West-Pokot market, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize took a descending trajectory from USD.597/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.52/MT in the first week of July, USD.516/MT in the second week, USD.491/MT in the third week and USD.395/MT in the fourth week. In the Meru market, week, the weekly average wholesale prices plunged from USD.631/MT in June to USD.530/MT in the first week of July where they maintained that level until the third week but further declined to USD.434/MT in the fourth week. In the Busia market, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize eased by 27.7 percent from the fourth week of June to the last week of July. Specifically from USD.581/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.512/MT in the first week of July, USD.403/MT and USD.432/MT in the second and third week respectively and USD.420/MT in the fourth week. The variations in wholesale prices observed within the selected markets in Kenya could be attributed to the boost from the surrounding maize markets, for example, the Busia market in Uganda.

**Figure 3: Average weekly retail prices of maize in selected markets in Kenya (July 2023)**

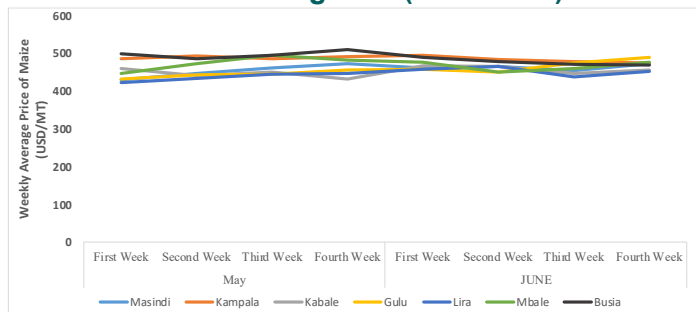


Source: Authors' construction using data from the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Fisheries and Cooperatives

## Uganda

In comparison to June, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize in all the selected markets plunged in July (Figure 4). In the Kampala market, the weekly average wholesale prices dropped from USD.473/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.451/MT in the first week of July and further in the second, third and fourth weeks respectively to USD.351/MT, USD.317/MT, USD.308/MT consecutively. In the Masindi market, the weekly wholesale prices of maize dropped from USD.473/MT in the first week of June to USD.414/MT in the first week of July and further to USD.270/MT in the third week, USD.284/MT in the third week and USD.273/MT in the fourth week. In the Kabale market, the weekly average prices of maize eased from USD.456 /MT in the fourth week of June to USD.450/MT in the first week of July, USD.365/MT in the third week and USD.397/MT in the fourth week. Also, in Gulu market, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize eased from USD.489/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.454/MT in the first week of July, USD.351/MT in the second week and dipped in the third week to USD.270/MT, then rose to USD.340/MT fourth week. Equally, in the Lira market, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize eased from USD.454 in the fourth week of June to USD.383/MT in the first week of July, USD.311/MT in the second week, dipped to USD.272/MT in the third week and resurged in the fourth week to USD.298/MT. In the Mbale market, weekly average wholesale maize prices slowed from USD. 478/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.417/MT in the first week of July then dipped to USD.320/MT and USD.279 /MT in the second and third week respectively and resurged in the fourth week to USD.290/MT. In Busia, the weekly average wholesale prices of maize slowed from USD.470/MT in the fourth week of June to USD.402/MT in the first week of July then dipped to USD.351/MT and USD.292/MT in the second week and third week respectively but then rose to USD.338/MT in the fourth week. Generally, wholesale prices in selected markets in Uganda plunged at the beginning of the month, this vindicates the bumper harvest season perennially experienced in Uganda at the beginning of July. However, in most selected markets, the wholesale price of maize resurged during the last week of the month, this could be attributed to the sudden rise in fuel prices stemming from the rising value-added tax on fuel from 8% to 16% imposed on gasoline in Kenya (Okafor, 2023), and being a major route from Uganda's fuel importation, that feeds into the importation costs.

**Figure 4: Average weekly retail prices of maize in selected markets in Uganda (June 2023)**



Source: Authors' construction using data from the Daily Traders Market Survey

### Comparison of wholesale and retail maize prices in East Africa

The monthly average prices of maize across the East African countries dropped in July compared to June except for Rwanda where they surged (Table 1). Illustratively, the retail and wholesale prices in Kenya dropped by 3.9% and 5.6% respectively. Wholesale and retail prices in Uganda plunged by 19.9% and 24.6%. While in Tanzania, the wholesale price of maize plunged by 8.8%. This is in tandem with the easing of inflation in these countries (Bank of Tanzania, 2023; Bank of Uganda, 2023; Okafor, 2023). However, in Rwanda, the price surged by 8.1%. This is also in tandem with the increase in Urban inflation in Rwanda to 11.9% in July from June (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2023).

