



**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

Marsabit, Laisamis and Chalbi Districts

Warning Stages



Livelihood zone	Warning Stage	Trend
Agro-Pastoralist	Alarm/Alert	worsening
Pastoral-All species	Alert/Alarm	worsening
Fishermen/Pastoralist	Alarm	Worsening

TIMELINE ACTIVITIES



Situation overview

- Rains were reported in several parts of Marsabit, Laisamis and Chalbi districts during the month under review.
- Although the rains were good in spatial distribution, most of the areas received rainfall for four to eight days on average. However, the temporal distribution was poor.
- The quality of forage improved substantially in all categories of natural vegetation.
- Water sources recharged adequately in most areas of the three districts, improving water availability for both domestic and livestock use. The water was expected to meet demand for both domestic and livestock use for at least two months in all the districts.
- Livestock body conditions improved with the onset of the short rains.
- Cases of *Peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) were reported in Laisamis division, while anthrax was reported in Chalbi district. The Veterinary department carried out a vaccination campaign as part of disease control in particular areas.
- Milk availability was minimal as a result of low calving rates among all livestock species. 24 per cent of the sampled 390 households reported some milk availability at an average of 1.6ml per household/day.
- Security situation improved slightly in most parts of the Marsabit, Laisamis and Chalbi districts. Tension and raids were reported in Loiyangalani location of Laisamis district and Gas and North Horr of Chalbi district.
- Few cases of Malaria, respiratory tract infections and diarrhoea were reported among children and other vulnerable groups as normal for the cool weather situation.
- The nutrition status of children below five years dropped during the month under review. The percentage of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC measurement) rose to 23.7 from 22.9 in October. Out of 1,373 children sampled, 359 registering MUAC below 135mm compared to 219 children the previous month.
- Higher rates were recorded in Loiyangalani division of fishermen/pastoral livelihoods at 49.3 per cent, followed by Garqarsa of Gadhamoji division of Agro/pastoralist livelihood with 23.8 per cent, while Maikona division had the least at 13.1 per cent.
- The food security situation in the district varied across the three main livelihoods. Fishermen/pastoralist livelihood reported an alarming food situation, the pastoralist alert, while the agro/pastoral registered alarm/alert situation.

On-going interventions (food and non foods)

- There was no EMOP relief food distributed in any part of the larger Marsabit district during the month under review.
- Vaccination campaign against PPR was conducted in most parts of Marsabit and Laisamis districts and some parts of Chalbi district.
- Drilling of one borehole at Lopi-lolpurana area of El Mol Bay Sub-location, Loiyangalani location in Laisamis district for El Mol water project.

- Monitoring and facilitating Nairewa Rock catchments at Ngurunit location in Laisamis district.

Recommendations to KFSSG and DSG

- Urgent need to prevent PPR and other disease outbreaks.
- Decentralisation of resource allocation should be emphasized at all developmental levels.
- Improve environmental awareness about strategic wet season grazing areas.
- Rehabilitation of broken Ken-Gen-sets should be encouraged instead of provision of new ones.
- Construction of rock catchments instead of water trucking for sustainability.
- Community participation in projects for their sustainability, basic understanding and awareness.
- FFA activities should be implemented alongside EMOP relief as timing and implementation of community developmental projects preferably during the wet season.
- Peace meetings should be organized, especially among the warring communities around Loiyangalani, North Horr, Laisamis, Central and Gadhamoji divisions.

1.0 Environmental indicators

1.1 Rainfall

- Rains were reported in several parts of the three districts during the month under review.
- Although the rains were good in spatial distribution, most of the areas received the rainfall on average of 4 to eight days.
- Poor temporal distribution of rains was an indication poor crop performance unless more rainfall is received.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The quality of forage was good due to the normal amounts of rainfall received.
- The forage was expected to sustain livestock for the next two months.

1.3 Water sources

1.3.1 Use of water sources

- Most water sources recharged adequately in many areas.

1.3.2 Average distances (km) to water sources

- Average distance to water sources for domestic use remained minimal for most at an average of 2 to 3kms, while access for livestock use improved to between 5 and 7kms.
- Distances between grazing areas and water sources were expected to be minimal for the coming months.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Insecurity/ conflict

- The security situation improved as few raids or deaths were reported due to conflicts.

1.4.2 Migration

- Livestock migration from dry to wet season grazing areas increased in all the three districts.
- Household and individual displacement remained minimal with only a few reported cases in Loiyangalani, North Horr, Gus and other insecurity prone areas in greater Marsabit district.

