



HOUSEHOLD AFFORDABILITY INDEX

**Johannesburg | Durban | Cape Town | Springbok |
Pietermaritzburg**

January 2023

Release date: 25 January 2023

Supported by the Heinrich Böll Foundation Southern Africa and the Constitutionalism Fund.

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A joint fund of the
Atlantic Philanthropies, Open Society Foundations & The Ford Foundation

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About the Household Affordability Index

The Household Food Basket in the Household Affordability Index has been designed together with women living on low incomes in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Cape Town (Gugulethu, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Langa, Delft, Dunoon), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hammarsdale, Pinetown, and Mtubatuba), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape), and Pietermaritzburg. It includes the foods and the volumes of these foods which women living in a family of seven members (an average low-income household size) tell us they typically try and secure each month. The basket was designed through a pilot project which ran from April 2020 to August 2020. ***It cannot however be considered the basket for every family living on a low income in each area and for all areas covered. It is however considered a reasonable proxy for a food basket which women identified as including the most important typical foods which most households try and buy each month, given affordability constraints.*** The Household Food Basket is not nutritionally complete.

Food prices are tracked directly by women data collectors off the shelves of **44 supermarkets and 30 butcheries** that target the low-income market and which women identified as those they shop at in the areas where they live. Food selection at the supermarket shelves mirrors how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves given affordability constraints viz. that the foods are chosen on relative affordability and reasonable quality, and food brands are switched to seek out the cheapest prices and special deals. The selection of food brands is dynamic and subjective. Women are smart and savvy, and shop around for bargains: this specific methodology used provides an accurate cost of a monthly household food basket, as purchased by women living on low incomes.

There are 44 foods in the Household Food Basket. The date for data collection is between the 1st and 4th day of each month. Data is collected and released in the same month. Data is presented for each area, and it is also weighted and averaged for all 5 areas. *For more on methodology, see page 15-16.*

About the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group

The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group is a Civil Society initiative founded in July 2018. This initiative focusses on issues of economic justice, the low-wage regime and on the increasing household affordability and food price crisis, with its attendant nutritional deficiencies, health and developmental consequences, and the lack of imaginative policy and systemic responses to deal with this crisis.

The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group envisions and work towards a society of solidarity, based on a politics of love and universality, and an economy which provides justice, equity, and dignity for all.

1. JANUARY 2023 Summary Data Reference Sheet

Summary of Household Affordability Data

National Minimum Wage Jan 2023 (21 working days)	
General workers at R23,19/hr	R3 895,92
General workers at 10% exemption at R20,87/hr	R3 506,33
Minimum underspend on food in Jan 2023	-52,3%

Cost of Household Food Basket in January 2023	
Cost of Joburg Household Food Basket	R4 873,28
Cost of Durban Household Food Basket	R4 974,99
Cost of Cape Town Household Food Basket	R4 948,47
Cost of Springbok Household Food Basket	R4 777,13
Cost of Maritzburg Household Food Basket	R4 850,97
Average cost of Household Food Basket (all areas).	R4 917,42
Month-on-month change	R64,25 1,3%
Year-on-year change	R516,40 11,7%

Cost of foods prioritised & bought first in Household Food Basket: year-on-year		
Core foods	Jan_2022	Jan_2023
	cost	cost
Maize meal (30kg)	R 248,56	R 291,61
Rice (10kg)	R 138,24	R 130,99
Cake Flour (10kg)	R 98,04	R 125,97
White sugar (10kg)	R 169,35	R 180,77
Sugar beans (5kg)	R 171,28	R 171,81
Samp (5kg)	R 49,34	R 63,64
Cooking oil (5L)	R 140,90	R 185,89
Salt (1kg)	R 13,06	R 14,07
Potatoes (10kg)	R 69,31	R 89,79
Onions (10kg)	R 70,95	R 123,84
Frozen chicken pieces (10kg)	R 371,00	R 395,72
Curry powder (200g)	R 32,38	R 34,24
Stock cubes (24 cubes x2)	R 39,26	R 44,03
Soup (400g x2)	R 39,40	R 42,30
Tea (250g)	R 23,56	R 26,65
White bread (25 loaves)	R 348,19	R 412,59
Brown bread (25 loaves)	R 316,01	R 372,22
Subtotal of core foods	R2 338,83	R 2 706,13

Cost of Household Domestic and Personal Hygiene Products Basket in Jan 2023	R920,87
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Cost of a basic nutritious diet for a family per month	
Household size with 4 members	R3 343,97
Household size with 5 members	R4 228,82
Household size with 7 members	R5 845,42

Average cost of a basic nutritious diet for a child per month in January 2023	
Small child aged 3-9 years	R748,47
Small child aged 10-13 years	R816,66
Girl child aged 14-18 years	R868,12
Boy child aged 14-18 years	R978,90
Average for all children	R853,04
In Jan 2023, the Child Support Grant (R480) is 28% below the food poverty line (R663) & 44% below the average cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a child (R853,04).	

Summary of Statistics South Africa's Economic and Social Data

All South Africans	
Population size	60,6 million
Unemployment rate	32,9%
Expanded unemployment rate	43,1%
Numbers of people unemployed	11,9 million
Numbers of people employed	15,8 million
Number of people one wage supports	3,8
Maximum NMW January 2023	R3 895,92
NMW shared in a family, per person	R1 025,24

Black South Africans	
Population size	49,1 million
Unemployment rate	36,8%
Expanded unemployment rate	47,6%
Numbers of people unemployed	10,8 million
Numbers of people employed	11,9 million
Number of people one wage supports	4,1
Maximum NMW January 2023	R3 895,92
NMW shared in a family, per person	R950,22

White South Africans	
Population size	4,6 million
Unemployment rate	7,8%
Expanded unemployment rate	9,5%
Numbers of people unemployed	183 000
Numbers of people employed	1,7 million
Number of people one wage supports	2,7
Maximum NMW January 2023	R3 895,92
NMW shared in a family, per person	R1 442,93

The maximum value of the National Minimum Wage [NMW]: general workers	R23,19/hour
Level of NMW at 10% exemption	R20,87/hour
The value of the Child Support Grant [CSG]	R480,00
The value of the Old-age Grant [OAG]	R1 990,00
The number of children receiving a CSG	12,78 million
The number of pensioners receiving an OAG	3,67 million
The upper-bound poverty line [UBPL]	R1 417,00
The lower-bound poverty line [LBPL]	R945,00
The food poverty line [FPL]	R663,00

% of people living below the UBPL (30,4m)	55,5%
% of people living below the FPL (13,8m)	25,2%
% of Black South Africans living below the UBPL (±29,9m)	64,2%
Stunting levels in boy children under 5 years	30%
Stunting levels in girl children under 5 years	25%
Estimated overall HIV prevalence rate among population in 2022 (8,45 million)	13,9%

Any errors in data entry or calculations are our own. See reference page 17 for Statistics South Africa data references. All efforts are made to source the latest available data.

2. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: All areas

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R248,56	R301,59	R291,61	-R 9,98	R 43,05	-3%	17%
Rice	10kg	R138,24	R136,80	R130,99	-R 5,81	-R 7,25	-4%	-5%
Cake Flour	10kg	R98,04	R128,20	R125,97	-R 2,23	R 27,93	-2%	28%
White sugar	10kg	R169,35	R172,80	R180,77	R 7,97	R 11,42	5%	7%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,28	R172,53	R171,81	-R 0,71	R 0,53	0%	0%
Samp	5kg	R49,34	R62,10	R63,64	R 1,54	R 14,30	2%	29%
Cooking oil	5L	R140,90	R179,79	R185,89	R 6,10	R 44,99	3%	32%
Salt	1kg	R13,06	R13,76	R14,07	R 0,31	R 1,01	2%	8%
Potatoes	10kg	R69,31	R70,00	R89,79	R 19,79	R 20,48	28%	30%
Onions	10kg	R70,95	R132,33	R123,84	-R 8,48	R 52,90	-6%	75%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R371,00	R394,97	R395,72	R 0,76	R 24,72	0%	7%
Curry powder	200g	R32,38	R30,59	R34,24	R 3,66	R 1,86	12%	6%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R39,26	R41,14	R44,03	R 2,88	R 4,77	7%	12%
Soup	400g x2	R39,40	R40,19	R42,30	R 2,11	R 2,89	5%	7%
Tea	250g	R23,56	R26,17	R26,65	R 0,48	R 3,09	2%	13%
Full cream milk	6L	R78,84	R89,63	R87,18	-R 2,45	R 8,34	-3%	11%
Maas	4L	R50,34	R52,35	R52,99	R 0,64	R 2,64	1%	5%
Eggs	60 eggs	R115,68	R115,33	R118,63	R 3,30	R 2,95	3%	3%
Chicken feet	2kg	R68,58	R78,46	R80,45	R 1,98	R 11,86	3%	17%
Gizzards	2kg	R81,75	R88,08	R87,80	-R 0,29	R 6,05	0%	7%
Chicken livers	2kg	R62,09	R70,92	R72,25	R 1,33	R 10,17	2%	16%
Beef liver	2kg	R96,88	R102,04	R103,20	R 1,16	R 6,32	1%	7%
Beef	2kg	R173,03	R187,82	R191,24	R 3,42	R 18,21	2%	11%
Wors	2kg	R129,69	R129,68	R141,32	R 11,64	R 11,62	9%	9%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R80,04	R92,13	R87,64	-R 4,50	R 7,60	-5%	9%
Fish	2kg	R103,10	R110,48	R111,56	R 1,08	R 8,46	1%	8%
Tomatoes	6kg	R120,33	R116,23	R119,56	R 3,33	-R 0,78	3%	-1%
Carrots	5kg	R33,42	R37,31	R39,48	R 2,17	R 6,06	6%	18%
Butternut	10kg	R91,47	R85,03	R81,48	-R 3,55	-R 9,98	-4%	-11%
Spinach	8 bunches	R79,17	R97,03	R98,50	R 1,46	R 19,33	2%	24%
Cabbage	2 heads	R29,63	R32,74	R35,32	R 2,58	R 5,69	8%	19%
Green pepper	2kg	R45,29	R52,55	R53,43	R 0,88	R 8,14	2%	18%
Cremora	800g	R39,67	R43,64	R44,20	R 0,57	R 4,53	1%	11%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R125,35	R137,52	R139,65	R 2,13	R 14,29	2%	11%
Canned beans	410g x6	R68,42	R79,34	R80,23	R 0,89	R 11,81	1%	17%
Bananas	4kg	R67,88	R61,81	R63,10	R 1,29	-R 4,78	2%	-7%
Apples	3kg	R45,32	R43,59	R45,57	R 1,98	R 0,26	5%	1%
Oranges	7kg	R82,42	R65,02	R68,61	R 3,59	-R 13,81	6%	-17%
Margarine	1kg	R37,92	R39,92	R40,54	R 0,62	R 2,62	2%	7%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R66,25	R67,20	R67,36	R 0,16	R 1,11	0%	2%
Polony	2.5kg	R58,44	R66,24	R65,88	-R 0,36	R 7,44	-1%	13%
Apricot jam	900g	R31,19	R34,34	R34,13	-R 0,21	R 2,94	-1%	9%
White bread	25 loaves	R348,19	R408,28	R412,59	R 4,30	R 64,39	1%	18%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R316,01	R365,51	R372,22	R 6,71	R 56,21	2%	18%
Total household food basket		R 4 401,02	R 4 853,18	R 4 917,42	R 64,25	R 516,40	1,3%	11,7%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **average household food basket increased** by **R64,25 (1,3%)** from R4 853,18 in December 2022 to R4 917,42 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **average household food basket increased** by **R516,40 (11,7%)** from R4 401,02 in January 2022 to R4 917,42 in January 2023.

3. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: All areas, by foods prioritised & bought first

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan_2022	Dec_2022	Jan_2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R248,56	R301,59	R291,61	-R 9,98	R 43,05	-3%	17%
Rice	10kg	R138,24	R136,80	R130,99	-R 5,81	-R 7,25	-4%	-5%
Cake Flour	10kg	R98,04	R128,20	R125,97	-R 2,23	R 27,93	-2%	28%
White sugar	10kg	R169,35	R172,80	R180,77	R 7,97	R 11,42	5%	7%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,28	R172,53	R171,81	-R 0,71	R 0,53	0%	0%
Samp	5kg	R49,34	R62,10	R63,64	R 1,54	R 14,30	2%	29%
Cooking oil	5L	R140,90	R179,79	R185,89	R 6,10	R 44,99	3%	32%
Salt	1kg	R13,06	R13,76	R14,07	R 0,31	R 1,01	2%	8%
Potatoes	10kg	R69,31	R70,00	R89,79	R 19,79	R 20,48	28%	30%
Onions	10kg	R70,95	R132,33	R123,84	-R 8,48	R 52,90	-6%	75%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R371,00	R394,97	R395,72	R 0,76	R 24,72	0%	7%
Curry powder	200g	R32,38	R30,59	R34,24	R 3,66	R 1,86	12%	6%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R39,26	R41,14	R44,03	R 2,88	R 4,77	7%	12%
Soup	400g x2	R39,40	R40,19	R42,30	R 2,11	R 2,89	5%	7%
Tea	250g	R23,56	R26,17	R26,65	R 0,48	R 3,09	2%	13%
White bread	25 loaves	R348,19	R408,28	R412,59	R 4,30	R 64,39	1%	18%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R316,01	R365,51	R372,22	R 6,71	R 56,21	2%	18%
Total household food basket		R 2 338,83	R2 676,74	R2 706,13	R 29,38	R 367,30	1,1%	15,7%

Month-on-month: The **average cost of the foods prioritised and bought first** in the household food basket **increased** by **R29,38 (1,1%)** from R2 676,74 in December 2022 to R2 706,13 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The **average cost of the foods prioritised and bought first** in the household food basket **increased** by **R367,30 (15,7%)** from R2 338,83 in January 2022 to R2 706,13 in January 2023.

The cost of the foods prioritised and bought first in the Household Food Basket is important. The core foods are bought first and these foods ensure that families do not go hungry whilst ensuring that meals can be cooked. When the prices of core foods increase, there is less money to secure other important mostly nutritionally-rich foods, which are essential for health and well-being and strong immune systems (*viz.* meat, eggs and dairy which are critical for protein, iron and calcium; vegetables and fruit which are critical for vitamins, minerals and fibre; and Maas, peanut butter and pilchards, good fats, protein and calcium essential for children. The data shows that the core foods contribute **55%** of the total cost of the Household Food Basket. At an average cost of **R2 706,13 in January 2023**, these foods are relatively very expensive in relation to the total money available in the household purse to secure food. These foods must be bought regardless of price escalations. The high cost of core staple foods result in a lot of proper nutritious food being removed off the family plates. The consequences of high costs on the core foods has a negative impact on overall household health and well-being, and child development.

4. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: Zero-rated vs. VAT

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan_2022	Dec_2022	Jan_2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Zero-rated foods								
Maize meal	30kg	R248,56	R301,59	R291,61	-R 9,98	R 43,05	-3%	17%
Rice	10kg	R138,24	R136,80	R130,99	-R 5,81	-R 7,25	-4%	-5%
Samp	5kg	R49,34	R62,10	R63,64	R 1,54	R 14,30	2%	29%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,28	R172,53	R171,81	-R 0,71	R 0,53	0%	0%
Cooking oil	5L	R140,90	R179,79	R185,89	R 6,10	R 44,99	3%	32%
Full cream milk	6L	R78,84	R89,63	R87,18	-R 2,45	R 8,34	-3%	11%
Maas	4L	R50,34	R52,35	R52,99	R 0,64	R 2,64	1%	5%
Eggs	60 eggs	R115,68	R115,33	R118,63	R 3,30	R 2,95	3%	3%
Potatoes	10kg	R69,31	R70,00	R89,79	R 19,79	R 20,48	28%	30%
Onions	10kg	R70,95	R132,33	R123,84	-R 8,48	R 52,90	-6%	75%
Tomatoes	6kg	R120,33	R116,23	R119,56	R 3,33	-R 0,78	3%	-1%
Carrots	5kg	R33,42	R37,31	R39,48	R 2,17	R 6,06	6%	18%
Butternut	10kg	R91,47	R85,03	R81,48	-R 3,55	-R 9,98	-4%	-11%
Spinach	8 bunches	R79,17	R97,03	R98,50	R 1,46	R 19,33	2%	24%
Cabbage	2 heads	R29,63	R32,74	R35,32	R 2,58	R 5,69	8%	19%
Green Pepper	2kg	R45,29	R52,55	R53,43	R 0,88	R 8,14	2%	18%
Tinned pilchards	6 tins	R125,35	R137,52	R139,65	R 2,13	R 14,29	2%	11%
Bananas	4kg	R67,88	R61,81	R63,10	R 1,29	-R 4,78	2%	-7%
Apples	3kg	R45,32	R43,59	R45,57	R 1,98	R 0,26	5%	1%
Oranges	7kg	R82,42	R65,02	R68,61	R 3,59	-R 13,81	6%	-17%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R316,01	R365,51	R372,22	R 6,71	R 56,21	2%	18%
Cake flour	10kg	R98,04	R128,20	R125,97	-R 2,23	R 27,93	-2%	28%
Subtotal of zero-rated foods		R 2 267,76	R 2 534,98	R 2 559,26	R 24,28	R 291,50	1,0%	12,9%
Foods subject to VAT								
White sugar	10kg	169,35	172,80	180,77	R 7,97	R 11,42	5%	7%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	371,00	394,97	395,72	R 0,76	R 24,72	0%	7%
Chicken feet	2kg	68,58	78,46	80,45	R 1,98	R 11,86	3%	17%
Gizzards	2kg	81,75	88,08	87,80	-R 0,29	R 6,05	0%	7%
Chicken livers	2kg	62,09	70,92	72,25	R 1,33	R 10,17	2%	16%
Beef liver	2kg	96,88	102,04	103,20	R 1,16	R 6,32	1%	7%
Beef	2kg	173,03	187,82	191,24	R 3,42	R 18,21	2%	11%
Wors	2kg	129,69	129,68	141,32	R 11,64	R 11,62	9%	9%
Inyama yangapakhathi	2kg	80,04	92,13	87,64	-R 4,50	R 7,60	-5%	9%
Fish	2kg	103,10	110,48	111,56	R 1,08	R 8,46	1%	8%
Salt	1kg	13,06	13,76	14,07	R 0,31	R 1,01	2%	8%
Stock	48 cubes	39,26	41,14	44,03	R 2,88	R 4,77	7%	12%
Soup	800g	39,40	40,19	42,30	R 2,11	R 2,89	5%	7%
Curry powder	400g	32,38	30,59	34,24	R 3,66	R 1,86	12%	6%
Tea	200g	23,56	26,17	26,65	R 0,48	R 3,09	2%	13%
Cremora	1kg	39,67	43,64	44,20	R 0,57	R 4,53	1%	11%
Canned beans	6 cans	68,42	79,34	80,23	R 0,89	R 11,81	1%	17%
Margarine	1kg	37,92	39,92	40,54	R 0,62	R 2,62	2%	7%
Peanut butter	400g x2	66,25	67,20	67,36	R 0,16	R 1,11	0%	2%
Polony	2.5kg	58,44	66,24	65,88	-R 0,36	R 7,44	-1%	13%
Apricot jam	900g	31,19	34,34	34,13	-R 0,21	R 2,94	-1%	9%
White bread	25 loaves	348,19	408,28	412,59	R 4,30	R 64,39	1%	18%
Subtotal of VATable foods		R2 133,26	R 2 318,19	R 2 358,16	R 39,97	R 224,90	1,7%	10,5%
Vatable foods (excl. VAT)		R1 855,01	R2 015,82	R2 050,58	R 34,76	R195,56	1,7%	10,5%
VAT total		R278,25	R302,37	R307,59	R5,21	R29,33	1,7%	10,5%
Total household food basket		R4 401,02	R4 853,18	R4 917,42	R64,25	R516,40	1,3%	11,7%

Month-on-month: The **zero-rated foods** in the household food basket **increased** by **R24,28 (1,0%)** from R2 534,98 in December 2022 to R2 559,26 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The **zero-rated foods** in the household food basket **increased** by **R291,50 (12,9%)** from R2 267,76 in January 2022 to R2 559,26 in January 2023.

Month-on-month: The **foods subject to VAT** in the household food basket **increased** by **R39,97 (1,7%)** from R2 318,19 in December 2022 to R2 358,16 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The **foods subject to VAT** in the household food basket **increased** by **R224,90 (10,5%)** from R2 133,26 in January 2022 to R2 358,16 in January 2023.

22/44 foods in the total household food basket are subject to VAT. Foods subject to VAT make up **48%** of the total cost of the household food basket. VAT on the total household food basket came to **R307,59 in January 2023**. This means **6,3%** of the household food basket is made up of VAT. A tax of **R307,59** is more than the cost of a large household's requirement of **30kg maize meal** per month (**in January 2023, 30kg maize meal cost R291,61**). VAT on basic food stuffs is still very high and removes food off the plate.

5. JANUARY 2023 Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index: All areas

Products tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan_2022	Dec_2022	Jan_2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Green bar soap	500g x8	R71,11	R107,92	R110,07	R 2,15	R 38,95	2%	55%
Washing powder	3kg	R70,45	R87,88	R87,86	-R 0,03	R 17,40	0%	25%
Dishwashing liquid	750ml	R28,55	R31,39	R32,11	R 0,72	R 3,56	2%	12%
Handy Andy	750ml	R25,29	R29,55	R29,89	R 0,35	R 4,61	1%	18%
Jik	1,5L	R38,49	R40,48	R39,66	-R 0,82	R 1,18	-2%	3%
Toilet paper	24 rolls	R94,94	R103,21	R107,48	R 4,27	R 12,55	4%	13%
Bath soap	500g x4	R59,86	R81,73	R81,23	-R 0,50	R 21,37	-1%	36%
Toothpaste	100ml x3	R46,16	R57,70	R53,71	-R 3,99	R 7,56	-7%	16%
Vaseline	500g	R40,94	R44,10	R45,52	R 1,43	R 4,58	3%	11%
Cream	big bottle x2	R40,37	R49,75	R52,27	R 2,52	R 11,90	5%	29%
Roll-on deodorant	x4	R69,33	R77,82	R80,34	R 2,52	R 11,01	3%	16%
Spray-on deodorant	big spray x3	R82,10	R94,76	R97,76	R 3,00	R 15,66	3%	19%
Sanitary pads	2 big packs	R67,02	R71,41	R73,35	R 1,94	R 6,33	3%	9%
Shoe Polish	100ml	R27,96	R31,66	R29,62	-R 2,04	R 1,66	-6%	6%
Total household domestic and hygiene products		R 762,56	R 909,35	R 920,87	R 11,52	R 158,31	1,3%	20,8%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **household domestic and personal hygiene products basket increased** by **R11,52 (1,3%)** from R909,35 in December 2022 to R920,87 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **household domestic and personal hygiene products basket increased** by **R158,31 (20,8%)** from R762,56 in January 2022 to R920,35 in January 2023.

Domestic and personal hygiene products are critical expenses for safe hygiene and overall health and well being. The money needed to secure domestic and personal hygiene products are sourced from within the food budget. These products compete viciously in the food budget.

6. JANUARY 2023 Basic Nutritional Food Index: families

By number of family members	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
	Jan_2022	Dec_2022	Jan_2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Four (4)	R3 045,88	R3 307,21	R3 343,97	R 36,76	R 298,09	1,1%	9,8%
Five (5)	R3 848,49	R4 180,55	R4 228,82	R 48,27	R 380,33	1,2%	9,9%
Seven (7)	R5 320,90	R5 779,07	R5 845,42	R 66,35	R 524,52	1,1%	9,9%

Month-on-month: The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members increased** by **R66,35 (1,1%)** from R5 779,07 in December 2022 to R5 845,42 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members increased** by **R524,52 (9,9%)** from R5 320,90 in January 2022 to R5 845,42 in January 2023.

In **January 2023** the difference in cost between the foods which families living on low incomes try and buy each month (the household food basket) and the foods which families would like to buy and should buy to meet basic nutrition (a basic nutritional food basket) was **R928,00 (R4 917,42 vs. R5 845,42)**.

It means that in **January 2023**, families with seven members underspent on basic nutritional food by a **minimum of 16% (R928,00)**.

7. JANUARY 2022 Basic Nutritional Food Index: children

By age of child	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
	Jan_2022	Dec_2022	Jan_2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Small child aged 3-9 years	R 684,06	R740,04	R748,47	R 8,43	R 64,41	1,1%	9,4%
Small child aged 10-13 years	R 743,33	R806,69	R816,66	R 9,97	R 73,33	1,2%	9,9%
Girl child aged 14-18 years	R 788,36	R858,48	R868,12	R 9,64	R 79,76	1,1%	10,1%
Boy child aged 14-18 years	R 889,41	R968,65	R978,90	R 10,25	R 89,49	1,1%	10,1%
Average for all children	R776,29	R843,47	R853,04	R 9,57	R 76,75	1,1%	9,9%

Month-on-month: The **average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet increased** by **R9,57 (1,1%)** from R843,47 in December 2022 to R853,04 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The **average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet increased** by **R76,75 (9,9%)** from R776,29 in January 2022 to R853,04 in January 2023.

As children grow older, their nutritional requirements increase. It means that the cost of feeding a child increases in price as a child grows older and is also different for teenage girls and boys. The Child Support Grant is a fixed amount: it does not account for age.

The Child Support Grant is **R480**. (The increase for the 2022/23 term was **R20**, and came into effect in April 2022).

The food poverty line calculated by Statistics South Africa is **R663** per capita per month (latest April 2022).

In **January 2023** the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet per month cost **R853,04**.

