



## THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL CONCERN

### RURAL BASIC NEEDS BASKET PROJECT:

**TAs MMBELWA (MZ), TAMBALA (DZ), MASEYA (CK), KANYENDA (KK)**

#### **Ideal Food Cost**

During the month of September 2023, the cost of ideal food items that make up to 1800 kilocalories was highest at K146, 845 in TA Kanyenda as compared to other areas, while TA Tambala in Dedza was the lowest at K100, 975. This means that in September, in an ideal situation, a household in TA Kanyenda was supposed to have K146, 845 to buy food items which could have provided minimum kilocalories of 1800 but the average monthly income of K104,869 alone for TA Kanyenda was not enough to achieve this and also to spend on other basic items.

#### **The Cost of Living**

The cost of living, a summation of ideal food and nonfood costs, was highest (K229, 295) in TA Kanyenda in Nkhotakota and lowest in Dedza (K184, 425). This means that Nkhotakota households were supposed to have K229, 295 to buy both food and non-food items, however, they only managed to get K104,425 from different sources of income.

#### **Coping mechanism**

During the lean period, when most households do not have enough food, they follow some coping mechanisms to ensure their survival. TA Tambala in Dedza had the largest number of households (70%) that abandoned their fields to work in other people's fields as casual labour in return for cash or food while only 20% of households from TA Maseya in Chikwawa worked in other people's fields as one of the coping mechanism for survival. 70% of the households in TA Tambala in Dedza reduced portions of the meals in order for their food to last longer. It has also been recorded that 50% of households in TA Tambala reduced the number of meals per day to allow food reserves to take more days. It is in the same TA Tambala area where 50% of the households reduced adult consumption of food just to give room for the children to have enough food.

## Kilocalorie intake

Kilo-calorie (energy) intake is one of the indicators of household food security. Kilo-calorie intake of less than the minimum requirement of 1800 per person per day, as per the UN's FAO recommendation, is an indicator that the household is food insecure. From the data collected, households from TA Kanyenda in Nkhotakota, TA M'mbelwa in Mzimba and TA Maseya in Chikwawa have consumed enough kilocalories (2279, 2210 and 1986 respectively) in the second quarter of 2023. However, households from TA Tambala in Dedza did not consume enough food that could have given them a minimum of 1800 Kcal. TA Tambala only got 1785 kilocalories.

### COST OF IDEAL FOOD ITEMS FOR A FAMILY OF SIX FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2023

IDEAL FOOD ITEMS	WEIGHT	TA MMBELWA (MZIMBA)		TA KANYENDA (NKHOTAKOTA)		TA TAMBALA (DEDZA)		TA MASEYA (CHIKWAWA)	
		UNIT PRICE	TOTAL	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
Maize	20kg	K750	<b>K15,000</b>	K600	<b>K12,000</b>	K400	<b>K8000</b>	K600	<b>K12,000</b>
Rice	10kg	K2,000	<b>K20000</b>	K1800	<b>K18,000</b>	K2,000	<b>K20000</b>	K1200	<b>12000</b>
Sugar	3kg	K1,800	<b>K5,400</b>	K1800	<b>K5,400</b>	K1,500	<b>K4500</b>	K1500	<b>4500</b>
Beans	7kg	K2,000	<b>K14000</b>	K1800	<b>K12,600</b>	K800	<b>K5600</b>	K1500	<b>10,500</b>
Eggs	40eggs	K200	<b>K8000</b>	K200	<b>K8000</b>	K200	<b>K8000</b>	K250	<b>10,000</b>
Goat meat	5kg	K4,500	<b>K22,500</b>	K5000	<b>K25,000</b>	K4,500	<b>K22,500</b>	K3500	<b>17500</b>
Tomato	20	K1,000	<b>K20000</b>	K1600	<b>K32000</b>	K400	<b>K8000</b>	K400	<b>8000</b>
Mustard	15kg	K308	<b>K4620</b>	K513	<b>K7695</b>	K385	<b>K5775</b>	K400	<b>6000</b>
Cooking oil	3litres	K3,500	<b>K10500</b>	K3500	<b>K10500</b>	K3500	<b>K10500</b>	K3500	<b>10500</b>
Bananas	150	K100	<b>K15000</b>	K100	<b>K15000</b>	K50	<b>K7500</b>	K100	<b>15,000</b>
Salt	1kg	K1000	<b>K1,000</b>	K650	<b>K650</b>	K600	<b>K600</b>	K600	<b>600</b>
Kilocalories (Kcal)-FAO	Approx. <b>1800</b>		<b>K136,020</b>		<b>K146,845</b>		<b>100,975</b>		<b>K106,600</b>

