

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, AUGUST 2008

Wajir District

Warning Stages

LIVELIHOOD ZONE	WARNING STAGE	TREND
Pastoral – All Species	ALARM	Worsening
Pastoral – Cattle	ALARM	Worsening
Pastoral – Camel	ALARM	Worsening
Agro – Pastoral	ALERT	Worsening
Informal Employment/Business	ALARM	Worsening

TIME LINE



Dry spell (**Jilaal**)
(Migration, conflicts
Watering of livestock
Pressure on boreholes e.t.c)

Long rains (**Gu'**)
(Pasture surveys, mating season
(Planting).

winter (**Hagai**)
(Livestock diseases,
Labour demand

Short rains (**Deyr**)
(Migration, conflicts)

Calving & kidding period

Situation overview

- No rainfall was recorded during the month under review and the dry spell reported in July persisted.
- Quantity of pasture and browse continued to deteriorate, while quality was depleted rapidly, increasing average distance to grazing grounds to 25-50 km.
- Water sources for households and livestock consumption were mostly shallow wells and bore holes, with few protected dams for human use.
- The trekking distances between water sources and grazing areas increased to 25-50km for animals and 5-10km for households.

- Availability of water declined due to drying up of pans and dams (more than 92 pans have dried up). The number of areas under water trucking increased with the inclusion of Wajir Bor, Ogorji, Lekole south and north Dugo, Ireteno, Lesayu, Gerille, Handaki, Lolkuta North, Boji, Adan Awale, Belatul amin, Gunana and Majabow, Qudama and Shimbirbul.
- Milk production continued to decline and prices rose to between Ksh 45-55 per 750ml bottle.
- Pneumonia, diarrhoea, intestinal worms and malnutrition remain the major causes of morbidity and mortality.
- Kalazaar is endemic in the district, with more than 69 cases reported in Wajir District, Wajir south and Wajir west during the month.
- Though the district was generally calm, conflicts over water and pasture are expected due to the prevailing dry spell.
- Average market prices for all animal species deteriorated due to deteriorating body condition. This was worsened by the outbreak of PPR the month before, which left over 30,000 shoats dead.
- Prices of all commercial foods such as rice and maize rose due to rising fuel prices and poor infrastructure.
- Cases of malnutrition increased to 13.9 per cent. However, immunization coverage improved slightly to 55 per cent, while that of vitamin A supplementation stood at 44 per cent.
- Food distribution is ongoing, with 139,893 beneficiaries targeted. Food For Asset (FFA) programmes continued in the district and the number of FDP implementing FFA increased.
- The continued influx of livestock from neighbouring Mandera district posed a threat to the dwindling resources, leading to degradation and overgrazing.

Recommendations by DSG and KFSSG

- Urgent support for rehabilitation and repair of boreholes.
- Strengthening of rapid response team in the district.
- Provision of contingency funds for the dry spell.
- Provision of standby generator, standby submersible pumps and repairing of water buzzers.
- More capacity building for water users association, especially on resource utilisation and conflict management.
- Regular diseases surveillance along the borders and endemic areas.
- Drilling of boreholes in centers without reliable water sources.
- Strengthening livestock disease surveillance and management system.
- Increasing the number of extension services providers and staffing level at Ministry of Health and Education.
- De-silting of existing water pans (120 in the district) before the short rains.
- Strengthening of early warning system for detection and preparation for possible outbreaks, drought and mitigation measures.
- Strengthening of school-feeding program to sustain pupil retention in school during the dry season.

Current interventions

The current interventions include:

Food aid

- EMOP program by World Food Program through Oxfam, Aldef-Kenya and Wasda.
- Supplementary feeding program to children under five years by Merlin (NGO), SFP and support to other vulnerable children.
- School-feeding program and therapeutic feeding program by Merlin.
- Support to grannies by Catholic missions.

Non -food aid

- Ad hoc vaccination against PPR.
- De-silting of some of existing pans through FFA program.
- Mobile VCT services supported by APHIA II.
- Water and sanitation activities by Oxfam.

1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

1.1 Rainfall

No rainfall was recorded during the month under review.

