

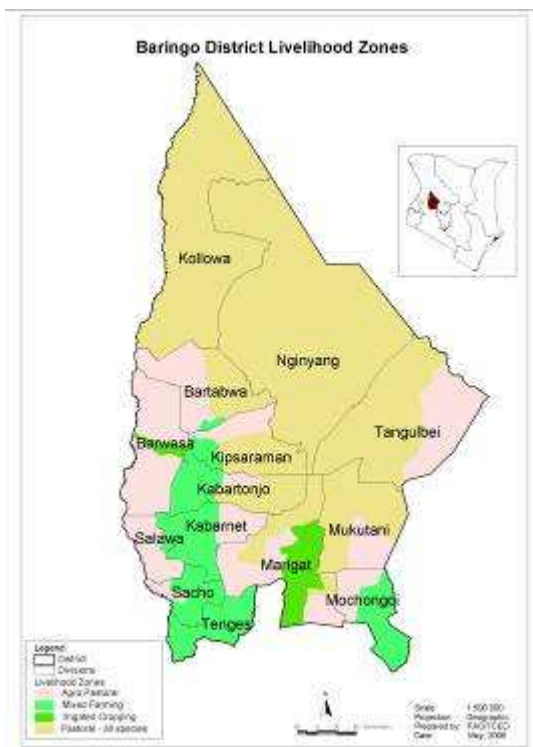


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, DECEMBER 2008

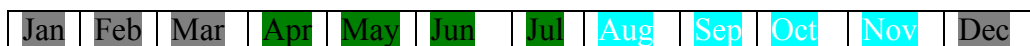
East Pokot/ Baringo Districts

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Pastoral	Alarm	Worsening
Agro pastoral	Alarm	Worsening
Irrigated Cropping	Alarm	Worsening
Mixed farming	Alarm	Worsening

Timeline



- Dry season :- (Land preparation, minimal calving, lambing & kidding)
- Long rains :- (Planting, most kidding & lambing and minimal calving & honey harvesting)
- Short rains :- (Most calving & honey harvesting and minimal kidding & lambing, pre-harvest & harvesting)

Situation Overview

- The district recorded no rainfall during the month.
- This resulted in drying up of grazing and water resources and quality and quantity of forage worsened.
- Water availability for households and livestock was generally fair.
- Livestock body condition was good for all the species.
- Milk production declined during the month, which was attributed to the onset of the dry season.
- The average prices of livestock increased for all the species. The increase was attributed to demand during Christmas festivities. Poultry prices also increased compared to last month due to improved demand during the Christmas festivities.
- The average prices of food and other commodities decreased slightly during the month, owing to improved supplies in the markets within the district and the neighboring districts. However, demand for food was high.
- Sale of honey, casual labour, petty trade (brewing local beer e.t.c.) and sale of charcoal and wood products were the other alternative sources of income for most sampled households during the month after the sale of livestock.
- The nutrition status of children below five years improved slightly during the month. The percentage of those rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC<135mm measurement) dropped to 18.6 per cent from 20.7 per cent in November. This was attributed to distribution of relief food in Baringo district in late November, a factor that improved food availability for children at the household level.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- The veterinary department /agencies should step up support to the livestock health sub sector through vaccinations and treatment of clinical cases. In particular, more effort should be directed at addressing CCPP in the district and upsurge of ECF in Kerio valley.
- The GOK and other aid agencies to put more efforts in ensuring the pastoralists communities in both East Pokot and Baringo districts are given continuous relief food supplies and supplementary foods for children until the stress situation normalises as malnutrition cases are very high, prices of food commodities are also high and milk production very low to sustain the communities.
- There is need to strengthen conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives to maintain the already achieved level of peace and further reduce it along the borders of East Pokot, Baringo, Turkana and Samburu districts.
- The Road Works Engineer should ensure that the roads linking Marigat to Mukutani; Marigat to Yatya; Marigat to Chemolingot and the Kerio valley roads that were destroyed by the rains are repaired to facilitate transportation of food to these areas as vehicles could not access the areas.
- The MOH should supply more anti-malarial drugs to rural health facilities that are far from the district hospitals to deal with the malaria upsurge.

