

Families feel pinch as 11 commodities face significant price changes

Inflation.

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Business leaders under the East African Business Council (EABC) have called on East African Community (EAC) governments to rethink the structure and management of digital tax stamp systems across the region.

For many families, a trip to the market now requires more careful budgeting than it did a year ago. From maize flour to smoked tilapia and fuel, everyday essentials have quietly become more expensive, stretching household incomes

and forcing difficult choices. Uganda Bureau of Statistics (Ubos) has listed 11 commodities whose prices have significantly changed over the last 12 months, reflecting shifts in supply and demand across the country.

At the centre of these changes is maize flour, a staple in many homes. The average price of a kilogramme rose from Shs2,422 in February 2025 to Shs2,718 in February 2026. That represents a 10.8 percent increase over the year, more than double the 5 percent rise recorded in January 2026.

Fish lovers are also digging deeper into their pockets. The average price of smoked tilapia rose from Shs36,547 to

Shs40,894 per kilogramme over the same period. Fresh tilapia, beef, cassava, onions, cabbage and other common food items also registered price increases.

Fuel prices have added another layer of pressure, with the price of petrol rising from Shs4,986 per litre in February 2025 to Shs5,130 in February 2026, a 3.4 percent rise compared to 1.3 percent. Diesel prices have also edged up. Since fuel costs affect transportation of goods, any increase often trickles down to market prices, further tightening household budgets.

Ubos principal statistician for price statistics Juliet Nakanyenga, says Uganda continues to experience both price elastic-

ity and price inelasticity, with some prices of goods and services easily increasing, but taking long to reduce or never at all.

Despite the noticeable rise in some key household commodities, Ubos reported that annual headline inflation declined slightly to 2.9 percent in February, from 3.2 percent in January, driven by annual food crop inflation, which slowed to 1.8 percent compared to 3 percent in January.

However, inflation for energy, fuel and utilities rose to 2.7 percent from 1.7 percent over the same period.

These figures may suggest stability at a national level, but the reality at the market stall can feel different, especially when

essential foods and fuel become more expensive. Beyond consumer goods, Ubos also released figures on construction input prices. Ubos senior statistician Irene Musitwa Namugenze, noted that construction sector inflation stood at 0.0 percent, compared to 0.2 percent in December.

Inflation for residential building construction was -0.1 percent, compared to 0.2 percent previously, suggesting relative stability in the cost of building materials.

Thus, while inflation remains relatively low, the steady rise in selected essential commodities highlights the daily financial balancing act faced by many Ugandans.