

Centre for Social Concern (CfSC)

Rural Basic Needs Basket (BNB) Analytical Report

Cost of Living and Household Welfare Monitoring in Chikwawa (TA Maseya) and
Nkhotakota (TA Kanyenda)

December 2025



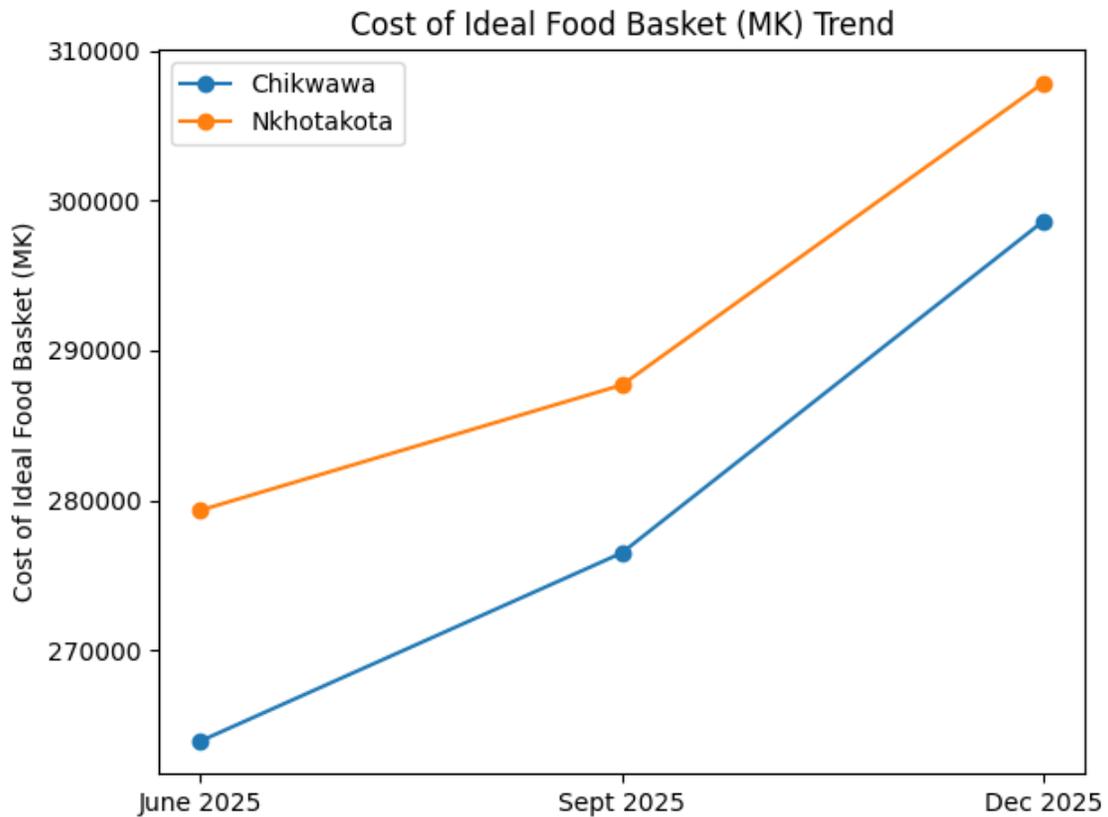
1. Introduction

The Centre for Social Concern (CfSC) conducted its quarterly Rural Basic Needs Basket (BNB) monitoring in December 2025 to track changes in household welfare in Chikwawa and Nkhotakota districts. The monitoring assesses trends in the cost of food, non-food items, household income, and calorie intake in order to understand the real cost of survival for rural households.

The October–December 2025 period coincided with the lean agricultural season, during which food stocks decline and food prices typically rise. This report compares trends from June 2025, September 2025, and December 2025 to assess how household welfare has evolved during this period.

