

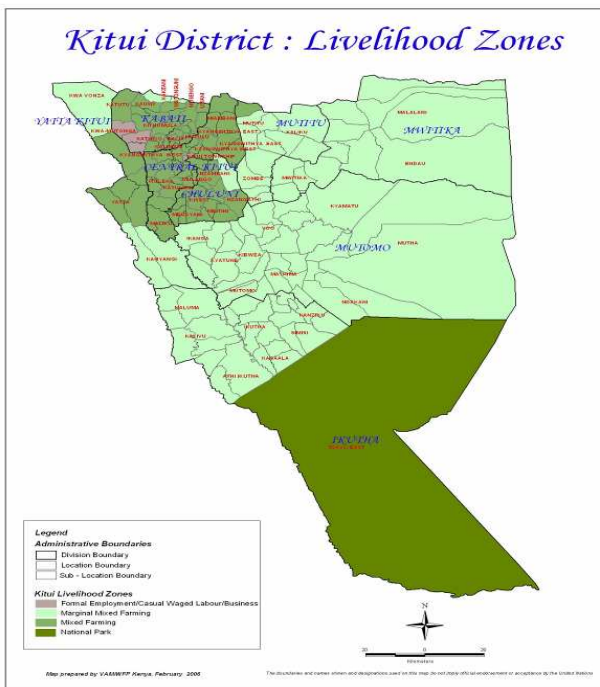


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN FOR JUNE, 2008
KITUI DISTRICT**

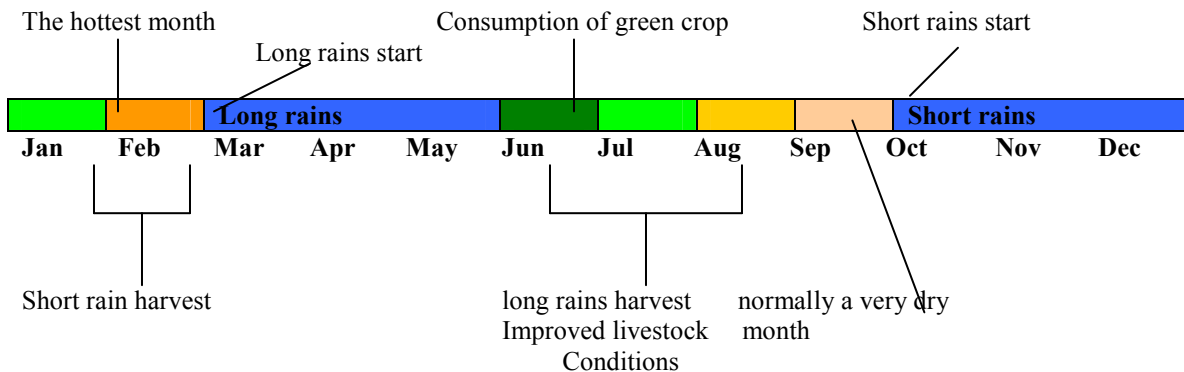
KITUI DISTRICT

WARNING STAGES



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Mixed Farming	Alert	Stable
Marginal Mixed Farming	Alert	Worsening
Formal Employment	Normal	Stable