The Child Support Grant of **R480** is set below the food poverty line of **R663**, and further below the average cost of **R853,04** to secure a basic nutritious diet for a child in **January 2023**.

In **January 2023**, the Child Support Grant is **28% below** the food poverty line and **44% below** the average cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a child.

About the Basic Nutritional Food Index

Households living on low incomes change their purchasing patterns in response to changes in affordability conditions. On low incomes, women buy the core staple foods first so that their families do not go hungry and for basic meals to be prepared. Where the money remaining is short, women have no choice but to drop foods from their trolleys or reduce the volumes of nutritionally rich foods in their trolleys. This has negative consequences for health, well-being, and nutrition. As financial and economic circumstances worsen, so too does household health and nutrition. The gap between what women are able to buy and what they need to buy for proper nutrition widens. The Basic Nutritional Food Basket is an attempt to track the cost of foods required for balanced nutrition, viz. the foods and the cost of these foods for families to ensure their health and nutrition and for children to grow and develop properly. The basket was designed in consultation with a Registered Dietician Philippa Barnard.

The Basic Nutritional Food Basket is an index on which we can start talking realistically about the cost of nutritious food, and the inadequacies of low wages and social grants. Importantly it ensures that current food expenditure (severely limited by affordability constraints) are not conflated with the food expenditure required to secure proper nutrition.

8. JANUARY 2023 National Minimum Wage Scenarios

Number of working days in January 2023 = 21 days

Affordability, in its simplest form, is relative to income levels and the cost of goods and services (expenses). Workers work to support their families. Workers, reasonably expect to cover the costs of goods and services needed for dignity and household functionality off their wages. In most Black South African households, only one family member works. This one wage must support, a reductive average of **4,1 persons in January 2023**.

The Minister of Employment and Labour gazetted a **6,9%** annual increase on the National Minimum Wage, which took effect on the 1st of March 2022. For a worker, the 6,9% increment works out to be an extra R1.50 an hour, R12 for an 8-hour day, and if the full working-day month is worked (average 22 days), a R264 monthly increase. **The NMW increased by R1.50 from R21,69 per hour to R23,19 per hour.**

The NMW for Domestic Workers has been equalised with General Workers and is R23,19 per hour.

The tables over the page provide income scenarios for households with workers remunerated at the National Minimum Wage level, as well as for different number of days and hours worked. Households do not prioritise paying for food first out of the wage. Instead households paid low incomes are forced to secure non-negotiable expenses like transport and electricity before food. Other important expenses like debt servicing, scholar transport, education and burial insurances, including household domestic and personal hygiene products also compete viciously in the purse.

A reasonable indicator of whether the NMW is improving the lives of workers is whether workers earning the NMW are able to secure the basic household expenses needed to live at a basic level of dignity and household functionality.

In the scenarios we pull out just 3 core worker expenses: transport to get to work and back; prepaid electricity and the cost of a basic basket of nutritional food for a family of 4 persons. We take the NMW in its various scenarios and subtract the cost of transport and electricity. We then look at the money remaining to buy food.

The last row in the tables highlights the minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs. If the NMW value is set at a reasonable level than we should see a surplus on the food costs, because households have a myriad of other expenses which also need to be secured. If however we see a shortfall on just the food costs, then we must conclude that the level at which the NMW has been set is inadequate because this scenario means that a worker cannot secure even the basic cost of food let alone the other essential goods and services families require.

A note on the data in the scenarios: The NMW and social grant data is national data. The food data is based on the average cost of the PMBEJD Basic Nutritional Food Basket for a family of 4 persons for Joburg, Durban, Cape Town, Springbok and Pietermaritzburg. We use Pietermaritzburg-based costs as a proxy for the transport and electricity figures. **In July 2022, the electricity tariffs in Msunduzi Municipality increased by 7,47%, with prepaid electricity costing R2,25/kWh (incl. VAT) for the 2022/23 period (up from R2,09/kWh from 2021/2022). The new taxi fare increases for Pietermaritzburg came into effect on the 1st of August 2022. Local fares went up by R2, from R16 to R18 (an increase of 12,5%).**

The data in the tables are relevant as at January 2023.

The tables below calculates transport to work on 2 taxi fare, return (R18x4 = R72), multiplied by number of working days. The electricity charge is based on Msunduzi Municipality's prepaid tariffs (R2,25 per kWh = R787,50 for 350kWh). The table below provides scenarios for the NMW for General Workers at R23,19 an hour. The scenario provides for the maximum NMW for the maximum number of working days and hours; and for a 15 day working month and full 8-hours; and for a 15 day working month for 5 hours.

General Workers: at NMW

R23,19 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	21	15	15
Number of hours worked	8	8	5
Remuneration rate	R23,19	R23,19	R23,19
Wage income	R3 895,92	R2 782,80	R1 739,25

	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Wage income	R3 895,92	R2 782,80	R1 739,25
Household expenses			
		% of wage	% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	R1 512,00	38,8%	R1 080,00
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R787,50	20,2%	R787,50
Total for transport + electricity	R2 299,50	59,0%	R1 867,50
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R1 596,42		R915,30
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R3 343,97		R3 343,97
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R1 747,55	-52,3%	-R2 428,67
			-72,6%
			-R3 472,22
			-103,8%

All the scenarios above show that workers paid at the level of the NMW cannot meet even the 3 core household expenses on the NMW. This provides a stark indication of the deficiencies in low baseline wages. The NMW set at such a low level does not allow workers and their families the possibility to secure even their most basic expenses. Instead it appears from the data above that the NMW has worked to lock workers and their families into even deeper levels of poverty. Workers will have to cut back further on food and go into deeper levels of debt to cover wage shortfalls.

The National Minimum Wage is a poverty wage - it hurts workers, it reduces productivity in the workplace, and slows down economic growth. The maximum wage of **R3 895,92 in January 2023** when disbursed in a family of **4 persons is R973,98**. This is below the **upper-bound poverty line of R1 417** per capita per month. Set at such a low level, the NMW works to institutionalise the low-baseline wage regime and lock millions of workers into poverty. Small annual increments off such a low base, and which do not reflect inflation levels as experienced by workers (including not projecting inflation forward for workers in the entire 2022/23 term), means that workers on the NMW are getting poorer and poorer each year. **The minimum shortfall on food for a family is 52,3% in January 2023.** After securing transport and electricity workers are left with R1 596,42. **If all of this money went to food, then for a family of 4, it would provide R399,11 per person per month. The Food Poverty Line is R663.**

9. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Basket: Per area, compared.

