

Price Monitoring and Analysis Country Brief

Malawi

October 2009

Key Messages

- **Maize prices have fallen, but are still double those of 2007, despite increased maize availability.**
- **Food production has increased and the weather has been favourable so far for maize harvest in early 2010.**
- **Although food security has improved in the country, different agencies agree that, in the long term, the problem of hunger will remain serious.**
- **A 2009 record cereal production reflects good rainfall and the government's effective input distribution programme.**

Background

The total population in Malawi was 14.27 million in 2008, while the annual growth rate was 2%. About 29% of the population was estimated to be undernourished in 2005 and the prevalence of HIV among adults was reported as 12% in 2005.

Economic Indicators	View Data
Total Population - 2008 (WB)	14278404
Population growth rate - 2008 (WB)	2%
GNI per capita, \$ PPP - 2008 (WB)	830
Population below 1\$ PPP per day - 2004 (MDGI)	73%
Rural population - 2007 (WB)	82%
Agriculture, value added (% of GDP) - 2008 (WB)	34%

Food Consumption	
Undernourished Population - 2005 (FAO)	29%
Cereal share in total dietary energy consumption - 2005 (FAO)	56%
Meat share in total dietary energy consumption	n.a.

Health Indicators	
Pop. with sustainable access to improved sanitation - 2006 (WHO)	60%
Life expectancy at birth (years) both sexes - 2006 (WHO)	50
Pop. with access to improved drinking water sources - 2006 (WHO)	76%
Prevalence of HIV among adults aged >= 15 years - 2005 (WHO)	12%

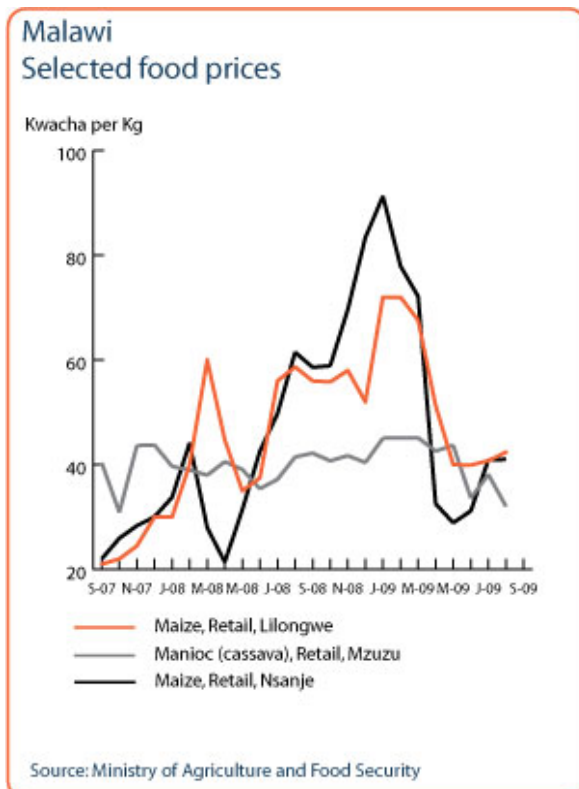
Prices

Cereals: Maize prices have steadily climbed since June 2008 reaching a high of MWK 72/kg in Lilongwe in January and February 2009, the peak of the hunger period. The arrival of the new harvest in April increased market supplies, leading to a seasonal decline in prices. However, in August 2009, maize prices were MWK 42/kg in Lilongwe, more than double the level of two years earlier.

Livestock: The price of livestock is likely to start decreasing in hunger prone areas thus affecting poor households owning small livestock. However, income obtained from the sale of cattle should be adequate to purchase food.

Conflicts and Refugees

The food security situation of Malawi is not affected by conflict. However the country registered increasing numbers of refugees and internally displaced people. Total population of concern in the country reached 10,716, while those outside the country were 8,316.



Source: [GIEWS Country Briefs](#)

Refugees and IDPs	2006	2007	2008
Total in the country	9188	9711	10716
Total outside the country	159	8287	8316

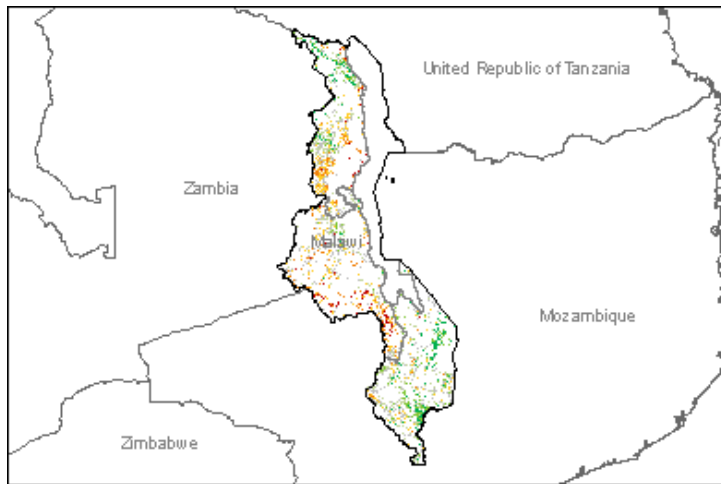
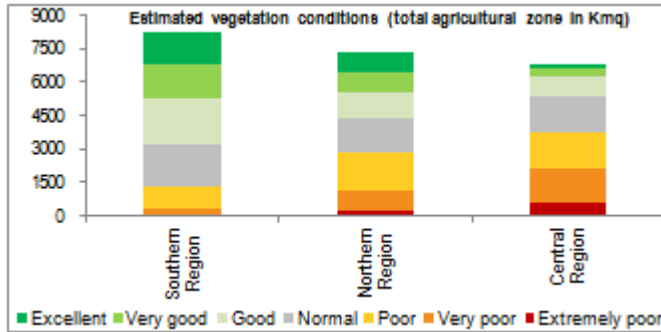
Source: [UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Data extracted on 22/10/2009.