1.5 Implications on food security

- Increasing food commodity prices by an average of 38 per cent compared to the mean trend of the years 2000 to 2007 aggravated food insecurity across the district.
- Increasing poverty due to constant raids and persistent droughts contributed hugely to food insecurity in most parts of Marsabit district. This was further aggravated by high food commodity prices.

2.0 Rural economy indicators

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Body conditions in all livestock species were fair and improving with improved forage condition and availability.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

- CCPP remained the most common disease, which was normal at the time of the year.
- The PPR quarantine was still in force in Laisamis division although the disease was under control following intervention by Veterinary Department.
- However, disease incidences still persisted in other parts of Laisamis district among shoat species.
- Anthrax incident among cattle is currently reported in North Horr division of Chalbi Marsabit.

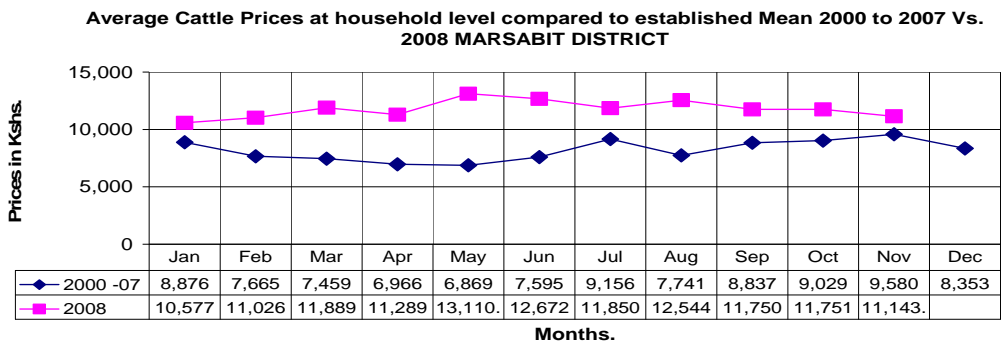
2.2 Implications on food security

- The food security situation was expected to worsen with the minimal livestock births among all livestock species.
- Inflation of food commodity prices increased by 38 per cent in most pastoral livelihoods, almost 30 per cent in Agro/Pastoral livelihood and 40 per cent for Fishermen livelihood, thus compounding food shortages in all three livelihoods of the larger Marsabit district.
- Neglected restocking program as an alternative food source, also negatively affected majority of households since the population is mainly pastoralist.

3. Access to food

3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices

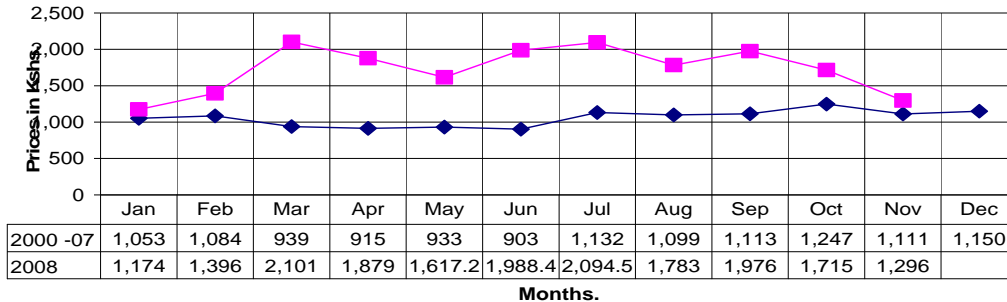


Ref: N =7 (No. of the sold cattle) x 13Sentinels x 30 Households

- Cattle prices dropped slightly during the month.
- The average price fell to Ksh11, 143 from Ksh 11,751 in October.
- However, the prices were much higher than the Ksh 9,580 long term mean.
- The increase against the long term mean could be attributed to the increased demand compared to previous years.
- Indeed, cattle prices are expected to increase come mid February 2009 because of improved livestock body condition.
- Comparatively, higher cattle price average was recorded in North Horr division of pastoralist livelihood zone at Ksh12, 787.50, followed by Gadhamoji division in Agro/ Pastoral livelihood zone at Ksh 9,500, while the rest of the divisions including Loiyangalani, Maikona, Laisamis and Central division sold none.
- Generally, cattle sales reduced significantly following the decreasing price rates.