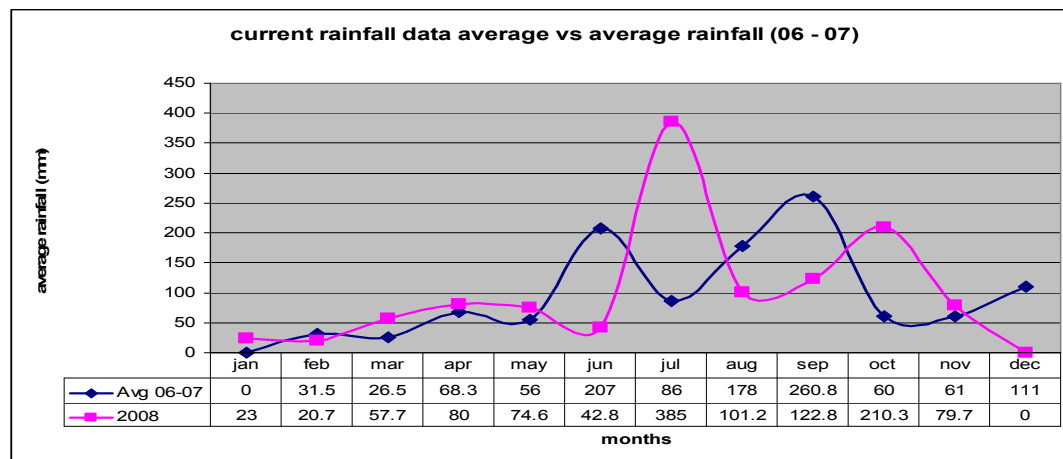
Current interventions

Non-food interventions

- Construction of 2 classrooms each for Chesitet and Natan communities in East Pokot district - **ALRMP/ Community.**
- Laying pipes for Tangulbei Borehole – **ALRMP / Ministry of water.**
- Construction of girls’ dormitory in Chepkesin primary school - **ALRMP/ Community.**
- Equipping of Rotu health centre and construction of pit latrines – **ALRMP/ Barpello catholic mission.**
- Equipping of Kapturo dispensary in Bartabwa division - **ALRMP/ Community.**
- Peace building initiatives within the districts’ of the project area by various stakeholders i.e. the **PSC, DPC, DSC, World vision, Community Elders, Youth groups, Political leaders, Pastors and ALRMP.**

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall



Source: ALRMP rain gauge data stations

- The district recorded no rainfall during the month, compared to the previous month which recorded 79.7 mm from three stations.
- This was not normal at the time of the year compared to the long term mean.
- However, this was the onset of the dry season expected to last for the next three months.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The quantity of forage in most parts of the project area worsened due to the onset of the dry season.
- The quality of the available pasture was fair. However, there was a general poor rejuvenation of pasture in the season due to the long dry spell earlier experienced.
- The average distance to grazing areas increased during the month owing to diminishing pasture and browse availability in the wet season grazing areas.
- The distance to grazing fields increased to an average of 5.3 km. from 4.7 km the previous month.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- There was a decline in recharge of water sources following lack of rain in the district.
- The water sources in use were pans and dams, natural rivers, traditional river wells, springs, boreholes and lakes.
- Distance to the nearest water source during the month increased to an average of 2.7 km from 2.3 km that of the previous month for most of the households.

1.4 Emerging issues

- The onset of the dry season worsened the browse and pasture conditions in the project area and the distances to water sources and pastures increased. Some of the satellite herds moved out of the wet season grazing points in search of pasture.
- Roads linking Marigat to Mukutani; Marigat to Yatya; Marigat to Chemolingot and the Kerio Valley roads were destroyed during the short rains period.

1.5 Implications on food security

- Worsening browse & pasture conditions and increasing distances to water has made livestock body deteriorate hence contributing to declining milk yields from the animals thus posing a threat to household food security for the pastoralists.
- Food cannot reach areas destroyed earlier by the short rains.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock body condition was good for all the species in all the livelihood zones despite of the onset of the dry season.
- This was normal at the time of the year.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

- Upsurge of CCPP and ECF diseases in the district.

