

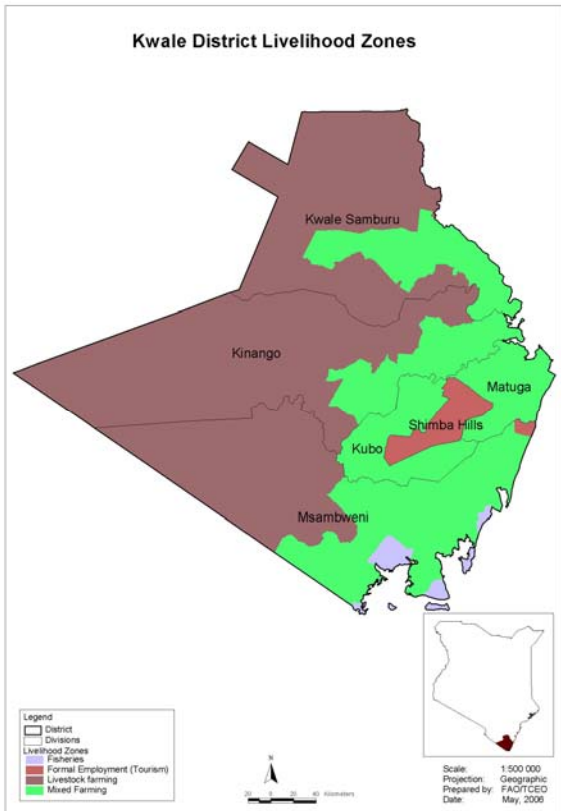


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, NOVEMBER 2008

Kwale District

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Livestock Farming	Alert	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 district received rainfall for only two days during the month. However, the rest of the month remained dry and hot.
- Pastures and browse, which had started regenerating, experiencing the effects of the hot weather.
- There was no significant change in the water situation compared to the previous month. Some areas were already reporting an increase in distances to access water for both households and livestock.
- The maize crop planted at the onset of the rains began to show signs of moisture stress but the legumes were progressing well.
- No significant changes were reported in the prices of livestock at the household level.
- However, prices of maize, posho and other food stuffs rose tremendously.
- Livestock body conditions were generally rated as fair. Effects of drought were still noted in cattle specie while the shoats were stable.
- The nutrition status of children below five years stabilized during the month under review. The number of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC<135mm measurement) was recorded at 5.3 per cent compared to 5.6 in October.
- The food security situation was at alert stage as food deficit continued to be experienced in most households in the district and the situation was expected to worsen due to poor short rains realised.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- Following the poor performance of the short rains, the short dry spell started earlier than normal, thus need for capacity building and facilitate the existing peace committees to be able to monitor the conflict indicators and address them early.
- Consider conducting a detailed nutrition and health survey for the district to confirm the rates of malnutrition and address them accordingly.
- Human/wild life conflicts should be critically addressed as households are vulnerable due to persistent crop destruction and faster depletion of water sources.
- The veterinary department should continue surveillance on livestock diseases with special attention on the PPR, especially in areas along the stock routes.
- Provision of water to areas where there is still water deficit.

Non-food interventions

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

- Training of health workers on the management of severe malnutrition.
- Training of the peace committee for Kwale, Kinango and Msambweni districts.

- Training of cashew nuts farmers on value addition.
- Training on community natural resource management.
- Facilitated an integrated health outreach at Wasini and Mkwiro Islands in Msambweni District.
- Training of front-line extension workers and farmers in Vanga on NERICA (New Rice for Africa).
- Purchase and delivery of 525kg Nerica rice seeds to farmers in Vanga – Msambweni district.
- Purchase and installation of a rice dehusker at Vichigini in Vanga Location, Msambweni district.

Food aid

- Food for Asset programme in Kinango District ongoing.
- The District Steering Group Kwale received the following food relief consignment from the Special Programmes Kitty and was distributed by the District Food Security Group Kwale on November 4.
 - Maize 1500bags x 90kg
 - Rice 1800bags x 50kg
 - Beans 300bags x 50kg

1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

1.1 Rainfall

- The district reported some rains with different intensities in the different livelihood zones, ranging from normal to below normal for the season.
- The rains were only experienced for a few days in the first week of the month, while the rest of the month remained hot and dry.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The condition of vegetation and pasture remained favourable in the mixed farming livelihood zone and negligible improvement in some parts of the livestock farming zone was noted.
- However, prevailing harsh weather conditions led to the deterioration of the same in the livelihood zones.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- There was no significant change in the water harnessed in the various water sources during the month under review despite the few rain days experienced in the district.
- Distance to water sources remained within normal ranges for both households and livestock in the mixed farming livelihood zone but the situation deteriorated in the livestock farming livelihood zone, where water sources dried up and distance to the strategic water points was on an upward trend.
- The above water situation was being experienced earlier than usual for the season.