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Joburg	Durban	Cape Town	Springbok	Maritzburg	Average
Maize meal	30kg	R291,97	R266,67	R327,97	R205,97	R304,77	R291,61
Rice	10kg	R136,57	R116,55	R138,32	R152,99	R112,79	R130,99
Cake Flour	10kg	R127,82	R121,09	R130,91	R119,99	R122,99	R125,97
White sugar	10kg	R178,49	R181,19	R179,63	R200,66	R175,99	R180,77
Sugar beans	5kg	R163,53	R162,79	R203,84	R179,90	R147,19	R171,81
Samp	5kg	R70,93	R60,88	R64,19	R68,97	R46,79	R63,64
Cooking oil	5L	R189,45	R169,69	R190,91	R210,40	R182,99	R185,89
Salt	1kg	R15,37	R13,14	R10,52	R18,32	R18,79	R14,07
Potatoes	10kg	R77,69	R102,26	R92,87	R80,93	R92,50	R89,79
Onions	10kg	R94,44	R135,98	R147,47	R103,86	R124,27	R123,84
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R366,49	R410,50	R386,62	R419,97	R434,44	R395,72
Curry powder	200g	R33,78	R32,89	R37,98	R32,65	R30,79	R34,24
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R42,65	R47,78	R44,65	R35,31	R43,58	R44,03
Soup	400g x2	R43,73	R37,28	R55,48	R38,65	R29,98	R42,30
Tea	250g	R28,95	R25,29	R27,41	R23,32	R23,99	R26,65
Full cream milk	6L	R91,49	R86,69	R79,90	R78,32	R100,59	R87,18
Maas	4L	R53,24	R50,99	R55,40	R56,32	R48,59	R52,99
Eggs	60 eggs	R112,31	R122,98	R122,38	R115,98	R119,18	R118,63
Chicken feet	2kg	R93,23	R83,95	R52,31	R91,98	R88,94	R80,45
Gizzards	2kg	R88,15	R91,93	R80,98	R79,98	R95,44	R87,80
Chicken livers	2kg	R69,73	R72,31	R58,98	R119,94	R79,94	R72,25
Beef liver	2kg	R105,23	R103,62	R95,98	R116,98	R102,44	R103,20
Beef	2kg	R190,98	R203,07	R175,61	R199,98	R197,98	R191,24
Wors	2kg	R147,23	R151,64	R109,90	R149,98	R169,94	R141,32
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R91,48	R97,07	R72,76	R91,98	R80,94	R87,64
Fish	2kg	R95,13	R117,64	R98,38	R159,98	R121,94	R111,56
Tomatoes	6kg	R108,32	R133,44	R132,15	R101,94	R97,49	R119,56
Carrots	5kg	R38,80	R44,49	R34,79	R37,75	R43,39	R39,48
Butternut	10kg	R81,68	R84,06	R82,34	R98,70	R64,27	R81,48
Spinach	8 bunches	R99,13	R109,95	R94,47	R74,59	R127,92	R98,50
Cabbage	2 heads	R30,98	R36,59	R39,62	R34,65	R31,98	R35,32
Green pepper	2kg	R48,16	R46,76	R62,38	R65,98	R51,58	R53,43
Cremora	800g	R45,24	R45,89	R42,66	R39,99	R44,59	R44,20
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R144,42	R145,14	R138,44	R119,94	R131,94	R139,65
Canned beans	410g x6	R81,95	R80,95	R76,94	R75,94	R85,14	R80,23
Bananas	4kg	R72,29	R58,96	R63,23	R66,61	R48,76	R63,10
Apples	3kg	R44,35	R48,98	R47,43	R27,99	R48,49	R45,57
Orange	7kg	R54,76	R87,47	R71,13	R54,79	R31,00	R68,61
Margarine	1kg	R45,07	R40,99	R34,32	R34,66	R47,19	R40,54
Peanut butter	400g x2	R71,98	R70,58	R63,48	R59,98	R63,58	R67,36
Polony	2.5kg	R72,82	R66,42	R56,29	R54,99	R71,99	R65,88
Apricot jam	900g	R33,66	R34,39	R34,57	R29,99	R36,19	R34,13
White bread	25 loaves	R415,42	R411,03	R441,44	R333,08	R381,06	R412,59
Brown bread	25 loaves	R384,17	R363,03	R391,44	R312,25	R346,69	R372,22
Total household food basket		R 4 873,28	R 4 974,99	R 4 948,47	R 4 777,13	R 4 850,97	R 4 917,42

The average cost (weighted) of the total household food basket in January 2023 is R4 917,42.

10. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: Johannesburg

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R252,97	R318,02	R291,97	-R 26,05	R 39,00	-8%	15%
Rice	10kg	R149,24	R139,91	R136,57	-R 3,33	-R 12,67	-2%	-8%
Cake Flour	10kg	R105,83	R128,07	R127,82	-R 0,25	R 22,00	0%	21%
White sugar	10kg	R170,82	R170,32	R178,49	R 8,17	R 7,67	5%	4%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,11	R166,12	R163,53	-R 2,59	-R 7,58	-2%	-4%
Samp	5kg	R54,85	R69,82	R70,93	R 1,11	R 16,08	2%	29%
Cooking oil	5L	R135,63	R182,41	R189,45	R 7,04	R 53,82	4%	40%
Salt	1kg	R15,07	R14,70	R15,37	R 0,67	R 0,29	5%	2%
Potatoes	10kg	R67,16	R70,94	R77,69	R 6,75	R 10,53	10%	16%
Onions	10kg	R70,25	R112,61	R94,44	-R 18,17	R 24,19	-16%	34%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R363,24	R373,73	R366,49	-R 7,25	R 3,25	-2%	1%
Curry powder	200g	R32,57	R30,37	R33,78	R 3,42	R 1,21	11%	4%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R37,93	R40,48	R42,65	R 2,17	R 4,72	5%	12%
Soup	400g x2	R42,42	R40,15	R43,73	R 3,59	R 1,32	9%	3%
Tea	250g	R24,23	R28,70	R28,95	R 0,25	R 4,72	1%	19%
Full cream milk	6L	R79,62	R91,95	R91,49	-R 0,46	R 11,87	0%	15%
Maas	4L	R49,74	R51,99	R53,24	R 1,25	R 3,50	2%	7%
Eggs	60 eggs	R108,40	R115,25	R112,31	-R 2,94	R 3,92	-3%	4%
Chicken feet	2kg	R83,48	R97,48	R93,23	-R 4,25	R 9,75	-4%	12%
Gizzards	2kg	R85,23	R88,90	R88,15	-R 0,75	R 2,92	-1%	3%
Chicken livers	2kg	R62,21	R64,98	R69,73	R 4,75	R 7,52	7%	12%
Beef liver	2kg	R102,98	R105,70	R105,23	-R 0,46	R 2,25	0%	2%
Beef	2kg	R177,74	R186,73	R190,98	R 4,25	R 13,25	2%	7%
Wors	2kg	R124,74	R141,23	R147,23	R 6,00	R 22,50	4%	18%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R87,73	R89,98	R91,48	R 1,50	R 3,75	2%	4%
Fish	2kg	R81,48	R86,23	R95,13	R 8,89	R 13,64	10%	17%
Tomatoes	6kg	R122,50	R106,37	R108,32	R 1,95	-R 14,18	2%	-12%
Carrots	5kg	R33,53	R39,35	R38,80	-R 0,55	R 5,27	-1%	16%
Butternut	10kg	R87,87	R88,90	R81,68	-R 7,21	-R 6,19	-8%	-7%
Spinach	8 bunches	R88,93	R104,72	R99,13	-R 5,59	R 10,20	-5%	11%
Cabbage	2 heads	R31,80	R31,15	R30,98	-R 0,17	-R 0,82	-1%	-3%
Green pepper	2kg	R38,16	R47,38	R48,16	R 0,78	R 10,00	2%	26%
Cremora	800g	R41,99	R45,41	R45,24	-R 0,17	R 3,25	0%	8%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R123,10	R143,44	R144,42	R 0,98	R 21,32	1%	17%
Canned beans	410g x6	R69,79	R82,20	R81,95	-R 0,24	R 12,16	0%	17%
Bananas	4kg	R73,39	R75,63	R72,29	-R 3,34	-R 1,10	-4%	-1%
Apples	3kg	R48,35	R50,44	R44,35	-R 6,09	-R 4,00	-12%	-8%
Oranges	7kg	R67,64	R43,99	R54,76	R 10,77	-R 12,88	24%	-19%
Margarine	1kg	R42,82	R46,74	R45,07	-R 1,67	R 2,25	-4%	5%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R68,98	R69,38	R71,98	R 2,60	R 3,00	4%	4%
Polony	2.5kg	R63,37	R74,24	R72,82	-R 1,42	R 9,46	-2%	15%
Apricot jam	900g	R29,99	R33,82	R33,66	-R 0,17	R 3,67	0%	12%
White bread	25 loaves	R351,98	R411,25	R415,42	R 4,17	R 63,44	1%	18%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R313,31	R375,83	R384,17	R 8,33	R 70,85	2%	23%
Total household food basket		R 4 434,18	R 4 877,01	R 4 873,28	-R 3,73	R 439,10	-0,1%	9,9%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Joburg household food basket decreased** by **R3,73 (-0,1%)** from R4 877,01 in December 2022 to R4 873,28 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Joburg household food basket increased** by **R439,10 (9,9%)** from R4 434,18 in January 2022 to R4 873,28 in January 2023.

11. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: Durban

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R231,97	R278,70	R266,67	-R 12,03	R 34,70	-4%	15%
Rice	10kg	R133,57	R131,44	R116,55	-R 14,90	-R 17,03	-11%	-13%
Cake Flour	10kg	R94,24	R132,35	R121,09	-R 11,26	R 26,85	-9%	28%
White sugar	10kg	R164,99	R166,72	R181,19	R 14,47	R 16,20	9%	10%
Sugar beans	5kg	R161,74	R157,90	R162,79	R 4,89	R 1,05	3%	1%
Samp	5kg	R48,78	R60,90	R60,88	-R 0,02	R 12,10	0%	25%
Cooking oil	5L	R145,41	R175,44	R169,69	-R 5,75	R 24,28	-3%	17%
Salt	1kg	R14,16	R14,17	R13,14	-R 1,03	-R 1,02	-7%	-7%
Potatoes	10kg	R80,06	R77,66	R102,26	R 24,60	R 22,20	32%	28%
Onions	10kg	R76,65	R133,75	R135,98	R 2,23	R 59,33	2%	77%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R380,41	R403,15	R410,50	R 7,35	R 30,09	2%	8%
Curry powder	200g	R32,32	R28,90	R32,89	R 3,99	R 0,57	14%	2%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R40,48	R40,16	R47,78	R 7,62	R 7,30	19%	18%
Soup	400g x2	R38,34	R40,53	R37,28	-R 3,24	-R 1,06	-8%	-3%
Tea	250g	R23,41	R25,17	R25,29	R 0,12	R 1,88	0%	8%
Full cream milk	6L	R80,57	R93,99	R86,69	-R 7,30	R 6,12	-8%	8%
Maas	4L	R46,26	R50,17	R50,99	R 0,82	R 4,73	2%	10%
Eggs	60 eggs	R117,15	R118,53	R122,98	R 4,46	R 5,84	4%	5%
Chicken feet	2kg	R80,19	R87,64	R83,95	-R 3,69	R 3,77	-4%	5%
Gizzards	2kg	R87,44	R91,59	R91,93	R 0,34	R 4,50	0%	5%
Chicken livers	2kg	R63,36	R75,64	R72,31	-R 3,33	R 8,95	-4%	14%
Beef liver	2kg	R94,94	R102,50	R103,62	R 1,12	R 8,69	1%	9%
Beef	2kg	R180,69	R197,65	R203,07	R 5,43	R 22,39	3%	12%
Wors	2kg	R145,19	R140,79	R151,64	R 10,86	R 6,46	8%	4%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R75,44	R102,62	R97,07	-R 5,55	R 21,64	-5%	29%
Fish	2kg	R107,19	R123,36	R117,64	-R 5,71	R 10,46	-5%	10%
Tomatoes	6kg	R125,88	R125,35	R133,44	R 8,08	R 7,56	6%	6%
Carrots	5kg	R38,07	R42,99	R44,49	R 1,50	R 6,42	3%	17%
Butternut	10kg	R90,93	R85,40	R84,06	-R 1,35	-R 6,88	-2%	-8%
Spinach	8 bunches	R75,50	R110,93	R109,95	-R 0,98	R 34,45	-1%	46%
Cabbage	2 heads	R33,15	R33,62	R36,59	R 2,97	R 3,44	9%	10%
Green pepper	2kg	R53,58	R51,51	R46,76	-R 4,75	-R 6,82	-9%	-13%
Cremora	800g	R39,82	R44,35	R45,89	R 1,54	R 6,07	3%	15%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R134,94	R141,76	R145,14	R 3,38	R 10,20	2%	8%
Canned beans	410g x6	R66,96	R79,04	R80,95	R 1,91	R 14,00	2%	21%
Bananas	4kg	R69,29	R54,87	R58,96	R 4,09	-R 10,33	7%	-15%
Apples	3kg	R49,23	R45,62	R48,98	R 3,36	-R 0,25	7%	-1%
Oranges	7kg	R135,04	R88,64	R87,47	-R 1,16	-R 47,56	-1%	-35%
Margarine	1kg	R37,24	R38,99	R40,99	R 2,00	R 3,75	5%	10%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R70,81	R68,71	R70,58	R 1,87	-R 0,23	3%	0%
Polony	2.5kg	R58,24	R64,99	R66,42	R 1,43	R 8,18	2%	14%
Apricot jam	900g	R33,32	R34,81	R34,39	-R 0,42	R 1,07	-1%	3%
White bread	25 loaves	R342,52	R397,52	R411,03	R 13,50	R 68,50	3%	20%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R311,29	R355,48	R363,03	R 7,55	R 51,73	2%	17%
Total household food basket		R 4 510,72	R 4 916,00	R 4 974,99	R 58,99	R 464,27	1,2%	10,3%

Month-on-month: The cost of the Durban household food basket *increased* by **R58,99 (1,2%)** from R4 916,00 in December 2022 to R4 974,99 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the Durban household food basket *increased* by **R464,27 (10,3%)** from R4 510,72 in January 2022 to R4 974,99 in January 2023.

12. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: Cape Town

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R262,71	R310,48	R327,97	R 17,50	R 65,26	6%	25%
Rice	10kg	R139,49	R142,74	R138,32	-R 4,42	-R 1,16	-3%	-1%
Cake Flour	10kg	R97,24	R131,74	R130,91	-R 0,83	R 33,67	-1%	35%
White sugar	10kg	R169,32	R175,32	R179,63	R 4,30	R 10,31	2%	6%
Sugar beans	5kg	R185,59	R208,00	R203,84	-R 4,16	R 18,25	-2%	10%
Samp	5kg	R47,19	R60,04	R64,19	R 4,15	R 17,00	7%	36%
Cooking oil	5L	R140,08	R173,42	R190,91	R 17,49	R 50,83	10%	36%
Salt	1kg	R7,82	R9,87	R10,52	R 0,65	R 2,70	7%	35%
Potatoes	10kg	R59,63	R63,46	R92,87	R 29,41	R 33,24	46%	56%
Onions	10kg	R68,68	R157,54	R147,47	-R 10,07	R 78,79	-6%	115%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R370,54	R377,37	R386,62	R 9,25	R 16,08	2%	4%
Curry powder	200g	R32,35	R30,89	R37,98	R 7,10	R 5,64	23%	17%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R37,64	R43,31	R44,65	R 1,33	R 7,01	3%	19%
Soup	400g x2	R43,51	R47,98	R55,48	R 7,50	R 11,97	16%	28%
Tea	250g	R23,74	R26,66	R27,41	R 0,75	R 3,67	3%	15%
Full cream milk	6L	R71,23	R81,98	R79,90	-R 2,08	R 8,67	-3%	12%
Maas	4L	R55,53	R55,35	R55,40	R 0,05	-R 0,13	0%	0%
Eggs	60 eggs	R120,52	R113,58	R122,38	R 8,80	R 1,86	8%	2%
Chicken feet	2kg	R34,25	R44,73	R52,31	R 7,58	R 18,06	17%	53%
Gizzards	2kg	R70,47	R79,69	R80,98	R 1,29	R 10,51	2%	15%
Chicken livers	2kg	R52,48	R56,23	R58,98	R 2,75	R 6,50	5%	12%
Beef liver	2kg	R90,80	R92,38	R95,98	R 3,60	R 5,18	4%	6%
Beef	2kg	R149,46	R162,73	R175,61	R 12,88	R 26,15	8%	17%
Wors	2kg	R105,72	R87,73	R109,90	R 22,17	R 4,18	25%	4%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R75,49	R86,98	R72,76	-R 14,22	-R 2,72	-16%	-4%
Fish	2kg	R100,29	R105,65	R98,38	-R 7,27	-R 1,91	-7%	-2%
Tomatoes	6kg	R127,75	R125,95	R132,15	R 6,20	R 4,40	5%	3%
Carrots	5kg	R25,08	R33,35	R34,79	R 1,44	R 9,71	4%	39%
Butternut	10kg	R93,26	R85,59	R82,34	-R 3,24	-R 10,91	-4%	-12%
Spinach	8 bunches	R89,26	R97,52	R94,47	-R 3,05	R 5,21	-3%	6%
Cabbage	2 heads	R23,38	R36,34	R39,62	R 3,27	R 16,23	9%	69%
Green pepper	2kg	R44,57	R53,48	R62,38	R 8,90	R 17,81	17%	40%
Cremora	800g	R38,32	R42,81	R42,66	-R 0,15	R 4,34	0%	11%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R119,94	R135,94	R138,44	R 2,50	R 18,50	2%	15%
Canned beans	410g x6	R65,67	R76,58	R76,94	R 0,37	R 11,27	0%	17%
Bananas	4kg	R66,51	R57,78	R63,23	R 5,45	-R 3,28	9%	-5%
Apples	3kg	R46,25	R43,71	R47,43	R 3,73	R 1,18	9%	3%
Oranges	7kg	R74,83	R62,39	R71,13	R 8,75	-R 3,69	14%	-5%
Margarine	1kg	R34,49	R35,32	R34,32	-R 1,00	-R 0,16	-3%	0%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R59,63	R64,48	R63,48	-R 1,00	R 3,85	-2%	6%
Polony	2.5kg	R54,39	R58,29	R56,29	-R 2,00	R 1,90	-3%	3%
Apricot jam	900g	R30,32	R35,07	R34,57	-R 0,50	R 4,25	-1%	14%
White bread	25 loaves	R362,31	R433,13	R441,44	R 8,31	R 79,12	2%	22%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R336,27	R373,77	R391,44	R 17,67	R 55,17	5%	16%
Total household food basket		R 4 303,99	R 4 777,33	R 4 948,47	R 171,14	R 644,49	3,6%	15,0%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Cape Town household food basket** *increased* by **R171,14 (3,6%)** from R4 777,33 in December 2022 to R4 948,47 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Cape Town household food basket** *increased* by **R644,49 (15,0%)** from R4 303,99 in January 2022 to R4 948,47 in January 2023.

13. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: Springbok

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R236,97	R281,97	R205,97	-R 76,00	-R 31,00	-27%	-13%
Rice	10kg	R159,99	R162,99	R152,99	-R 10,00	-R 7,00	-6%	-4%
Cake Flour	10kg	R102,66	R111,66	R119,99	R 8,33	R 17,33	7%	17%
White sugar	10kg	R193,32	R200,66	R200,66	R 0,00	R 7,33	0%	4%
Sugar beans	5kg	R239,90	R199,90	R179,90	-R 20,00	-R 60,00	-10%	-25%
Samp	5kg	R56,64	R68,97	R68,97	R 0,00	R 12,33	0%	22%
Cooking oil	5L	R127,48	R210,40	R210,40	R 0,00	R 82,92	0%	65%
Salt	1kg	R17,99	R18,32	R18,32	R 0,00	R 0,33	0%	2%
Potatoes	10kg	R59,50	R73,79	R80,93	R 7,14	R 21,43	10%	36%
Onions	10kg	R85,69	R105,52	R103,86	-R 1,67	R 18,17	-2%	21%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R388,72	R436,64	R419,97	-R 16,67	R 31,25	-4%	8%
Curry powder	200g	R34,99	R37,65	R32,65	-R 5,00	-R 2,34	-13%	-7%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R43,98	R39,31	R35,31	-R 4,00	-R 8,67	-10%	-20%
Soup	400g x2	R37,31	R39,31	R38,65	-R 0,67	R 1,33	-2%	4%
Tea	250g	R23,66	R24,32	R23,32	-R 1,00	-R 0,33	-4%	-1%
Full cream milk	6L	R73,32	R78,32	R78,32	R 0,00	R 5,00	0%	7%
Maas	4L	R56,32	R55,65	R56,32	R 0,67	R 0,00	1%	0%
Eggs	60 eggs	R128,65	R119,31	R115,98	-R 3,33	-R 12,67	-3%	-10%
Chicken feet	2kg	R71,98	R99,98	R91,98	-R 8,00	R 20,00	-8%	28%
Gizzards	2kg	R73,98	R85,98	R79,98	-R 6,00	R 6,00	-7%	8%
Chicken livers	2kg	R92,98	R135,94	R119,94	-R 16,00	R 26,96	-12%	29%
Beef liver	2kg	R105,98	R116,98	R116,98	R 0,00	R 11,00	0%	10%
Beef	2kg	R169,98	R222,98	R199,98	-R 23,00	R 30,00	-10%	18%
Wors	2kg	R129,98	R179,98	R149,98	-R 30,00	R 20,00	-17%	15%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R99,98	R119,98	R91,98	-R 28,00	-R 8,00	-23%	-8%
Fish	2kg	R155,98	R159,98	R159,98	R 0,00	R 4,00	0%	3%
Tomatoes	6kg	R115,94	R125,94	R101,94	-R 24,00	-R 14,00	-19%	-12%
Carrots	5kg	R46,62	R39,42	R37,75	-R 1,67	-R 8,87	-4%	-19%
Butternut	10kg	R129,90	R105,52	R98,70	-R 6,82	-R 31,20	-6%	-24%
Spinach	8 bunches	R82,59	R77,25	R74,59	-R 2,67	-R 8,00	-3%	-10%
Cabbage	2 heads	R29,98	R33,31	R34,65	R 1,33	R 4,67	4%	16%
Green pepper	2kg	R45,98	R65,98	R65,98	R 0,00	R 20,00	0%	43%
Cremora	800g	R35,99	R39,99	R39,99	R 0,00	R 4,00	0%	11%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R117,94	R119,94	R119,94	R 0,00	R 2,00	0%	2%
Canned beans	410g x6	R67,94	R79,94	R75,94	-R 4,00	R 8,00	-5%	12%
Bananas	4kg	R75,96	R62,61	R66,61	R 4,00	-R 9,35	6%	-12%
Apples	3kg	R39,32	R31,31	R27,99	-R 3,33	-R 11,33	-11%	-29%
Oranges	7kg	R79,30	R56,34	R54,79	-R 1,56	-R 24,51	-3%	-31%
Margarine	1kg	R28,99	R33,32	R34,66	R 1,33	R 5,67	4%	20%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R68,65	R69,31	R59,98	-R 9,33	-R 8,67	-13%	-13%
Polony	2.5kg	R41,49	R52,49	R54,99	R 2,50	R 13,50	5%	33%
Apricot jam	900g	R30,32	R33,32	R29,99	-R 3,33	-R 0,33	-10%	-1%
White bread	25 loaves	R299,75	R366,42	R333,08	-R 33,33	R 33,33	-9%	11%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R287,25	R353,92	R312,25	-R 41,67	R 25,00	-12%	9%
Total household food basket		R 4 591,83	R 5 132,86	R 4 777,13	-R 355,73	R 185,30	-6,9%	4,0%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Springbok household food basket decreased** by **R355,73 (-6,9%)** from R5 132,86 in December 2022 to R4 777,13 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Springbok household food basket increased** by **R185,30 (4,0%)** from R4 591,83 in January 2022 to R4 777,13 in January 2023.

14. JANUARY 2023 Household Food Index: Pietermaritzburg

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2022/23			change in Rands		change in %	
		Jan 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Dec 2022 vs. Jan 2023	Jan 2022 vs. Jan 2023
Maize meal	30kg	R250,77	R302,97	R304,77	R 1,80	R 54,00	1%	22%
Rice	10kg	R106,99	R111,19	R112,79	R 1,60	R 5,80	1%	5%
Cake Flour	10kg	R87,59	R120,79	R122,99	R 2,20	R 35,40	2%	40%
White sugar	10kg	R161,99	R169,39	R175,99	R 6,60	R 14,00	4%	9%
Sugar beans	5kg	R157,99	R143,99	R147,19	R 3,20	-R 10,80	2%	-7%
Samp	5kg	R35,74	R46,19	R46,79	R 0,60	R 11,05	1%	31%
Cooking oil	5L	R152,79	R179,99	R182,99	R 3,00	R 30,20	2%	20%
Salt	1kg	R15,75	R17,20	R18,79	R 1,60	R 3,05	9%	19%
Potatoes	10kg	R77,33	R63,02	R92,50	R 29,48	R 15,17	47%	20%
Onions	10kg	R54,93	R137,13	R124,27	-R 12,86	R 69,34	-9%	126%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R359,80	R437,49	R434,44	-R 3,05	R 74,64	-1%	21%
Curry powder	200g	R30,59	R29,99	R30,79	R 0,80	R 0,20	3%	1%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R40,58	R40,78	R43,58	R 2,80	R 3,00	7%	7%
Soup	400g x2	R28,38	R27,58	R29,98	R 2,40	R 1,60	9%	6%
Tea	250g	R21,79	R21,24	R23,99	R 2,75	R 2,20	13%	10%
Full cream milk	6L	R94,39	R99,59	R100,59	R 1,00	R 6,20	1%	7%
Maas	4L	R45,79	R49,39	R48,59	-R 0,80	R 2,80	-2%	6%
Eggs	60 eggs	R111,18	R109,58	R119,18	R 9,60	R 8,00	9%	7%
Chicken feet	2kg	R74,80	R86,44	R88,94	R 2,50	R 14,14	3%	19%
Gizzards	2kg	R87,89	R96,39	R95,44	-R 0,95	R 7,55	-1%	9%
Chicken livers	2kg	R63,39	R71,44	R79,94	R 8,50	R 16,55	12%	26%
Beef liver	2kg	R96,94	R99,44	R102,44	R 3,00	R 5,50	3%	6%
Beef	2kg	R196,99	R205,44	R197,98	-R 7,46	R 0,99	-4%	1%
Wors	2kg	R156,44	R151,25	R169,94	R 18,68	R 13,50	12%	9%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R73,44	R88,44	R80,94	-R 7,50	R 7,50	-8%	10%
Fish	2kg	R115,94	R118,94	R121,94	R 3,00	R 6,00	3%	5%
Tomatoes	6kg	R82,48	R96,38	R97,49	R 1,11	R 15,01	1%	18%
Carrots	5kg	R28,99	R27,38	R43,39	R 16,01	R 14,40	58%	50%
Butternut	10kg	R81,70	R61,41	R64,27	R 2,86	-R 17,43	5%	-21%
Spinach	8 bunches	R49,94	R70,32	R127,92	R 57,60	R 77,98	82%	156%
Cabbage	2 heads	R28,49	R26,38	R31,98	R 5,60	R 3,50	21%	12%
Green pepper	2kg	R43,98	R55,18	R51,58	-R 3,60	R 7,60	-7%	17%
Cremora	800g	R39,19	R41,99	R44,59	R 2,60	R 5,40	6%	14%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R124,74	R128,34	R131,94	R 3,60	R 7,20	3%	6%
Canned beans	410g x6	R75,54	R79,44	R85,14	R 5,70	R 9,60	7%	13%
Bananas	4kg	R54,36	R49,96	R48,76	-R 1,20	-R 5,60	-2%	-10%
Apples	3kg	R30,79	R31,19	R48,49	R 17,30	R 17,70	55%	57%
Oranges	7kg	R64,46	R31,00	R31,00	R 0,00	-R 33,46	0%	-52%
Margarine	1kg	R41,39	R40,49	R47,19	R 6,70	R 5,80	17%	14%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R63,18	R64,78	R63,58	-R 1,20	R 0,40	-2%	1%
Polony	2.5kg	R61,79	R70,19	R71,99	R 1,80	R 10,20	3%	17%
Apricot jam	900g	R31,59	R33,39	R36,19	R 2,80	R 4,60	8%	15%
White bread	25 loaves	R347,90	R390,35	R381,06	-R 9,29	R 33,16	-2%	10%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R302,40	R349,90	R346,69	-R 3,21	R 44,29	-1%	15%
Total household food basket		R 4 253,07	R 4 673,31	R 4 850,97	R 177,67	R 597,91	3,8%	14,1%

