

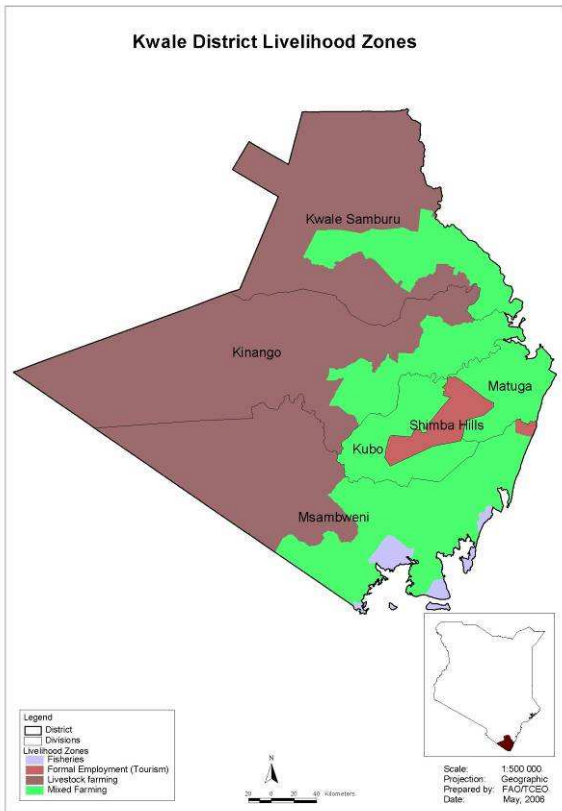


OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, DECEMBER 2008

Kwale District

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Livestock Farming	Alarm	Worsening
Mixed farming	Alert	Worsening
District	Alert	Worsening

Timeline activities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short rains harvests ▪ Short dry spell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planting/Weeding ▪ Long rains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long rains harvests ▪ A long dry spell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short rains ▪ Planting/weeding 								
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

Situation Overview

- The short rains season ended, with most parts of the district receiving below normal rains. Fair rains were reported in areas bordering the Shimba Hills forest and the ocean strip.
- The condition of pasture and browse improved slightly in a few parts of the livelihood zones following the light showers. However, most of the area was abandoned due to lack of water.
- The water situation deteriorated in where the rains subsided much earlier. However, for the remaining ones, the depletion rate is very fast.
- There was concentration of livestock in strategic water sources and this contributed heavily to the spread of livestock diseases.
- Pressure over natural resources begun to be experienced in most parts of the hinterlands following the short rains failure.
- There was a slight improvement in the prices of livestock at the household level. However, prices of maize, posho and other food stuffs were unstable and continued to rise.
- Food deficit continued to be experienced in most households in the district and the situation was expected to worsen due to poor short rains.
- The just-ended short rains were expected to register minimal to nil impact on the food security. Most of the maize crop planted during the season wilted at weeding/tussling stage.
- The nutrition status of children below five years based on the MUAC<135mm measurement declined during the month.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- As the just-ended short rains registered minimal impact to the food security, there is an argent need to carry out food needs assessment so as to assess the situation in advance for appropriate and timely interventions.
- Peace structures should be facilitated in order to avert any incidences of conflict, especially in those areas where livestock concentration is expected.
- As the water situation deteriorated, more areas begun experiencing acute water shortages and therefore there is need for an emergency intervention.
- As a short term measure, water trucking should be considered to institutions like schools and health facilities (in the most affected areas) and also provision of water storage tanks to these drought affected institutions.
- A detailed nutrition and health survey should be conducted for the district so as to confirm the rates of malnutrition and address them accordingly.
- Human/wild life interaction should be critically addressed as households are vulnerable due to persistent crop destruction and faster depletion of water sources.
- The veterinary department should continue to be on alert on livestock diseases, with special attention on the PPR.