- However, human and wildlife competition at water sources, especially in the hinterlands of the livestock farming livelihood zone may have led to faster depletion of the water sources.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Insecurity/Conflict/Human displacement

- Conflicts over use of water sources were reported between households, livestock and wildlife (elephants), especially in the hinterland parts of Kinango District.

1.4.2 Migration

- Human migration in search of labour was reported during the month.

1.5 Implications on food security

- The unpredictable rains experienced in the district may lead to crop failure as most of the maize crop planted at the onset was showing some moisture stress.
- Human/wildlife interaction at water points will lead to depletion of water quantities earlier than usual, resulting in long trekking distances for livestock and thus affecting their body condition and health.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock body and health conditions were fair for the big stock and fair-to-good for shoats.
- The effects of the long dry spell were still evident in cattle despite the rains received. Reports from the sampled households indicated that there were more deaths among cattle mainly due to disease.
- Shoat had stable body condition and minimal cases of diseases were reported during the month.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

- As reported in the last month, some livestock were still suffering from the effects of the just-ended drought (the long dry spell).
- Livestock diseases reported from the households sampled included Foot and Mouth disease reported mainly in the mixed farming zone and pneumonia in all the livelihood zones.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and Condition of Crop Production activities.

- The main staple crop (maize) was in varied stages of growth as determined by the onset of the rains. The stages varied from planting to weeding, with some few pockets of the crop at the tussling stage.
- The main agricultural activities of the month ranged from planting, replanting and weeding in anticipation that the rains would continue.

- Legumes planted at the onset of the rains were progressing well in most farms, while majority of the maize crop planted at the time was experiencing some moisture stress.

2.2.2 Harvests

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

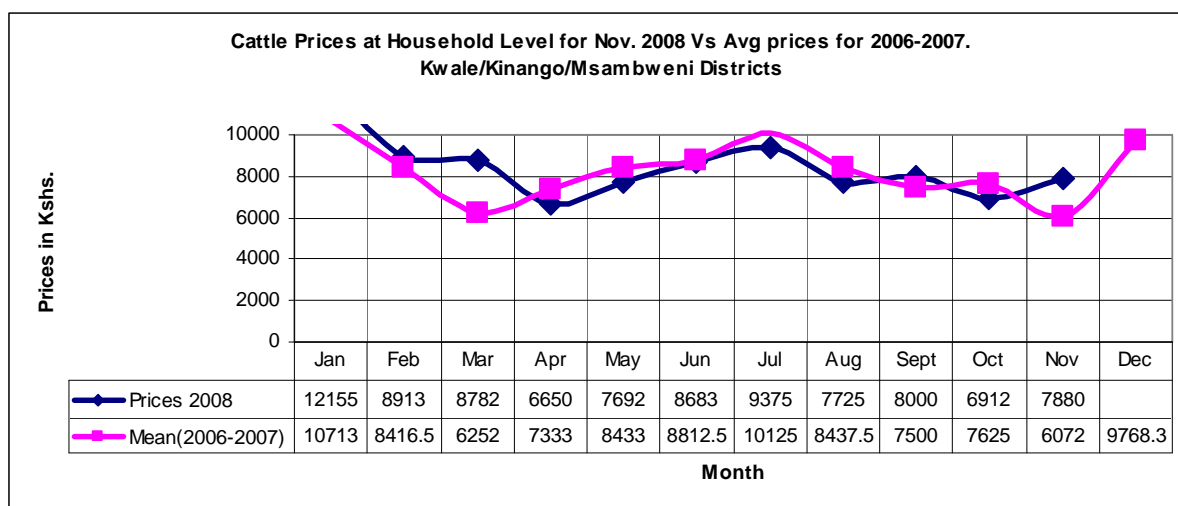
2.3 Implication on food security

- Majority of the food crops, especially maize, could fail if no rains are realised in the next few days/weeks as most of it was showing moisture stress.
- However, on the side of livestock, depletion of range resources earlier than normal may have a negative effect on the household food security.

