

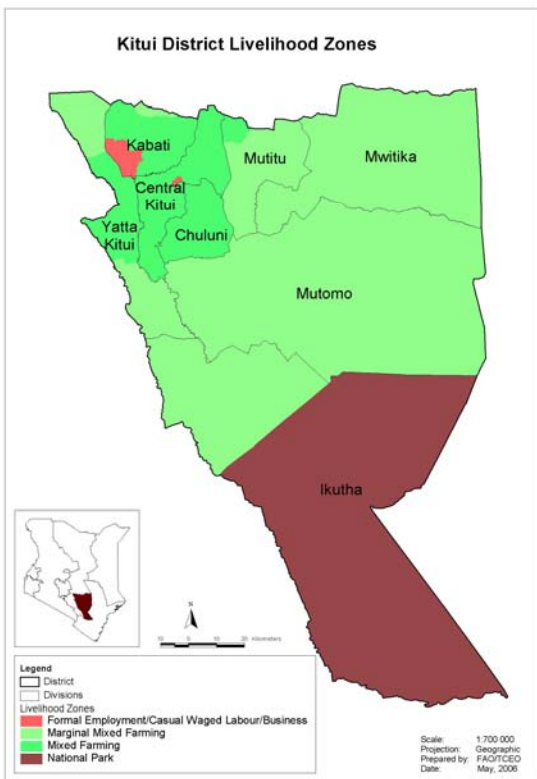


OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, NOVEMBER 2008

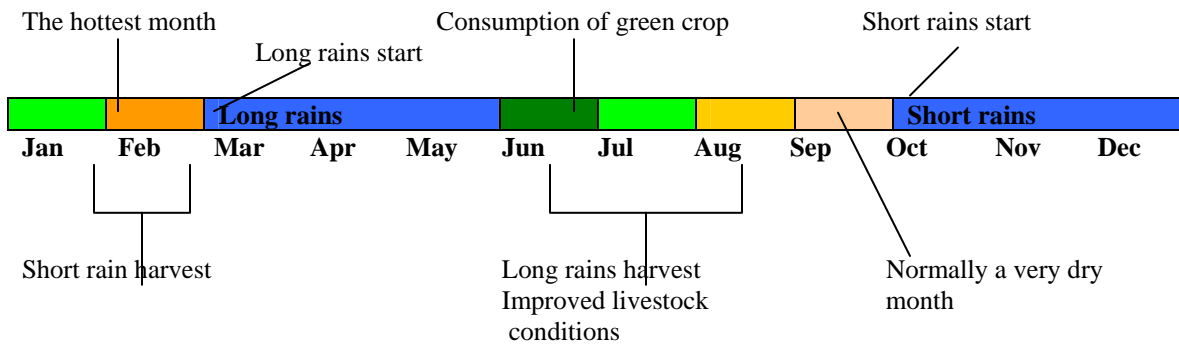
Kitui District

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Mixed farming	Alert	Improving
Marginal mixed farming	Alarm	Improving
Formal Employment	Normal	Stable

TIMELINE ACTIVITIES



Situation overview

- The district received a significant amount of rainfall during the second and third weeks of the month. Kitui station recorded an average of 104mm.
- The condition of natural vegetation and pastures generally improved following the onset of rains, which led to sprouting of grass and regeneration of vegetation.
- Availability and access to water improved. The rains produced run-off, which recharged both the surface and underground water facilities.
- The return distances to water points dropped drastically as many households accessed water within their homesteads.
- The body conditions of livestock slightly improved. This improvement was attributed to the availability of pasture and natural vegetation and access to water.
- The price of maize rose due to shortage of food supplies in the district but beans prices remained stable compared to the previous month.
- The nutrition levels of children under five years remained stable.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- Repair and service of borehole pumps.
- Training on PHAST.
- Intensify roof water harvesting campaigns.
- Intensify capacity building of farmers.
- Sensitisation on crop pests and disease control.
- Massive treatment of livestock against worms.
- Intensify surveillance on PPR.

