



**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, NOVEMBER 2008

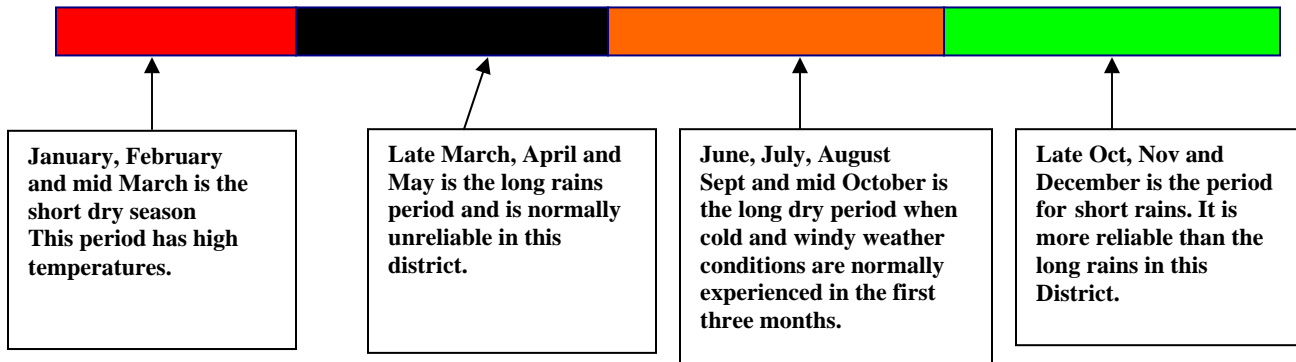
Garissa District

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Agro-pastoral	Alert	Worsening
Formal employment/ Casual labor.	Alert	No Change
Pastoral- Cattle/Sheep.	Alert	Improving
Pastoral- all species	Alert	Improving
Pastoral: Camels and Goats	Alert	Improving
District	Alert	Improving

SEASONAL CALENDAR



Situation Overview

- The district recorded moderate rainfall in some parts and light showers in others during the first week of the month. Danyere, parts of Benane and Dertu recorded very little rain, while Jarajilla, Sankuri, Shanta Abak and Balambala received moderate rainfall.
- Most of the vegetation sprouted after the onset of the short rains, especially herbs and forbs. There was regeneration of leaves on most of the large trees and pasture/browse outlook was expected to be good if the rains continue.
- Small and large water pans refilled with substantial amounts of water following the short rains, except Abdisamet, Fafi Kalala and Ahmed Gallow. Large water pans such as Ashadin, Rethab, Ohiyo, Abdigab Dujis, Koriale, Gohh and Awliya are filled up.
- Household access to water improved tremendously compared with the preceding month, with most pastoral households being able to access water. Distance to water points reduced to less than a kilometer for households.
- Livestock access to water improved tremendously compared with the preceding month in most parts of the district. Livestock trekked less than a kilometer for water and in some cases it was available in grazing areas. The situation is expected to prevail if the short rains continue into December.
- No conflicts or human displacements were reported in the course of the month. However, there was heightened tension due to insecurity in neighboring Somalia.
- Livestock body conditions were expected to improve after the onset of the short rains due to vegetation regeneration. Camels and goats were expected to do better than cattle because of the availability of browse and pasture for the different livestock species.
- The most common livestock diseases were tick bone diseases and worm infestations. However, most of the livestock in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas remained healthy.
- Milk was available in parts of the district, especially camels/goats zones. This was expected to improve with better forage/browse availability.
- Cattle prices rose tremendously following the onset of the rains. The price rose to Ksh 11,750 from 8,867 in October. The rise was also due to shortage of cattle in the market as pastoralists held on to their animals either for fattening or for herd improvement.
- Goat prices improved slightly during the month. The average price was Ksh 1,597 compared to Ksh 1,587 in October. However, goat prices were expected to rise further following improved availability of pasture and browse due to the ongoing short rains. Sheep prices improved to Ksh 1,350 from Ksh 1,189 in October.
- Food prices rose during the month compared to the preceding month. Maize prices rose slightly to Ksh 30 per kilo from Ksh 27 in October, while Posho prices rose to Ksh 42 per kilo, up from Ksh 35 in October.
- The increase was due to shortage of cereals in most of the rural centres in the district after the rains made roads inaccessible.
- The nutrition status of children below five years continued to worsen during the month under review compared to the preceding month. The percentage of those

rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC measurement) rose to 9.3 from 8.5 in October.

Current interventions

Non-food interventions

- Action against hunger continued supporting the agro-pastoral communities and also extended their support to Dujis water pan, where they are constructing livestock water troughs.