3.0 Accessibility

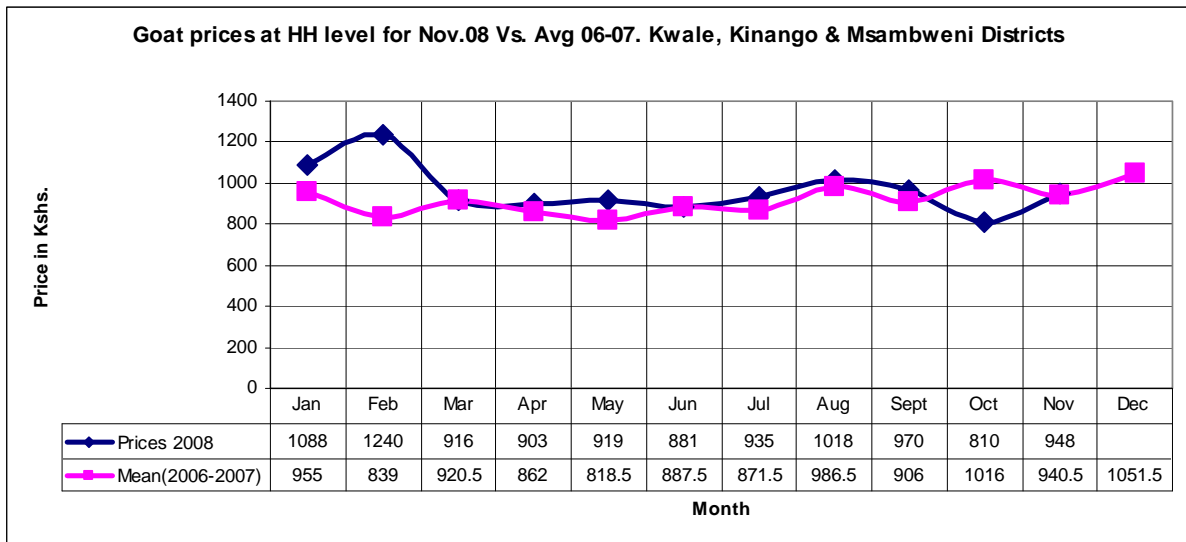
3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



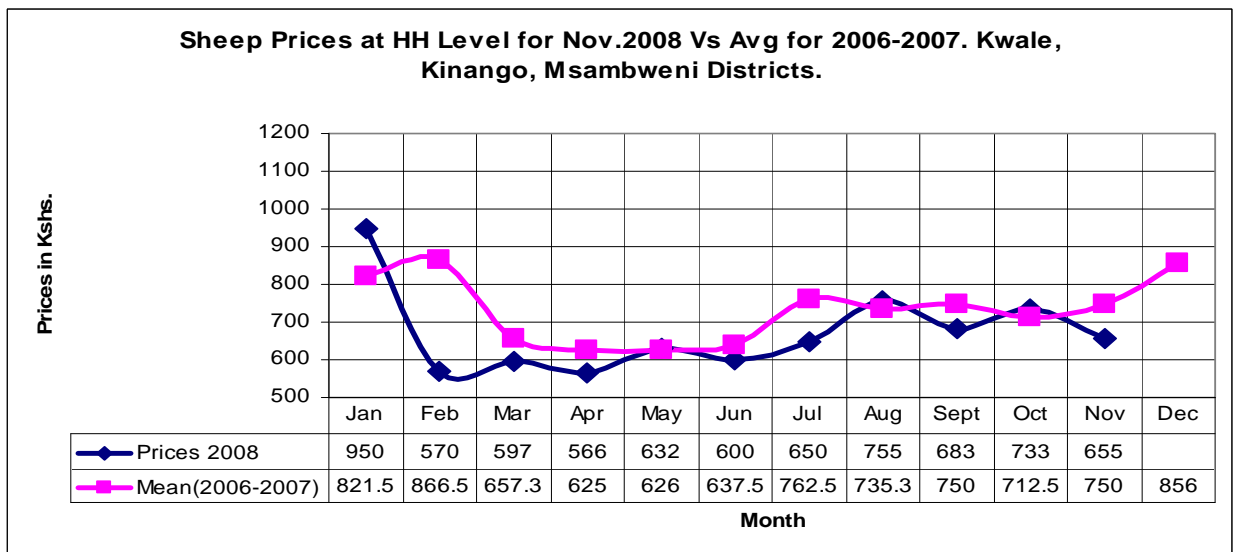
- There was a slight improvement in the price of cattle in the month.
- The average price rose to Ksh 9,768.3 from Ksh 6,072 in October.
- The price was lower than normal for the month.
- This could be attributed to the effects of the short rains on cattle, leading to a slight improvement of body condition.