Current interventions

Food aid

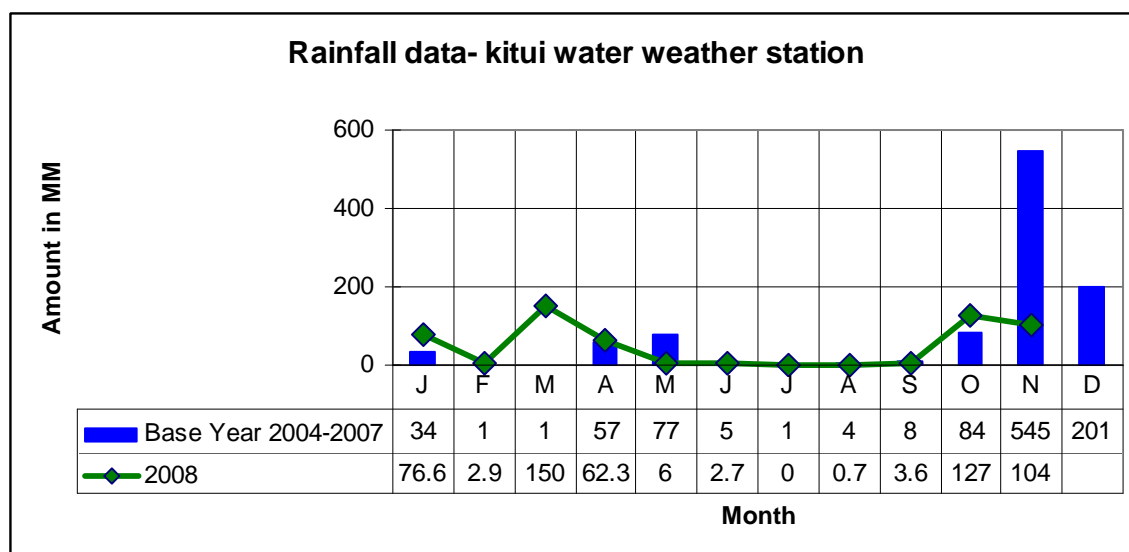
- EMOP food distribution in 9 divisions.
- Continued regular school-feeding programme

Non-food interventions

- Distribution of the township water supply to the peri-urban areas.
- Water trucking in Mutomo during the first week.
- Construction of Usiani weir in Mutonguni division by World Vision.
- Design surveys of dams by ALRMP and Ministry of Water.
- Water projects baseline surveys supported by Tanathi Water Service Board.
- Construction of shallow wells in Kitui central supported by MAEEO CBO.
- Training on dairy goat management in Mutomo and Kitui districts supported by ALRMP.
- Capacity building in livestock management by Ministry of Livestock.
- Stocking of fish ponds supported by ALRMP.
- Distribution of dairy goats in Mutonguni division supported by ALLPRO and World Vision.
- Training of Kawama youth Group on irrigation supported by ALRMP.
- Distribution of seeds by ALRMP and Dept. of Agriculture.

1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

1.1 Rainfall



- During the reporting month the district received a significant amount of rainfall.
- The rainfall was spatially and temporally distributed.
- The rains were distributed within 19 days.
- The maximum amount in one day was 104mm on November 9.
- The amounts were below normal.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The condition of natural vegetation and pasture improved in all the livelihood zones.
- The improvement was attributed to the good rains received during the second and third weeks of the month.

1.3 Water sources and availability

Availability of water improved with the onset of rains.

- Distances to water points reduced for both households and livestock.
- Traditional river wells were the main sources of water.
- There was water in most facilities and communities had a wide variety to choose from.

Water sources in use and the % number of households accessing them in November compared with October

Source	Traditional river wells	Pans/Dams	Shallow wells	Rock catchments	Boreholes	Natural rivers
September 2008	54%	4%	18%	0	13%	9%
October	51%	0	18%	0	22%	0

2008						
November 2008	29%	2%	19%	3%	2%	19%

1.4 Implications on food security

- The onset of rains triggered sprouting of grass and regeneration of pasture, which provided forage for livestock.
- The recharge of water reservoirs significantly improved water availability and access by both livestock and people.
- The rains triggered germination of crops, hence impacting positively on food security.
- The improved water situation significantly reduced the cost of buying water in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock body conditions

- The livestock body condition started improving gradually.
- The improvement was attributed to the availability of pasture and water at convenient distances.