Food aid

- Food aid was distributed throughout the month, especially in areas or divisions that were accessible during the rains.
- Food distribution was carried out and supervised by Kenya Red Cross.

Recommendations

- Provision of farm inputs to irrigated farms along River Tana in order to improve food security in the area.
- Mobile health clinics for pastoral communities that do not have static health facilities.
- Continued capacity building for pastoral communities.
- Continued financing of micro and macro projects in urban and rural communities to improve their livelihoods.

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall

- The district recorded moderate rainfall in some parts and light showers in others during the first week of the month.
- Danyere, parts of Benane and Dertu recorded very little rain, while Jarajilla, Sankuri, Shanta Abak and Balambala received moderate rainfall.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Most of the vegetation sprouted after the onset of the short rains, especially herbs and forbs.
- There was regeneration of leaves on most of the large trees and pasture/browse outlook was expected to be good if the rains continue.

1.3 Water sources and availability

1.3.1 Water sources

- Small and large water pans refilled with substantial amounts of water following the short rains, except Abdisamet, Fafi Kalala and Ahmed Gallow.
- Large water pans such as Ashadin, Rethab, Ohiyo, Abdigab Dujis, Koriale, Gohh and Awliya are filled up.

1.3.2 Household access to water

- Household access to water improved tremendously compared with the preceding month, with most pastoral households being able to access water.
- Distance to water points reduced to less than a kilometer for households.

1.3.3 Livestock access to water

- Livestock access to water improved tremendously compared with the preceding month in most parts of the district.
- Livestock trekked less than a kilometer for water and in some cases it was available in grazing areas.
- The situation is expected to prevail if the short rains continue into December.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Insecurity/conflict/ human displacement

- Though no conflicts or human displacements were reported in the course of the month, there was heightened tension due to insecurity in neighboring Somalia.

1.4.2 Migration

- Most of the large and small water pans in the interior filled up with rain water, resulting in livestock and pastoral households from different parts of the district moving from permanent water sources, where vegetation was depleted during the long dry period, to wet season grazing areas.

1.4.3 Implications on food security

- Inadequate rainfall, hence lack of continuous vegetation regeneration and shortage of milk in most parts of the district impacted negatively on food security in the district.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock body conditions were expected to improve after the onset of the rains due to vegetation regeneration.
- Camels and goats were expected to do better than cattle since more browse and pasture were available for them.

2.1.2 Livestock health and diseases

- Most of the livestock species in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas remained healthy.
- However, there were reported cases of tick-borne diseases and worm infestations.

2.1.3 Milk production

- Milk was available in parts of the district, especially the camels/goats zones.
- Availability was expected to improve with forage/browse availability and improvement.
- Milk production was expected to improve with continuous rainfall and vegetation rejuvenation (pasture/browse improvement).

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and status of crop production activities

- All the farms along River Tana halted vegetable production due to the start of the short rains in the district and expected floods.
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- Farmers were preparing to evacuate their farm equipment.

2.2.2 Pests and crop diseases

- No pests or crop diseases were reported in irrigated farms along the River Tana.

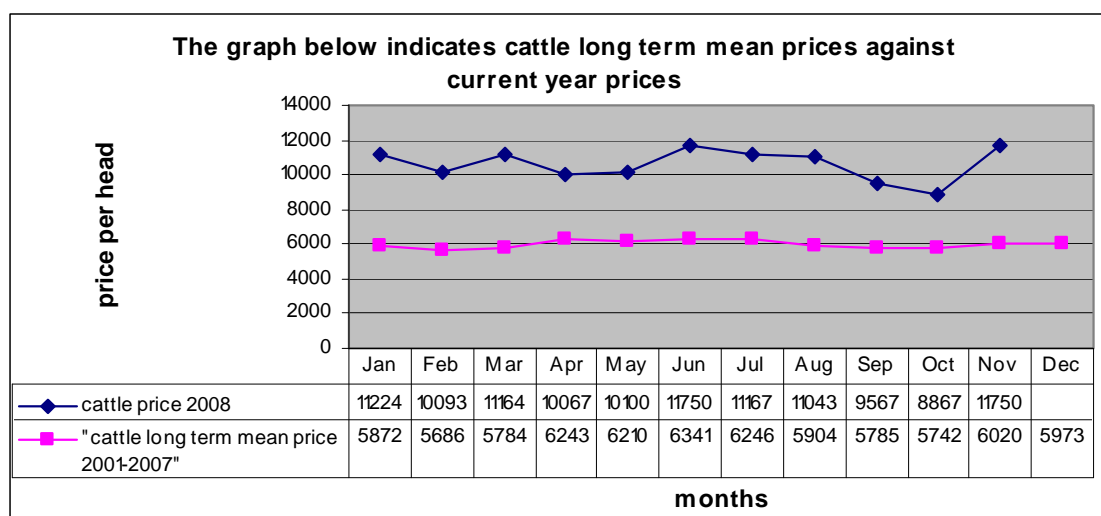
2.2.3 Crop harvest

- There were vegetables and fruits from irrigated farms along River Tana but quantities continued to reduce following the start of the short rains.

