CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) MARCH, 2009: PRESS RELEASE

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MARCH 2009 ANNUAL INFLATION RATE INCREASES SLIGHTLY

The Composite year-on-year Inflation rate (2003=100) increased by 0.41 percentage point from 7.04 per cent in February 2009 to 7.45 percent in March 2009. When the CPI for this month is compared with the figure for last month, the monthly rate of inflation for March 2009 also increased by 0.66 per cent.

There were increases in the year-on-year rates of inflation in centers like Kenema and Makeni and decreases in the year-on-year rates of inflation Freetown and Bo during the month of March 2009 resulting in single digits rates of inflation been recorded in all CPI townships in the month of March 2009. Inflation declined in Freetown from 7.5 per cent in February 2009 to 7.0 per cent in March 2009, in Bo from 9.96 per cent in February 2009 to 8.64 per cent in March 2009. However, inflation increased in Kenema from 8.0 per cent in February 2009 to 11.5 per cent in March 2009 and in Makeni from 3.6 per cent in February 2009 to 6.9 per cent in March 2009.

In the old CPI series (1992=100) similar trends were recorded. The annual rates of inflation decreased in Freetown from 9.75 per cent in February 2009 to 9.72 percent in March 2009. However, inflation increased in Bo from 7.09 per cent in February 2009 to 8.29 per cent in March 2009, in Kenema from 9.74 percent in February 2009 to 11.69 percent in March 2009 and in Makeni from 5.23 percent in February 2009 to 9.64 percent in March 2009.

Inflation declined in Freetown from 7.5 per cent in February 2009 to 7.0 per cent in March 2009. However, inflation increased in Bo from 7.09 per cent in February 2009 to 8.29 per cent in March 2009, in Kenema from 9.74 percent in February 2009 to 11.69 percent in March 2009 and in Makeni from 5.23 percent in February 2009 to 9.64 percent in March 2009.

FACTORS INFLUENCING CHANGES IN THE MONTHLY RATE OF INFLATION

The combined monthly CPI for March 2009 increased from 185.44 per cent in February 2009 to 186.66 per cent in March 2009. The increase in the CPI this month was driven by increases in the cost of food especially bread and cereals(5.54 per cent), meat(13.87 per cent) and fruit(1.48 per cent) reinforced by increases in the price of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels(1.35 per cent) products such as actual rentals paid by tenants(0.43 per cent), repair of the dwelling(2.93 per cent) and other fuels(10.70 per cent) while the price of liquid fuels remained constant. Single digit year-on-year rates of inflation were recorded in all centers during the month of March 2009 probably because, the global pressure which resulted in increase prices in March last year has eased off a little and prices for some products in the basket such as fuel, palm oil, fish, vegetables, milk, cheese and eggs, postal services etc have fallen below their March 2008 level.

More information can also be obtained from our website: www.statistics.sl

For More Detailed Information: Subscribe to the Detailed CPI Report. Please Contact: The Statistician General, Statistics Sierra Leone P. O. Box 595, Tower Hill, Freetown, SIERRA LEONE Telephone: (232) 22- 223287 Call: (232) 76 – 609989 Facsimile: (232) 22- 223897 E-Mail: info@statistics.sl OR statistics@statistics.sl
<table>
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<tr>
<th>COICOP</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>Mar-08</th>
<th>Dec-08</th>
<th>Jan-09</th>
<th>Feb-09</th>
<th>Mar-09</th>
<th>3 Months Change</th>
<th>12 months Change</th>
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<td>193.65</td>
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<td>189.24</td>
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<td>185.44</td>
<td>186.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>-1.18</td>
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**Column Description**

- **Column O**: COICOP 12 Functions
- **Column A**: CPI Weighting
- **Column B**: CPI Of The Given Month (M) For Previous Year
- **Column C**: CPI Of The Given Month (M –3) For Current Year
- **Column D**: CPI Of The Given Month (M –2) For Current Year
- **Column E**: CPI Of The Given Month (M –1) For Current Year
- **Column G**: CPI Monthly Change In % ((F-E) X 100 /E)
- **Column H**: CPI 3 Months Change In % ((F-C) X 100 /C)
- **Column I**: CPI 12 Months Change In % ((F-B) X 100/B).