2.1.3 Milk production

- Milk production declined in the district owing to diminishing pasture and browse availability.
- This was normal at the time of the year.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and status of various crop production activities

- Agro-pastoralists were preparing for the pre-planting activities.
- This was normal at the time of the year.

2.3 Implications on food security

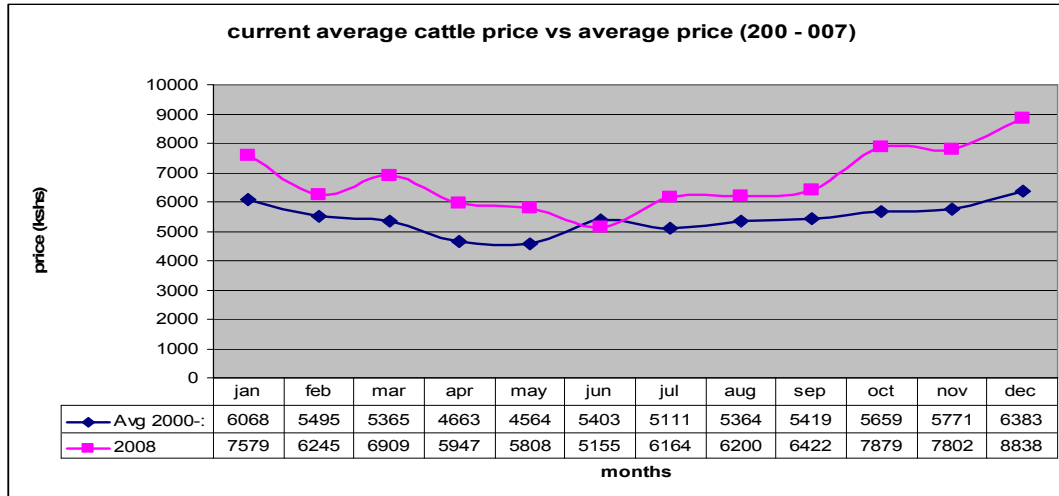
- Milk production at household level was not sufficient to support the families as this was the food depended upon by the pastoralists and children.
- Crops planted in last season failed due to lack of rain.

- This was a major threat to food security at the household level. The population requires relief food continuously until the situation normalises.

