

Press Release



Republic of Zambia

Central Statistical Office

P.O. Box 31908, Lusaka

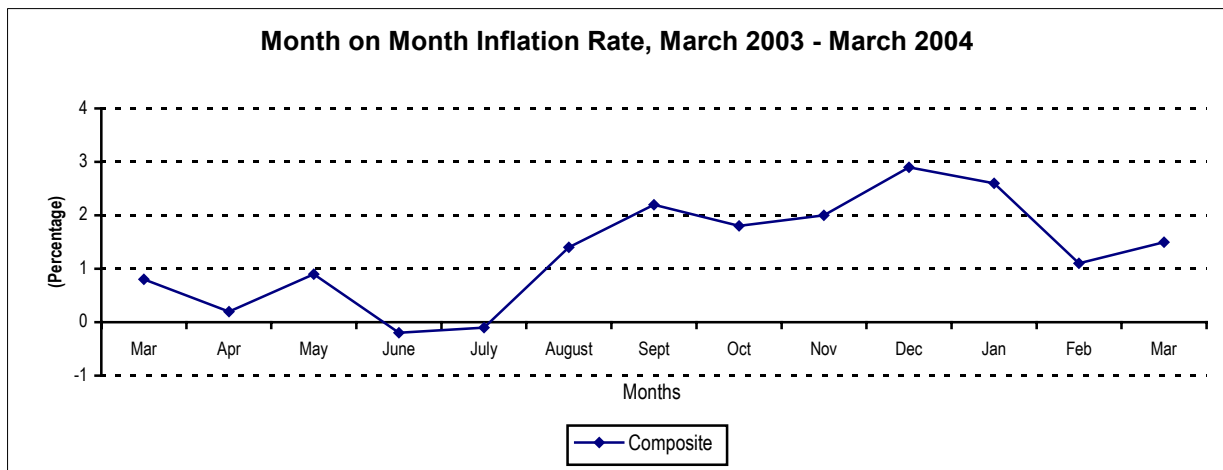
For immediate Release
Thursday March 25, 2004

Information
Enquiries

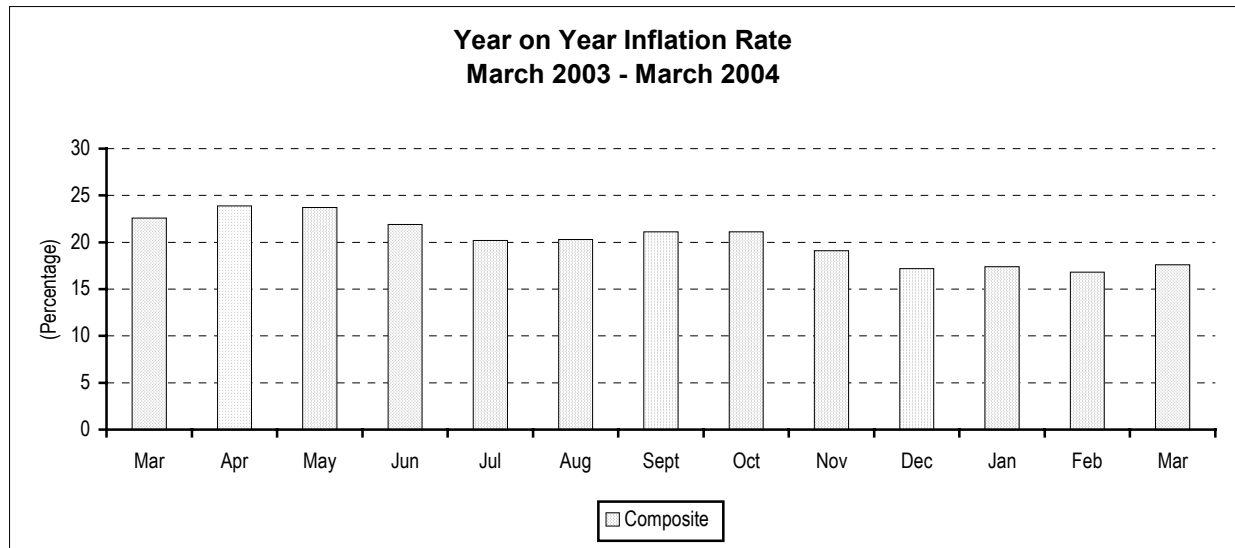
Tel: +260-1-253468
Tel/Fax: +260-1-253468/253609
E-mail: info@zamstats.gov.zm
Website: www.zamstats.gov.zm