1.2 Natural Vegetation, forage and pasture

- The quantity and quality of pasture, forage and vegetation covers deteriorated as the dry spell persisted.
- The migration of animals from Eastern Province and Mandera district overstretched resources, causing environmental degradation.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- Water sources for households and livestock consumption were mostly shallow wells and boreholes, with few protected dams for human consumption but grossly polluted.
- The trekking distances for animals increased to 25-50km and 5-10km for households.

1.3.1 Household access

The trekking distances to water sources for households increased and the time taken rose to approximately 4-5 hours in the pastoral community.

1.3.2 Livestock Access

Livestock trekking distances to water sources were between 25-50 km and the situation is expected to worsen.

1.4 Emerging issues

- Outbreak of Kalazaar, breakdown of boreholes and conflict over water are some of the emerging issues.
- Livestock quarantine following PPR outbreak aggravated the terms of trade for pastoralists, especially the lower strata households whose purchasing power is low.
- There is need to support various emergency initiatives interventions, including IGA.
- High increase of essential commodity prices including cereals and commercial goods.
- Influx of pastoral communities from Mandera District.

1.4.1 Insecurity

- No cases of insecurity were reported but there were few conflicts over water and pasture.

1.4.2 Migration

Inward migration of pastoralists from Mandera and neighboring Moyale district was reported. Animals are now concentrated in Wajir Bor, Gerile, Tarbaj, Griftu Sebule, Gurar, Eldas and Buna.

1.5 Implication on food security

Poor livestock body condition, low livestock and milk prices, high food prices and crop failure following failed rains impacted negatively on food security in the district.

2. Rural indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

Production of livestock was extremely low due to water and pasture stress, impacting negatively on herd sizes of the pastoralist communities.

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

Livestock body conditions were fair following the good pasture and browse generated in the last season. However, the body conditions are expected to deteriorate unless the short rains are timely and adequate.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

Other than the previous PPR outbreak, no other disease outbreaks have been reported of PPR affecting shoats.

2.1.3 Milk production

Milk production dropped following declining quantity and quality of pasture and browse. The average market price of milk per 750mm bottle stood at Ksh 45-50.

2.2 Crop production.

Crops such as maize and millet failed due to inadequate rainfall farmers planting late. However, there was small garden farming in Wajir central and other areas through use of

small irrigation pumps and hand dug pans.

2.2.1 Timeliness and condition of crop production

Crops failed due to inadequate rainfall.

2.2 Pests and diseases

No pests or crop diseases were reported.

2.2.3 Harvest

2.2.4 Implication on food security

Irrigation farming through use of solar energy would boost food security on the district. The rising prices of fuel have impacted negatively on crop production through irrigation.

