

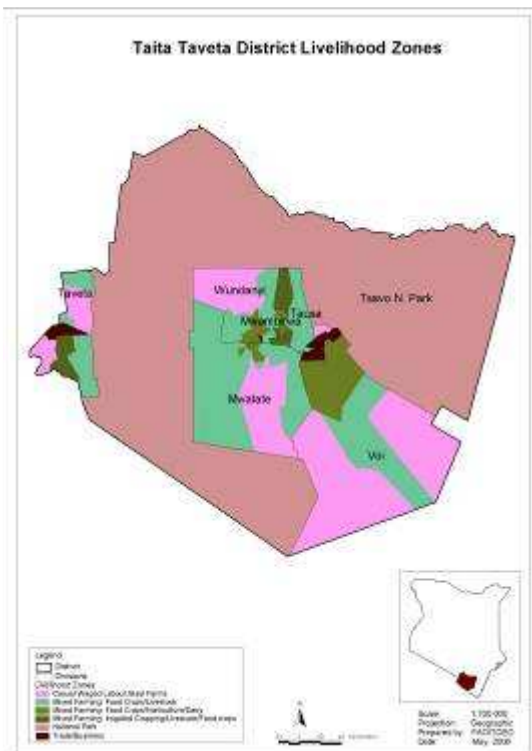


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, DECEMBER 2008

Taita/Taveta Districts

Warning Stages



Livelihood zone	Warning Stage	Trend
Casual Waged Labour: Sisal Farms	Normal	Stable
Mixed Farming: Food Crops/Livestock	Alert	Deteriorating
Mixed Farming: Food Crops/Horticulture/Dairy	Normal	Stable
Mixed Farming: Irrigated Cropping/Livestock/ Food Crops	Normal	Stable
National Park	Normal	Stable
Trade/Business	Normal	Stable
DISTRICT	Normal	Stable

TIMELINE ACTIVITIES

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Maize	Harvesting	Planting	Weeding				Harvesting	Planting	Weeding			
Beans	Harvesting		Planting Weeding			Harvesting				Planting Weeding		
Vegetables						Sowing Transplanting	Top dressing		Harvesting			
Cattle	Milking											
Goats	Weaning		Mating/Kidding					Weaning		Mating/Kidding		
Rainfall			Long rains							Short rains		

Situation Overview

- The month of December recorded very low rainfall at 172 mm compared to 621.6 mm recorded in November.
- Only light showers were received on the hill masses of Taita district, while its lowlands and Taveta district received no rainfall.
- Maize crop in areas such as Mwakitau and Mahandakini withered at knee height. In areas situated in the lowlands of Taita district and rain-fed areas of Taveta district, the crop showed signs of failure unless they receive rain soon.
- Though rainfall amount recorded was minimal, water sources still had water and availability of pasture and browse was still good.
- Compared to the long term average rainfall for 2000-2007, the trend was abnormal and decreasing at high rate.
- Condition of natural vegetation and pasture in both districts was good due to rainfall received in the month of November.
- Compared to the previous month, the average grazing distance from sampled sentinel sites reduced to 4.9 km from 5.5 km.
- Dense heavy thickets of forest cover continued to dominate the national park livelihood zone.
- In the month under review water sources used were tap water, springs, natural rivers, water pans, dams and boreholes as a source of water for both human and livestock.
- Water situation deteriorated due to lack of rainfall and high temperatures.
- Compared to the previous month, the average distance and time to and from the water sources increased to 3.6 km and 1.9 hrs from 3.1 km and 1.7 hrs respectively.
- Though there was plenty of pasture, browse and a few water points in the national park livelihood zone, household members continued to report attacks from marauding elephants, hippos, wild pigs and baboons, especially in areas bordering the national park due to dwindling water sources.
- Elephants were a major threat to both humans and livestock. Most areas that continued to report cases of human/wildlife conflict even during the rainy season lie on the elephant corridors between Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Park. The areas are Kajire, Talio, Rahai, Paranga, Kishushe, Mwachabo, Mwakitau, Tausa and Kasigau in Taita district and Mata, Challa, Njukini and Jipe in Taveta district.
- Livestock body condition in both districts was good. This was attributed to availability of natural vegetation and pasture and access to water within their grazing areas.
- Both districts, especially the lowlands of Taita and the rain-fed areas of Taveta, will slide into an emergency stage if the short rains do not continue.