3.1.2 Goat prices

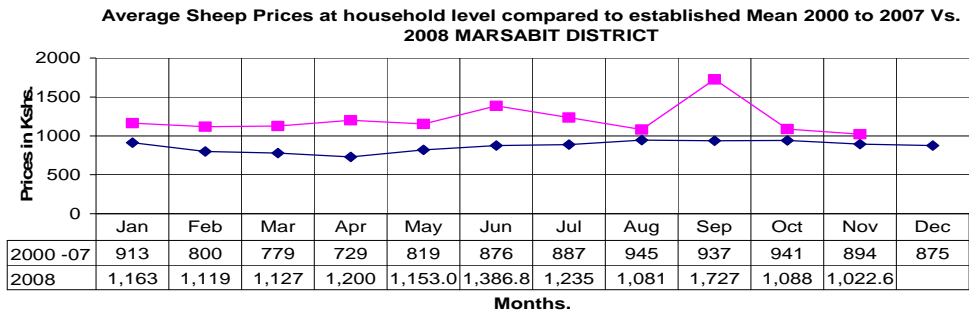
**Average Goats Prices at household level compared to established Mean 2000 to 2007 Vs. 2008
MARSABIT DISTRICT**



Ref: N =100 (No. of sold goats’) x 13 Sentinels x 30 Households

- Average prices of goats dropped slightly from Ksh1, 715 the previous month to 1,296.
- The decline was as a result of poor body condition.
- However, the prices were still higher than Ksh1,111 established mean averages for the years 2000 to 2007.
- Comparatively, higher goat prices was fetched in Dukana sample area of North Horr division in Chalbi district (Agro/Pastoralist livelihood) at Ksh1,557, followed by Laisamis division of pastoral livelihood in Laisamis district at Ksh 1,410 and Loiyangalani division of pastoral/ fishermen livelihood had the least at Ksh1,000.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



Ref: N =79 (No. of Sheep sold) x 13 Sentinels x 30 Households

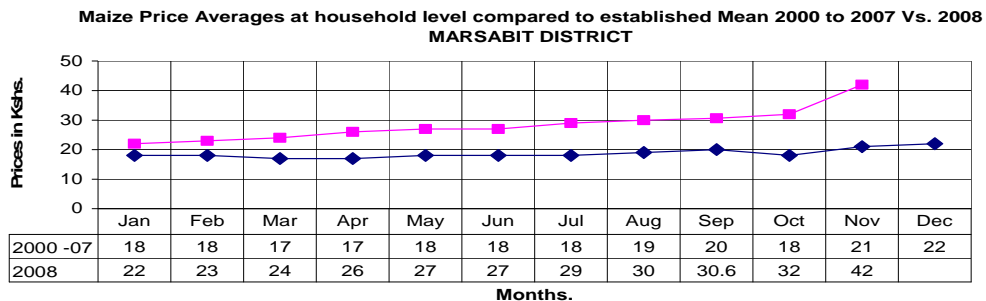
- Sheep prices at household level remained stable.
- The average price was Ksh 1,022.60 compared to Ksh1,088 the previous month.
- Higher sheep prices were recorded in Laisamis division at Ksh1,168 followed by Maikona division at Ksh1,082, while Loiyangalani of Pastoralist/ fishermen recorded the lowest at Ksh 900.

3.2 Milk consumption

- Milk availability remained minimal in most sedentary households as a result of minimal livestock newborns among all livestock species.
- Apart from Karare sample area, Kalacha, North Horr and few households in Ngurunit sample areas (camel keepers) reported a maximum of 1.4 litres of milk.
- Diminishing milk availability was an indication that malnutrition rates in children and other community vulnerable groups was on alarming trend.

3.3 Crop prices

3.3.1 Maize prices



Ref: N =332 Households purchasing out 13 sentinel x 30 households

- Maize prices continued rising during the month.
- The average price rose to Ksh 42 per kilo from Ksh 32 per kilo in October.
- The price was double the established mean of Ksh 21 for the year 200-2007.
- Higher maize prices were recorded in Loiyangalani, Laisamis and North Horr divisions (pastoral/ Fishermen livelihood).

3.4 Income

3.4.1 Livestock income

- Sale of livestock remained the leading source of income as reported by 156 out of the 390 sampled households esp. among pastoralist households.
- Livestock sales decreased compared to previous month as a result of poor livestock body condition.
- Other livestock income was derived from sales of milk, whose prices fell from Ksh 55 the previous month to Ksh 42.
- Sales of livestock decreased by 13 per cent compared to mean averages for the year 2000 to 2007.