3. Access to food

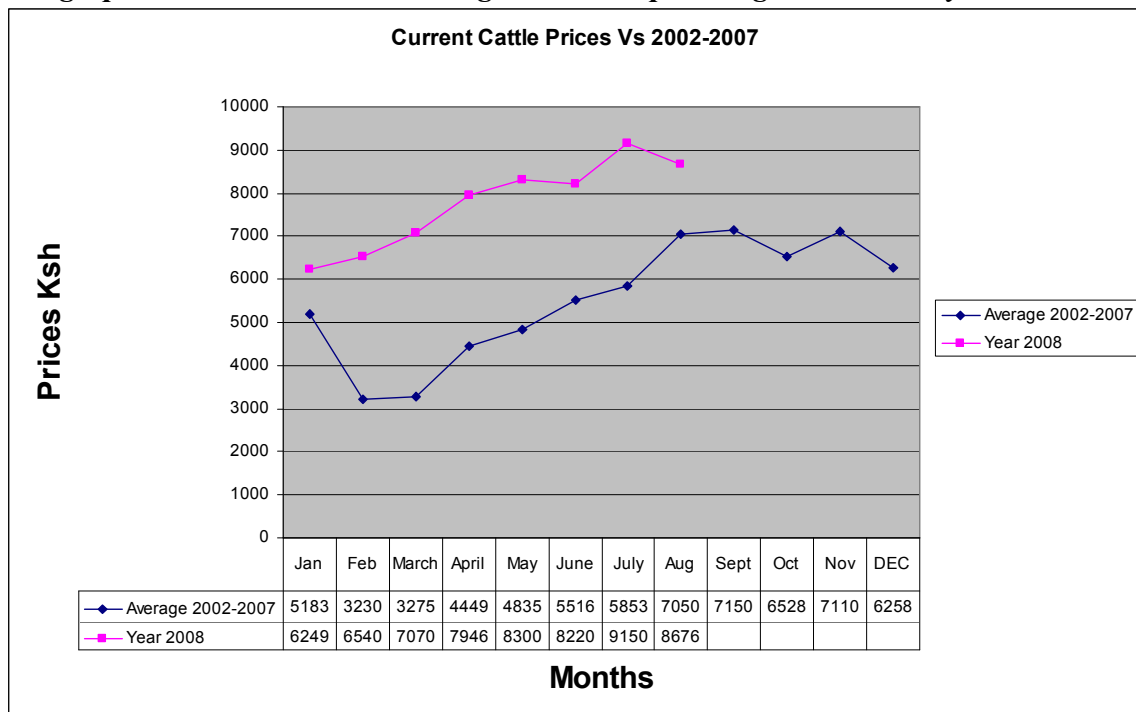
3.1 Livestock marketing and sales

Livestock prices declined following poor body condition across all species.

3.1.1 Cattle prices

Cattle prices dropped significantly from 9,150 in the previous month to 8,676. This was attributed to poor body condition due to insufficient pasture and browse.

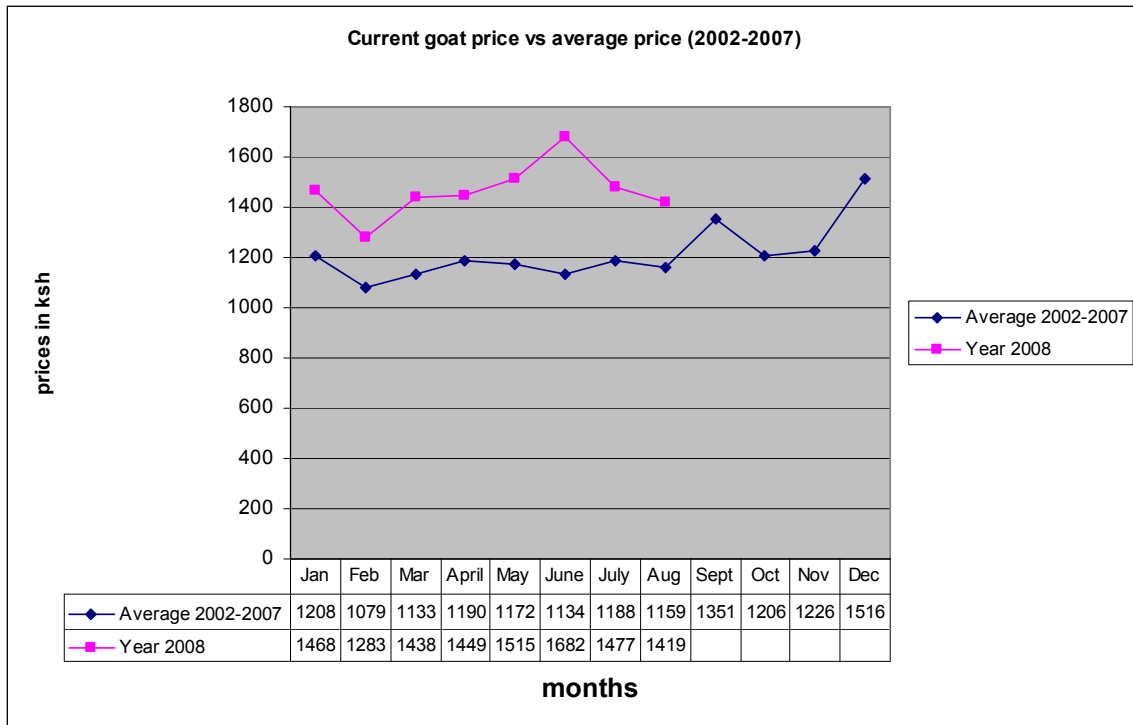
The graph below indicates cattle long term mean prices against current year 2008



