

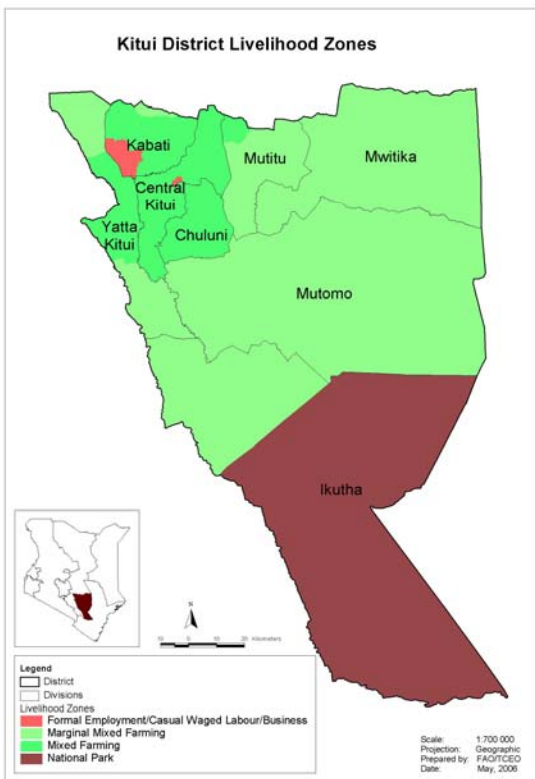


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, OCTOBER 2008**

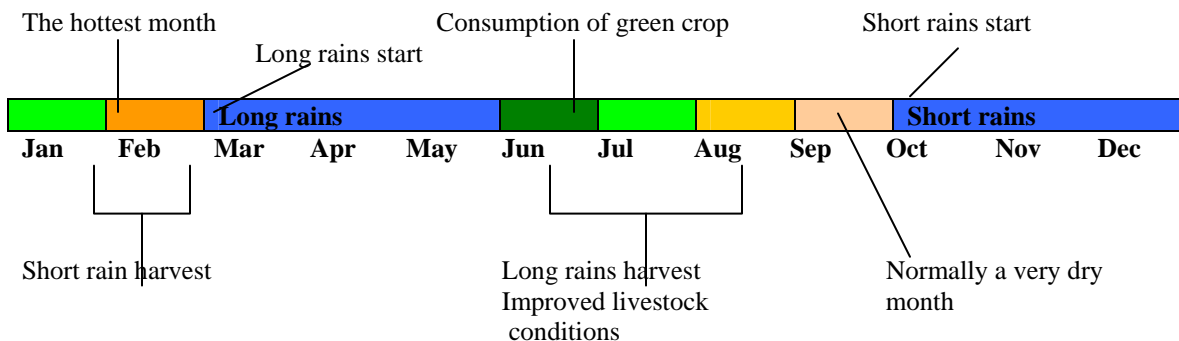
**Kitui District**

**Warning Stages**



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

**TIMELINE ACTIVITIES**



## **Situation overview**

- The district recorded 127.2mm of rainfall during the month under review.
- The condition of pastures and natural vegetation declined in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, while the onset of rains triggered regeneration in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The main sources of water in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, were boreholes and traditional river wells. The situation was worse in Mutha division following engine failure of the Mutha-Kalambani water project, which is the main source of water. The situation in the mixed farming livelihood zone improved slightly with the onset of rains.
- The return distances to water points in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone ranged from 10 -15 kilometres and 1- 7km in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The body condition of livestock generally declined. Cattle body conditions ranged from poor to fair, while shoats ranged from fair to good. The decline was attributed to shortage of forage.
- Cattle prices rose during the month, while goat remained stable.
- The price of maize and beans rose and the trend was attributed to shortage of supplies from the National Cereals and Produce Board and at the household level.
- The nutrition status of children under the age of five years remained within the previous month's range. The number of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC measurement) stabilized at 8 per cent.