- Household members require food assistance either through food for work programme or general food distribution since they have lost hope of harvesting.
- High prices of food and other essential goods like paraffin and transport cost continue to dominate all the markets.
- Though milk was available for household members to sell and for consumption, most farmers languished in poverty due to the high prices of food stuffs.
- Cereals and legumes were readily available at market level but still at very high prices. Areas that were adversely affected by effects of prices and need particular attention in regard to food security were Mwakine and Riata in Kimorigho division, Jipe division, Challa division and parts of Njukini location in Taveta district. Others were Kajire, Marapu, Rahasi, Ndara, Bungule, Bachuma, Marungu, parts of Rukanga in Voi division, Mwakitau, Kamtonga, Chunga Unga and Mukuki in Mwatate division, Mbulia, Ndome and parts of Mbololo in Tausa division and Wongonyi in Mwambirwa division, Paranga, Sangenyi, Nyache, Mwaroko, Mbale and Kishushe in Wundanyi division of Taita district.
- The nutrition status of children below five years remained stable during the month. The percentage of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC<135mm measurement) was 4.1 as it was in November. Out of 1,235 children under-five sampled in 15 sample sites areas, 50 were found with MUAC< 135mm.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- Relevant departments to activate their drought contingency plans to address the situation as it unfolds.
- Revive colonial drainage canals to divert flood waters in Taveta district.
- Food for Assets projects to target rain-fed lowlands of both districts to enhance food security.
- Encourage roof catchment technology on the hilly areas to reduce volume of water flowing downhill.
- Rehabilitate and excavate water pans in the rain-fed lowlands, ranches and the park, construct sand dams across dry river beds and promote catchment conservation measures through planting of indigenous trees.
- Increase small-scale irrigation, protect water springs by fencing to reduce degradation and construct water harvesting structures in the lowlands to enhance crop production.
- Electric fencing of the national Park next to farming areas to safeguard food crops destruction.
- Expansion of area under irrigation through desilting of canals and opening of new ones in Taveta district and Tausa and Mwatate in Taita district.
- Promotion of drought-tolerant crops such as cassava, sorghum, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, green grams and millet.

Current interventions

Non-food interventions

- Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Sector projects
 - Rehabilitation and equipping of Paranga shallow well was ongoing and all the materials were on site- ALRMP.
 - Out of 5,000 tissue culture bananas procured, only 2,290 were delivered to farmers in Taveta due to transportation problems. The remaining batch will be delivered in January- ALRMP.
 - DSG Taita approved Ksh 62,000 to be used for payment of two tyres and two tubes following water trucking exercise that was carried out to thirteen stressed institutions due to prolonged drought in the month of November- ALRMP.
 - DSG Taita requested for two water bowsers to be purchased for the district for use in water trucking during the dry season.
- Livestock Sector projects
 - DSG Taita approved Ksh 875,000 from DCF to be used by DVO Taita to carry out a massive vaccination campaign on CCPP, PPR and RVF in the entire district- ALRMP.