3.1.2 Goats prices

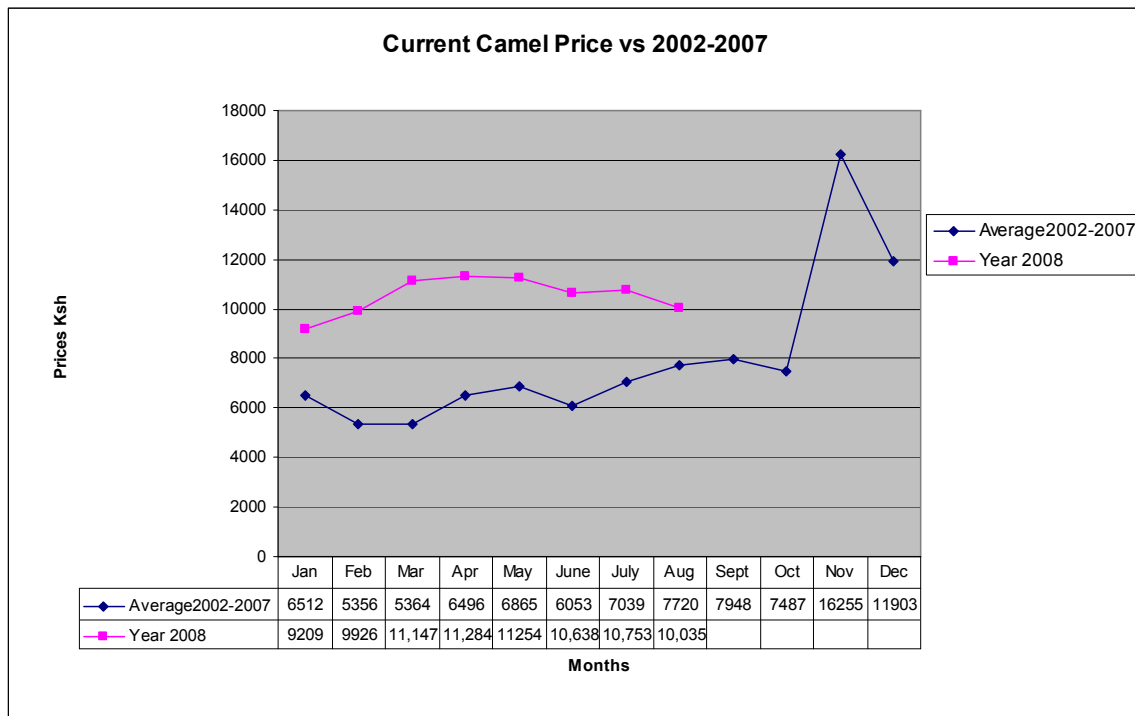
Prices of goats dropped compared to last month due to the market closure following the PPR outbreak. Pastoralists sold their animals illegally and therefore at reduced prices, posing a threat to household food security.

The graph indicates Goat long term mean prices against current year 2008.



3.1.3 Camel prices

The graph below indicates Camel long term mean prices against current year 2008



The prices of camels dropped compared to the previous month.

3.2 Livestock sales

Livestock sales were low as a result of poor body condition.