Consumer Price Index (CPI) - March 2004

The Central Statistical Office through its monthly survey on consumer prices today announced that the monthly inflation rate was recorded at 1.5 percent as at March 2004, representing 0.4 of a percentage point increase on the February rate of 1.1 percent. Monthly inflation rates for the Metropolitan Low, High Income and Non-Metropolitan Groups were recorded at 1.8, 1.0 and 1.6 percent respectively.



The annual rate of inflation stood at 17.6 percent in March 2004. This rate is 0.8 of a percentage point higher than the February rate of 16.8 percent. Compared with March 2003, the annual rate of inflation declined by 5.0 percentage points, from 22.6 percent in March 2003 to 17.6 percent in March 2004. Annual inflation rates for the Metropolitan Low, High Income and Non-Metropolitan Groups were recorded at 16.4, 18.3 and 17.9 percent respectively.



The relatively higher level of inflation as recorded in March 2004, was largely due to increases in food prices, especially maize meal and maize grain prices. The monthly food inflation rate shows an increase of 1.1 percentage points, from 0.9 percent in February to 2.0 percent in March 2004. The annual food inflation rate was recorded at 15.9 percent at March 2004, increasing by 3.0 percentage points on the February rate of 12.9 percent.

Contributing the most to food inflation were increases in the cost of Maize meal, maize grain, other cereals, fresh meat, fresh vegetables and dried fish (kapenta and bream). Furthermore, price increases were reported for fresh fruits, oils, fats and other processed food commodities. However price decreases were recorded for sweet potatoes and dried beans.

The monthly Non-Food inflation rate declined from 1.4 percent in February 2004, to 1.0 percent in March 2004, decreasing by 0.4 of a percentage point. Similarly, the annual non-food inflation rate was recorded at 19.6 percent, decreasing by 2.0 percent on the February rate of 21.6 percent.

Comparatively, the average price of a 25kg bag of Roller Meal increased by 5.3 percent, from K25,794 in February to K27,162 in March 2004, while the price of Maize Grain measured in a 20-litre tin increased by 14.5 percent. The average price of 1kg of dried Mpulungu Kapenta showed an increase of 8.2 percent. The average price of 1kg of onion went up by 22.5 percent during the month.