Current Interventions

Non food interventions

The following non-food interventions were facilitated by the Arid Lands Resource Management Project II;

- The District Veterinary Officer – Msambweni district was facilitated to carry out a PPR mop-up vaccination programme.
- Training of bee keeping farmers.
- Training community goat keepers on the upgrading of local goat breeds.

Food aid

- Food for Asset programme in Kinango District ongoing.

District Steering Group meeting

The District Steering Group meeting was held in Kinango District on 5th December 2008. A special District Steering Group meeting which brought on board all the District Steering Group members from all the districts was held on 24th December 2008.

The meeting's main agenda was to activate the District Drought Contingency Plan and enable the district to solicit for funds from the various stakeholders to address the current food situation. The District Steering Group approved the following for funding;

- Conduct integrated health outreaches in each district in areas where there is concentration of human population due to the drought effects.
- Rehabilitation of Mwembeni and Mikomani Boreholes.
- Purchase of one pump for a water user group in Kiteje.
- Water trucking to schools hard hit by the water shortage.
- Carry out a mop-up vaccination programme on the scare of the PPR in all the three districts.
- Facilitate peace dialogue meetings in the natural resource base conflict areas.
- Procurement and distribution of drought-tolerant seeds.

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall

- The short rains season ended, with most parts of the livelihoods sampled reporting nil to below normal rains in the month.
- However, areas bordering the shimba Hills forest and the coastal strip had fair rains for the season.
- The hinterland divisions and the livestock dominated areas remained very dry in most parts, with very few areas reporting negligible showers.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Pasture and browse conditions were generally fair, especially in the areas where some rains were received.
- However, most of the hinterlands/livestock dominated areas registered very little improvement as the rains were negligible.

- Most of the pasture and browse in the livestock farming livelihood zone was abandoned because of lack of water.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- The percentage of communities/households accessing water from pans/dams increased during the month, a clear indication of the deteriorating water situation.
- This was not a normal situation at the time of the year as under normal circumstances water stress is expected to begin in late January.
- As reported in the last reporting month, human and wildlife competition at water sources, especially in the hinterlands of the livestock farming livelihood zone, may have led to a faster depletion of the water sources.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Insecurity/conflict/human displacement

- Conflicts over use of the water sources between households, livestock and wildlife (elephants), especially in the hinterland parts of Kinango District, was still being reported.
- Destruction of coconut/mango trees and other food crops by elephants was also reported.

1.4.2 Migration

- Livestock movement to areas near water has already started. This time round this movement is taking place much earlier than expected for the season.

1.5 Implication on food security

- Destruction of crops by wild animals affected food security directly, particularly in the areas where there were fair rains.
- Failure of the rains will lead to an alarming food deficit across all the livelihoods.

2.0 Food Availability

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock body and health conditions were fair. Most of the livestock showed body stress, a condition which was expected to continue as the drought condition progresses.
- More cattle continued to succumb to the effects of drought and diseases, while shoats were dying of unconfirmed conditions.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

- The main diseases during the month were suspected cases of pneumonia, foot and mouth disease, worms, tick-borne infections and the goat plague.
- Cases of mortalities due to disease and drought-related effects were reported in some parts of Kasemeni and Kinango divisions.
- Mortalities of goats were high due to incidences suspected to be goat plague.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities

- Most crops in farms cultivated during the short rains wilted at different stages, ranging from weeding, tussling/flowering.
- December is usually the start of the harvesting season for those who planted on time. However, minimal farming activities took place in majority of the farms.
- Legumes planted at the onset of the rains were still progressing well in some farms.

2.2.2 Pests and diseases

- No serious crop diseases reported.

2.2.3 Harvests

- Minimum sweet potatoes, cassava, coconut, bixa, passion fruits, & pockets of mango harvesting are ongoing mostly in the mixed farming livelihood zone.