3.0 Access to food

3.1 Livestock marketing

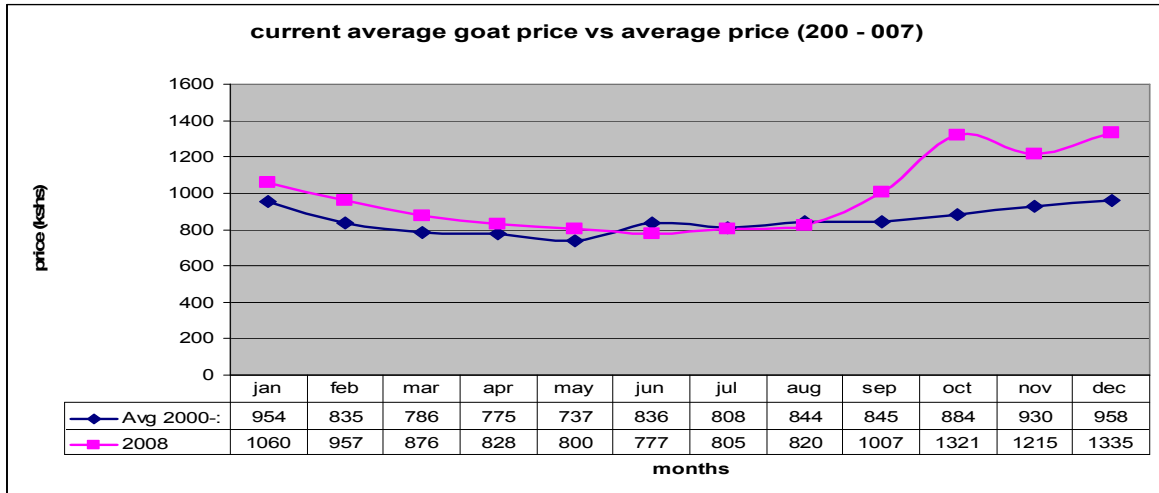
3.1.1 Cattle prices



N = 450 HH

- The average cattle price increased from Ksh 7,802 the previous month to Ksh 8,838 in December.
- The increase was normal at the time of the year when the price of cattle was expected to be high.
- The price was higher than the long term average of Ksh 6,383.
- This was attributed to availability of buyers and increased demand during Christmas festivities. This had a positive impact on household food security.
- Marigat division had the highest average cattle price of Ksh12,500. This was attributed to fair body condition of the animals and access to peri-urban prices. Bartabwa division had the lowest average price of Ksh5,000 due to inadequate buyers.

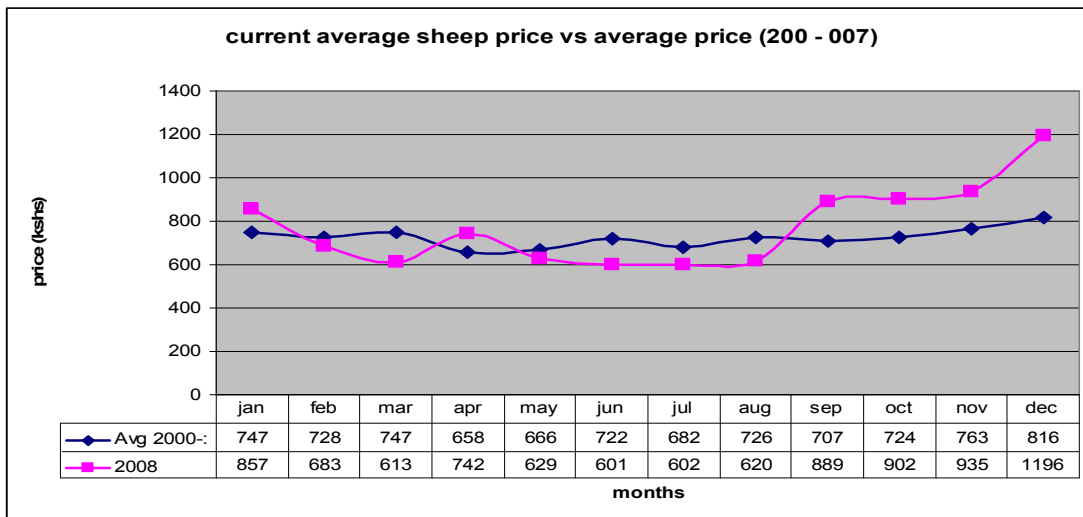
3.1.2 Goats prices



N = 450 HH

- The average goat price increased from Ksh1,215 in November to Ksh1,335 in December, showing an upward trend.
- The price was above the long term average of Ksh938.
- The increase was attributed to availability of buyers and increased demand during the Christmas festivities. This was impacted positively on household food security.
- Marigat division had the highest goat prices average of Ksh 1,757 due to high demand and access to peri-urban prices, while Tangelbei division had the lowest price average of Ksh1,138 owing to poor body condition and lack of buyers.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



N = 450 HH

- The average sheep price increased from Ksh 935 in November to Ksh1,196 in December, showing a slight increase.
- The price hike was attributed to high demand of the animals during the Christmas festivities and adequate buyers.

- The prices were, however, higher than the long term average. This was a boost to household food security.
- Marigat division had the highest sheep price of Ksh1,550 owing to access to peri-urban prices, while Kipsaraman division had the lowest price of Ksh 900 as a result of influx of the animals in the market and poor demand.