3.0 Access to food

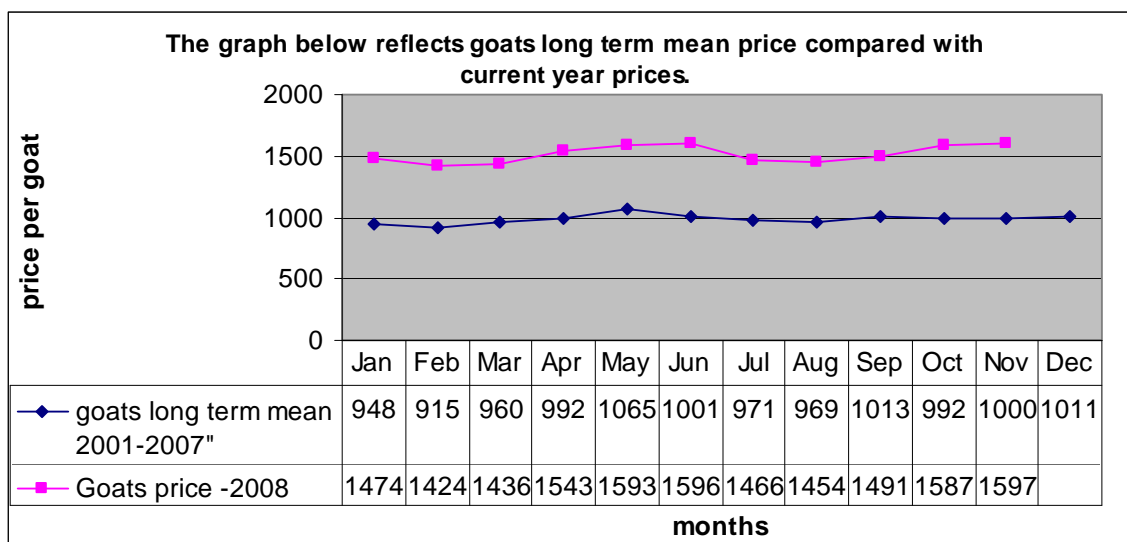
3.1 Livestock Marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



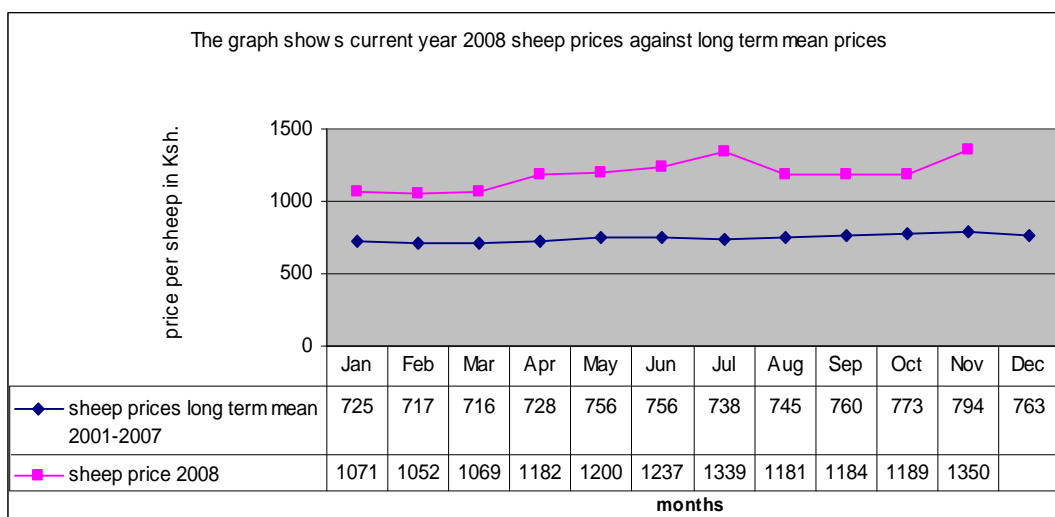
- Cattle prices rose tremendously following the onset of the rains.
- The price rose to Ksh 11,750 from 8,867 in October, representing a 10 per cent increase.
- The rise was also due to shortage of cattle in the market as pastoralists held on to their animals either for fattening or for herd improvement.