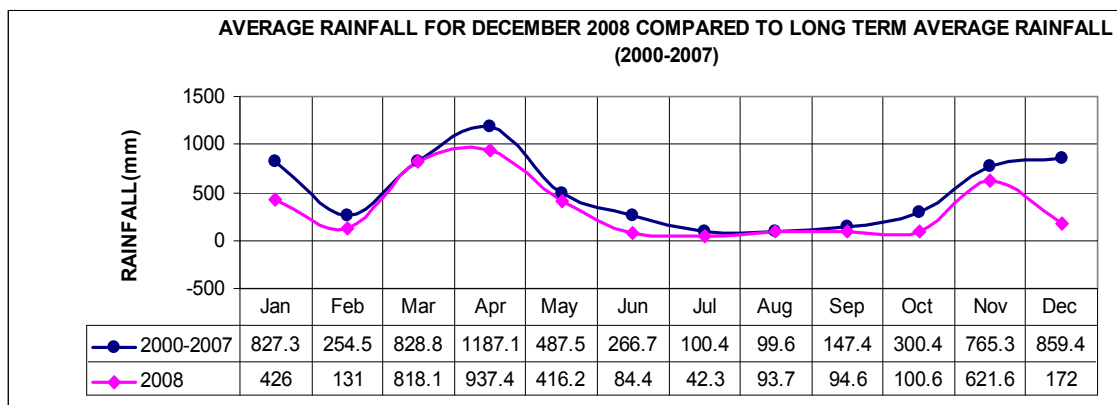
Food aid

- Taveta district received 2,000 bags (90 kgs), 300 bags (90 kgs) of beans and 600 bags (50kgs) of rice as relief food from the Office of the President Ministry of State for Special Programmes department of Relief and Rehabilitation.
- The DSG resolved that the location committees identify the needy cases within their locations and those locations that have more people requiring assistance will receive more food and no food should be retained at the DC's office for distribution.
- However, PLWHA'S to be allocated 2% of their location allocations.

Cereal Type	Name of Location					
	Kimorigho	Bomeni	Jipe	Challa	Njukini/Chumvini	Total
Rice(bags)	90	138	114	150	108	600
Beans(bags)	45	69	57	75	54	300
Maize(bags)	300	460	380	500	360	2000

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall



- The month of December recorded very low amount of rainfall at 172 mm compared to 621.6 mm recorded in November.
- Only light showers were received on the hill masses of Taita district, while its lowlands and Taveta district received no rainfall.
- Maize crop in areas such as Mwakitau and Mahandakini withered at knee height. In areas situated in the lowlands of Taita district and rain-fed areas of Taveta district the crop were showing signs of failure unless rainfall is received soon.
- Though rainfall amount recorded was minimal, water sources still had water and availability of pasture and browse was still good.
- Compared to the long term average rainfall for 2000-2007 the trend was abnormal and decreasing at high rate.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- In both districts condition of natural vegetation and pasture was good due to rainfall received in the month of November.
- Dense heavy thickets of forest cover continued to dominate the National park livelihood zone.
- Compared to the same month in a normal year, the quality and quantity of natural vegetation and pasture was good.
- Compared to the previous month, the average grazing distance from sampled sentinel sites reduced to 4.9 km from 5.5 km.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- Water sources for both human and livestock use during the month under review were tap water, springs, natural rivers, water pans, dams and boreholes.
- Water situation was deteriorating due to lack of rainfall and high temperatures, and compared to the previous month the average distance and time to and from the water sources increased to 3.6 km and 1.9 hrs from 3.1 km and 1.7 hrs respectively.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1. Insecurity/conflict/human displacement

- Though there was plenty of pasture, browse and a few water points in the National park livelihood zone, household members continued to report attacks from marauding elephants, hippos, wild pigs and baboons, especially in areas bordering the National park due to dwindling water sources.
- Elephants were a major threat to both humans and livestock. The most affected areas were Kajire, Talio, Rahai, Paranga, Kishushe, Mwachabo, Mwakitau, Tausa and Kasigau in Taita district and Mata, Challa, Njukini and Jipe in Taveta district.

1.4.2. Migration

- In the month under review no major human or livestock migration occurrence was reported in the two districts, though the Somali community continued to lease vast land in the ranches to graze their livestock.
- In Taveta, herders from Salaita and Mahandakini, especially the pastoral Maasai, still grazed in the National Park.