3.2 Livestock sales

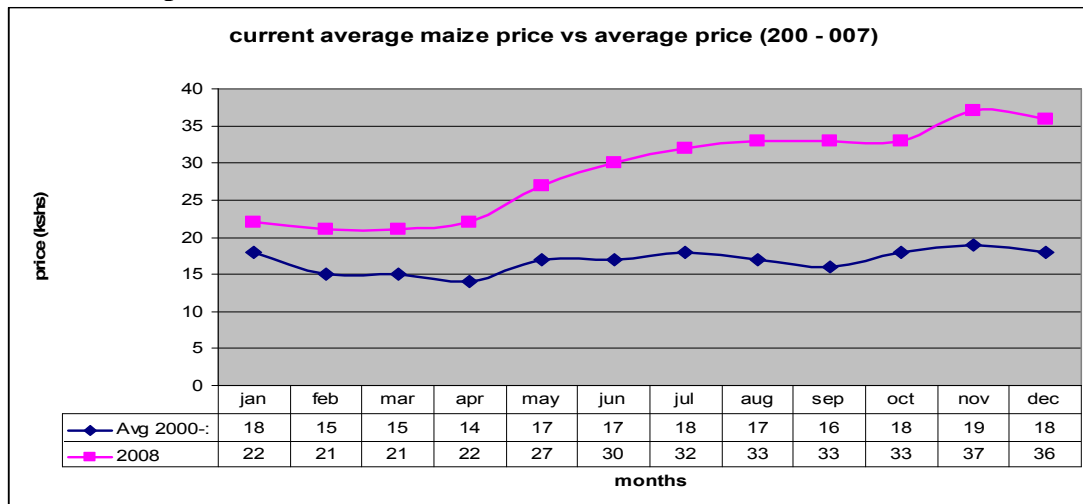
- The volume of livestock sales increased in the month compared to the previous months as a result of more demand for food at the household level.
- Goats, sheep, poultry, donkeys and cattle were the main livestock offered for sale at the markets.
- The pastoral livelihood zone had the highest sales as they depended on their livestock sales as the sole means of getting household needs, while the agro-pastoral and irrigated cropping livelihood zones had the lowest sales since they had other sources of income e.g. business, food stock, and casual labor.
- The level of sales was not normal at the time of the year as people had to sell a lot of animals to purchase highly priced food in the markets.

3.3 Milk consumption

- Milk consumption by household members declined in all livelihood zones.
- Compared to the previous month, the milk consumption at household level decreased owing to the onset of dry season. This impacted negatively on food security at household level, especially for children under five year.