**Table 1: Changes in average monthly retail and wholesale price of maize in East Africa for June and July**

Commodity	Country	Market Levels	Monthly Average Prices June	Monthly Average Prices July	% Change	Trend
Maize	Kenya	Retail	647	622	-3.9%	▼
Maize	Uganda	Retail	513	411	-19.9%	▼
Maize	Rwanda	Retail	521	563	8.1%	▲
Maize	Kenya	Wholesale	541	511	-5.6%	▼
Maize	Uganda	Wholesale	470	354	-24.6%	▼
Maize	Rwanda	Wholesale	521	563	8.1%	▲
Maize	Tanzania	Wholesale	439	400	-8.8%	▼

▼ = Decrease      ▲ = Increase      ► = Constant

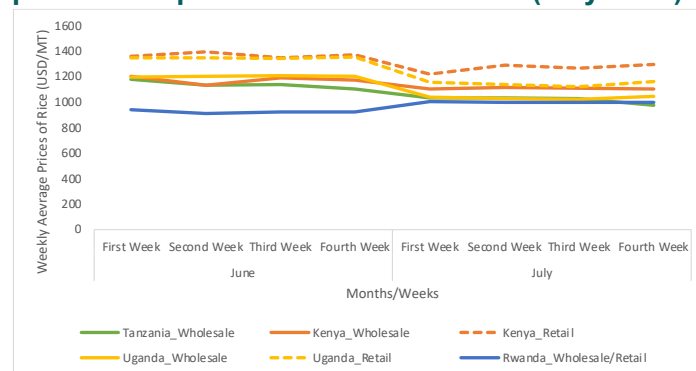
Source: Authors construction using data from FSP (for Uganda), Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries (for Kenya), Ministry of Agriculture (for Tanzania), and e-SoKo (for Rwanda)

### Changing Rice Prices in East Africa

Despite the subtle weekly average prices of rice experienced in June, the weekly average wholesale and retail prices of rice in July across the East African countries were

volatile (Figure 5). Illustratively, in Kenya, the weekly wholesale price of rice averaged USD.1104/MT in the first week, then rose to USD.1114/MT in the second week, then dropped to USD.1108/MT in the third week and further to USD.1100/MT in the fourth week. Simultaneously, the retail prices averaged USD.1219/MT in the first week, then rose to USD.1287/MT in the second week, then dropped to USD.1268/MT in the third week and rebounded to USD.1296/MT in the fourth week. This reinforces the high cost of living experienced by Kenyan households. The cost of living has increased and household pressure from rising food costs has persisted, this stems from the implementation of the recently passed value-added tax policy on fuel from 8% up to 16% (Okafor, 2023). Uganda's weekly wholesale prices of rice took a nosedive in the first to USD.136/MT but resuscitated in the second week to USD.1025/MT, then dropped to USD.1022/MT in the third week and increased again to USD.1041/MT in the fourth week. While the retail prices averaged USD.1152/MT in the first week, USD.1138/MT in the second week, USD.1119/MT in the third week and USD.1160/MT in the fourth week. This could allude to the bumper harvest always experienced in July in Uganda that pushed down prices. In Rwanda, the prices averaged USD.1005/MT in the first week then dropped to USD.998/MT maintaining the same price throughout the month. This also alludes to the value-added tax waiver and price-setting mechanism adopted by the Government of Rwanda to absorb the post-pandemic shocks from drastically affecting poor households (Ndushabandi, 2023; Ashimwe, 2023). Prices of rice in Tanzania averaged USD.1034/MT in the first week, USD.1032/MT in the second week, USD.1029/MT in the third week and dropped drastically to USD.973/MT in the fourth week. This alludes to a drop in inflation from 4% in May to 3.6% in June which has eased food prices in Tanzania (Bank of Tanzania, 2023).

**Figure 5: Average daily wholesale and retail prices of imported rice in East Africa (July 2023)**



Source: Authors' construction using data from RATIN (for Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda), and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock for Kenya

Relatedly, like maize prices, the monthly average retail and wholesale price of rice in the East African region plunged in July except for Rwanda (Table 2). Illustratively, in Kenya, retail and wholesale prices decreased by 7.3% and 5.7% respectively. In Uganda, the retail and wholesale prices decreased by 15.1% and 32.9% respectively. In Tanzania, the wholesale price decreased by 10.6% but in Rwanda, it increased by 8.4%. Also, the plunge in retail and wholesale in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania is in a cycle with the easing of inflation in those countries (Bank of Tanzania, 2023; Bank of Uganda, 2023; Okafor, 2023). The surge in prices of rice in Rwanda alludes to the increase in Urban inflation in July to 11.9% (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2023).

**Table 2: Monthly retail and wholesale prices changes of rice in East Africa (June-July 2023)**

Commodity	Country	Market Levels	Monthly Average Prices June	Monthly Average Prices July	% Change	Trends
Rice	Kenya	Retail	1367	1267	-7.3%	▼
Rice	Uganda	Retail	1346	1142	-15.1%	▼
Rice	Rwanda	Retail	923	1000	8.4%	▲
Rice	Kenya	Wholesale	1173	1107	-5.7%	▼
Rice	Uganda	Wholesale	1202	806	-32.9%	▼
Rice	Rwanda	Wholesale	923	1000	8.4%	▲
Rice	Tanzania	Wholesale	1137	1017	-10.6%	▼
▼ = Decrease      ▲ = Increase      ▶ = Constant						

Source: Authors construction using data from the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade for Tanzania, eSoKo for Rwanda and Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Fisheries and Cooperatives for Kenya and Daily Market Traders Survey for Uganda