**AVERAGE KILO-CALORIE INTAKE PER PERSON PER DAY FOR SEPTEMBER 2023**

TRADITIONAL AREA	DISTRICT	ACTUAL AVERAGE KILO CALORIE INTAKE
Mmbelwa	Mzimba	2096
Kanyenda	Nkhotakota	2145
Tambala	Dedza	1654
Maseya	Chikwawa	1883

**IDEAL COST OF NON-FOOD ITEMS FOR SEPTEMBER 2023**

ITEM	IDEAL	TA MMBELWA		TA KANYENDA		TA TAMBALA		TA MASEYA	
		UNIT PRICE	TOTAL	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
Butex	4	K1500	<b>K6,000</b>	K1500	<b>K6,000</b>	K1300	<b>K5,200</b>	K1100	<b>4,400</b>
Nirma	15	K400	<b>K6000</b>	K350	<b>K5250</b>	K400	<b>K6,000</b>	K400	<b>6,000</b>
Clere	3	K500	<b>K1500</b>	K850	<b>K2,550</b>	K850	<b>K2,550</b>	K800	<b>2,400</b>
Glycerin	3	K500	<b>K1500</b>	K750	<b>K2,250</b>	K600	<b>K1,800</b>	K700	<b>2,100</b>
Bodycare	1	K3500	<b>K3,500</b>	K1500	<b>K1500</b>	K4000	<b>K4,000</b>	K3500	<b>K3,500</b>
Airtime	1	K4,500	<b>K4500</b>	K4,500	<b>K4,500</b>	K4,500	<b>K4,500</b>	K4,500	<b>4,500</b>
Phone Charging	10	K300	<b>K3000</b>	K100	<b>K1000</b>	K200	<b>K2,000</b>	K100	<b>1,000</b>
Charcoal	2	K6000	<b>K12,000</b>	K9000	<b>K18000</b>	K9000	<b>K18,000</b>	K12000	<b>K24,000</b>
Batteries	9	K600	<b>K5400</b>	K400	<b>K3600</b>	K400	<b>K3,600</b>	K400	<b>3,600</b>
Matches	9	K100	<b>K900</b>	K100	<b>K900</b>	K100	<b>K900</b>	K100	<b>900</b>
Kukonola	5	K1000	<b>K5000</b>	K800	<b>K4,000</b>	K600	<b>K3,000</b>	K700	<b>3,500</b>
Milling	5	K1000	<b>K5000</b>	K800	<b>K4,000</b>	K600	<b>K3,000</b>	K700	<b>3,500</b>
Bicycles	1	2,900	<b>K2900</b>	2,900	<b>K2,900</b>	K2,900	<b>K2,900</b>	K2,900	<b>2,900</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>K57,200</b>		<b>K56,450</b>		<b>K57,450</b>		<b>62,300</b>

**AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME FOR SEPTEMBER 2023**

<b>INCOME SOURCE</b>	<b>TA M'MBELWA</b>	<b>TA KANYENDA</b>	<b>TA TAMBALA</b>	<b>TA MASEYA</b>
<b>Cash Brought Forward from February</b>	14050	6100	2510	11590
Casual labour	11254.	18480	1530	26650
Small business	33710	22095	2850	11170
Loans from VSL	0	0	0	0
Loans from others	0	11000	900	0
Usury/Katapila	0	15600	0	1800
Crop sales	18855	22800	11152	32900
Livestock sales	2700	0	300	6500
Remittances	15600	550	3500	0
Wage Labour	0	0	0	4700
Forest products	8700	1200	6720	700
Selling planks	0	0	0	0
Firewood for selling	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>104,869</b>	<b>97,825</b>	<b>29,462</b>	<b>96,010</b>