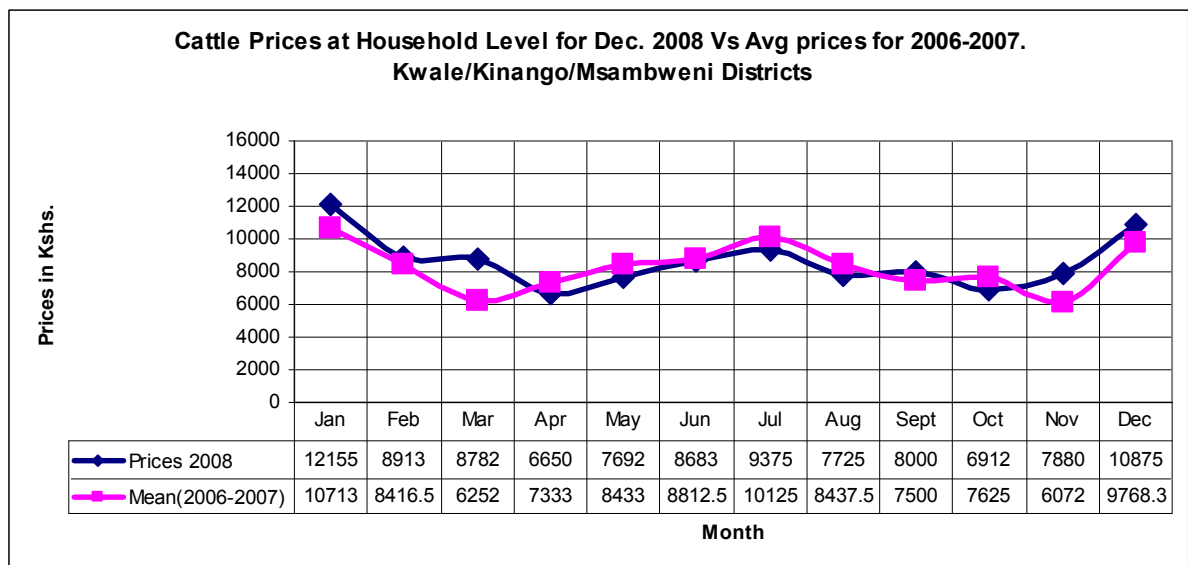
2.3 Implications on food security

- Most of the maize crop planted for the short rains season has wilted at the various stages. This may translate to alerting food insecurity as there are no hopes of any meaningful harvests in majority of the households. The only areas with hopes are those bordering the coastal strip and the shimba forests.

3.0 Access to food

3.1 Livestock marketing

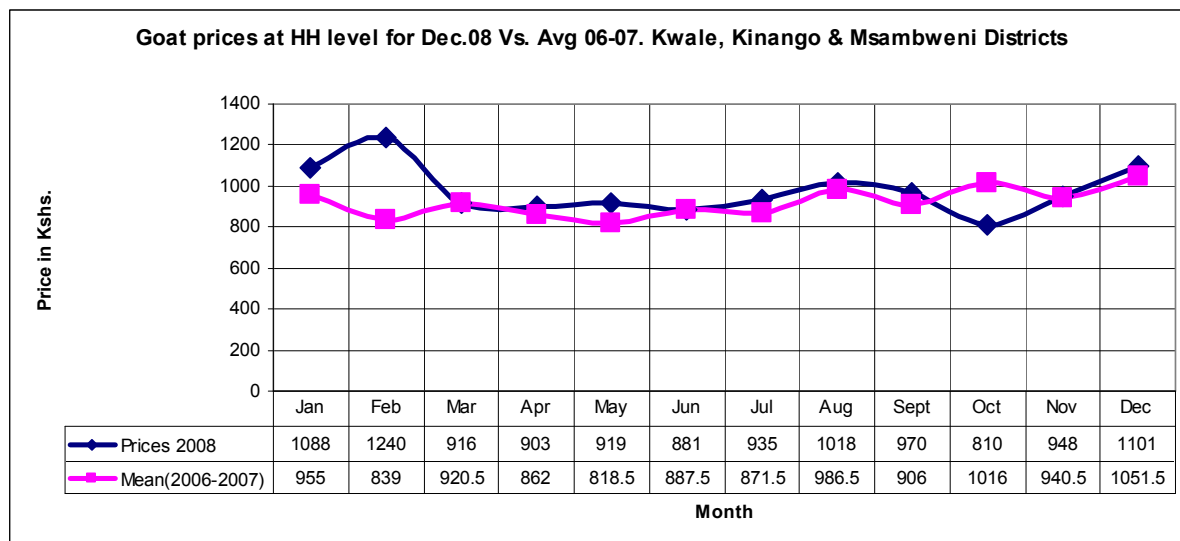
3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The price of cattle improved during the month. The average price rose to Ksh10,875 compared to Ksh7,880 during the last reporting month.