TIME LINE



Situation overview

- The month of June remained cold with traces of rains being reported in the township.
- The situation of the natural vegetation and pastures declined.
- The main sources of water in the district were traditional river wells, natural rivers and shallow wells. Most of the open water surface facilities dried up.
- The average walking distances to the water point increased from 4 kilometres previously to 5 Kms currently.
- The sale rate of cattle dropped from 3.2% in the previous month to 2% while that of goats remained stable at 2%.
- During this period there were no many crops in the farms. In the marginal mixed livelihood zone all the crops have withered while in the mixed farming livelihood zone various crops are at different stages of growth, maize is being consumed green, pigeon peas is being harvested and a number of fruits are available.
- The price of both goats and cattle went down. This is attributed to the shortage of food crops at the household level.
- Milk consumption in the district increased compared to the previous month.
- The district experienced a sharp rise in the price of maize and beans. This trend is attributed to the decline in domestic supplies, poor performance of the long rains particularly in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The nutrition levels for children under the age of five years declined.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- To undertake mass vaccination of livestock to boost immunity during the dry period.
- Sensitize farmer to destock before their animals weaken and to avoid feed stress.
- Assess the status of the contingency boreholes.
- Procure start-up diesel for contingency boreholes.
- Repair water bowsers.
- Carry out a rapid assessment to ascertain the status on the ground.
- Lobby the NCPBD to open satellite selling centres where farmers can access cereal at a reasonable price and distance.
- Intensify surveillance conflict flare ups at the border points.

Current interventions

Food interventions

- Food for assets distribution in all the targeted Divisions.
- Continued regular school feeding program.
- Aflatoxin contaminated food surveillance in both Kitui and Mutomo Districts.
- General food distribution in the non-EMOP targeted locations in both Districts.

Non- food interventions

Water

- Sand dam construction by ALRMP, SASOL, DASS.
- Completion of Tiva borehole water project by ALRMP.
- Extension of the Masinga water pipeline by the Ministry of Water.
- Water trucking to institutions of learning.

Works

- Museve road repairs by the Ministry of Works and DASS.
- Maintenance of Mulango- Kavisuni road by DASS and Ministry of Public Works.

Livestock

- Supply of meat goat breeding stock by ALRMP and the Ministry of Livestock.
- Training on meat goat management in Mutomo, Mutitu & Mwitika Division supported by ALRMP and the Ministry of Livestock.
- Livestock vaccination against foot and mouth disease in Mutomo District supported by ALRMP.

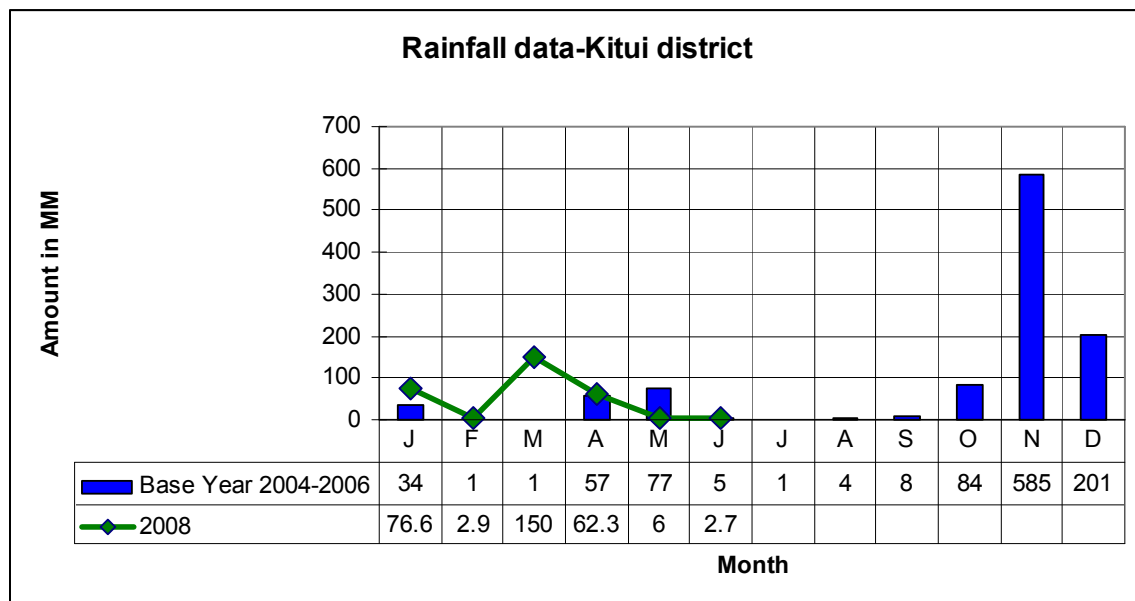
Agriculture

- Extension in crop & livestock production supported by NALEP.
- Promotion of micro irrigation by ALRMP, DASS, ADRA and the Irrigation department.
- Community training on value addition of baobab and tamarids in Ikutha.