1.4.3. Implications on food security

- Both districts, especially the lowlands of Taita and the rain-fed areas of Taveta, will slide into an emergency stage if the short rains do not continue.
- Household members require food assistance either through food for work programme or general food distribution since they have lost hope of harvesting.
- Areas still facing acute food shortage and require immediate attention are Mwakitau in Mwatate division, Kasigau and lower Sagalla in Voi division, Tausa division, Wongonyi in Mwambirwa, Paranga, Sangenyi, Nyache, Mwaroko, Mlechi, Choke, Wanganga, Irido and Saghasa in Wundanyi division, Taita district.
- Others were Nakuruto, Kasokoni, Chokaa, Kidong'u, Challa kati, Uthiani, Kijijini, Vikwatani, Chumvini A & B, Langata, and Ulawani in Challa division, Njoro, Mtakuja, Kazamoyo, Kachero, Mata village, Nasaini in Jipe division and Lessessia, Kasarani, parts of Mjini, Langata, Chewa, Mahoo, Salaita, parts of Vikwatani, Mwakine, Riata, Madarasani, Lotima A & B, Riata Ndogo/Kubwa in Bomeni division of Taveta district.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1. Livestock body condition

- Livestock body condition was good in both districts.
- This development was attributed to availability of natural vegetation and pasture and access to water within their grazing areas.
- Compared with a normal year, the livestock body condition was normal at this time of the year.

2.1.2. Milk production

- In the month under review total milk production from sampled households increased to 12,230 litres from 9,017 litres recorded in November.

- This increase in milk production could be attributed to improved body condition of cattle in the two districts.
- Casual waged labour: sisal farms and mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zones continued to record the lowest amount of milk production due to livestock trekking long distances in search of water and pasture.
- Mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone remained the leading producer of milk recording 76 per cent situated in the wetlands, mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone 17% and casual waged labour: sisal farms 7% found in the rain fed lowlands.

2.2 Crop production

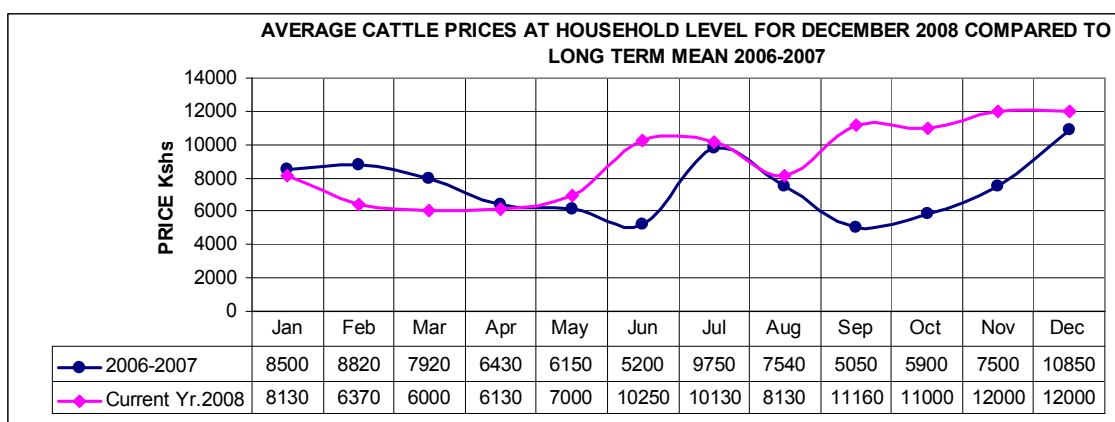
2.2.1 Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities

- Most farmers in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone were in shock while a few who constructed water harvesting structures in their farms were waiting for the maize crop to flower.
- However, in the casual waged labour: sisal farms livelihood zone casual waged labourers were busy weeding, while others were harvesting the sisal crop.
- In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone, some farmers were harvesting vegetables, while others were weeding maize crop.
- In the mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops livelihood zone, most farmers were busy harvesting tomatoes, maize, bananas and sugarcane.
- This was normal at the time of the year.

