



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

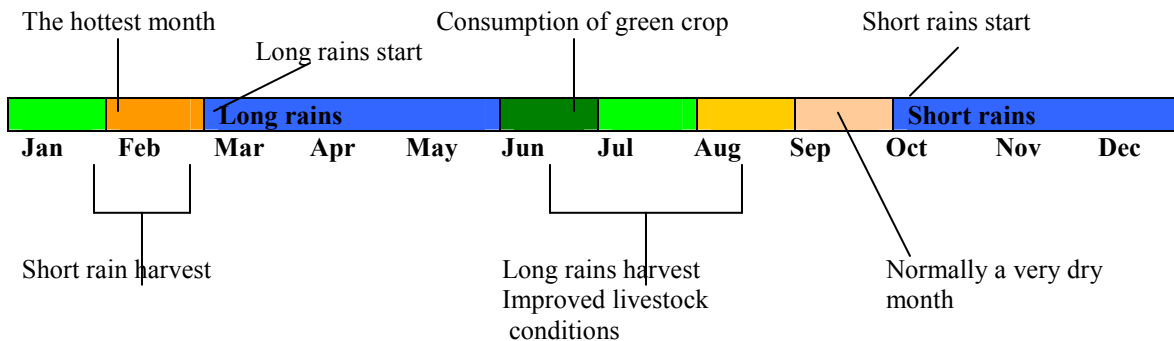
Kitui District

Warning Stages



| Livelihood Zone | Warning stage | Trend |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Mixed farming | Alert | Worsening |
| Marginal mixed farming | Alarm | Worsening |
| Formal Employment | Normal | Stable |

TIMELINE ACTIVITIES



Situation overview

- The district received light showers during the month. The rainfall was recorded during the first week and the eve of Christmas.
- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, the situation of natural vegetation was good, whereas the situation was poor in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The body condition of cattle in the mixed farming livelihood zone was poor, while in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone the body conditions ranged from fair to good
- The water situation slightly worsened as levels dropped and the price of water rose.
- The body condition of shoats ranged from fair to good.
- All the crops in the farms were withering due to moisture stress
- Cattle prices went down, whereas that of goats slightly improved.
- The price of maize and beans increased during the month.
- The nutrition status of children below five years declined, with the percentage of those with MUAC<135mm rising to 11 from 8 in November. The decline was attributed to food shortages at the household level following failure of both the short and long rains.

Current interventions

Food aid

- EMOP covering 9 divisions.
- Normal Government food distribution was ongoing, targeting institutions caring for the vulnerable groups and areas not under EMOP.

Non- food interventions

- Pipeline rehabilitation of the Tiva and Mutomo water project.
- Borehole drilling and equipping in the districts (No. 30), funded by JICA.
- Development of various shallow wells, sand dams and roof catchment water facilities in by ALRMP.
- Capacity building of water management committees in Yatta and Ikutha supported by ADRA.
- Disease surveillance.
- Capacity building of farmers supported by ALLPRO.
- Development of market infrastructure supported by DASS.
- Promotion of fish production.
- Normal extension services in crop production.
- Promotion of Micro irrigation to supplement ordinary crop production along the main rivers supported by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Promotion of bullet chilli production.

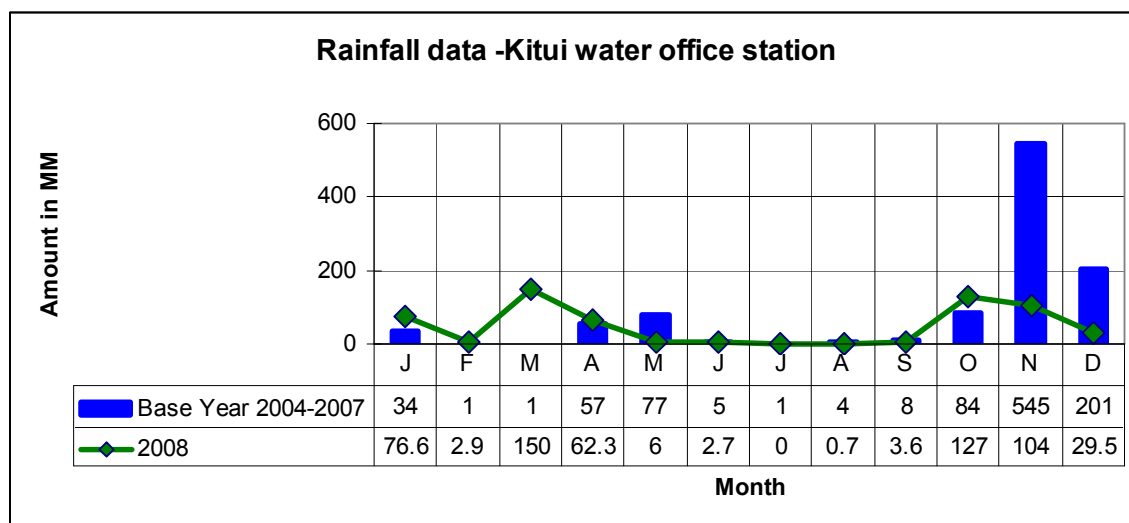
Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- Prepare for food supplementation in the district.
- Repair and servicing of strategic boreholes.