**THE COST OF LIVING (Ideal food cost + Ideal nonfood cost, including average school expenses)**

ITEM	TA M'MBELWA	TA KANYENDA	TA TAMBALA	TA MASEYA
Matches				
Kcal	2096	2145	1654	1853
Ideal FoodCost	K136,020	K146,845	K100,975	K106,600
Ideal NonFood Cost	K57,200	K56,450	K57,450	K62,300
School Expenses	K26,000	K26,000	K26,000	K26,000
Cost of Living	<b>K219,220</b>	<b>K229,295</b>	<b>K184,425</b>	<b>K194,900</b>
Average Monthly Income	<b>K104,869</b>	<b>K97,825</b>	<b>K29,462</b>	<b>K96,010</b>

**AVERAGE TOTAL CROP PRODUCTION IN KG BETWEEN MARCH AND JUNE 2023**

ITEM	TA M'MBELWA	TA KANYENDA	TA TAMBALA	TA MASEYA
Maize	545Kg	305Kg	115Kg	20Kg
Rice	14.4Kg	201Kg	0	61.5Kg
Cassava	0	0	0	0
Beans	21Kg	0	17.5Kg	15Kg
Soya	85Kg	0	0	0
Groundnuts	33Kg	258Kg	18.1Kg	53Kg
Sweet potatoes	0	0	0	0

### COPING MECHANISMS

	Type of Coping Mechanisms followed	M'mbelwa(MZ)	Kanyenda (KK)	Tambala(DZ)	Maseya(CK)
		% households	% households	% households	% Households
1	working in other people's fields leaving their gardens unattended	30	40	70	20
2	Selling household assets	0	10	30	0
3	Cooking grain meant for seed	10	10	10	20
4	Reducing portions at meal times	40	30	70	0
5	Reducing number of meals per day	20	30	50	10
6	Skipping the entire day without eating	20	30	30	0
7	Reducing adult consumption so children can have something to eat	10	20	50	20
8	Relying on less expensive or less preferred types of food	0	10	10	0
9	Cutting down fruit trees and sale for firewood	0	0	0	0
10	Gathering unusual types or amounts of wild food/fruit	0	0	0	0
11	Uncontrolled cutting down of trees for sale as firewood or charcoal	0	10	0	0
12	School children staying at home	0	10	40	0
13	Breaking up of marriages	0	10	10	0
14	Abandoning household plots to become tenants in estates	0	0	0	0
15	Getting Usury	0	0	0	10

### COMPARISON FOR MARCH , JUNE AND SEPTEMBER 2023 RESULTS

	TA M'MBELWA (Mzimba)			TA KANYENDA (Nkhotakota)			TA TAMBALA (Dedza)			TA MASEYA (Chikwawa)		
	March	June	Sept	March	June	Sept	March	June	Sept	March	June	Sept
<b>Kilocalorie</b>	2145	2210	2096	1978	2279	2145	1545	1785	1654	1782	1986	1883
<b>Average Income</b>	80570	122,969	104,869	98,320	132,425	97,825	39,853	38,390	29,462	130,610	102,510	96,010
<b>Cost of Living</b>	195,950	199,220	219,220	198,025	213,795	229,295	186,780	174,125	184,425	169,490	175,000	194,900

Exchange Rate: 1USD = K1, 691.76 Source: <https://www.oanda.com/currency-converter/en/>

The Social Conditions Research Programme of the CfSC conducted these quarterly surveys in the month of September 2023 in TAs

M'mbelwa in Mzimba; Kanyenda in Nkhotakota; Tambala in Dedza and Maseya in Chikwawa.

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