## **Food aid**

- EMOP food distribution in 9 divisions.
- General food distribution to non-EMOP areas by the provincial administration.
- Regular school-feeding programme

## **Non-food interventions**

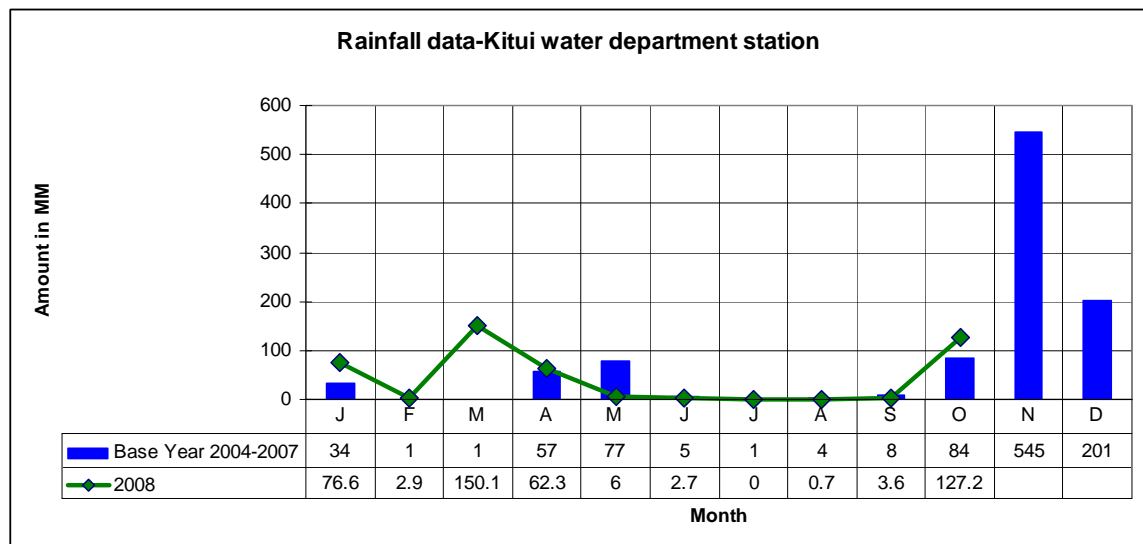
- Construction of sand dams supported by ALRMP, water department and World Vision.
- Water trucking in Mutomo supported by provincial administration, water dept. ARLMP and Catholic diocese of Kitui.
- Repair and servicing of contingency boreholes supported by ALRMP and water dept. in Kitui and Mutomo districts.
- Drilling of boreholes by World Vision and water department.
- Training of Tiva water project management committee.
- Training on dairy goat management in Matinyani ALRMP.
- Training of meat goat farmers in Yatta by ALRMP.
- Capacity building in livestock management by Ministry of Livestock.
- Distribution of dairy goats in central constituency.
- Capacity building for farmers by ALRMP and Department of Agriculture.
- Distribution of seeds by ALRMP and Department. of Agriculture.
- Support to irrigation by Agriculture department and ALRMP.

## **Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG**

- Continued provision of contingency fuel to boreholes in Mutomo and Kitui districts.
- Repair and servicing of contingency boreholes –Kalambani and Ndilili and Kaliani boreholes.
- Continued water trucking to institutions.
- Intensify capacity building for farmers.
- Promotion of soil and water harvesting structures.

## 1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall



- In the mixed farming livelihood zone, within the township and the peri-urban areas, rains started as early as October 3 with light showers and peaked on October 21 with moderate rainfall of 60.2mm.
- The rains were of low intensity and poorly spatially spread. The total amount recorded was 127.2mm.
- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, the month of October remained dry and hot.

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Regeneration of pasture and natural vegetation begun in the mixed farming livelihood zone following the onset of the rains. Overall, the quantities were low and the quality poor.
- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, the condition of pasture and natural vegetation continued to decline.

- Most of the grounds were bare, the little grass and plant droppings on the ground were consumed by ants.
- Leaves started sprouting on trees along the river banks and wet lands, which most locals considered a sign of the onset of rains.