3.0 Access to food

3.1 Livestock marketing

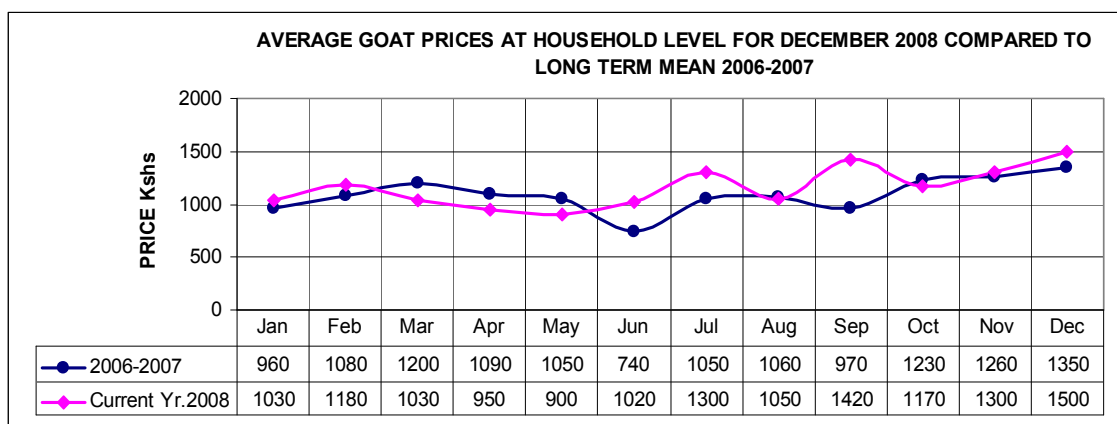
3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The average cattle price remained at Ksh12,000.
- The prevailing high prices could be attributed to the availability of natural vegetation and pasture and access to water within their grazing areas, resulting in improved cattle body condition.

- However, high prices were experienced in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone at Ksh13,500 due to good livestock body condition.
- Low prices prevailed in the casual waged labour: sisal farms at Ksh 9,000 and Ksh 10,000 in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zones.
- Compared to the long term mean the trend was normal but the price is high.

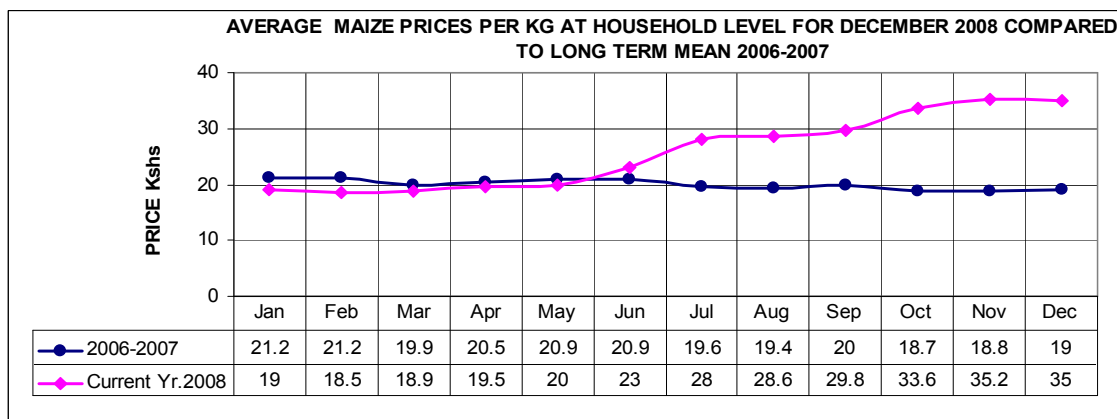
3.1.2. Goats prices



- The average goat price rose to Ksh 1,500 from Ksh 1,350 in November.
- The price rise could be attributed to increase in demand for goat meat due to the festive month.
- Prices remained higher in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone at Ksh 1,700 than in both the casual waged labour: sisal farms livelihood zone at Ksh 1,300 and Ksh 1,000 in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone.
- Compared to the long term mean the trend was normal but the price was higher.