**INDEX NUMBERS OF CONSUMER PRICES BY INCOME GROUP
(1994 WEIGHTS)**

1994 = 100

Period	Total	Metropolitan Low Income Group	Metropolitan High Income Group	Non Metropolitan Group
Weight	1000	261	295	444
1985	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
1986	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4
1987	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6
1988	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9
1989	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.1
1990	4.3	4.2	4.5	4.3
1991	8.6	8.3	9.2	8.4
1992	22.8	23.1	23.0	22.6
1993	64.7	65.3	63.5	65.1
1994	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1995	134.9	135.8	135.3	134.2
1996	193.0	192.8	188.3	196.3
1997	240.2	237.8	235.1	245.0
1998	298.9	295.9	292.3	305.1
1999	379.0	372.3	373.5	386.6
2000	477.7	462.7	482.5	483.3
2001	579.9	554.8	587.4	589.6
2002	708.8	690.3	697.7	727.0
2002 January	657.3	630.9	645.6	680.6
February	676.4	652.9	660.8	700.6
March	683.1	658.7	670.3	705.9
April	677.4	659.0	670.3	692.9
May	684.5	668.8	677.3	698.4
June	692.9	674.9	687.1	707.4
July	702.3	685.4	696.0	716.3
August	711.7	691.6	705.5	727.6
September	722.6	703.8	714.6	739.0
October	735.6		.1	753.2
November	763.3	749.2	745.9	783.3
December	798.3	790.7	774.0	819.0
2003 January	816.9	814.2	782.5	841.3
February	830.9	823.6	801.7	854.7
March	837.2	828.0	818.2	855.1
April	839.0	831.0	827.7	851.2
May	846.8	837.7	845.3	853.2
June	844.8	831.8	848.3	850.2
July	843.9	828.0	847.5	850.9
August	856.1	840.1	858.2	864.2
September	874.9	856.0	874.7	886.2
October	891.0	870.7	889.5	903.8
November	908.9	888.8	909.5	920.4
December	935.3	915.2	927.4	952.3
2004 January	959.4	937.3	950.6	978.2
February	970.3	946.8	958.6	991.8
March	984.8	964.2	968.1	1008.0

MONTH ON MONTH INFLATION RATES

Percent

Period	Total	Metropolitan Low Income Group	Metropolitan High Income Group	Non Metropolitan Group
Weight	1000	261	295	444
Jan 01 - Dec 00	3.5	4.0	3.2	3.3
Feb 01 - Jan 01	3.3	4.7	0.1	4.6
Mar 01 - Feb 01	2.0	2.2	1.5	2.2
Apr 01 - Mar 01	-0.6	-0.7	-0.7	-0.5
May 01 - Apr 01	-1.5	-2.5	-0.2	-1.9
Jun 01 - May 01	-0.9	-2.1	0.0	-0.9
Jul 01 - Jun 01	1.5	1.3	1.8	1.4
Aug 01 - Jul 01	1.1	1.6	0.9	0.9
Sep 01 - Aug 01	1.4	0.9	1.4	1.7
Oct 01 - Sep 01	1.8	1.5	1.4	2.3
Nov 01 - Oct 01	2.5	2.7	1.9	2.8
Dec 01 - Nov 01	3.5	4.1	2.1	4.0
Jan 02 - Dec 01	4.3	4.9	2.7	4.9
Feb 02 - Jan 02	2.9	3.5	2.4	2.9
Mar 02 - Feb 02	1.0	0.9	1.4	0.8
Apr 02 - Mar 02	-0.8	0.0	0.0	-1.8
May 02 - Apr 02	1.0	1.5	1.1	0.8
Jun 02 - May 02	1.2	0.9	1.4	1.3
Jul 02 - Jun 02	1.3	1.6	1.3	1.3
Aug 02 - Jul 02	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.6
Sep 02 - Aug 02	1.5	1.8	1.3	1.6
Oct 02 - Sep 02	1.8	2.0	1.5	1.9
Nov 02 - Oct 02	3.8	4.4	2.9	4.0
Dec 02 - Nov 02	4.6	5.5	3.8	4.6
Jan 03 - Dec 02	2.3	3.0	1.1	2.7
Feb 03 - Jan 03	1.7	1.2	2.5	1.6
Mar 03 - Feb 03	0.8	0.5	2.1	0.1
Apr 03 - Mar 03	0.2	0.4	1.2	-0.5
May 03 - Apr 03	0.9	0.8	2.1	0.2
Jun 03 - May 03	-0.2	-0.7	0.4	-0.4
Jul 03 - Jun 03	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1	0.1
Aug 03 - Jul 03	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.6
Sep 03 - Aug 03	2.2	1.9	1.9	2.5
Oct 03 - Sep 03	1.8	1.7	1.7	2.0
Nov 03 - Oct 03	2.0	2.1	2.2	1.8
Dec 03 - Nov 03	2.9	3.0	2.0	3.5
Jan 04 - Dec 03	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.7
Feb 04 - Jan 03	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4
Mar 04 - Feb 03	1.5	1.8	1.0	1.6