The weekly average prices of the different varieties of rice imported in the selected East African countries. In this case, we observe wholesale and retail prices of Pakistani rice imported from Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda, Tanzanian rice imported from both Uganda and Rwanda, Thailand rice imported into Rwanda and rice from Asia imported into Rwanda as well (Table 1). That said, we see mixed patterns in the retail and wholesale price of imported rice in July from June. For example, in Uganda, the wholesale and retail Pakistani rice was reduced from USD.1007/MT in the first week to USD.954/MT and stayed in that range until the end of the month. The retail price remained in the USD1000/MT range but with a decreasing tendency throughout the month. However, wholesale prices rose in the first and second weeks but declined in the third and fourth weeks. The retail prices took up a similar trend. Pakistani rice prices in Rwanda remained elevated throughout July. Similarly, the prices of Thailand rice, Asian and Tanzanian rice No.1&2 remained elevated throughout July. This is owed to the surge in Inflation in Rwanda in July (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda, 2023). In Part, these observed mixed patterns in imported rice varieties across the East African region were

anticipated given the depreciations of the local currencies against the US dollars coming from an aggressive US Fed monetary policy over the horizon to cool inflation.

**Table 3: Trends of weekly average wholesale and retail prices of imported rice in East Africa (June-July 2023)**

Variety	Country	Market Level	June				July		
			First Week	Second Week	Third Week	Fourth Week	First Week	Second Week	Third Week
Pakistan	Uganda	Wholesale	1022	1018	988	1022	1007	954	962
Pakistan	Uganda	Retail	1156	1159	1103	1153	1127	1082	1075
Pakistan	Kenya	Wholesale	876	901	987	905	912	957	928
Pakistan	Kenya	Retail	1084	1053	1125	1029	1033	1089	1106
Pakistan	Rwanda	Wholesale/Retail	1064	1067	1081	1083	1124	1121	1129
Thailand	Rwanda	Wholesale/Retail	1226	1285	1184	1167	1198	1199	1194
Asia	Rwanda	Wholesale/Retail	1104	1103	1087	1087	1127	1126	1163
Tanzania No. 1	Rwanda	Wholesale/Retail	1510	1499	1510	1491	1552	1534	1523
Tanzania No. 2	Rwanda	Wholesale/Retail	1261	1287	1182	1193	1208	1218	1217
Tanzania	Uganda	Wholesale	1106	1123	1141	1082	1120	1122	1098
Tanzania	Uganda	Retail	1234	1259	1276	1285	1283	1268	1215

## Summary and Future Outlook

Prices of maize across the selected East African countries including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda, and within the selected markets slowed down attributing to (i) perennial harvest season in July in Uganda, (ii) waiver of value-added tax on maize to cushion poor households in Rwanda, (iii) non-trade embargo imposed on Tanzanian maize creating a surge in domestic supply and (iv) trade ban on Ugandan maize by South Sudan for high aflatoxins level. The prices of rice across the selected East African countries including Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, and monthly average percentage changes plunged in July except for Rwanda where they upsurged. These variations were in tandem with the decrease (increase) in inflation reported in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.

The weakening of the local currencies against the US dollar attributable to a hawkish US Fed policy caused the mixed variation of the wholesale and retail prices of imported varieties of rice including Pakistani, Tanzania No.1&2 and Tanzania, Thailand and Asia in Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda respectively. Also, the increase in demand in the post-Covid-19 pandemic era played a big role in influencing the price volatility of imported rice varieties seen across the East African region.

Lastly, as vindicated by (Bank of Uganda, 2023; Bank of Tanzania, 2023, Okafor, 2023), grain prices in the East African region will continue to ease given the aggressive monetary policy that the Central Banks are pursuing. This will eventually spill over to the lower transportation costs that feed into the prices of food items like maize and rice grains in the markets. Also, as countries slowly recover from the COVID-19 and Russia-Ukraine war crisis, inflation is seen easing in all the East African countries monthly.

## Data and Methodology

Data for wholesale and retail prices of rice and maize for Uganda and Tanzania were obtained from the (1) Food security Portal (FSP)<sup>2</sup> facilitated by the International Food Policy Research Institute, (2) Kenya Market Information System<sup>3</sup> sourced for the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Fisheries and Co-operatives (MALF) for Kenya, and e-Soko (3)<sup>4</sup> for Rwanda. Also, we maintain that the data source for commodity prices for Rwanda neither indicates whether the prices are retail or wholesale. Further, the data for Kenya and Rwanda were collected in the local currencies, measured in Kshs/Kg and Rwf/Kg, and converted to USD/MT.

Additionally, we averaged the weekly and daily wholesale and retail prices of maize and rice across the markets for each country in East Africa while drawing comparisons between January and February. We also analysed within-country weekly average wholesale prices of maize in selected markets of Uganda and Kenya. We also computed monthly average changes in rice wholesale and retail prices between January and February for the East African region to quantify any changes in the two periods. Finally, we constructed graphs of wholesale and retail prices of domestically produced and imported rice for Uganda and Rwanda.

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