2.2 Crop production

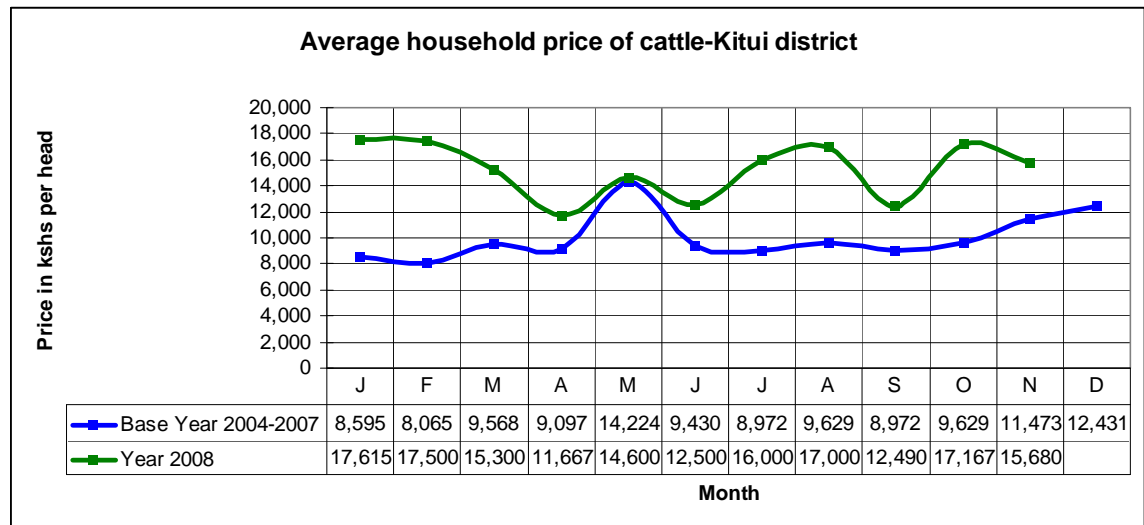
2.2.1 Timeliness and status of various crop production activities

- The month of November coincided with the onset of the short rains and most farmers were planting and weeding.
- The stage and timeliness of the crop ranged from livelihood to livelihood and from household to household.
- In the black cotton soils in Mutonguni division farmers were planting, while in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone the onset of the rains was late and the crops were at a slightly lower stage as opposed to the mixed farming livelihood zone where the onset of the rains was early.
- Early planted maize within the peri-urban zone was about to tassel, whereas in the other areas it ranged from germination to 30 centimetres.
- Beans planted early were about to flower but due to the prevailing dry weather conditions the crop experienced moisture stress and was drying.
- Cowpeas were doing relatively well and most households were consuming their green leaves.

2.3 Implications on food security

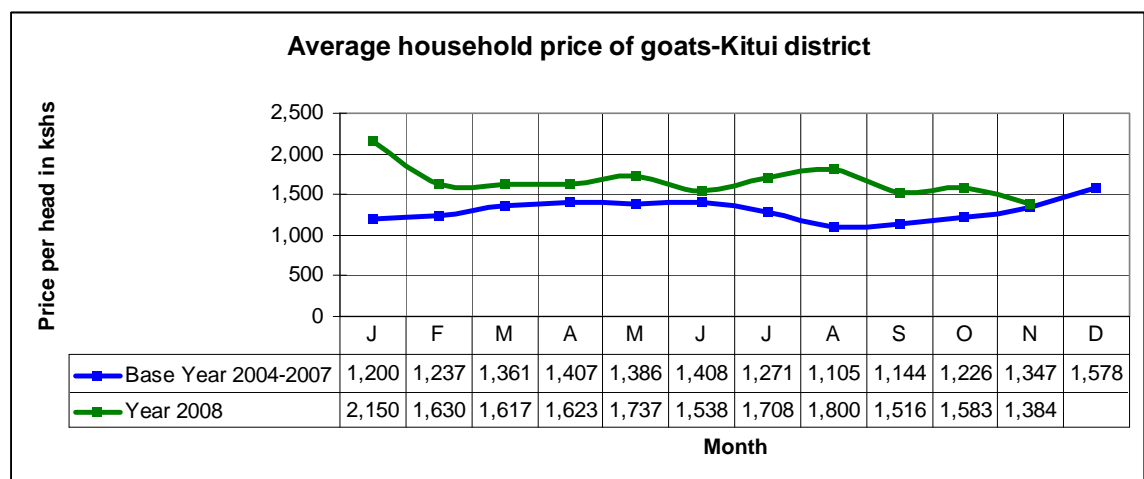
- The onset of the rains was a positive indication of attainment of food security.
- It helped recharge the water facilities, reducing distances to water points improved the body conditions of livestock, hence increased production and productivity.
- The availability of greens from cowpeas supplemented the family diet with essential vitamins.
- However, there were fears that all these gains will be eroded if the rains do not resume soon as the entire crop in the field will dry up.