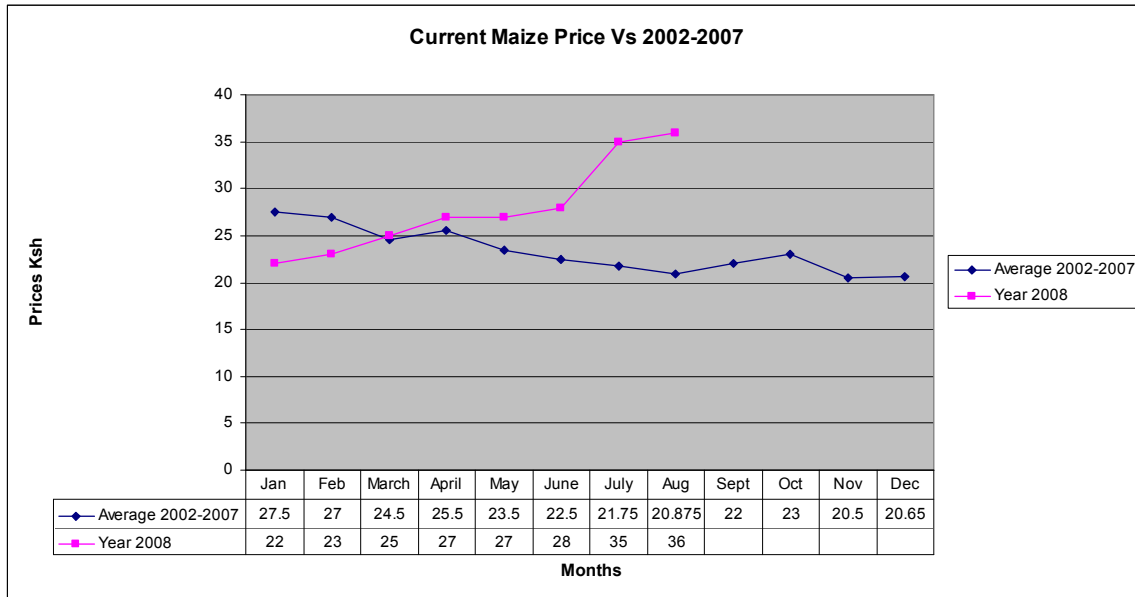
3.3 Milk consumption

Milk consumption was low compared to previous months. This was attributed to inadequate pasture and browse.

3.4 Crop prices

3.4.1 Maize

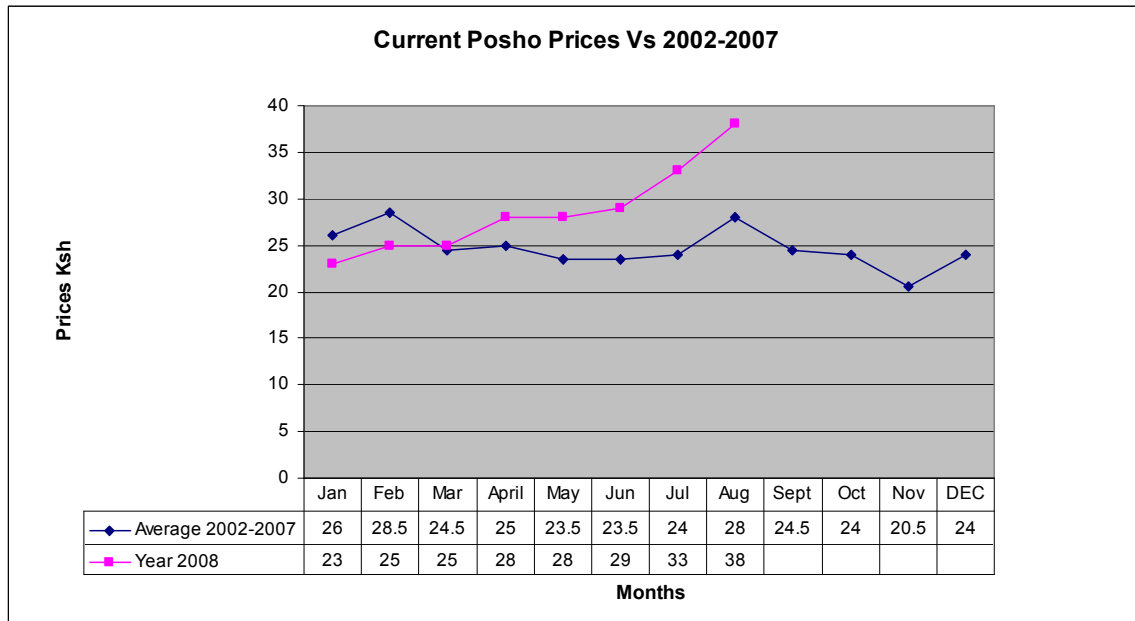
The graph below indicates maize long term mean prices against current year 2008.



The average maize price per kg during the month was Ksh 36, Ksh 1 more than the previous month. The price was not normal for the time of the year owing to low purchasing power and poor infrastructure.