TWELVE MONTH INFLATION RATES

Percent

Period	Total	Metropolitan Low Income Group	Metropolitan High Income Group	Non Metropolitan Group
Jan 01 - Jan 00	30.0	27.9	34.8	28.0
Feb 01 - Feb 00	29.1	28.1	31.3	28.4
Mar 01 - Mar 00	28.8	28.0	30.8	28.0
Apr 01 - Apr 00	24.8	24.0	24.7	25.3
May 01 - May 00	22.2	20.8	23.2	22.4
Jun 01 - Jun 00	20.2	17.4	22.4	20.4
Jul 01 - Jul 00	17.1	14.2	18.6	17.8
Aug 01 - Aug 00	16.8	14.9	17.5	17.5
Sep 01 - Sep 00	17.4	15.6	17.4	18.5
Oct 01 - Oct 00	17.2	15.1	16.6	18.6
Nov 01 - Nov 00	17.7	16.8	15.6	19.7
Dec 01 - Dec 00	18.7	19.0	14.1	21.7
Jan 02 - Jan 01	19.6	20.1	13.5	23.6
Feb 02 - Feb 01	19.2	18.6	16.1	21.6
Mar 02 - Mar 01	18.1	17.1	16.0	19.9
Apr 02 - Apr 01	17.8	18.0	16.9	18.3
May 02 - May 01	20.9	22.8	18.3	21.6
Jun 02 - Jun 01	23.6	26.6	20.1	24.3
Jul 02 - Jul 01	23.4	26.9	19.5	24.1
Aug 02 - Aug 01	23.7	26.0	20.0	24.9
Sep 02 - Sep 01	23.8	27.1	19.9	24.7
Oct 02 - Oct 01	23.8	27.7	20.0	24.2
Nov 02 - Nov 01	25.3	29.7	21.2	25.6
Dec 02 - Dec 01	26.7	31.5	23.2	26.2
Jan 03 - Jan 02	24.3	29.1	21.2	23.6
Feb 03 - Feb 02	22.9	26.2	21.3	22.0
Mar 03 - Mar 02	22.6	25.7	22.1	22.1
Apr 03 - Apr 02	23.9	26.1	23.5	22.8
May 03 - May 02	23.7	25.3	24.8	22.2
Jun 03 - Jun 02	21.9	23.2	23.5	20.2
Jul 03 - Jul 02	20.2	20.8	21.8	18.8
Aug 03 - Aug 02	20.3	21.5	21.7	18.8
Sep 03 - Sep 02	21.1	21.6	22.4	19.9
Oct 03 - Oct 02	21.1	21.3	22.7	20.0
Nov 03 - Nov 02	19.1	18.6	21.9	17.5
Dec 03 - Dec 02	17.2	15.8	19.8	16.3
Jan 04 - Jan 03	17.4	15.1	21.5	16.3
Feb 04 - Feb 03	16.8	15.0	19.6	16.0
Mar 04 - Mar 03	17.6	16.4	18.3	17.9

These Consumer Price Indices cover three series, namely: -

- The Metropolitan Low Income Group; which covers Low Income households in the urban areas
- The Metropolitan High Income Group; which covers High Income households in the urban areas
- The Non-Metropolitan Group; covering households in rural areas.

The Metropolitan areas comprise the 10 major towns. These include Livingstone, Lusaka urban, Kabwe urban and all the Copperbelt towns. The Metropolitan areas were further classified into Low and High Income households. All the small towns and the rural parts form the Non-Metropolitan.

In addition, a Composite Consumer Price Index series combining the three groups is also compiled. The base period for the Consumer Price Index is 1994.

The Consumer Price Index is calculated based on mid-month prices.

Dr. Buleti G. Nsemukila
Director of Census and Statistics