- Repair and service water bowsers in readiness to truck water to institutions(hospitals and institutions of learning).
- Fuel supplementation to reduce cost of water.
- Mass vaccination and treatment of livestock to boost immunity.
- Initiate destocking campaigns.
- Expansion of the school feeding program.

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall



- Light showers were received within the township during the first week and over the eve of Christmas.
- The district recorded an average of 29.5mm of rainfall during the month.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The situation of natural vegetation and pastures remained stable in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone. Generally, there was plenty of browse, except in Ikutha division and Yatta division.
- In the mixed farming livelihood zone, the pasture and natural vegetation situation declined.
- In this zone the regeneration of pasture was poor. Most households begun moving their livestock to other areas within and out of the district.
- Most of the areas got denuded and the trend was expected to worsen.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- The water situation slightly worsened.
- The water levels in the rock catchments and other open water facilities reduced.
- The rivers that were flowing with water during the month of November dried-up.
- The situation was worse in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, where the water facilities were few and unreliable.
- A 20 litre jerrican of water retailed at between Ksh20 and 30 in Mutomo town.

- The main sources of water included, traditional river wells, boreholes, shallow wells and springs.

1.4 Implications on food security

- The above indicators negatively impacted on food security.
- The decline in water levels at the main sources of water led to contamination and rationing.
- Due to scarcity, the price of water in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone went up (a 20 litre Jerrican retailed at Ksh 20).
- The deterioration of the condition of pasture and natural vegetation led to shortage of forage for livestock in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The failure of the rains during the month of December led to withering of the planted crop in the farms.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock body conditions

- The body conditions of cattle in the mixed farming livelihood zone deteriorated.
- This was attributed to lack of pasture and inadequate browse due to poor performance of the short rains. The body conditions of shoats remained stable.
- The body conditions of cattle in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone remained stable save for Ikutha and Yatta divisions. The body condition of shoats improved.
- This trend was attributed to the availability of browse.

2.2 Livestock diseases

- During the reporting period no major livestock disease outbreaks were reported.
- However, due to the weakening body conditions in the mixed farming livelihood zone, cases of opportunistic diseases were expected to go-up.

2.3 Crop production

2.3.1 Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities

Crops were at various stages of growth depending on kind and variety.

- **Maize**- the early planted maize crop was at tussling stage and aborted due to moisture stress, while the late planted crop withered.
- **Beans** – the crop withered at flowering and podding stage.
- **Cowpeas**- The crop withered in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone. In the mixed farming livelihood zone, in sections of central, Chuluni and Matinyani divisions the crop was at flowering stage but experiencing moisture stress.
- **Green grams**- the crop is mostly grown in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, where germination was poor and the little that survived withering due to moisture stress.
- **Sorghum/ Millet** –though planted in small quantities, the crop was at fruiting stage and also experienced moisture stress.
- **Fruit crops**- mangoes in the farms were ready in Central, Chuluni and Mutitu divisions.

2.3.2 Crop pests and diseases

No major crop pest and disease outbreaks were reported during the reporting period.