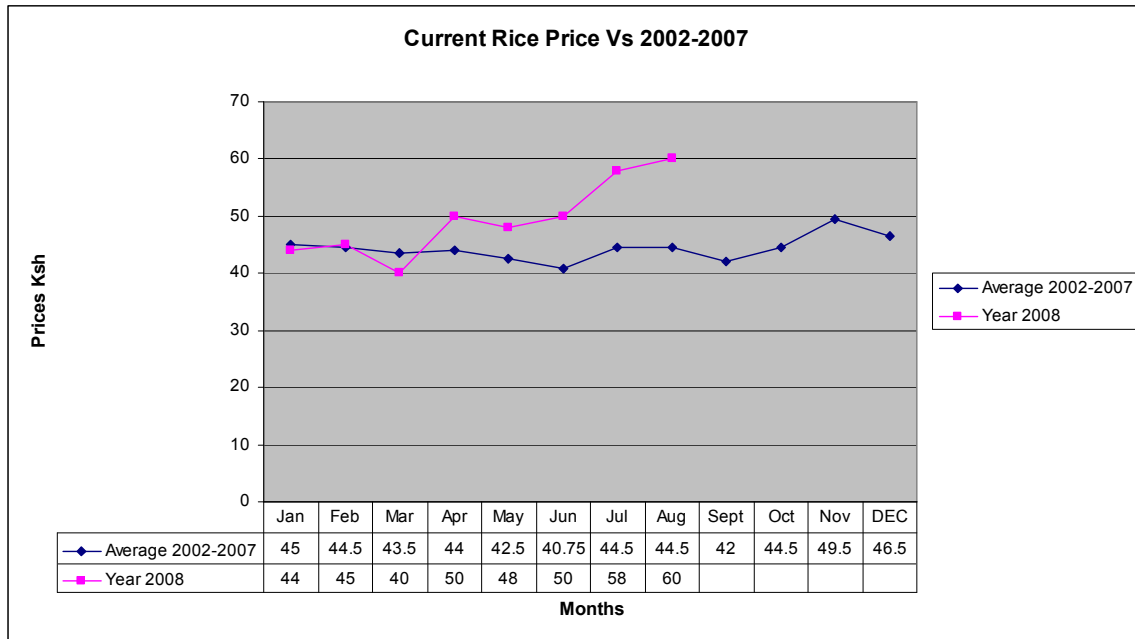
3.4.2 Posho prices (Maize meal)

The price of posho increased from Ksh 33 in July to 38. The price hike was attributed to scarcity in the local market.



3.4.3 Rice prices

The graph below indicates long term mean prices of rice against the current year 2008



The prices of rice increased compared to the previous month and are expected to increase further during the holy month of Ramadhan since the food is very commonly used.

3.5 Income

3.5.1 Crop income

Kitchen farming by use of small irrigation pumps, especially in Wajir central, was an alternative source of income. Drought resistant crops grown on small scale are also a source of income.

3.5.2 Livestock income

- Income from livestock is usually minimal. However, in small business livelihood zone, most people engage in livestock trade as brokers, middlemen or small-scale traders.
- Animals are also traded across the border in Ethiopia.
- Hides and skin, which are transported to outside markets, are also a source of income.

3.5.3 Other income

Hawking, sale of miraa (khat), quarrying, casual labour, sale of firewood are other alternative source of income especially in the small business/informal livelihood zone. Though the income is low, production and sale of gum and resin are also commonly practiced.

3.6 Implication of food security

- Poor income from livestock, milk and crops impacted negatively on the purchasing power of most households. This was compounded by high food and

fuel prices and the strain on resources following influx of animals from other areas.