The Interim National CPI measures the change in prices, on average, from month to month, of the goods and services bought by most households, in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Makeni including all expenditure groups and both families and single persons. Prices are collected for 251 items. All prices collected are the prevailing retail market prices from six (6) markets in the Greater Freetown area, three (3) Markets in Bo Town, three (3) markets in Kenema Town and two (2) markets in Makeni Town for weekly prices and other outlets for monthly items whose prices are less likely to fluctuate rapidly. The National Index was computed by aggregating the CPI for the four index towns previously published separately with different base periods. The old CPI series for Bo, Kenema, Makeni and Freetown were rebased to base year 2003. Computation methodology changed from the Modified to the Traditional Laspeyres, and transformed into the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP) with 12 functions. The separate center CPIs were aggregated at the sub-class level.
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<td>Cloth &amp; Footwear</td>
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</table>

**Wgts**

- **Food**: 54.13
- **Beverages & Tobacco**: 3.63
- **Rent Rates & Repairs**: 3.92
- **Fuel & Power**: 6.51
- **Cloth & Footwear**: 7.35
- **Furniture Goods**: 1.86
- **Expn. Goods & Services**: 2.46
- **Personal Transport**: 1.16
- **Transp & Comm**: 4.77
- **Med. & Medicare**: 3.45
- **Education & Stationary**: 4.11
- **Enter. & Recreation**: 3.72
- **Personal Goods & Services**: 2.93
- **All Items**: 100

**Monthly % Change**

- **Food**: 0.10
- **Beverages & Tobacco**: 13.85
- **Rent Rates & Repairs**: -0.17
- **Fuel & Power**: 13.63
- **Cloth & Footwear**: 13.52
- **Furniture Goods**: 15.65
- **Expn. Goods & Services**: 12.48
- **Personal Transport**: 11.75
- **Transp & Comm**: 9.24
- **Med. & Medicare**: 7.24
- **Education & Stationary**: 6.31
- **Enter. & Recreation**: 6.63
- **Personal Goods & Services**: 6.91
- **All Items**: 8.26

**Annual % Change**

- **Food**: 1.53
- **Beverages & Tobacco**: 9.81
- **Rent Rates & Repairs**: 12.80
- **Fuel & Power**: 3.71
- **Cloth & Footwear**: 11.44
- **Furniture Goods**: 7.93
- **Expn. Goods & Services**: 11.87
- **Personal Transport**: 13.48
- **Transp & Comm**: 10.22
- **Med. & Medicare**: 1.10
- **Education & Stationary**: 13.34
- **Enter. & Recreation**: 13.34
- **Personal Goods & Services**: 8.26
- **All Items**: 13.76

**Wgts**

- **Food**: 54.13
- **Beverages & Tobacco**: 3.63
- **Rent Rates & Repairs**: 3.92
- **Fuel & Power**: 6.51
- **Cloth & Footwear**: 7.35
- **Furniture Goods**: 1.86
- **Expn. Goods & Services**: 2.46
- **Personal Transport**: 1.16
- **Transp & Comm**: 4.77
- **Med. & Medicare**: 3.45
- **Education & Stationary**: 4.11
- **Enter. & Recreation**: 3.72
- **Personal Goods & Services**: 2.93
- **All Items**: 100

**Monthly % Change**

- **Food**: 0.10
- **Beverages & Tobacco**: 13.85
- **Rent Rates & Repairs**: -0.17
- **Fuel & Power**: 13.63
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- **Expn. Goods & Services**: 12.48
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- **Transp & Comm**: 9.24
- **Med. & Medicare**: 7.24
- **Education & Stationary**: 6.31
- **Enter. & Recreation**: 6.63
- **Personal Goods & Services**: 6.91
- **All Items**: 8.26

**Annual % Change**

- **Food**: 1.53
- **Beverages & Tobacco**: 9.81
- **Rent Rates & Repairs**: 12.80
- **Fuel & Power**: 3.71
- **Cloth & Footwear**: 11.44
- **Furniture Goods**: 7.93
- **Expn. Goods & Services**: 11.87
- **Personal Transport**: 13.48
- **Transp & Comm**: 10.22
- **Med. & Medicare**: 1.10
- **Education & Stationary**: 13.34
- **Enter. & Recreation**: 13.34
- **Personal Goods & Services**: 8.26
- **All Items**: 13.76

**FREETOWN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1992=100)-OLD SERIES**