3.4 Crop prices

3.4.1 Maize prices

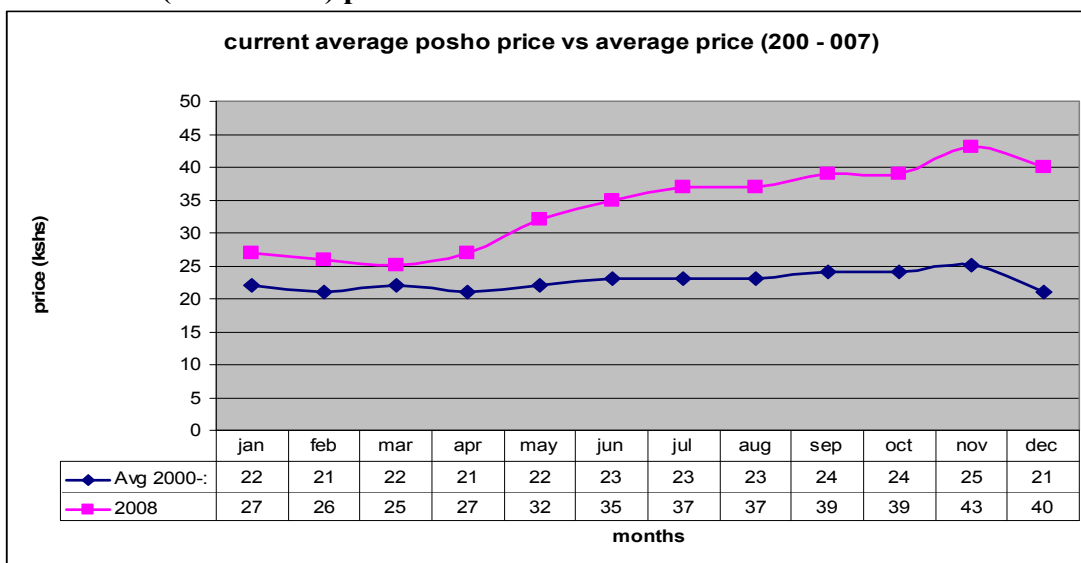


N = 450 HH

- The average maize price per kilo during the month was Ksh36.
- The price was lower than the Ksh 37 recorded the previous month.
- The highest price in the market was Ksh 60 per kilo.
- The average price was double the long term mean owing to scarcity of the food in the markets and high demand.

- Inadequate supply of maize to the local markets from agro- pastoralists within the district and also neighboring districts was the cause of high prices.
- As in the previous month, maize prices were much higher in the pastoral livelihood zone than in the agro-pastoral and irrigated farming livelihood zones.
- The average maize price was not normal at the time of the year owing to the scarcity of the food in the district.

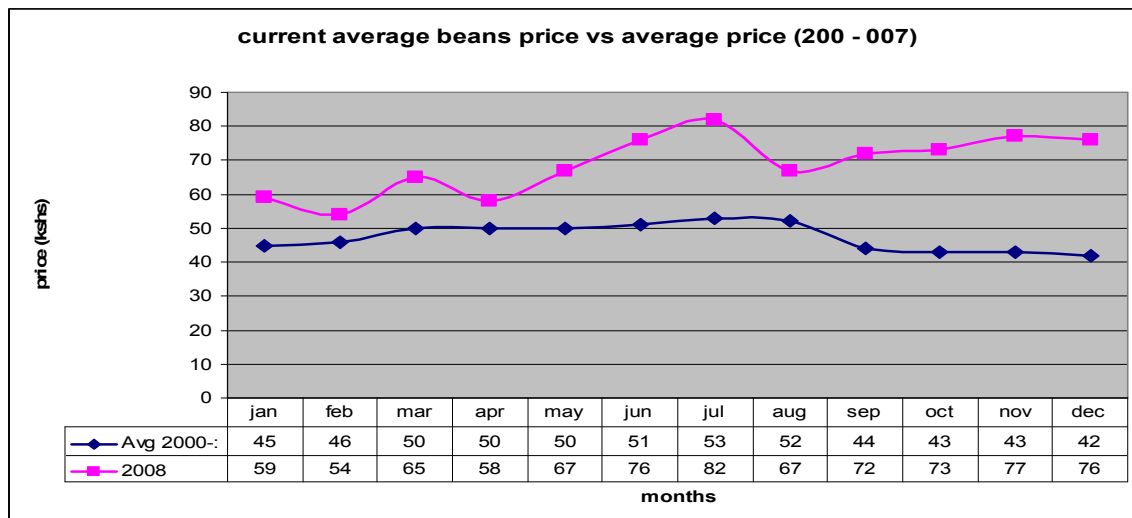
3.4.2 Posho (maize meal) prices



N = 450 HH

- The average price of posho during the month was Ksh 40 per kilo.
- The price was three shillings lower than the previous month. The highest price in the market was Ksh65 per kilo.
- The average price decreased due to improved supply of the commodity in the local markets.
- The price was double the long term mean, eroding the purchasing power of the pastoralists.
- Posho prices were much higher in the pastoral livelihood zone than in the agro-pastoral and irrigated cropping zones because the pastoral communities depend only on purchases, from local markets, which are usually dictated by availability unlike the others who produce maize and access it easily.
- The price of posho was not normal at the time of the year owing to scarcity of maize in the markets.

3.4.3 Beans prices



N = 450 HH

- The average price of beans per kg during the month was Ksh76, a shilling less than the previous month. The highest price in the market was Ksh100 per kilo.
- The price was much higher than the long term mean of Ksh 42.
- The average price decreased due to improved supply of the commodity to the markets within the district and also from the neighboring districts.
- However, the prices were too high, eroding the purchasing power of the pastoralists. This posed a threat to household food security.
- Beans prices were higher in the pastoral livelihood zone than in the irrigated cropping and agro- pastoral zones.
- Beans prices were not normal at the time of the year owing to erratic availability in the markets.