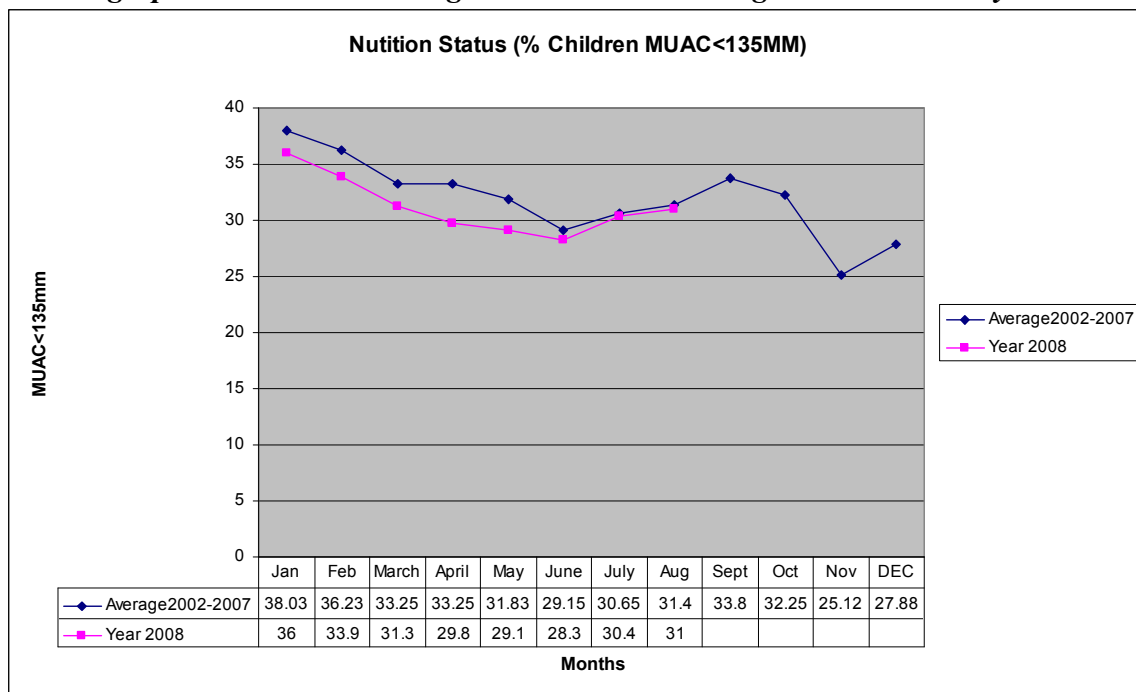
- FD Phase seven continued, with a target of 139,893 beneficiaries. Tarbaj, Hadado, Wajir Bor and Sebule were ranked as the most food insecure in the last assessment.

4.0 Welfare (utilization of food)

4.1 Nutrition status

The percentage of children under five years categorised as being at the risk of malnutrition (using MUAC <135MM) increased as milk and cereals prices soared, leaving them out of reach of most households.

The graph below indicates long term muac<135mm against the current year 2008



4.2 Health

The main causes of morbidity and mortality in the district remain malaria, URTI, Diarrhoeal diseases and malnutrition. The most affected area is Wajir west.

4.3 Flagged areas

Upsurge of Kalazaar may undermine nutrition status of children less than five years.

5. Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

- Water and sanitation hygiene activities by Oxfam.
- Credit scheme used as revolving fund by Aldef Kenya (Ngo).
- Support to mobile school education through ALRMP and MOEST.

5.2 Food aid

- EMOP relief food distribution by WFP through lead agency, Oxfam and implementing partners (ALDEF & WASDA) is ongoing.
- Outpatient therapeutic feeding and supplementary feeding Programmes (TFC) by Merlin (an NGO) at Wajir district hospital and all the thirteen divisions.
- Basic relief support from OOP especially to vulnerable groups.
- FFA-food for asset program.

5.3 Other coping strategies

Some of the coping strategies in the district include.

- Sale of firewood, charcoal, miraa (khat), gum and resins, quarry products.
- Purchasing of food on credit .
- Casual labour such as watering of animals at shallow wells.
- Reduction of number of meals per day.

6.0 Recommendations

- Mass treatment and vaccination of livestock, especially shoats.
- Improved sanitation and activities to promote hygiene.
- Strengthening of disease surveillance along the border and curbing of Kalazaar in Arbajahan and Eldas.
- Support to orphans and other vulnerable people through income-generating activities and material support.
- Food for training strategy to be considered and building of community capacity for asset management.
- Conflict early warning and peace-building initiatives to be strengthened.
- More hand pumps and solar powered water supply systems for shallow wells for schools and institutions.
- Provision of vector control chemicals and equipments i.e. LLTNs, Icons, Spray pumps and protective gear.
- Provision of more water kiosks at existing boreholes to improve separation of water points for human and livestock consumption.
- Purchase of a submersible engine and standby generator.
- Provision of a contingency fund for drought preparedness.