## BNNB Statement 7th May, 2021

**Cost of Living Maintains Upward Trend**

The cost of living for a family of five as measured by the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket (BNNB) for Lusaka in April stood at K8, 743.89**.** This shows an increase of K99.39 from the March 2021 basket which stood at K8, 644.50. The rise in the basket is attributed to price movements mainly from the food items.

In the April basket, the price of vegetables increased by K60.71 for 40kg moving from K491.72 to K552.43, 16kg of bananas increased by K53.41 from K230.08 to K283.49, chicken increased by K45.53 from K199.46 to K244.99 for 5kg, the price of 2kg soya pieces increased by K41.9 moving from K96.35 to K138.25 and 1kg of beans went up by K12.66 moving from K108.77 to K121.43. From the non-food but essential items, the price of charcoal increased by K14.80 from K672 to K684.80.

The increase in the price of vegetables can be attributed to change in season as the country moves towards the cold season. A similar movement was seen in 2020 were the basket recorded a K14.1 upwards movement in the price of vegetables. Also, the Centre notes that food items such as chicken have remained on an upward trajectory over the last few months attributed to increased costs of production.

However, notable price declines in the basket were recorded in the value of onion which reduced from K141.41 to K93.18 for 4kg showing a price drop of K48.23, other fruits reduced by K39.88 moving from K543.77 to K503.89 and the price of 10litres milk went down by K10, from K291.40 to K281.40. Also, the price of onion which has shown a decline of K48.23 following the lift of the importation ban. However this reduction is observably less than the increase which was recorded in March evidently showing that prices tend to move up easily but quite resistant to move downward. As other fruits get into season, a reduction is noted in the commodity though not so much given that they are largely imported.

JCTR invites community members to actively participate in the ongoing 2022 budget consultations as a step to highlighting key development proposals for the betterment of the nation. Also, as the Country prepares for the 2021 general elections, community members and politicians are encouraged to promote and practice community peace building and issue-based campaigns. A positive social and political outlook is important for economic stability. Stability of the nation’s macroeconomic indicators in particular is critical in seeing constancy in prices of both food and non-food essentials. Additionally, economic stability further holds implications for development, trade and investment.

Evidently, Zambia needs to enhance its promotion and provision of incentives for local production especially in the agriculture sector. The Centre further urges communities to take initiatives in forming more agricultural cooperatives guided by policies in the agriculture sector. This will go a long way in encouraging the production and subsequently consumption of locally produced food. This in turn would contribute to economic growth, food security, food diversity, poverty reduction and the nation’s achievement of the goal of zero hunger as espoused in Vision 2030. Food security is a key determinant of health. Health is one of the key components of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) and must not be compromised if the nation is to guarantee dignified living for all its people especially the poor and vulnerable among us.

**For further clarifications contact the Social and Economic Development (SED) Programme at the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) on 0955295881 and 0954755319. Email:** [**jctr.sed@gmail.com**](mailto:jctr.sed@gmail.com) **and** [**jctr.info@gmail.com**](mailto:jctr.info@gmail.com)**. Martin Mwamba Road, Plot 3813 Martin Mwamba Road, Olympia Park – Lusaka. P. O. Box 37774 Lusaka – Zambia**