3.5 Income

3.5.1 Crop income

- Agro-pastoralists were in the process of preparing for the pre-planting activities in the coming season.

3.5.2 Livestock income

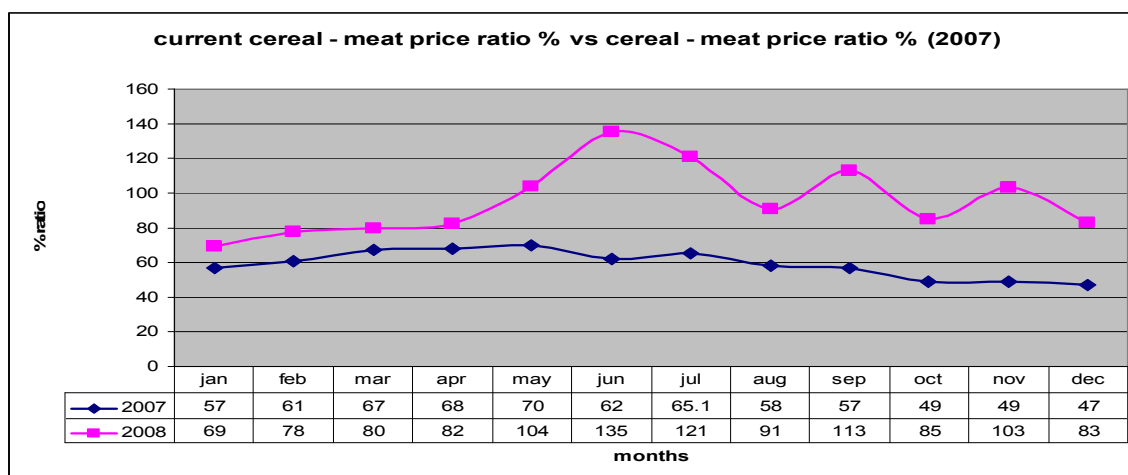
- Livestock sales income slightly increased more than the previous month.
- The livestock sales income increased due to the high prices of food in the markets necessitating sale of high number of animals to meet the demand for food at the household level.
- The income obtained from the livestock is not normal at this time of the year.

3.5.3 Other income

- Casual labor was another major source of income during the month, with approximately 1/3 of the household members engaged as casual laborers, followed by sale of honey, charcoal, sale of wood products and petty trade (local beer brewing).

- The average daily wage rate per casual for the month was Ksh76, which was much lower than that of the previous month, something so meager to meet the daily household needs.
- Most of the trade in charcoal, wood products and petty trade was recorded in pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones. This reflected unavailability of livestock and farm incomes for the households in these zones.