### 1.3 Water sources and availability

- Water was scarce in the marginal mixed farming zone, and where available it was unaffordable for many.
- The Mutha-Kalambani water project, which is the main water source in Mutha division, collapsed and people walked more than 20kms one way in search of water.
- The main sources of water were traditional river wells and boreholes.
- In the mixed farming livelihood zone, the water situation was slightly better due to the availability of alternative sources.
- In the areas where the rains were recorded, households with roof catchment structures managed to recharge their reservoirs.
- In Mutonguni, Matinyani, central and chuluni communities relied on the town water supply in addition to boreholes and shallow wells.

**Water sources in use and the % number of households accessing them during the month of October as compared with September**

Source	Traditional river wells	Pans/Dams	Shallow wells	Rock catchments	Boreholes	Natural rivers
August 2008	56%	6%	13%	0	17%	6%
September 2008	54%	4%	18%	0	13%	9%
October 2008	51%	0	18%	0	22%	0

### 1.4 Implication on food security

- The rains triggered germination of the dry crop planted in the mixed farming livelihood zone. However, some of the seed rotted in sections where it was inadequate.
- Within the township and the peri-urban areas it recharged the roof catchment water facilities.
- The regeneration of pasture and natural vegetation in the mixed farming livelihood zone marked the beginning of the recovery phase from the severe drought.
- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, the above indicators posted a gloomy picture of food security prospects.

## 2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

### 2.1 Livestock body conditions

- The livestock body conditions worsened in both livelihood zones.
- The decline was attributed to the scarcity of forage and increased distances to water points.
- Most households were busy ploughing using draft power, leading to reduced feeding hours and exhaustion by the draft power animals.

## **2.2 Livestock diseases**

- Despite the weakening body conditions, no major disease outbreaks were reported in the district.
- However, during the month, the Veterinary Department vaccinated goats against PPR.

## **2.3 Crop production**

### **2.3.1 Timeliness and status of various crop production activities**

- Most of the households in the district were engaged in dry planting during the month.
- In the mixed farming livelihood zone, the little showers received triggered germination in sections of Central, Chuluni and Matinyani divisions. The crop was timely but showed signs of moisture stress.
- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, most of the farmers dry planted though onset of the rains delayed.

### **2.3.2 Crop pests and diseases**

- Since there was very little crop in the fields, no major crop pests or diseases were reported.

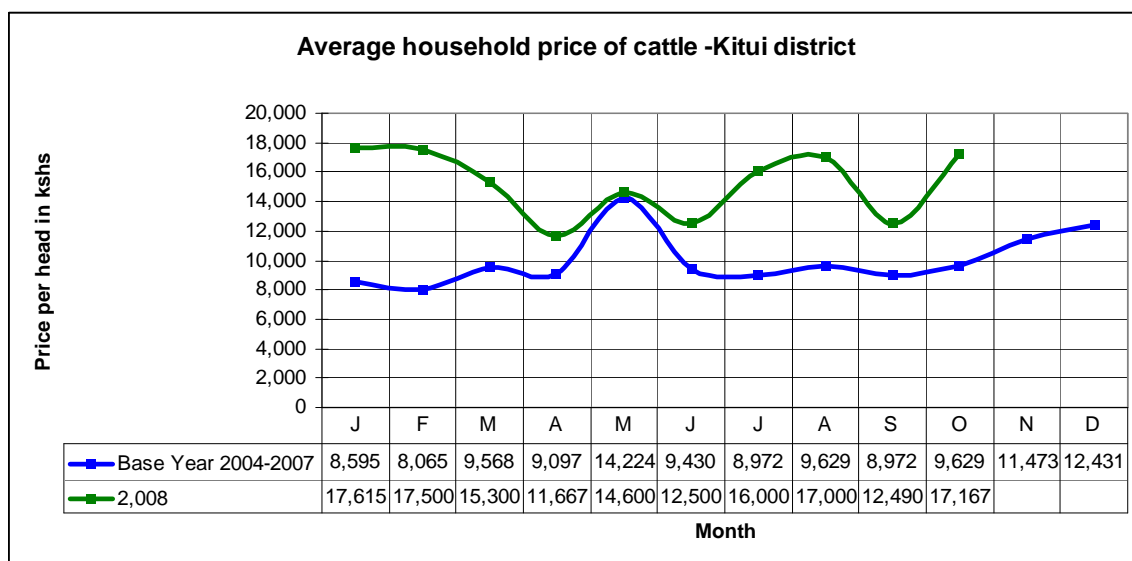
## **2.4 Implications on food security**

- The decline in the livestock body conditions translated into decline in the value of animals through reduced milk yields, low prices and decline in kidding and calving.
- However, vaccination against PPR boosted shoats' immunity and reduced susceptibility to the disease, hence a boost to food security.