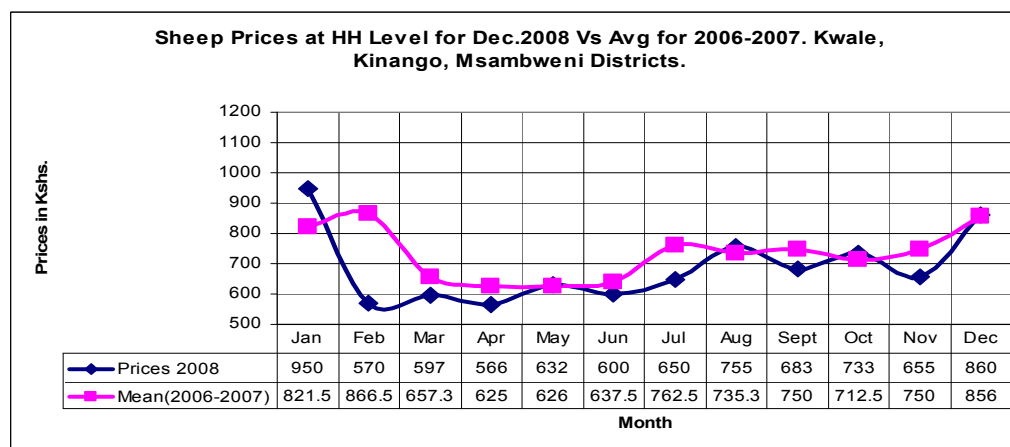
- During such times of the year, livestock was expected to fetch better prices due to the festivities of the month.
- Cattle prices however remained above normal as compared to long term mean prices recorded in 2006-2007

3.1.2 Goat prices



- Goat prices indicated a slight improvement compared to last month.
- This negligible increase may be due to the increase in the number of goats presented during the Christmas festivities.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



- Sheep prices increased during the month under review.
- The average price was Ksh 860 compared to Ksh 655 in November.

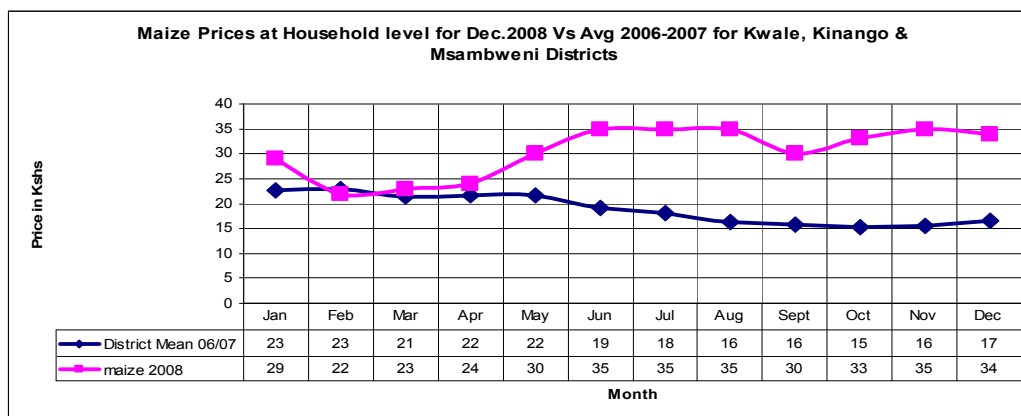
- Consumers have a low preference for sheep and the price may therefore be attributed to the size of the animal presented in the market during the month.