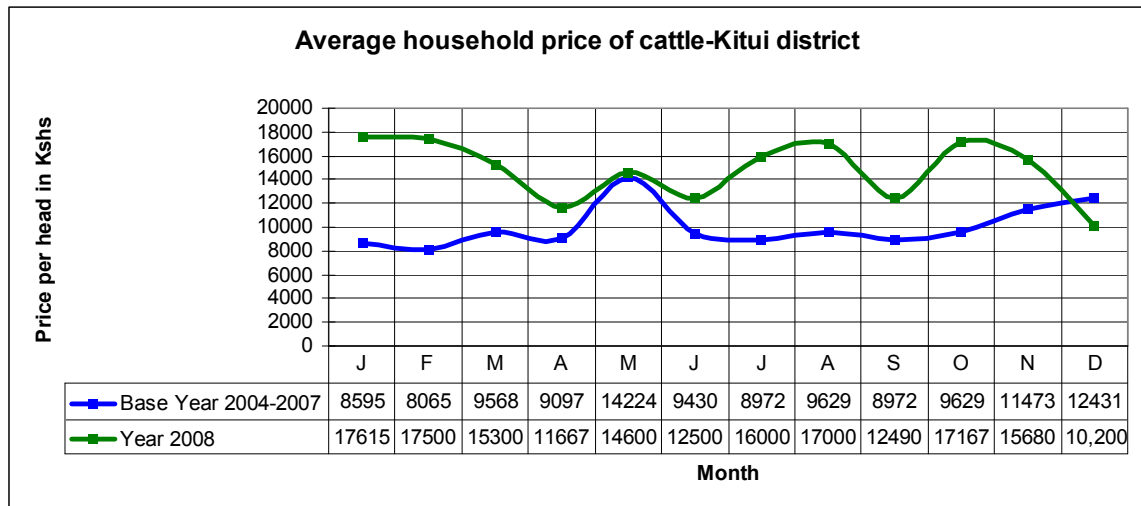
2.4 Impact on food security

- During the first week of the month, communities were consuming green cowpeas leaves but things changed.
- All the planted crops experienced moisture stress and started withering.
- The livestock body conditions weakened, making them susceptible to diseases.

3.0 Access to food

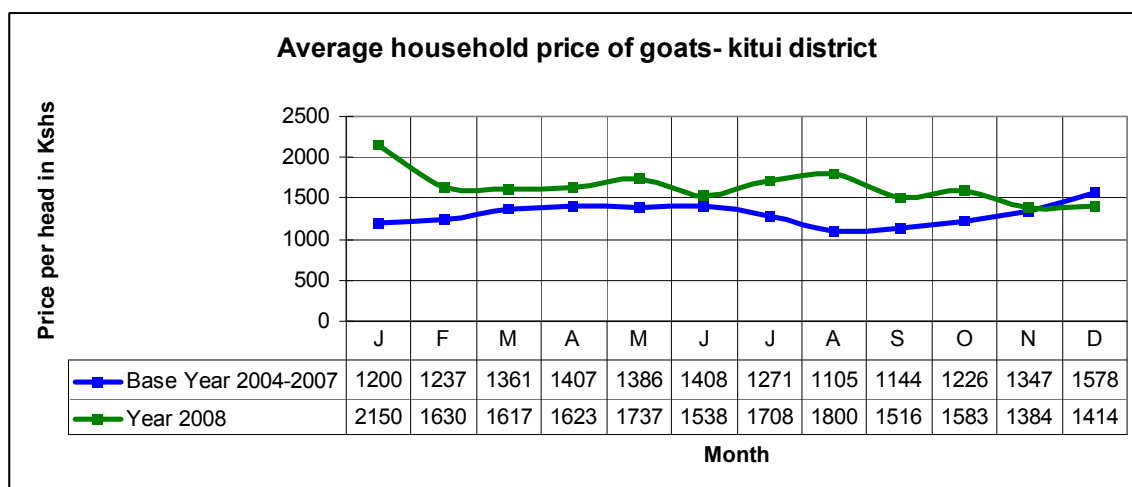
3.1 Livestock prices

3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The price of cattle continued to decline steadily.
- The drop was attributed to the decline in body conditions, particularly in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- In this zone, pasture regenerated poorly and there was little browse in the field. In addition, due to prevailing drought situation and absence of organized marketing system, brokers were taking advantage to purchase animals at low prices.
- The highest prices were recorded in central division at Ksh 15,000, while the lowest prices were reported in Ikutha division at Ksh5,000.
- The trend was not normal as compared to long term mean prices.