3.0 access to food
3.1 Livestock marketing
3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The price of cattle dropped to Ksh 15,680 from Ksh17,167 in October.
- Most of the cattle were just recovering from the drought period, hence the price drop.
- Further, due to the onset of rains, most of the dry matter was washed away and leaving cattle to feed on green materials, which reduced their weight.

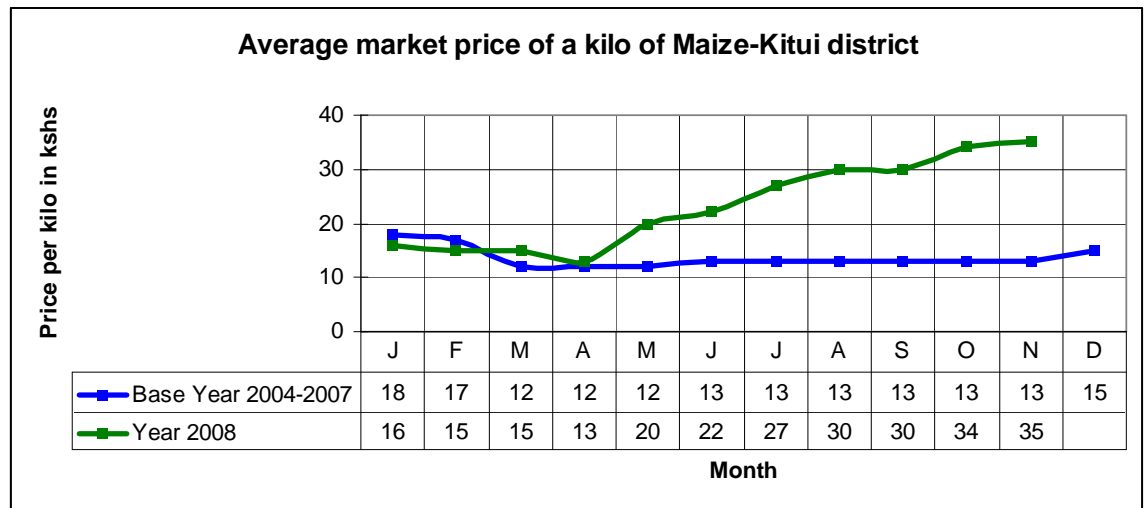
3.1.2 Goat prices



- The price of goats declined as compared to the previous month.
- The average price fell to Ksh 1,384 from Ksh1,583 in October.
- The decline was attributed to increased supply in the markets as households disposed of animals to raise money to purchase food.