1. Environmental indicators (stability)

1.1 Rainfall

- The month of June remained cold with traces of rain being reported in the township



1.2 Natural vegetation and pastures

- The situation of natural vegetation and pastures declined. The quantity of grass has significantly dropped and the other plants have started shedding their leaves owing to the prevailing dry weather. This is particularly so in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone. The most severely affected areas stretch from Muthungue Location in Mwitika Division through Mutha Division, Ikutha Division, Mutomo Division and Yatta Divisions.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- Nearly 50% of the communities relied on traditional river wells as their main source of water. The levels of water in the open water facilities went down and the levels of contamination are high. This is shown by the increase in the number of households relying on traditional river wells and natural rivers and the decline in the number of households relying on rock catchments and pans which have dried up.
- An interview with education officers reviewed that, quite a number of institutions are facing acute water shortage as their reservoirs continue to dry and the water bowsers in the District are inadequate and the cost of water trucking is high.
- Currently, the average return distance to the water points is 5 Kms, an increment of 1 Km compared to the previous month.

The table below shows the water sources in use and the % number of households accessing them during the month of April as compared to March.

Source	Traditional river wells	Pans/Dams	Shallow wells	Rock catchments	Natural ponds	Natural rivers
April 2008	48%	27%	9%	7%	9%	0
May 2008	49%	25%	6%	6%	2%	2%
June 2008	50%	16%	13%	2%	4%	8%

1.4 Implications on food security

- The cold weather supported the growth and maturity of the maize crop in the black cotton soils of Katutu and Katheani Locations of Mutonguni Division.
- The cold weather provided a conducive environment for the spread of Newcastle disease in poultry.
- Decline in the pasture and natural vegetation is a threat to the livestock industry as feed stress is expected to begin early.
- The increase in the distances to the water points is bound to weaken livestock and consume productive hours that could be used for other investments.
- Because of concentration at the water points environmental degradation is expected to rise.
- Water and livestock feed scarcity in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone is a recipe for conflicts with the neighboring Oroma and Somali community from the neighboring Tana River Districts.
- The deep unprotected river wells are a security risk as people might be buried alive in the event of the walls collapsing.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock body conditions

- In spite of the decline in the amount of available pastures and natural vegetation the livestock body conditions of most of the livestock remained good, more so the small stock.

2.2 Livestock diseases

- Cases of Newcastle disease infection were widely reported in Mutomo and Mutha Districts. Elsewhere in Mutomo and Mwitika unconfirmed cases of CCPP were reported.

2.3 Crop production

2.3.1 Timeliness and crop situation

Very few crops are in the field during the reporting period. The most common crop was pigeon peas and most particularly in the mixed farming livelihood zone.

- **Maize**- available in the black cotton soils in Mutonguni Division, parts of Central and Chuluni Divisions and is mostly being consumed green. The performance ranges from fair to poor.
- **Pigeon peas**- in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone the crop has completely withered due to moisture stress while the crop in the mixed farming livelihood zone apart from Yatta Division the crop is mature and harvesting has begun.
- **Fruit crops** – in Central, Matinyani & Chuluni a variety of fruits are available, tangerines are available and ready in Mbitini location in Chuluni Division. In the other two Divisions paw paws and bananas are ready. In Museve, Kasyala and Ulonzo areas in Central Division sugarcane is available.
- **Baobab** –the fruit is plenty in Mwitika and Ikutha Divisions where most farmers are harvesting and packaging for transportation to the towns for sale.
- **Pumpkins** – these are available in Central, Chuluni and Matinyani Divisions.
- **Cassava** – this is also available in central, Chuluni and Matinyani Division and is at various stages of growth and development.
- **Asian vegetables**- these are being grown through irrigation along the main rivers –Thua, Nzeeu, Tiva, Athi and Kauwi.