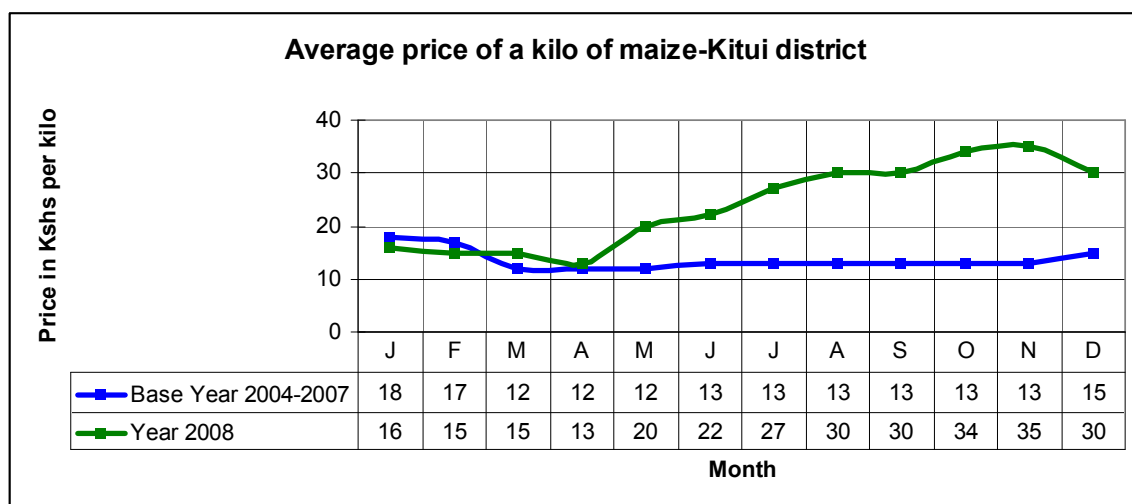
3.1.2 Goat prices



- The price of goats rose slightly during the month under review.
- This rise in price was attributed to the increase in demand for goats during the Christmas festive season.
- Further, the body condition of the shoats was good and there was plenty of browse in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The highest prices were reported in Mutomo at Ksh1,660, while the lowest prices were reported in Yatta at Ksh1,055.
- The trend was normal

3.2 Crop prices

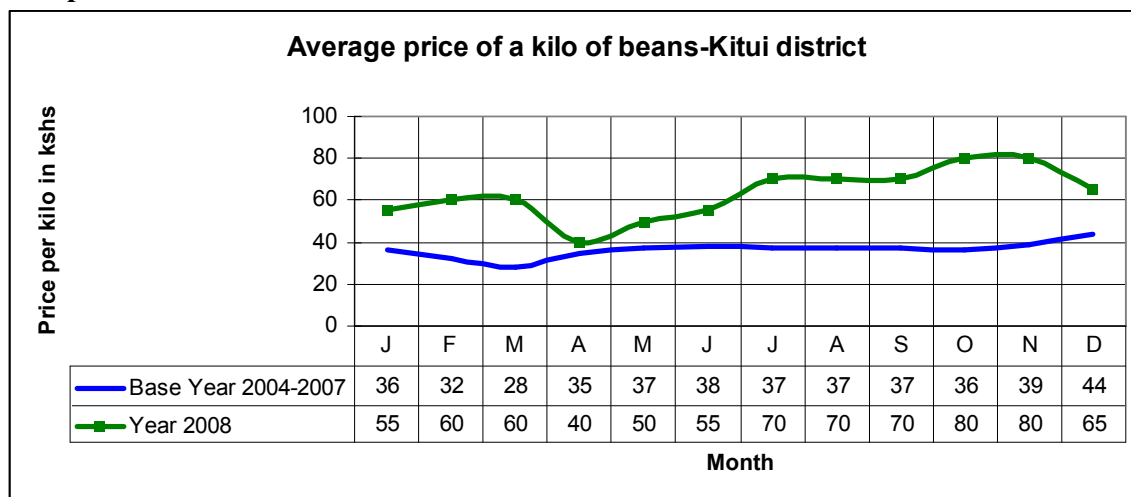
3.2.1 Maize prices



- The price of maize dropped to Ksh 30 from Ksh 35 in November.
- The decline was attributed to reduced demand for the commodity at the end of the planting season.
- The availability of the crop through the National Cereals and Produce Board moderated the rise in price.