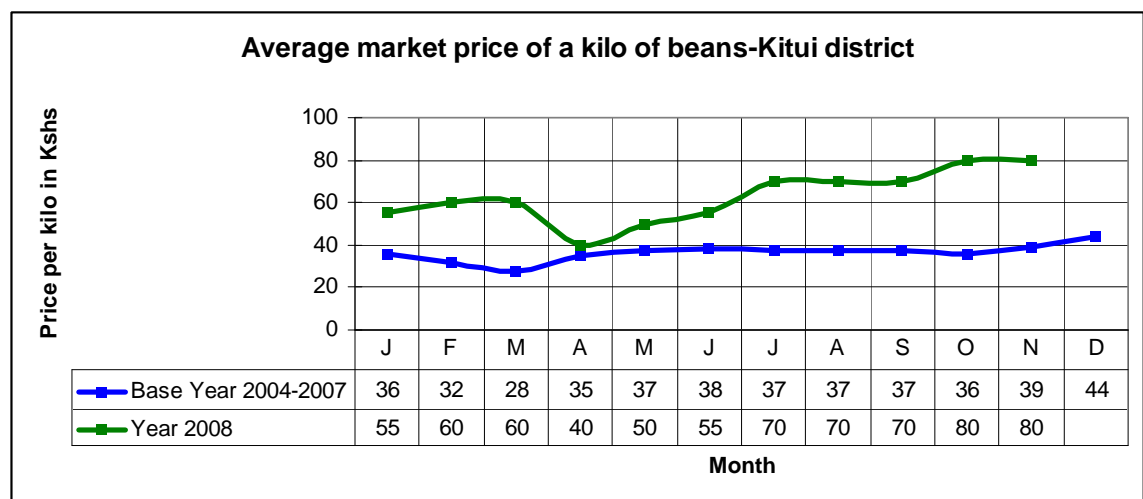
3.2 Crop prices

3.2.1 Maize prices



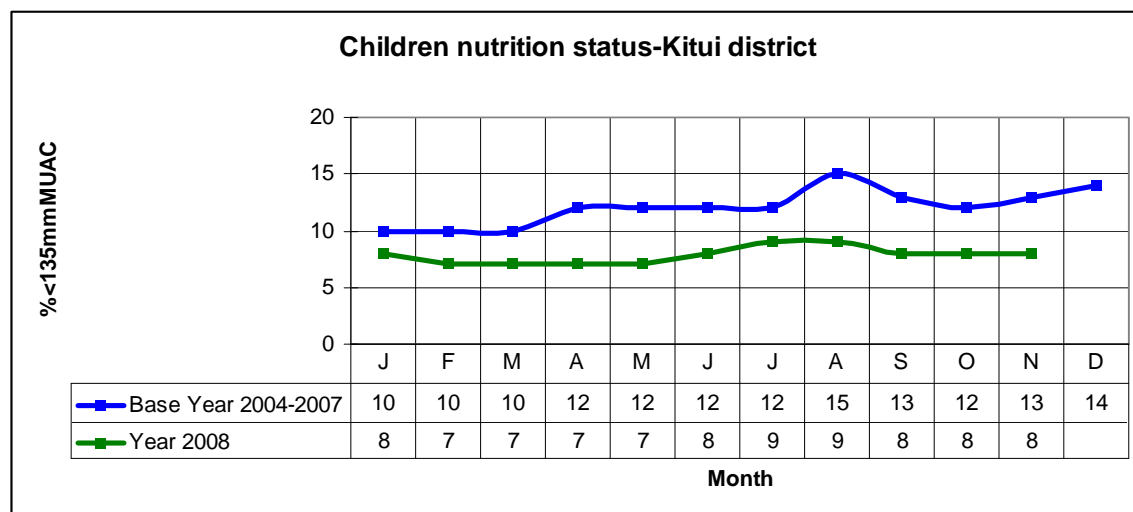
- The average price of a kilo of maize continued to rise.
- This price increase was attributed to the prevailing food shortage in the district following the dismal performance of the long rains.
- In addition, the demand for the food crop rose during the planting season as farmers scrambled for planting materials.
- The National Cereals and Produce and Board, which was supported to normalise the prices, often ran out of stock, leaving farmers at the mercy of unscrupulous businessmen.
- The trend was expected to continue.

3.2.2 Beans prices



- The price of beans remained stable.
- This stability was attributed to the reduction in demand as many households opted out of consumption of beans since they were unaffordable.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of Food)



- The nutrition status children under the age of five remained stable and the same as the previous month.
- The number of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC<135mm) was 8 per cent.

4.2 Human Health

- Malaria was the most commonly reported disease across all the divisions.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Food aid

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- Continued regular school-feeding programme.

Non-food interventions

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6.0 Recommendations

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