3.1.2 Goats prices



- Goat prices improved slightly during the month. The average price was Ksh 1,597 compared to Ksh 1,587 in October.
- However, goat prices were expected to rise further following improved availability of pasture and browse due to the ongoing short rains.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



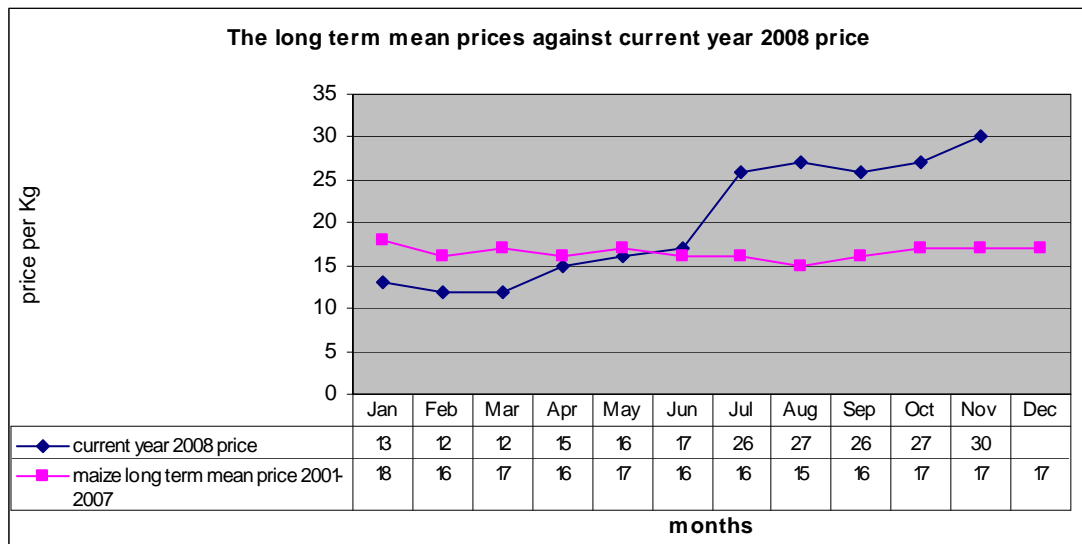
- Sheep prices rose to Ksh 1,350 from Ksh 1,189 in October.
- Generally, sheep are fewer than goats and their availability diminished with the onset of the rains.

3.2 Livestock sales

- The livestock sales rate reduced compared with the preceding month.
- This was due to pastoralists holding on to their animals in order to fatten them or to improve their herds during the wet season.
- Very few animals were presented for sale in markets, hence the high prices.

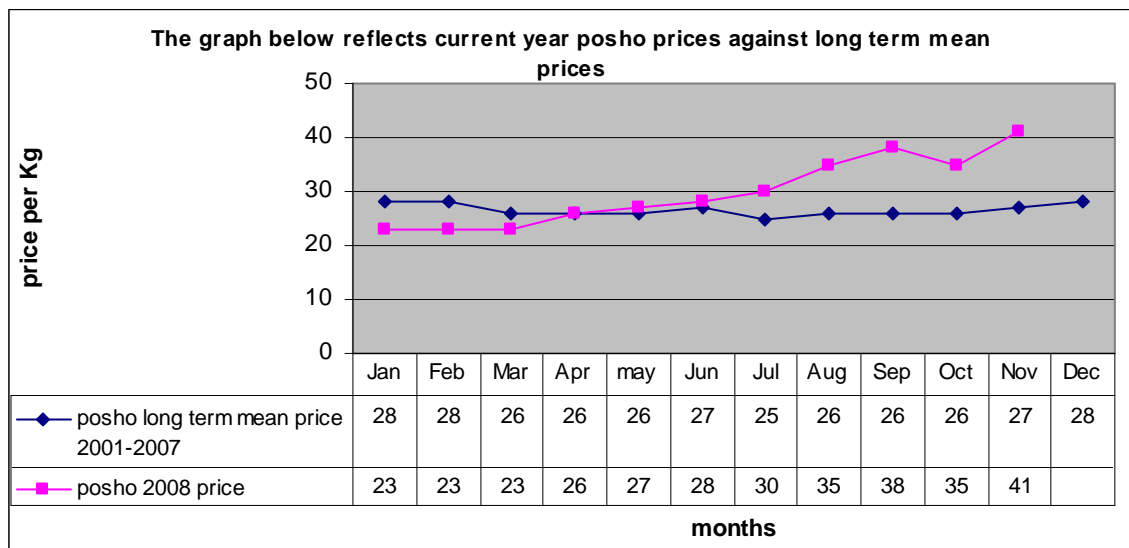
3.3 Crop prices

3.3.1 Maize price



- Maize prices rose slightly compared to the preceding month.
- The average price was Ksh 30 per kilo, up from Ksh 27 in October
- The increase was due to shortage of cereals in most of the rural centres in the district after the rains made roads inaccessible.