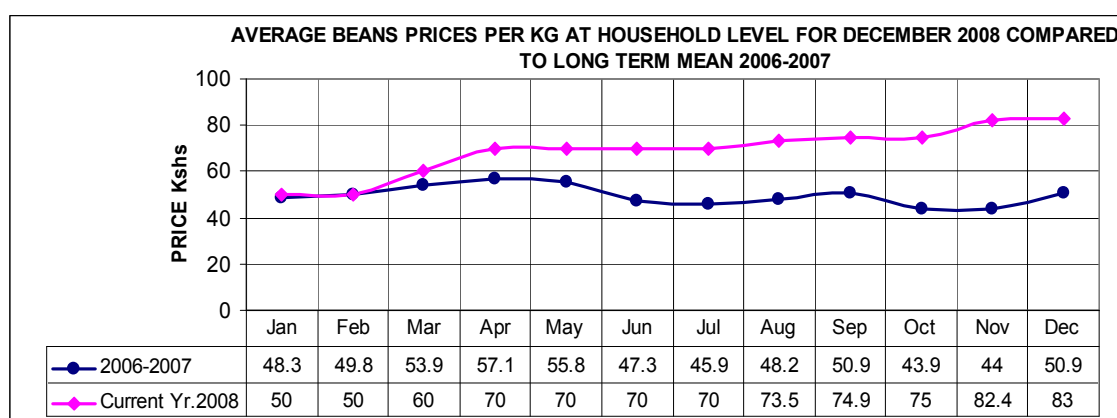
3.2 Crop prices

3.2.1. Maize prices



- The average maize price decreased to Ksh35 per kilo from Ksh 35.2 recorded in November.
- The prevailing high prices could be attributed to depleted maize stocks at household and national level.
- Low prices were recorded in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone (Ksh28 per kg), while higher prices were realized in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone (Ksh38 per kg) and mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops (Ksh30 per kg) livelihood zone situated in the wetlands.
- Compared to the long term mean, the trend was increasing and average maize price was still very high.

3.2.2 Beans prices



- In the month under review the average beans price increased to Ksh 83 per kilo from Ksh 82.4 recorded in November.
- The high price in both districts could be attributed to increased demand while supply was not adequate.
- In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone average beans prices at household level were high (Ksh 90 per kg).
- Prices were lower in mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone at Ksh 80 per kg and at Ksh70 per kg in the mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops livelihood zone.
- Compared to the long term mean the trend was normal but the price was still very high.

3.3 Income

3.3.1. Livestock income

- Income from livestock sales obtained from 360 sampled households in the month under review increased significantly.
- Sale of 8 cattle @ Ksh 12,000, 23 goats @ Ksh 1,500 and 71 chickens @ Ksh 380 realized Ksh 157,480 compared to Ksh 54,500 realized in the month of November.

- The significant increase could be attributed to increased prices and increased sales due to the festive month of Christmas.

3.3.2 Other income sources

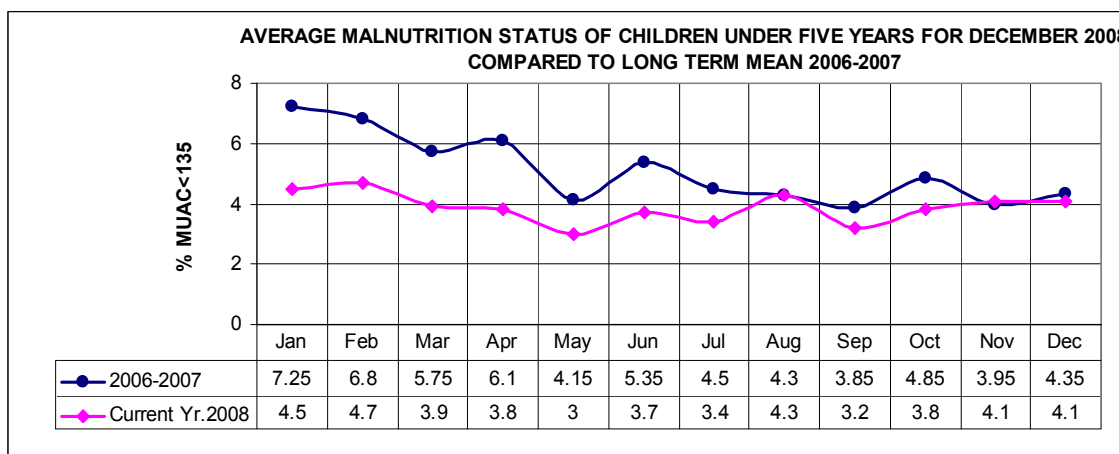
- Other income sources in the month under review remained casual labour, petty trade, formal employment, remittances, sand and brick selling, charcoal selling, miraa selling, fishing and small-scale mining.
- Income obtained from these sources remained the same and this was normal for the time of the year.