- The district is currently relying on maize supplies from Taveta district. The trend is not normal.

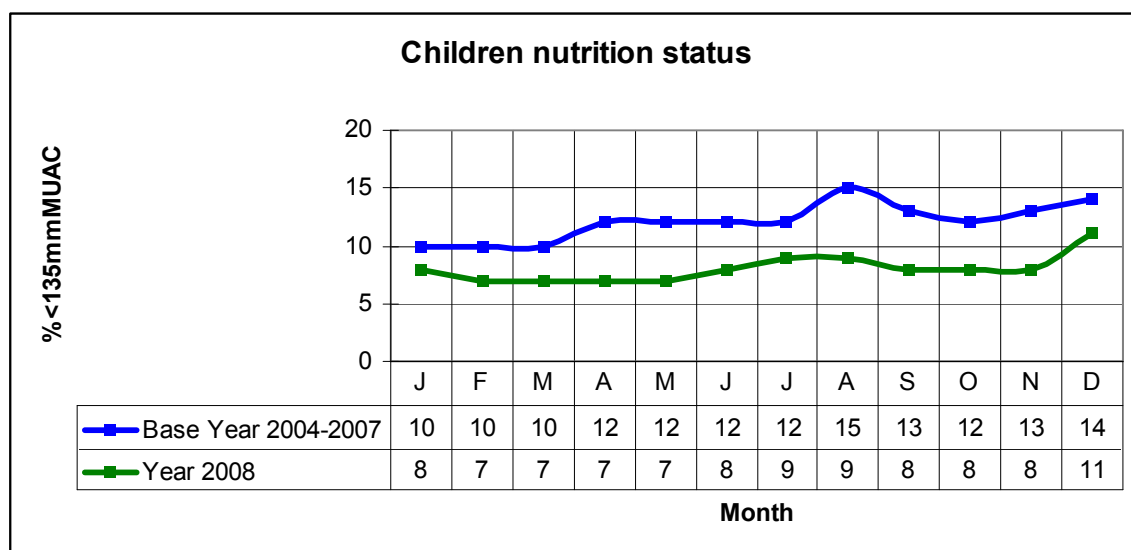
3.2.2 Beans prices



- The price of beans declined during the month.
- Average price per kilo was Ksh 65, down from Ksh 80 per kilo in November.
- This decline was attributed to increased supplies from western Kenya and Taveta district in the coast.
- In addition, the demand for beans declined with the decline in purchasing power of the communities. Consumption of beans became a luxury for most households.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilization of food)

4.1 Children nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children under the age of five years declined.
- The percentage of those with MUAC<135mm rose to 11 from 8 in November.

- The drop was attributed to food shortages at the household level following failure of both the short and long rains.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Food aid

- EMOP covering 9 divisions.
- Normal Government food distribution was ongoing, targeting institutions caring for the vulnerable groups and areas not under EMOP.

5.2 Non- food interventions

- Pipeline rehabilitation of the Tiva and Mutomo water project.
- Borehole drilling and equipping in the districts (No. 30), funded by JICA.
- Development of various shallow wells, sand dams and roof catchment water facilities in by ALRMP.
- Capacity building of water management committees in Yatta and Ikutha supported by ADRA.
- Disease surveillance.
- Capacity building of farmers supported by ALLPRO.
- Development of market infrastructure supported by DASS.
- Promotion of fish production.
- Normal extension services in crop production.
- Promotion of Micro irrigation to supplement ordinary crop production along the main rivers supported by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Promotion of bullet chilli production.

6.0 Recommendations

- Prepare for food supplementation in the district.
- Repair and servicing of strategic boreholes.
- Repair and service water bowsers in readiness to truck water to institutions(hospitals and institutions of learning).
- Fuel supplementation to reduce cost of water.
- Mass vaccination and treatment of livestock to boost immunity.
- Initiate destocking campaigns.
- Expansion of the school feeding program.