3.6 Terms of trade (cereal: meat price ratio)



N = 450 HH

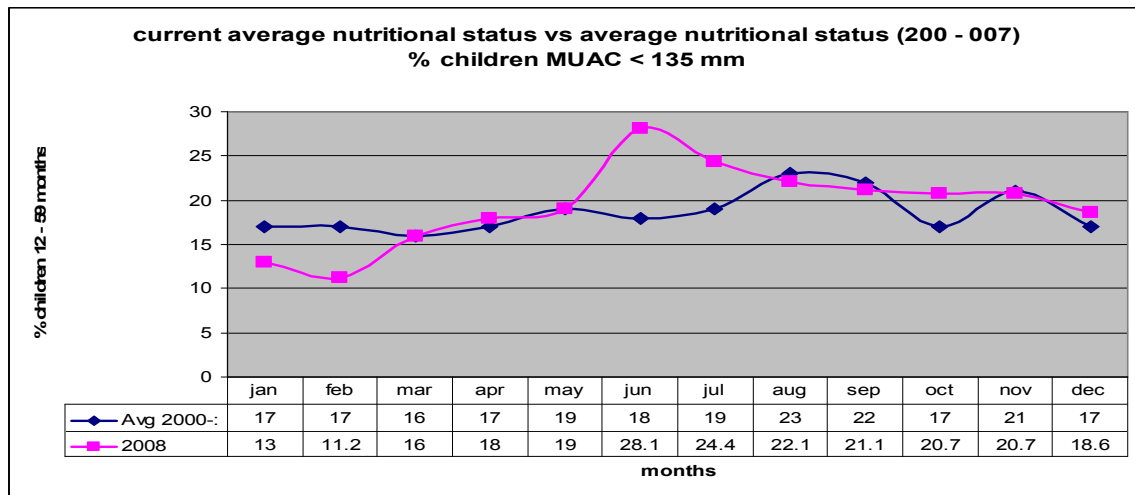
- Terms of trade improved compared to the previous month.
- The ratio improved due to better animal prices during the month.
- The price ratio was worst in the pastoral livelihood zone because of low prices offered for the livestock compared to high cereal prices.
- The ratio was lowest in the irrigated cropping livelihood zone owing to production of cereals and better livestock prices in the area.
- The cereal: meat price ratio was not normal at the time of the year since a pastoralist had to sell 4 goats at an average of Ksh1,300 to purchase a 90 kg sack of posho at an average price of Ksh4,000. The sack cannot last for a month.
- This completely eroded the purchasing power of the pastoralists, depleting the asset level of the pastoralists.

3.7 Implications on food security

- The low prices of livestock, coupled with the erosion of the purchasing power of households depleted the asset level of the pastoralists.
- High number of animals had to be sold to purchase food, hence a threat to the household food security.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilization of food)

4.1 Nutrition status



N = 1,270 children

- The nutrition status of children below five years improved slightly during the month.
- The percentage of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition dropped to 18.6 per cent from 20.7 in November.
- The improvement was attributed to distribution of relief food in Baringo district in late November, a factor that improved food availability for children at the household level.
- The highest rates were recorded in the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones and lowest in irrigated cropping livelihood zone.
- The status worsened at the time of the year because of insufficient milk and other foods at the household level.

4.2 Human Health

- High incidences of malaria were reported during the month.

4.3 Flagged areas

- Pastoral livelihood zone reported the highest malnutrition rates and Malaria disease. These areas require particular attention.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

The following programmes were on-going in the district:

- Construction of two classrooms each for Chesitet and Natan communities in East Pokot district - ALRMP/ Community.
- Laying pipes for Tangelbei Borehole – ALRMP / Ministry of Water.
- Construction of girls’ dormitory in Chepkesin primary school - ALRMP/ Community.
- Equipping of Kapturo dispensary in Bartabwa division - ALRMP/ Community.
- Peace-building initiatives within the districts’ of the project area by various stakeholders i.e. the PSC, DPC, DSC, World Vision, Community Elders, Youth groups, Political leaders, Pastors and ALRMP.
- Equipping of Rotu health centre and construction of pit latrines – ALRMP/ Barpello Catholic mission.

5.2 Other coping strategies

The coping mechanisms employed by the vulnerable population in all the livelihood zones during the month were;

- Migration of livestock in search of pasture and water.
- Sale of honey (for those who have bee hives).
- Borrowing food from relatives.
- Reduction in size of meals and skipping some.
- Casual labour and petty trade.

The mechanisms were employed by majority of the sampled households while a few of the households sold their livestock. Compared to previous months, the situation is worsening.

6.0 Recommendations

- The veterinary department /agencies should step up support to the livestock health sub sector through vaccinations and treatment of clinical cases. In particular, more effort should be directed at addressing CCPP in the district and upsurge of ECF in Kerio valley.
- The GOK and other aid agencies to put more efforts in ensuring the pastoralists communities in both East Pokot and Baringo districts are given continuous relief food supplies and supplementary foods for children until the stress situation normalises as malnutrition cases are indicating increase, prices of food commodities are also high and milk production very low to sustain the communities.
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