3.2 Livestock sales

- There was a reported increase in the sales of livestock across all the livelihoods.
- The increase may be due to the festivities of the month and high supply as households presented a lot of goats into the market in fear of losing them to disease.

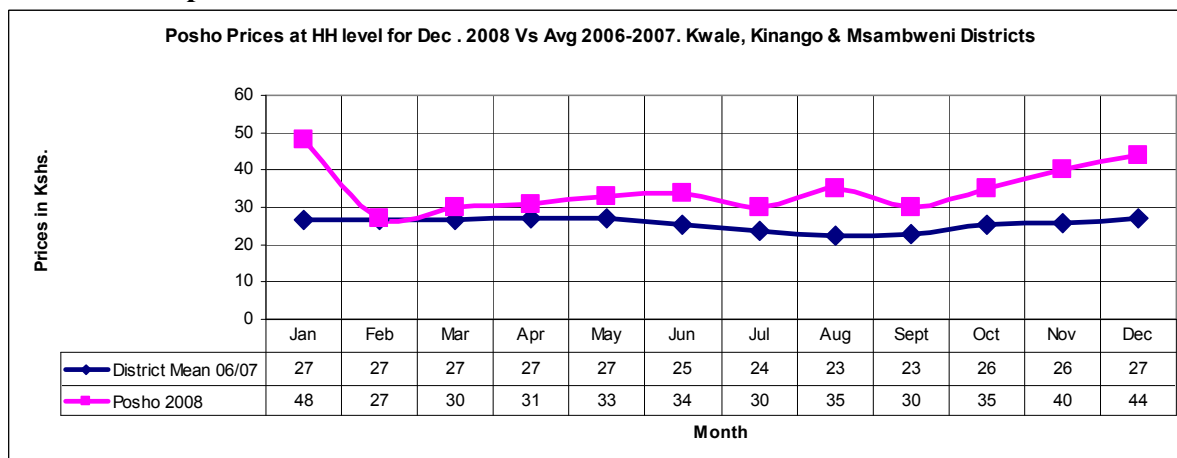
3.3 Crop prices

3.3.1 Maize prices



- The average price of maize stabilised but dropped by one shilling.
- The price was double compared to the average price at the same time of the year 2006/2007.
- Cereals became scarce in the local markets a situation, which was not expected at the time of the year.

3.3.2 Posho prices



- The price of posho reported an increase in the month by Ksh 4.

- The price may be due to the scarcity of cereals in most local markets as the major sources were outside the district.
- However, the price of sifted maize flour continued to be unstable in most areas with the prices on the increase.
- The prices varied between the different areas considering the distances from the distributors.
- A kilo traded at between Ksh40 – 55 and the price was likely to increase following the failure of the short rains.

3.4 Income

3.4.1 Crops income

- The month reported a very minimal income from crops for the households sampled.
- However, sale of crops such as coconut, mangoes, oranges and passion fruits were reported in the mixed farming livelihood zone.

3.4.2 Livestock income

- Income from livestock increased. Livestock income represented 15 per cent of the total household income, down from 10 per cent reported last month.
- The increase was due to the numerous festivals during the month.