2. Cost of Ideal Food Basket (MK)

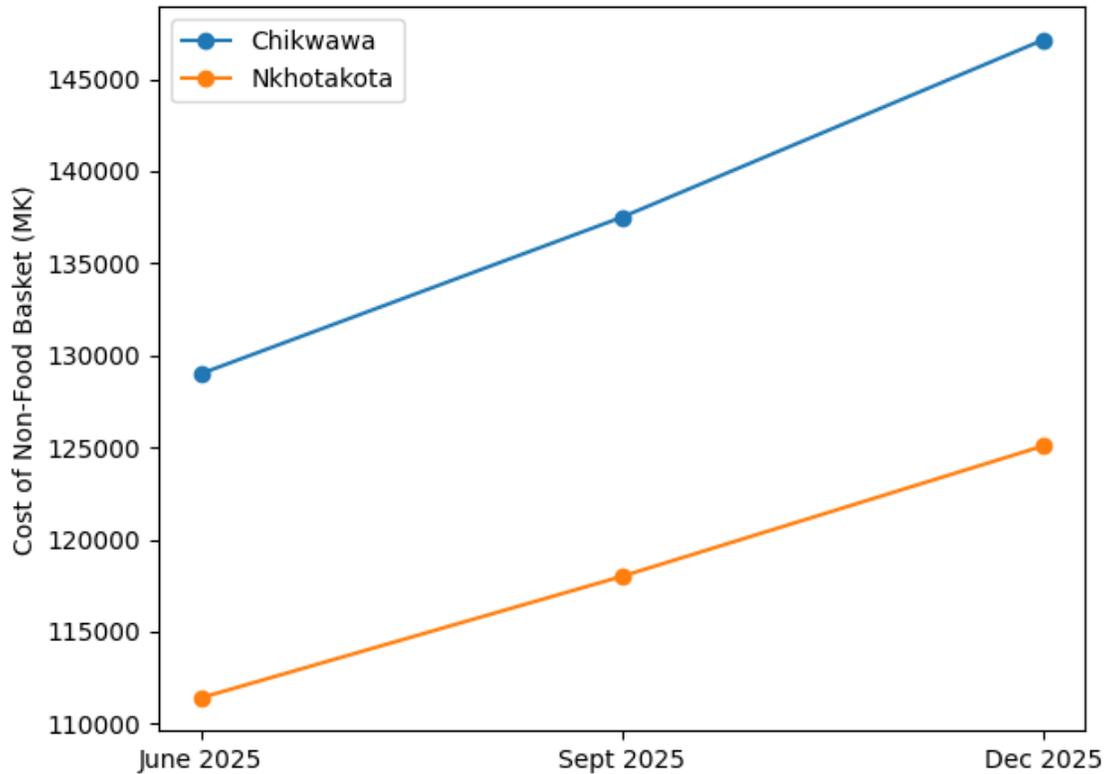
District	June 2025	Sept 2025	Dec 2025
Chikwawa	263,955	276,500	298,620
Nkhotakota	279,345	287,700	307,839



3. Cost of Ideal Non-Food Basket (MK)

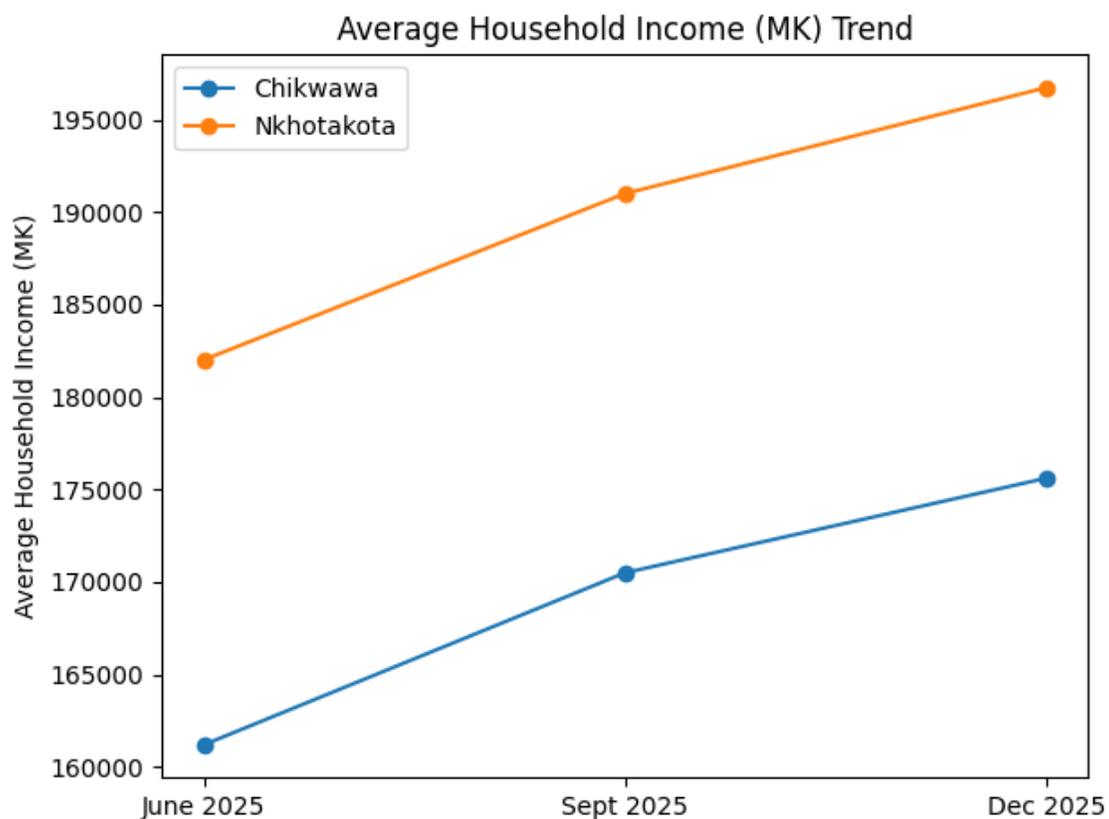
District	June 2025	Sept 2025	Dec 2025
Chikwawa	129,000	137,500	147,125
Nkhotakota	111,400	118,000	125,080