3.1.2 Goat prices



- Goat prices rose slightly during the month to Ksh948 from Ksh810 reported last month.
- This price was still low for the season.
- The increase could be due to increase in the number of goats presented in the market to enable households to meet other food needs.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



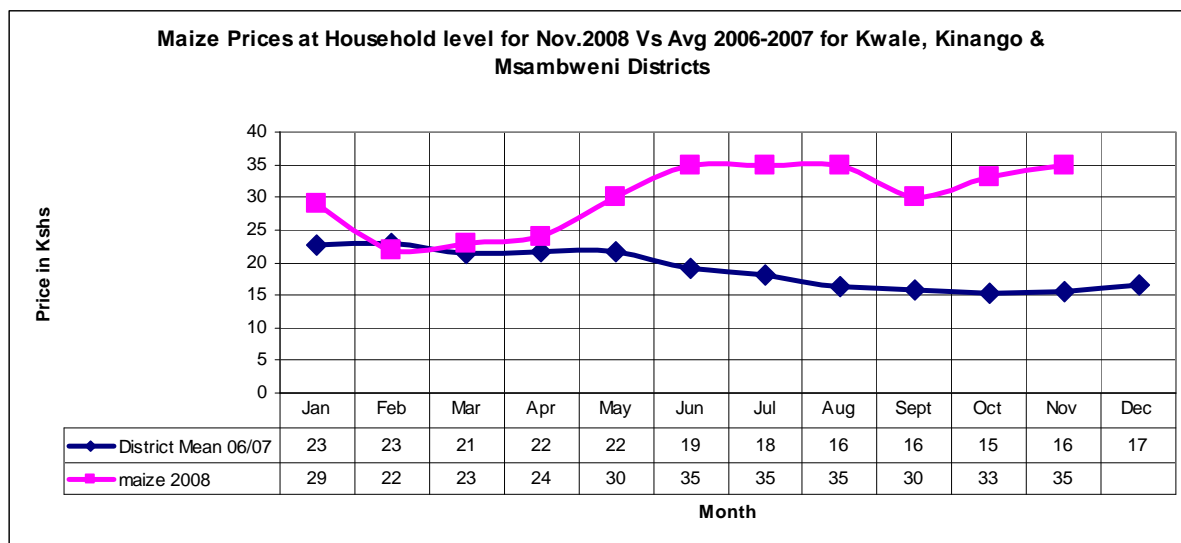
- Average sheep prices dropped from Ksh 733 in October to Ksh 856.
- The drop could be attributed to low preference for sheep among consumers and the size of the animal presented in the market during the month.

3.2 Livestock sales

- There was a very slight decline in the sales of livestock during the month under review.
- This may be due to the availability of local casual labour, which contributed to household income.

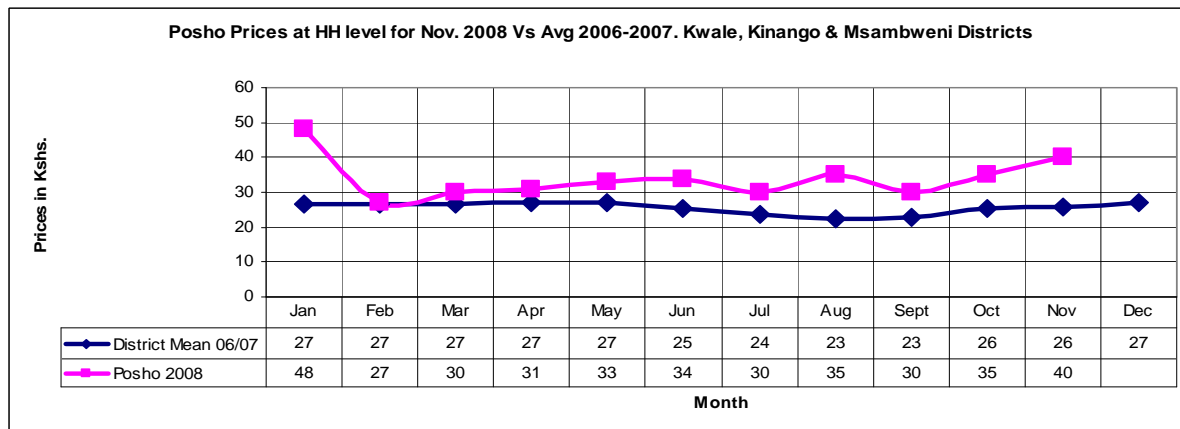
3.3 Crop prices

3.3.1 Maize prices



- Maize prices rose slightly from Ksh 33 per kilo in October to Ksh 35.
- The price was double the average price at the same time for the year 2006/2007.
- This was mainly attributed to the scarcity of the commodity in the district and the high cost of transportation.
- This trend is only expected to change after the short rains harvests expected in January 2009.

