



## **MUTARE BASIC NEEDS BASKET**

**July 2013**

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## MUTARE BASIC NEEDS BASKET

The cost of the Basic Needs Basket for Mutare has slightly risen by less than 0.45%, from \$472.21 in May 2013 to \$474.33 in July 2013. The increase was mainly driven by the slight changes in the prices of food items especially of beef and cooking oil. The cost of beef which on average was costing around \$4.50 per kilo in May increased to an average price of around \$6.50 in July. The cost of non food items remained stable. The table below is a detailed Mutare BNB for the month.

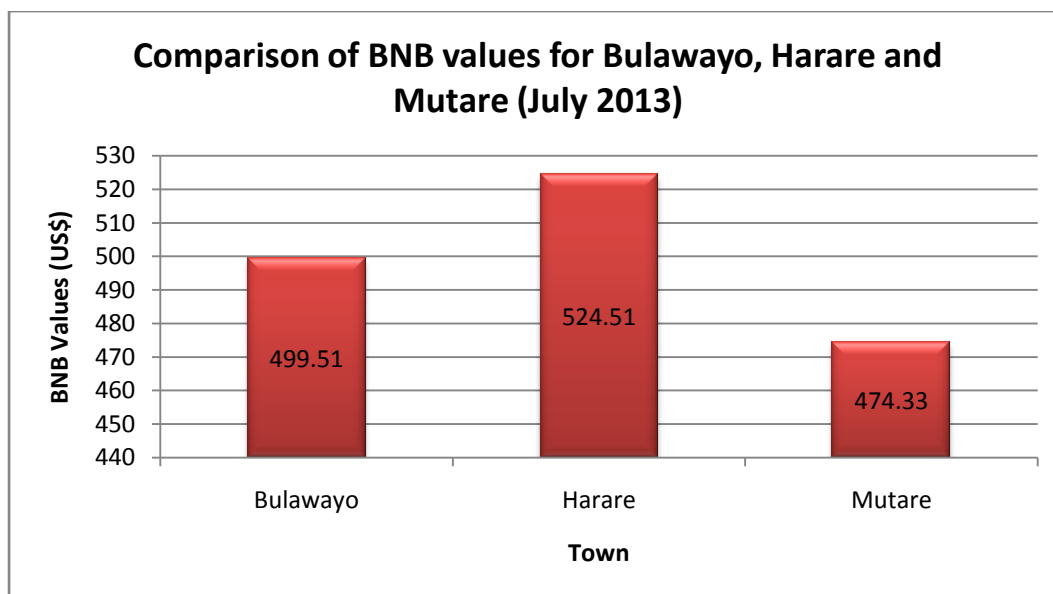
### Mutare BNB<sup>1</sup> for July 2013

		Unit Available	Quantity Required	Mutare average (US\$)
<b>A. Essential Food Items:</b>				
Mealie Meal (breakfast)	Red Seal (Roller meal)	20kg	2	25.22
Cooking oil	D'lite	2Ltrs	2	8.89
Beef	Mixed	1kg	8	51.59
Chicken	Suncrest cuts	2kg	1	7.97
Beans	Sugar beans	500g	2	2.95
Fish	Fresh	1kg	2	8.08
Salt	Pro-brands	2kg	1	0.92
Bread	Bakers Inn	1loaf	30	30.00
Eggs	Standard	1 crates	2	11.14
Sugar	Gold star (white)	2kg	4	8.90
Tea (leaves)	Tanganda	250g	4	9.12
Milk	Steri	500ml	10	9.75
Margarine	Buttercup	2kg	1	11.46
Onions		1kg	5	8.80
Tomatoes		1kg	10	13.80
Vegetables (greens)	Rape	1kg	15	6.13
<b>Sub-total</b>				<b>214.72</b>
<b>B. Essential Non-food items</b>				
Washing soap	Green bar	1kg	3	4.92
Bathing soap	Geisha tablets	250g	4	3.73
Washing Powder	Omo	1kg	1	2.25
Toothpaste	Colgate	100ml	2	2.75
Sanitary pads	Farai	1 pack	3	3.20
Toilet paper	Softex	4 rolls	4	5.11
Jelly	Vaseline	250ml	2	5.66

<sup>1</sup> The following are the shops and markets where PRFT collected data on prices of basic commodities for the July 2013 BNB; Dangamvura TM, Sakubva TM, Sakubva Spar, Chikanga Spar, TM City centre, OK City Centre. The survey was conducted on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>st</sup> of July 2013.