## **3.0 Access to food**

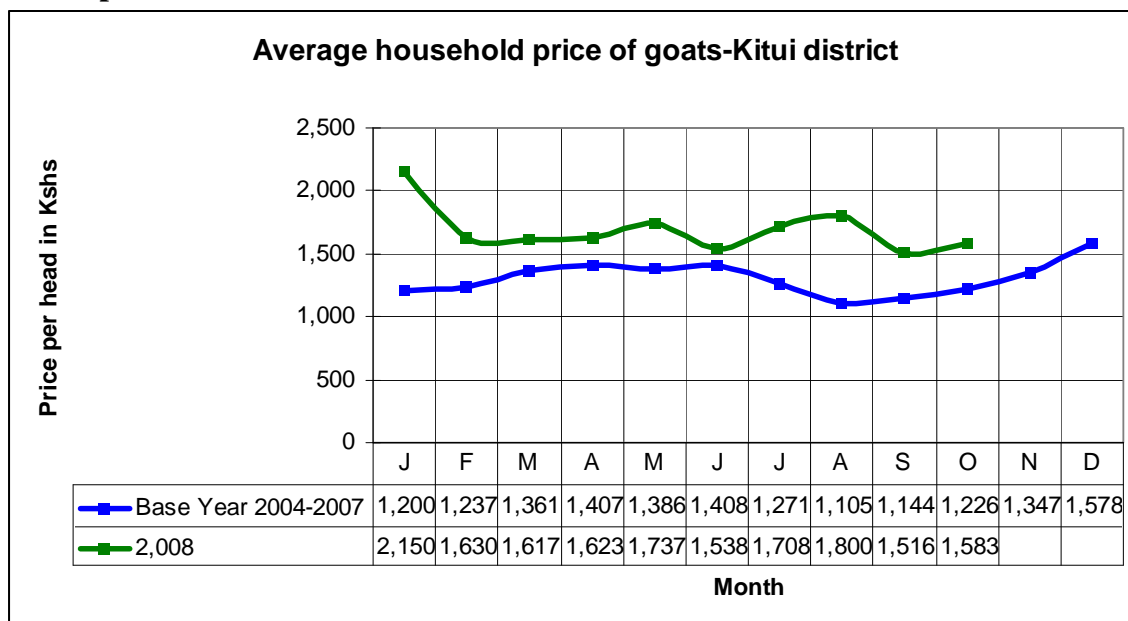
### **3.1 Livestock marketing**

#### **3.1.1 Cattle**



- The price of cattle went up compared to the previous month.
- The average price stood at Ksh 17, 167 from Ksh 12, 490 in September.
- The demand was attributed to increased demand for draft power animals.
- The highest prices were recorded in Ikutha at Ksh22, 000, while the lowest were reported in Mwitika at Ksh 12,500.
- The trend was normal.