3.3.2 Posho (locally milled maize meal) prices



- Posho prices continued to increase compared with the preceding month.
- The average price was Ksh 42 per kilo, up from Ksh 35 in October.

3.3.3 Purchase of other food commodities

- The price of other essential food items {non-cereals} rose during the month.

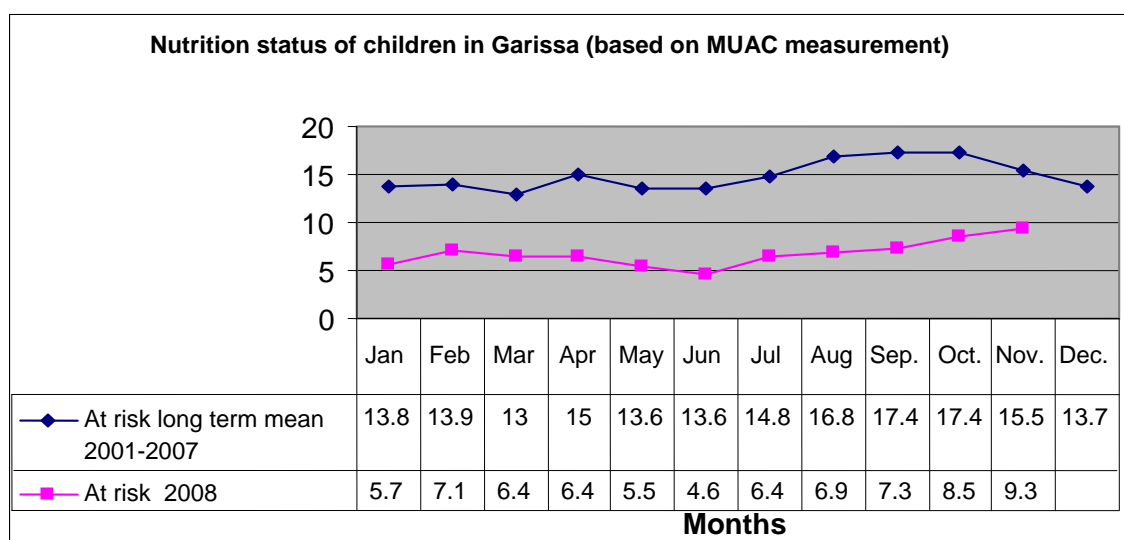
- The rise was attributed to global inflation coupled with transport hitches during the first week of the month following onset of the rains.
- Beans traded at Ksh 85 per kilo, up from Ksh 80 in October.
- The price of sugar rose to Ksh 77 compared to Ksh 72 in October while the price of cooking oil stood at Ksh 142 per liter.
- Generally, food commodities prices were on the increase.

3.4 Implications on food security

- Rising livestock prices were countered by increasing food commodity prices.
- However, lack of animal products and high cereal prices impacted negatively on household food security.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutritional status



- The nutrition status of children below five years continued to worsen during the month under review compared to the preceding month.
- The percentage of those rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC measurement) rose to 9.3 from 8.5 in October.
- However, the rate was lower than the 15.5 percent long term mean.
- The decline was attributed to lack of milk and other livestock products.
- The pastoral livelihood zones were the worst affected, except the camel/goats zones.

4.2 Human health

- No human disease outbreak was reported during the month.
- However, there was risk of disease spread in the event of an outbreak in refugee camps in the district due to congestion and poor sanitation.

4.3 Flagged Areas (Affected Areas)

- Locations surrounding refuge camps are likely to be affected following congestion in the camps.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

- Action against hunger continued supporting the agro-pastoral communities and also extended their support to Dujis water pan, where they are constructing livestock water troughs.

5.2 Food aid

- Food aid was distributed throughout the month, especially in areas or divisions that were accessible during the rains.
- Food distribution was carried out and supervised by Kenya Red Cross.

5.3 Other coping strategies

- Weak animals were left behind as other herds migrated.

6.0 Recommendations

- Provision of farm inputs to irrigated farms along River Tana in order to improve food security in the area.
- Mobile health clinics for pastoral communities that do not have static health facilities.
- Continued capacity building for pastoral communities.
- Continued financing of micro and macro projects in urban and rural communities to improve their livelihoods.