Disaster Type (last year)	Date	Location	Alert
Earthquake	2009-10-08	Northern	1/3
No Floods	-	-	-

Source: [Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System](#) - 3 = 1000 or more people killed or 800000 or more people displaced. 2 = 100 or more people killed or 80000 or more displaced.

Drought and Natural Disasters

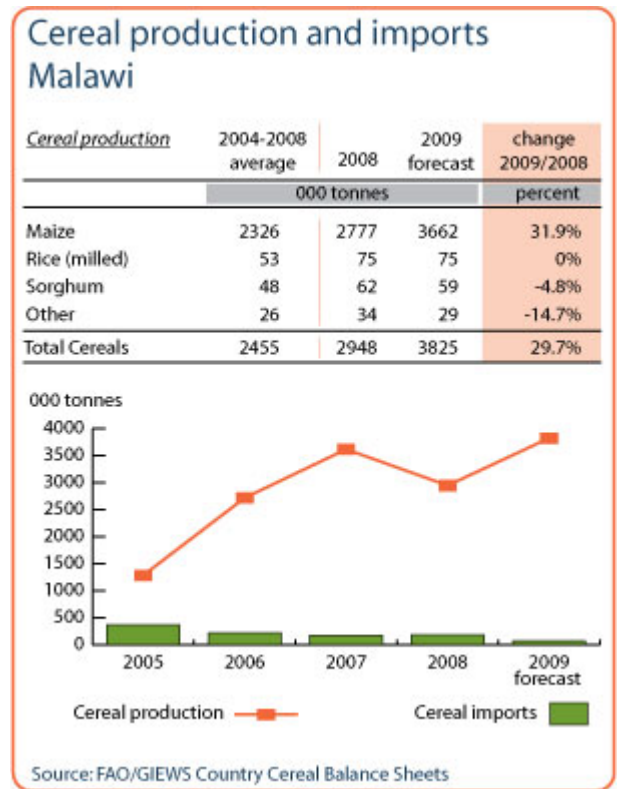
Shown below is the estimated vegetation condition of Sept. 2009 with respect to the average of the last 10 years. The vegetation condition is calculated on the agricultural zone defined according to the GLOBCOVER land cover database. The central region is facing very poor vegetation conditions.



Source: JRC MARS – FoodSec

Food Balance Sheet

The 2009 maize harvest reached an estimated 3.7 million tonnes, 32% above last year's level and 61% above the five year average. Domestic utilization for the 2009/10 marketing year (April/March) is forecast at around 3 million tonnes, resulting in a national surplus for the third consecutive year.



Source: GIEWS Country Briefs

Food Security Situation

Food security has improved in the country, with the exception of the Lower Shire Valley in the far south. FEWSNET describes Malawi as a generally food secure country in the short term, while WFP and IFPRI agree that the scale of hunger in the long term is moderately high and serious.

CURRENT EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT

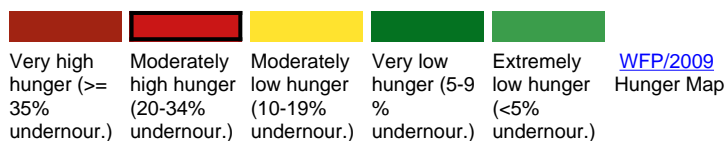
Malawi is not part of the countries in crisis requiring external assistance

[FAO/GIEWS CPFS 2009](#)

Following the MVAC assessment results, the government has approved free food distribution to all the people experiencing food insecurity in the districts of Balaka, Chikwawa, and Nsanje. ...[more](#)

[FEWSNET](#)

SCALE OF HUNGER



Governance Policies

Due to huge stocks in the Strategic Grain Reserves (SGR), the Government can respond to pockets of food insecurity without imports. It has also lifted the maize export ban and strengthened the targeted agricultural input subsidy programme.

Consumer and market oriented measures	Released stock; Admin. price control; Price/market stabilization; Reduction of post-harvest losses
Producer oriented measures	Support to input for crop production; Irrigation
Trade policy measures	Restricted exports
Safety net (increased or introduced)	Food/cash transfer; Targeted input distribution

Market and trade policy measures adopted (as of 1 December 2008)

Current events to watch (Click to see the full report)

[MALAWI: Esinati Chimpere, "Is it a crime to be HIV positive?"](#)
[MALAWI: Lucy Chikoti, "My husband wants to marry another woman b..."](#)

For more information, contact: Information-for-action@fao.org
 Website: www.foodsec.org

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