Month-on-month: The cost of the Pietermaritzburg household food basket *increased* by **R177,67 (3,8%)** from R4 673,31 in December 2022 to R4 850,97 in January 2023.

Year-on-year: The cost of the Pietermaritzburg household food basket *increased* by **R597,91 (14,1%)** from R4 253,07 in January 2022 to R4 850,97 in January 2023.

15. Food Price Methodology

In 2019 we began a process of thinking through how to expand the scope of the Pietermaritzburg-based Household Affordability Index. The reason to expand the scope of the Pietermaritzburg data was to seek greater empirical evidence of the national picture of household affordability constraints and how families, living on low incomes, were responding to a deepening financial and economic crisis, given rising expenditure costs, job losses, stagnant employment, a deepening food crisis, deepening poverty and entrenched inequality.

The Pietermaritzburg Household Affordability Index is a realistic and accurate tool to measure inflation on basic expenditure items for households living on low incomes, whilst able to provide a picture of how families living on low incomes are responding to a deepening household affordability crisis. The data that we release monthly is important and provides a reflection of what is playing out in Pietermaritzburg but it is also able to provide a reasonable reflection of what might be playing out nationally. Expanding the scope of our data beyond Pietermaritzburg is an attempt to better track and analyse the national picture of household affordability.

In April 2020, PMBEJD started a process of expanding the scope of food price data collection and having conversations with women in four new areas: Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, and Springbok. Women living in low-income households within these areas were approached to work with us, talk with us, think with us, and track food prices and other expenditures in the areas in which they lived. The areas include Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow; Gugulethu, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Langa, Delft, Dunoon; KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, and Mtubatuba; and Springbok, and includes Pietermaritzburg.

Between April and August 2020 we ran a pilot, based on the Pietermaritzburg methodology, to (1) test which foods constitute the core foods and the volumes of these foods in the trollies of low income households in the new areas; (2) identify, test and verify supermarkets and butcheries which target the low-income market and where women living on low incomes do their shopping; and (3) collect food prices from the supermarkets and butcheries every two weeks (for 5 months), whilst improving the practice of selection of foods for greater accuracy of data (this included buying and cooking selected cheaper food brands to check quality), as well as to continually track and reflect how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves.

The pilot was successful.

The outcomes of which were that the core foods identified by women as constituting those in the area-based household food baskets were very closely reflective of the foods and volumes of foods in the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket. Women agreed that the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket was a good proxy for the baskets in new areas, but that a few modifications should be made to improve its accuracy of area-based food purchasing dynamics to better reflect the core foods in the basket. In this regard several new foods were added to the new Food Basket, and some foods originally in the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket were increased/decreased in volume or dropped from the trolley.

The new Food Basket retains the core of the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket with the following modifications: **new foods** added are 6L Full cream milk, 2kg chicken livers, 2kg beef livers, 2kg fish (seasonal), 2kg green pepper and 7kg oranges. **Increased volumes** are 3kg apples (up from 1,5kg), 4 bars of 500g green bar bath soap (up from 2 bars of 500g), and 1,5L of *jik* (up from 750ml). **Reduced volumes** are 30kg maize meal (down from 35kg), 2kg chicken feet (down from 5kg), 1kg margarine (down from 2 x 1kg), and 1 x 900g apricot jam (down from 2 x 900g). **Removed item** is *jeyes fluid*. **The new Food Basket includes 44 foods & the Domestic & Hygiene Products Basket includes 14 products.**

The new basket reflects the most important foods in the trollies of families living on low incomes in the new areas. Because we have universalised the new basket (the basket is the same for all 5 areas: Joburg, Durban, Cape Town, Springbok and Pietermaritzburg), it is important to note that whilst the new basket reflects the core foods in the trollies across the five areas; there will be nuances within households and areas. For example, there will be differences in the volumes of starches (viz. maize meal and rice); types of meats (viz. chicken feet, fish, offal, and red meats); and purchasing of types of fruits and vegetables (seasonality). This is expected. The new basket therefore is a proxy of the foods, the volumes of foods and the cost of foods which form a household basket in each area and averaged for all areas. ***It cannot however be considered the basket for every family living on a low income in each area and***

for all areas covered. It is however considered a reasonable proxy for a food basket which women identified as including the most important typical foods which most households try and buy each month.

The supermarkets and butcheries selected by women are those which most households, in the areas in which they live, do their shopping in, and which offer the cheapest/or most affordable prices. These are all supermarkets which target the low-income market. In total, prices are tracked in 44 supermarkets and 30 butcheries.

The methodology used to collect food prices is unique and has some significant implications: (1) food price inflation is tempered by switching to cheaper brands if monthly prices increase beyond what women consider affordable or reasonable; and (2) [linked to 1] the cost of the household food basket month-to-month is relatively stable, and therefore provides an accurate measure of inflation, whilst also better able to show spikes (because women absorb price shocks by switching to cheaper brands – if there is a spike, then there really is a spike because the shock was not absorbed by switching as most brands of that food would have increased); and (3) the household food basket is accurately able to capture the real costs of food and other basic expenditures for households living on low incomes.

Implications of expanding the scope of the Household Affordability Index

Expanding the scope of the food price work provides a better lens into the national picture of food price inflation, the cost of a food basket, household affordability, low wages, and low social grants. Conversing with women in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, and Springbok further provides a deeper level of understanding on inflation on different foods, the vagaries of local contexts, the different ways women respond to food price and other expenditure fluctuations and how women cope on low incomes; and what different local situations look like and what women think about what is happening, and what should be done about it. Through dialogue and confirming stories and insights with all women data collectors we are also able to provide a joint narrative of what is happening (what the situation is like), whilst pulling out the nuances. The Household Affordability Index is better able to reflect the national picture of the deepening household affordability crisis.

Whilst we intend to continue broadening the scope of the Household Affordability Index, to include more areas in South Africa as well as including more expense and income data; and therefore improving data capacity to better reflect a wider national picture, whilst continually improving the accuracy of data collected and analysis, we are confident that the data and analysis which we now release to the public from September 2020 is sound, grounded, verifiable and accurate in capturing the real cost of foods as purchased by women living on low incomes, and the decisions taken by women at the supermarket shelves in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Springbok and Pietermaritzburg.

Summary of the new Household Food Basket

The Household Food Basket has been designed together with women living on low incomes in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Cape Town (Gugulethu, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Langa, Delft, Dunoon), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hammarsdale, Pinetown, and Mtubatuba), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape), and Pietermaritzburg. It includes the foods and the volumes of these foods which women living in a family of seven members (an average low-income household size) tell us they typically try and secure each month. **The Household Food Basket is not nutritionally complete. It is a basket of food which women try and secure each month for their families given affordability constraints.**

Food prices are tracked directly by women data collectors off the shelves of 44 supermarkets and 30 butcheries that target the low-income market and which women identified as those they shop at. Food selection at the supermarket shelves mirrors how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves given affordability constraints viz. that the foods are chosen on relative affordability and reasonable quality, and food brands are switched to seek out the cheapest prices and special deals. The selection of food brands is dynamic and subjective. Women are smart and savvy, and shop around for bargains: this specific methodology used provides an accurate cost of a monthly household food basket, as purchased by women living on low incomes.

There are 44 foods in the Household Food Basket. The date for data collection is between the 1st and 4th day of each month. Data is collected and released in the same month. Data is presented for each area, and it is also weighted and averaged for all 5 areas. Weighting is as follows: 27% for Joburg, Durban & Cape Town; 12% Pietermaritzburg, and 7% Springbok.

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