<b>Sub-total</b>				<b>27.61</b>
<b>C. Rates and other essential services</b>				
Water & Sanitation (medium cost - fixed)	Water fixed			0.00
	Average usage/month	m3	40	16.00
	Sanitation (Sewage)	Fixed		6.00
Monthly rent (4 roomed house)	Basic accommodation	per room	4	160.00
Electricity <sup>2</sup>	Fixed		1	0.00
	Average usage/month	Units		50.00
<b>Sub-total</b>				<b>232.00</b>
<b>Total for Basic Needs Basket for Mutare</b>				<b>474.33</b>
<b>Other Costs</b>				
Telephone/Communication		\$/month		30.00
Transport (2-way)		\$1/day		30.00
School Fees				
Tertiary	University			420.00
	Technical/Professional College		National certificate	175.00
			National Diploma	225.00
	High School (Forms 5&6)	per term		120.00
	Secondary (Forms 1-4)	per term		70.00
	Primary	per term		25.00
	Creche	per month		30.00
Uniforms	Girls	Complete set	Enbee Prices	70.00
	Boys	Complete set	Enbee Prices	60.00
Health care	CIMAS Basicare scheme			2 adults @ \$67 each and 3 children @ \$40 each
Fuel & Lighting	Paraffin			1.20
	Diesel			1.28
	Petrol			1.42
	Matches	Carton of 10		0.75
	Candles	pack of 6		2.00
	Firewood	per month		20.00

<sup>2</sup> Electricity charges were estimated using averages that families are now paying following the installation of pre-paid meters in most homes.



### **Social services revival, a key step towards eradication of urban poverty in Zimbabwe**

According to the recent Zimbabwe 2012 country report on the progress towards attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Zimbabwe still lags behind in terms of eradication of poverty. The current level of poverty in Zimbabwe has its roots in the cumulative effects of the protracted economic decline that the country experienced prior to the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009. Although some progress has been achieved in terms of economic recovery after the formation of GNU, eradicating poverty has remained a mammoth challenge for the government. Urban poverty has been worsened by lack of access to affordable education and health care. The social services sector has not received enough support especially in terms of ensuring social protection to vulnerable residents. Due to high levels of unemployment in urban areas with most families earning their income from flea markets and street vending, the majorities are facing challenges and find it difficult to pay the exorbitant school fees and health care bills as the dollar is increasingly becoming scarce.

To access health care services, families on average pay \$20 as consultation fees and this amount excludes cost of buying drugs. Since most families are not on medical aid, payment on health care is done through out of pocket. On the other side, a family with school going children needs to fork school fees which is on average \$50 for creche, \$45 primary and \$80 for secondary pupils per term. Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (PRFT) considers that such amounts are unaffordable especially to the poor families with low levels of income. An analysis of the households under the PRFT sentinel surveys in Bulawayo and Mutare has revealed that the average household monthly incomes for July 2013 were approximately US\$373.33 and US\$336, respectively. Comparing these average incomes with a minimum amount required for a decent life (Cost of Basic Needs Basket) in the respective cities, there is no doubt that the majority of families are already in food poverty. The PRFT's Basic Needs

Basket (BNB) survey for July has shown that the cost of Basic Needs Basket for an average family of five to live a descent and dignified lifestyle in Harare was \$524.51 while the cost of the basket for same sized families in Bulawayo and Mutare is about \$499.51 and \$474.33, respectively. High school fees and out of pocket spending on health care impose a burden on poor families who are struggling to afford a monthly Basic Needs Basket.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have identified improvement in access to social services such education and health care as means to alleviate poverty. Investing in education especially primary level and health care positively influence income poverty through human capital development. Due to failure to cope with high bills in education and health care, most families are incurring huge debts. Huge debts have an effect of worsening poverty situation as families are left with no option but to sell their assets to pay the bills.

Due to urban poverty which is an emerging reality, PRFT continues to unmask urban poverty and recommend pro poor policies that aim to cushion the vulnerable families from unaffordable education and health care services. PRFT strongly advocates for social services revival in the process of fighting urban poverty. At policy level, the government should consider policies aiming at increasing social protection to the vulnerable groups in our society that include the aged, orphans and vulnerable children as well as people with disabilities. Implementing National Health Insurance (NHI) policy and increasing resources channelled to the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) are some of the policy measures that can be pursued in this regard.