3.4 Implications on food security

- High prices of food stuffs and other essential goods like paraffin and transport costs continued to dominate all the markets.
- Though milk was available for household members to sell and for consumption, most farmers were languishing in poverty due to the high prices of food stuffs.
- Cereals and legumes were readily available at market level but still at very high prices.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilization of food)

4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years remained stable during the month.
- The percentage of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC<135mm measurement) was 4.1 as it was in November.
- Out of 1,235 children under-five sampled in 15 sample sites areas, 50 were found with MUAC< 135mm.
- Though the trend was increasing, the rate was not alarming given that it was still below 4.85.
- The prevailing low levels could be attributed to increased awareness by Ministry of Health at district level.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

- Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Sector projects
 - Rehabilitation and equipping of Paranga shallow well was ongoing and all the materials were on site- ALRMP.
 - Out of 5,000 tissue culture bananas procured, only 2,290 were delivered to farmers in Taveta due to transportation problems. The remaining batch will be delivered in January- ALRMP.
 - DSG Taita approved Ksh 62,000 to be used for payment of two tyres and two tubes following water trucking exercise that was carried out to thirteen stressed institutions due to prolonged drought in the month of November- ALRMP.
 - DSG Taita requested for two water bowsers to be purchased for the district for use in water trucking during the dry season.
- Livestock Sector projects
 - DSG Taita approved Ksh 875,000 from DCF to be used by DVO Taita to carry out a massive vaccination campaign on CCPP, PPR and RVF in the entire district- ALRMP.

5.2 Food aid

- Taveta district received 2,000 bags (90 kgs), 300 bags (90 kgs) of beans and 600 bags (50kgs) of rice as relief food from the Office of the President Ministry of State for Special Programmes department of Relief and Rehabilitation.
- The DSG resolved that the location committees identify the needy cases within their locations and those locations that have more people requiring assistance will receive more food and no food should be retained at the DC's office for distribution.
- However, PLWHA'S to be allocated 2% of their location allocations.

Cereal Type	Name of Location					Total
	Kimorigho	Bomeni	Jipe	Challa	Njukini/Chumvini	
Rice(bags)	90	138	114	150	108	600
Beans(bags)	45	69	57	75	54	300
Maize(bags)	300	460	380	500	360	2000

6.0 Recommendations

- Relevant departments to activate their drought contingency plans to address the situation as it unfolds.
- Revive colonial drainage canals to divert flood waters in Taveta district.
- Food for Assets projects to target rain-fed lowlands of both districts to enhance food security.
- Encourage roof catchment technology on the hilly areas to reduce volume of water flowing downhill.

- Rehabilitate and excavate water pans in the rain-fed lowlands, ranches and the park, construct sand dams across dry river beds and promote catchment conservation measures through planting of indigenous trees.
- Increase small-scale irrigation, protect water springs by fencing to reduce degradation and construct water harvesting structures in the lowlands to enhance crop production.
- Electric fencing of the national Park next to farming areas to safeguard food crops destruction.
- Expansion of area under irrigation through desilting of canals and opening of new ones in Taveta district and Tausa and Mwatate in Taita district.
- Promotion of drought-tolerant crops such as cassava, sorghum, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, green grams and millet.