3.4.3 Other income

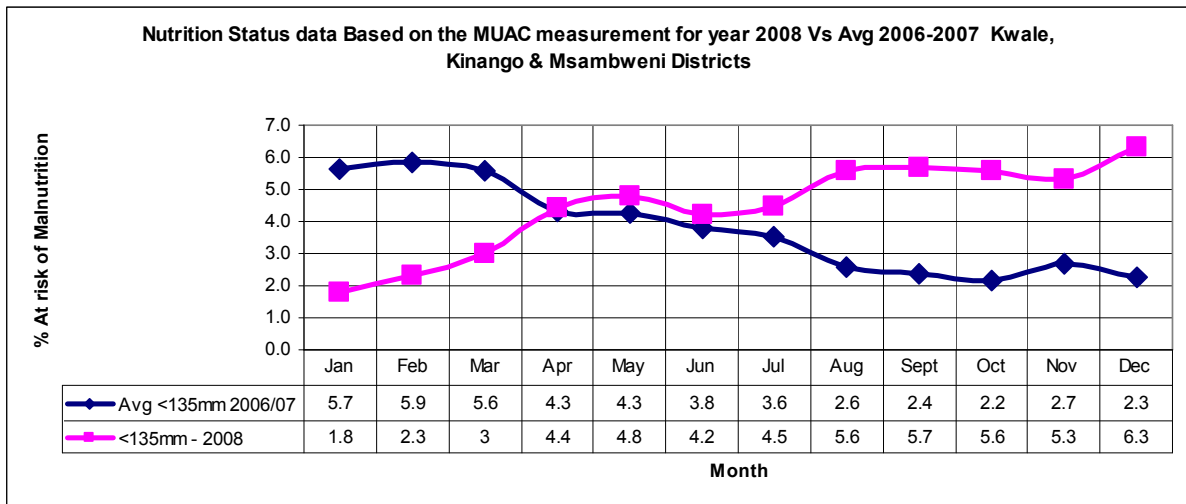
- Other major income at the household level included casual labour (44 per cent), petty trade (18%) and gifts/remittance (social networks) at 16%.

3.5 Implications on food security

- The short rains did not register any impact on the range resources in the livestock dominated areas and this will compromise the livestock body and health, translating into low prices.
- Upsurge in prices of cereals and legumes due to scarcity in the local market directly affected the purchasing power of most households, leading to poor feeding patterns and taking of small food portions.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years declined during the month.
- The percentage of those rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC<135mm measurement) rose to 6.3% from 5.3% in November.
- This may be attributed to depleted food stocks in households and low purchasing power, thus leading to poor feeding patterns.

4.2 Health

- Diarrhoea, cough and skin conditions were reported in most of the households interviewed.
- However, malaria remained the dominant ailment across all the livelihoods.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non food interventions

- The District Veterinary Officer – Msambweni district was facilitated to carry out a PPR mop-up vaccination programme.
- Training of bee-keeping farmers.
- Training community goat keepers on the upgrading of local goat breeds.

5.2. Food aid

- Food for Asset programme in Kinango District was ongoing.

5.3 Coping strategies

Some of the coping strategies employed in the month include:

- Feeding on premature foods like young pawpaws, mangoes and bananas.
- Skipping of meals, reduced meal portions & survival of relief (FFA beneficiaries).
- Migration to search for food.
- Feeding on wild vegetables.
- Enhanced sale of livestock.
- Enhanced search for casual labour and labour migration.
- Sale of charcoal and wood.
- Dependence on gifts and other social networks.

6. Recommendations

- As the just-ended short rains registered minimal impact to the food security, there is an argent need to carry out food needs assessment so as to assess the situation in advance for appropriate and timely interventions.
- Peace structures should be facilitated in order to avert any incidences of conflict, especially in those areas where livestock concentration is expected.
- As the water situation deteriorated, more areas begun experiencing acute water shortages and therefore there is need for an emergency intervention.
- As a short term measure, water trucking should be considered to institutions like schools and health facilities (in the most affected areas) and also provision of water storage tanks to these drought affected institutions.
- A detailed nutrition and health survey should be conducted for the district so as to confirm the rates of malnutrition and address them accordingly.
- Human/wild life interaction should be critically addressed as households are vulnerable due to persistent crop destruction and faster depletion of water sources.
- The veterinary department should continue to be on alert on livestock diseases, with special attention on the PPR.