2.3.2 Crop pests and diseases

- No major crop pests and diseases were reported during the period under review.

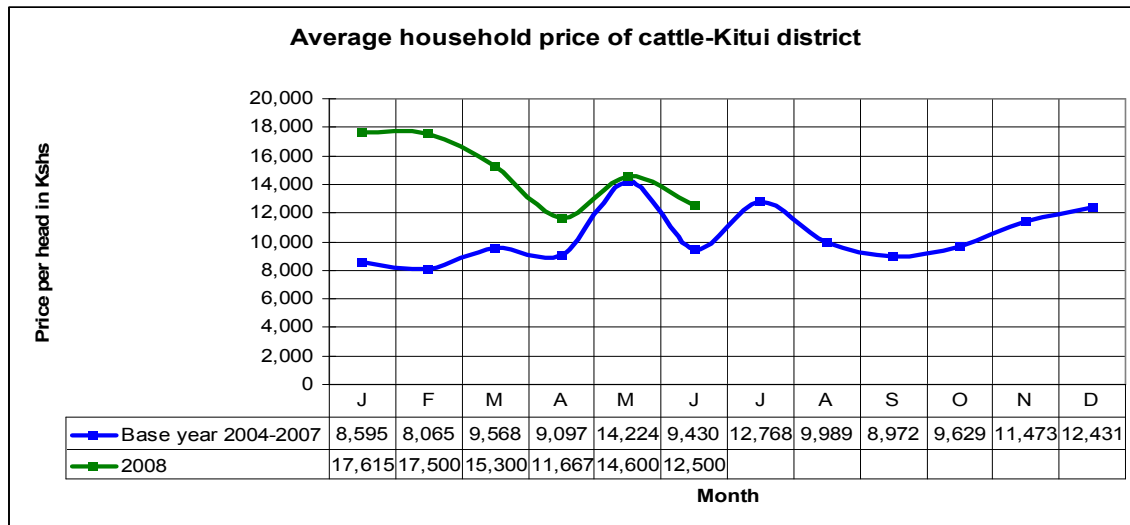
2.4 Implications on food security

- The food security situation in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone worsened. It recorded a total crop failure.
- In the mixed farming livelihood zone the situation is slightly different because of diversity in the enterprises from which the households can choose from. Apart from consumption of pigeon peas and the various fruits they are also selling them to raise funds to meet other household needs.
- The infection of chicken by Newcastle led to deaths.