3.4.2 Other income

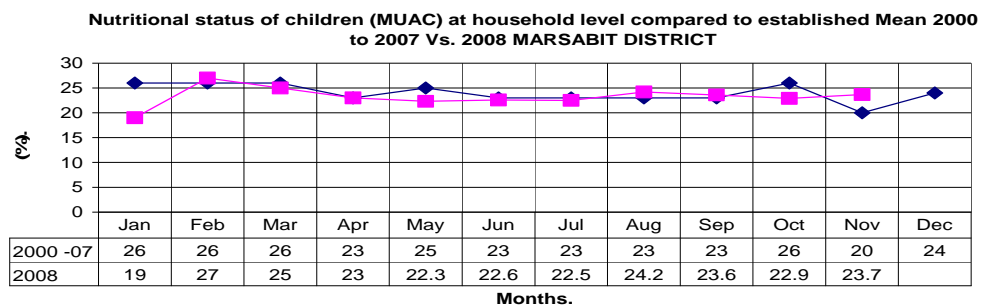
- Other income sources were casual labour (144 out of 2,157 sampled persons from 390 households), sale of charcoal, petty trade and formal employment.
- Daily casual labour rate stood at an average of Ksh 234 per person/ day, a decline of Ksh14 compared to the previous month.

3.6 Implication on food security

- Soaring food prices impacted negatively on the pastoralists' and Fishermen livelihoods and terms of trade, thus causing food shortages at district level.
- Lower rates of employment among pastoralist community impacted negatively on food security in the greater Marsabit district.

4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutritional status



Ref: N=4 No. of children x 13 Sample sites x 30 Households

- The nutrition status of children below five years dropped during the month under review.
- The percentage of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC measurement) rose to 23.7 from 22.9 in October.
- Out of 1,373 children sampled, 359 registering MUAC below 135mm compared to 219 children the previous month.
- Higher rates were recorded in Loiyangalani division of fishermen/pastoral livelihoods at 49.3 per cent, followed by Garqarsa of Gadhamoji division of Agro/pastoralist livelihood with 23.8 per cent, while Maikona division had the least at 13.1 per cent.
- The differences were attributed to varying divisional poverty levels.

4.1 Human health

- Malaria and respiratory tract infections continued to be the common ailments, especially among children between the age of 2-10 years and adults.
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5.0 Current interventions and coping strategies

5.1 Non-food interventions

- Drilling of one borehole in El Molo BaySub-location of Loiyangalani division for El Molo water project- Northern Kenya Water Board.
- Construction of community water sources in Hurri hills, Naripi, Kurkum, Olturot, Parkishon and Maikona – Christian Community Services (CCS).

5.2 Food aid

- EMOP relief food was distributed to some distribution centres, while few areas where include Kalacha and Nguronit reported none.
- Supplementary feeding program (SFP) in 24 health centres in all six divisions targeting 3,000 direct beneficiaries among severely malnourished children.

5.3 Other coping strategies

The coping strategies include;

- Purchasing food on credit
- Borrowing food from relatives and friends.
- Reducing numbers of meals per day.
- Reducing sizes of meals.
- Switching to cheaper or less preferred foods.

These coping strategies were severely experienced, which was abnormal for the time of the year.

6.0 Recommendations

- Supplementary and therapeutic relief assistance should be encouraged to most affected areas such as Loiyangalani division to curb the existing malnutrition and food shortages.
- EMOP and UNICEF relief food distribution should be continued to sustain the alarming food situations among 60 per cent of the neediest population in the larger Marsabit district.
- Restocking program as an alternative and strategic food source, especially for pastoral livelihoods.
- Small-scale business grants to facilitate the dwindling resources in terms of empowerment in larger Marsabit district.
- Reconstruction of rock catchments instead of water trucking.
- Creation of seasonal grazing areas through Environmental Management Committees (EMC's) at locational level.
- Continuous disease surveillance to contain disease outbreaks, especially PPR and Anthrax incidence to affected areas or those with livestock concentration.
- PPR vaccination in areas not covered during the campaign, such as Loiyangalani division.
- MOH should continue to stock all the rural health facilities with adequate drugs in order to improve the access to basic health services to pastoralists.
- Constitute peace committees and at least 25 per cent youth representation should be emphasised.