Cost of Non-Food Basket (MK) Trend



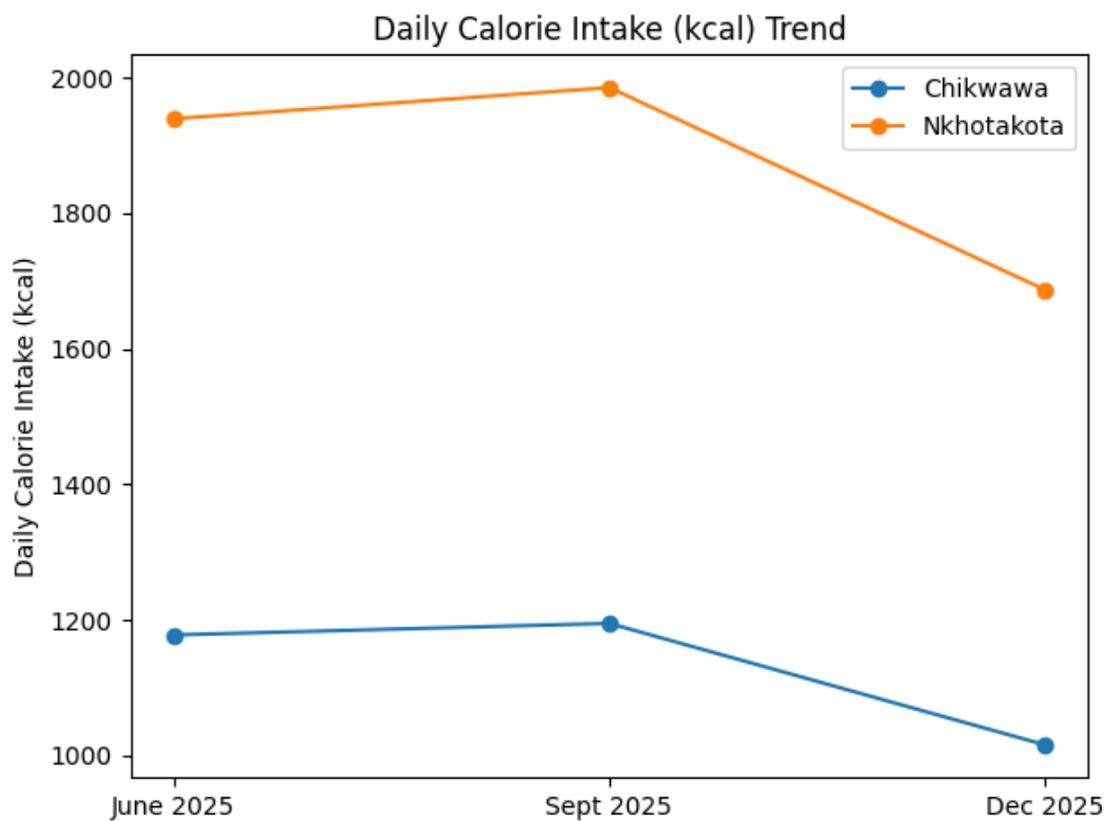
4. Average Household Income (MK)