3.0 Access to food

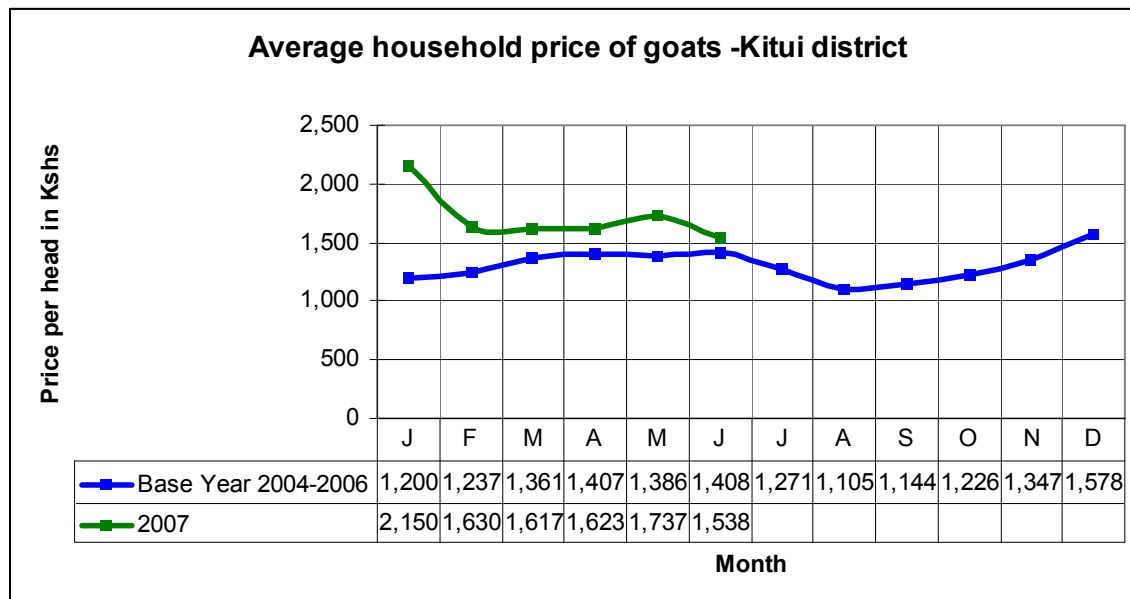
3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The average price of cattle slightly went down. This trend is attributed basically to two things, Most households have depleted their food stocks and are relying on proceeds from livestock sales for their daily needs and secondly the livestock feed has declined and farmers are destocking before the drought bites. Both factors have led to increased supply of livestock in the markets against static demand. High prices were recorded in Ikutha of 15,400 whereas the lowest prices were reported in Chuluni – 8,600. Compared to the base year the trend is normal.

3.1.2 Goats prices



- The price of goats too dropped. Again as mentioned above, most households in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone have exhausted their food stocks and are currently relying on proceeds from livestock sales to acquire food from the market. High prices were reported in Chuluni division of Kshs. 2,000 while low prices were reported in Mutitu division of 1,240. The trend is not normal.

3.1.3 Livestock sales

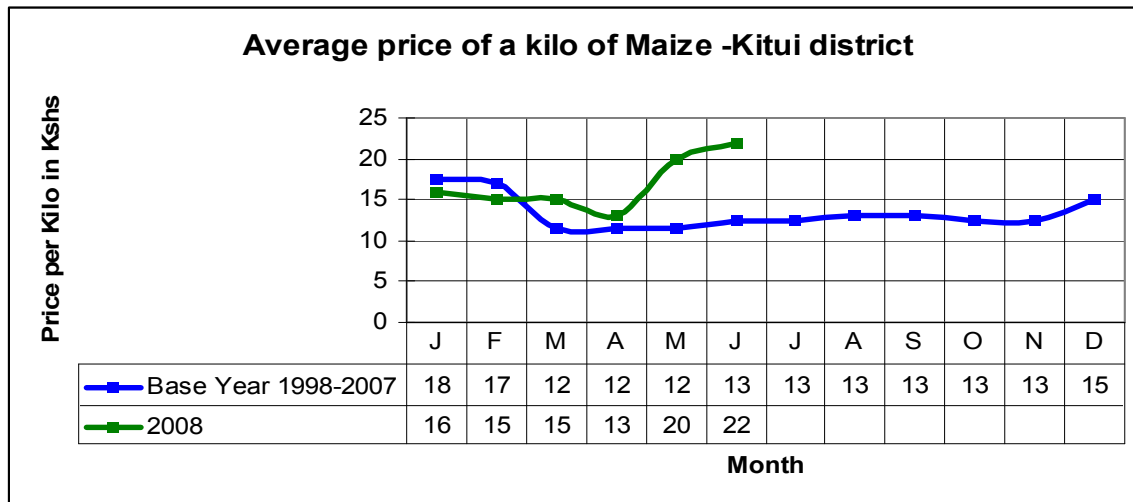
- The rate of selling of cattle dropped from 3.2% in the previous month to 2 % currently while that of goats remained stable at 2%.

3.1.4 Milk consumption

- Consumption of milk went up in the district. Consumption rose from an average of 37 (750 MM) bottles per sampled households last month to the current 39 (750MM) bottles.