3.3.2 Posho (maize meal) prices



- The price of posho was reported rose by Ksh 5 to Ksh 40 per kilo from Ksh 35 recorded in October.
- The average price was almost double the average price of posho recorded at the same time in the years 2006/2007.
- However, an alarming price of sifted maize flour was also reported and varied between Ksh45 to Ksh60 per kilo. This may be attributed to the high cost of transport and the inflation rates at the national level.

3.4 Income

3.4.1 Crops income

- The month reported a very minimal income from crops from the households sampled.
- However, there sales of crops such as sweet potatoes, cassava, bixa and coconuts were reported.

3.4.2 Livestock income

- Income from livestock declined 10% of the total household income down from 16% reported last month.
- This may be due to the availability of local casual labour, which contributed to the household income.

3.4.3 Other income

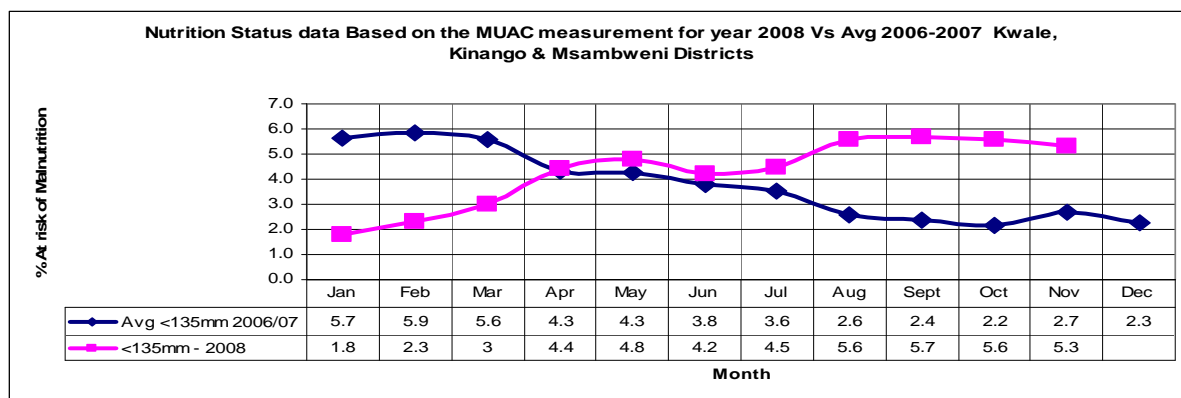
- Other major sources of income at the household level include casual labour 41%, petty trade 24%, sale of charcoal 6% and gifts/remittance 9%.

3.5 Implications on food security

- Household depleted food stocks and prices of the food available in market kept soaring, making it inaccessible for the households.
- Low livestock prices verses high food prices eroded the purchasing power of most households, posing a threat to household food security.
- Increased livestock sales as households seek means of meeting food needs may lead to disposal of livestock at low prices, affecting the size of herds.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of Food)

4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years stabilized during the month under review.
- The number of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC<135mm measurement) was recorded at 5.3 per cent compared to 5.6 in October.

4.2 Human health

- No incidences of a major human disease outbreak were reported.
- However, cases of malaria, diarrhoea, coughing, skin infections and worms were reported.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non food interventions

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5.3 Coping strategies

Some of the coping strategies employed in the month include:

- Skipping of meals, reduced meal portions and survival on relief food (FFA beneficiaries).
- Migration in search of food.
- Feeding on wild vegetables.
- Consumption of premature fruits.
- 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

- Following the poor performance of the short rains, the short dry spell started earlier than normal, thus need for capacity building and facilitate the existing peace committees to be able to monitor the conflict indicators and address them early.
- Consider conducting a detailed nutrition and health survey for the district to confirm the rates of malnutrition and address them accordingly.
- Human/wild life conflicts should be critically addressed as households are vulnerable due to persistent crop destruction and faster depletion of water sources.
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