District	June 2025	Sept 2025	Dec 2025
Chikwawa	161,200	170,500	175,615
Nkhotakota	182,013	191,000	196,730



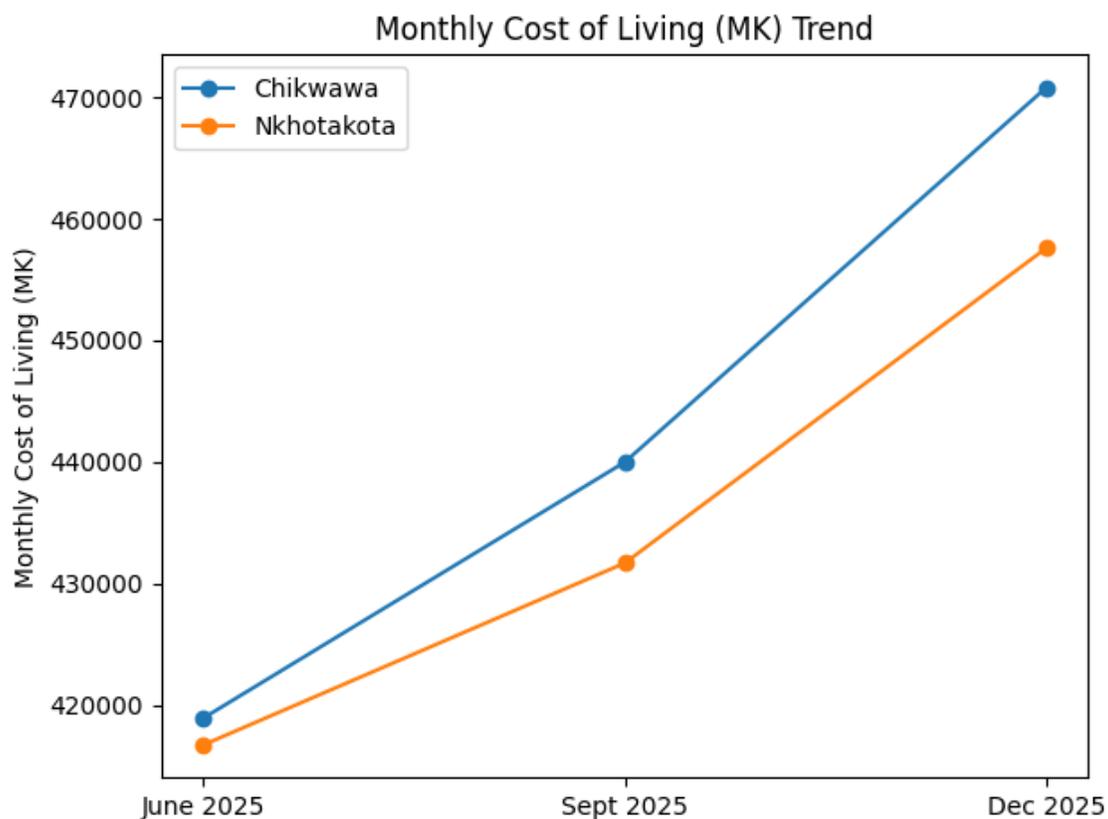
5. Daily Calorie Intake per Person (kcal)

District	June 2025	Sept 2025	Dec 2025
Chikwawa (Maseya)	1178	1195	1016
Nkhotakota (Kanyenda)	1939	1985	1687



6. Monthly Cost of Living (MK)

District	June 2025	Sept 2025	Dec 2025
Chikwawa	418,955	440,000	470,800
Nkhotakota	416,745	431,700	457,602



7. Policy Recommendations

- i. Scale up emergency cash transfer programmes targeting vulnerable rural households.
- ii. Introduce temporary maize price stabilization measures to cushion food inflation.
- iii. Expand school feeding programmes in food-insecure districts.
- iv. Promote climate-resilient agriculture and irrigation systems.
- v. Support rural livelihood diversification beyond rain-fed agriculture.
- vi. Expand access to affordable energy alternatives such as solar and efficient cookstoves.
- vii. Strengthen national grain reserves and community storage systems.

8. Conclusion

The December 2025 Rural BNB monitoring confirms that rural households continue to face significant cost-of-living pressures. Food price increases during the lean season combined with declining calorie intake suggest growing food insecurity. While household incomes show marginal increases, they remain insufficient to meet the rising cost of basic needs.