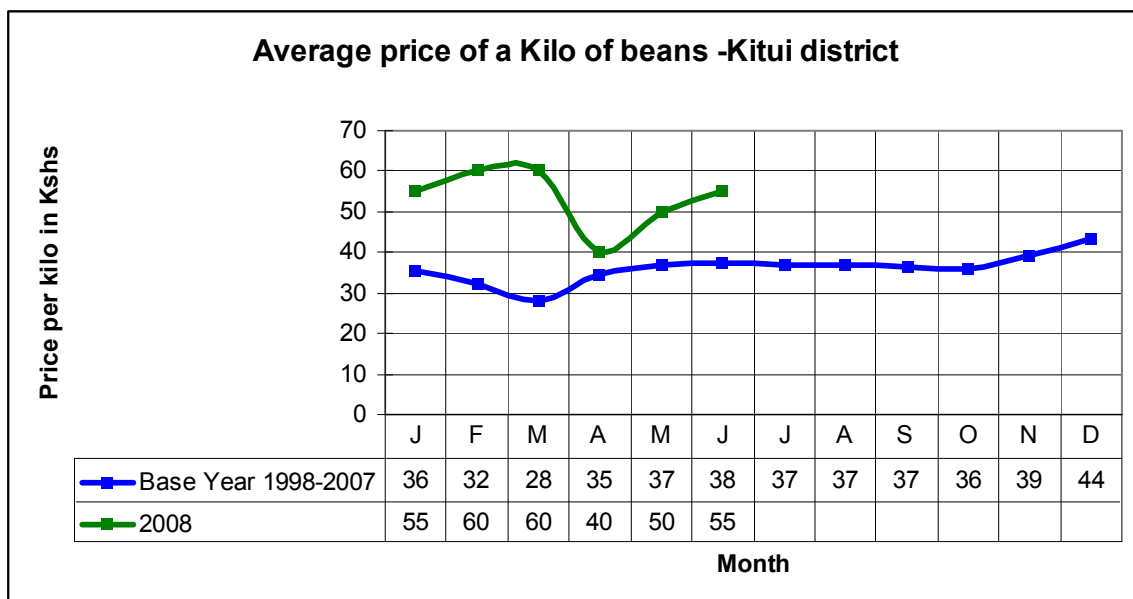
3.2 Crop prices

3.2.1 Maize prices



- The price of a kilo of maize continued to rise. This increase in price is attributed to increased demand for the food crop in the District against declined local supply of the same. Most of the crop in the field in the Central Divisions is too little and will be consumed green in the field. Currently the District is relying on supplies from outside. Compared to the base year the trend is normal but the rise is sharp.

3.2.2 Beans prices



- During the month the District experienced a rise in the price of beans. Again as mentioned above, the District is experiencing a shortage of the above food item following poor performance of the short rains. On the contrary, the demand for the same commodity is on the rise owing to depletion of stocks at the household levels. The District is importing this commodity from other parts of the country namely Western Province and parts of Coast Province. In the mixed farming livelihood zone farmers are substituting consumption of beans with green pigeon peas which are available in the farms. The trend is not normal and is expected to persist.

3.3 Incomes

3.3.1 Crop income

- The income from sale of crops compared to other sources declined from 4% in the previous month to 3% currently. This drop is attributed to decline in food stocks at the household levels and signs of poor performance of the crop currently in the farms.

3.3.2 Livestock income

- The percentage of income derived from sale of livestock rose to 10% from 8% in the month of April. This is an indication that people are now relying more on livestock to make their ends meet.

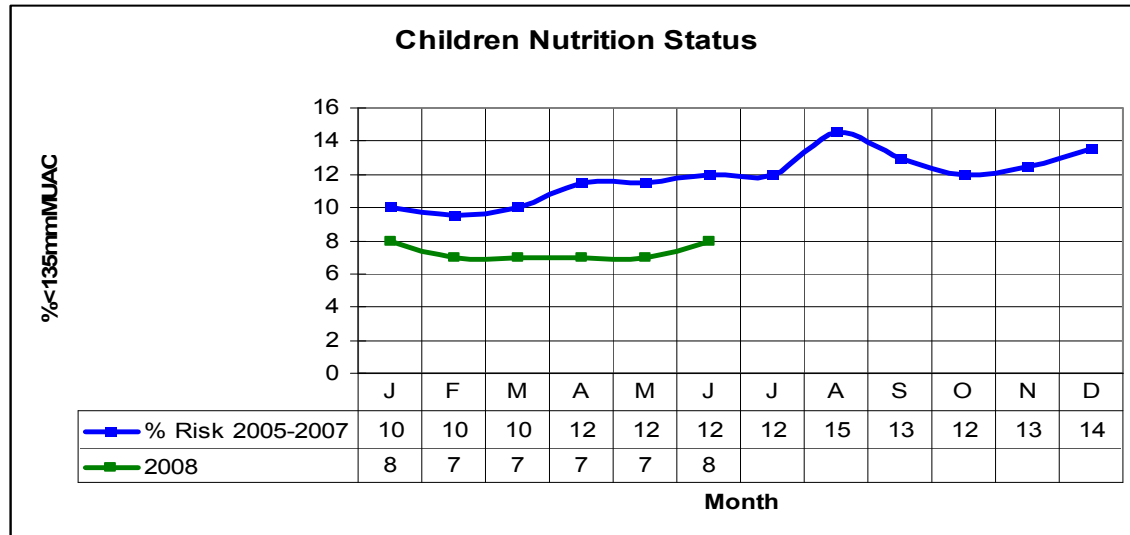
3.3.3 Other sources

- Most community members relied on casual labor as the main source of income though the percentages of proceeds from this source 38% from 40% reported in April. This drop is attributed to decline in casual job opportunities which are mostly from the farms. Other sources included remittances 21%, salary 11%, petty trade 13% and sale of charcoal 6%.

3.4 Implications on food security

- The decline in the price of livestock cast a bleak future food security. They reflect poor terms trade because the price of every other household good has virtually gone up.
- The rise in the price of the main cereal crop is making the commodity far from the reach by the common man. Communities in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone are being forced by circumstances reducing the size and number of meals per day.
- Lack of food supplies in the community has also slackened the implementation of other long term food security programmes, households are now committing most of their time in search of food and food related items.

4. Welfare indicators (utilization of food)



- The percentage number of malnourished children slightly went up. This drop in nutrition status is attributed to the prevailing food shortages in most parts of the District.

4.1 Human health

- The commonly reported disease affecting most communities was Malaria and diseases of the upper respiratory truck. Both are accredited to the prevailing cold weather conditions.

5. Current interventions and coping strategies

5.1 Food interventions

- Food for assets distribution in all the targeted Divisions, targeting 32,381 people.
- Continued regular school feeding program.
- Aflatoxin contaminated food surveillance in both Kitui and Mutomo Districts.
- General food distribution in the non-EMOP targeted locations in both Districts.

5.2 Non- food interventions

5.2.1 Water

- Sand dam construction by ALRMP, SASOL, DASS.
- Completion of TIVA borehole water project by ALRMP.
- Extension of the Masinga water pipeline by the Ministry of Water.
- Water trucking to institutions of learning.

5.2.2 Works

- Museve road repairs by the Ministry of Works and DASS.
- Maintenance of Mulango- Kavisuni road by DASS and Ministry of Public Works.

5.2.3 Livestock

- Supply of meat goat breeding stock by ALRMP and the Ministry of Livestock.
- Training on meat goat management.

5.2.4 Agriculture

- Extension in crop and livestock production supported by NALEP.

- Promotion of micro irrigation by ALRMP,DASS, ADRA and the Irrigation department.
- Community training on value addition of baobab and Tamarids in Ikutha.