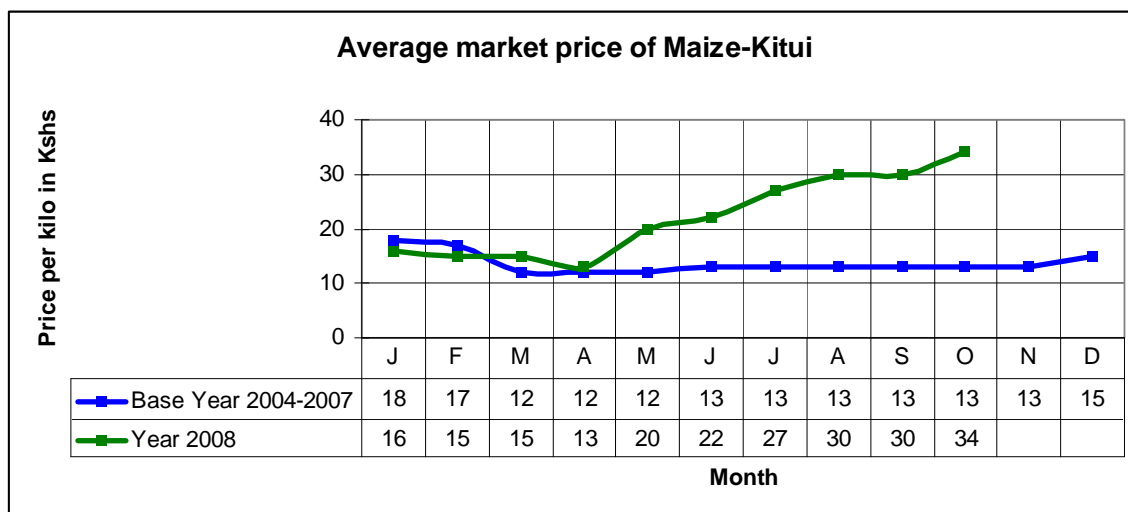
### 3.1.2 Goat prices



- The price of goats remained within the previous months range.
- The average price was Ksh 1,583 compared to Ksh 1,516 in September.
- The stability was attributed to the prevailing body conditions and the trend was normal.

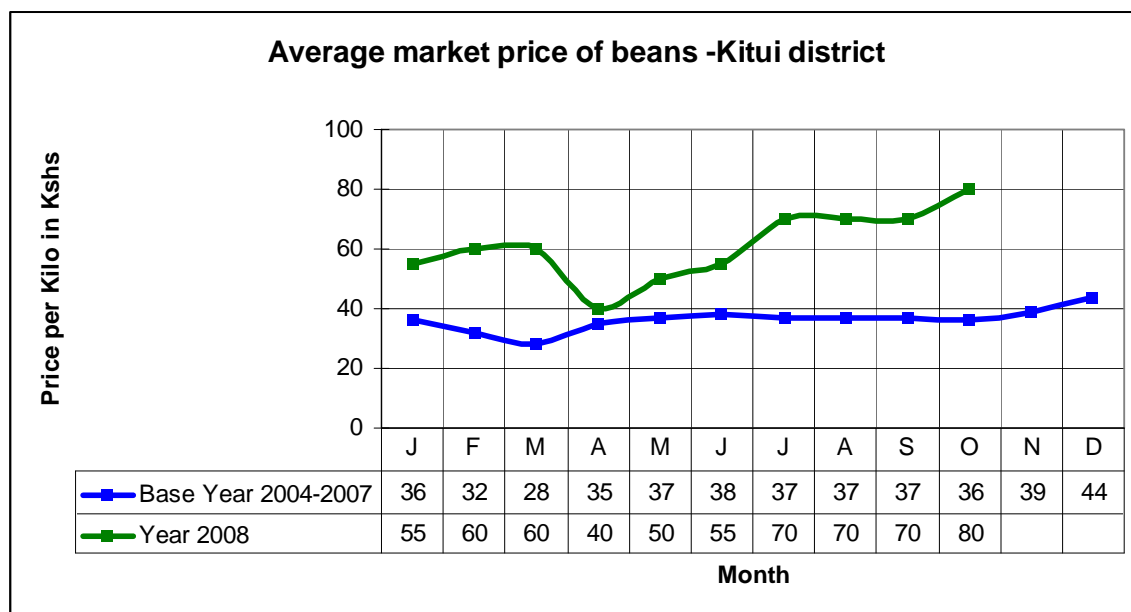
## 3.2 Crop prices

### 3.2.1 Maize prices



- The average price of maize rose to Ksh 34 per kilo from Ksh 30 in September.
- This rise was attributed to the shortage of the crop in the district and demand for the crop for planting.
- The price was only applicable in the main trading centers but in the interior it was as Ksh38.
- In central division the National Cereals and Produce Board sold a kilo of maize at Ksh 20 but the quantities were too little to influence the market price.
- The trend was not normal compared to the long term average.

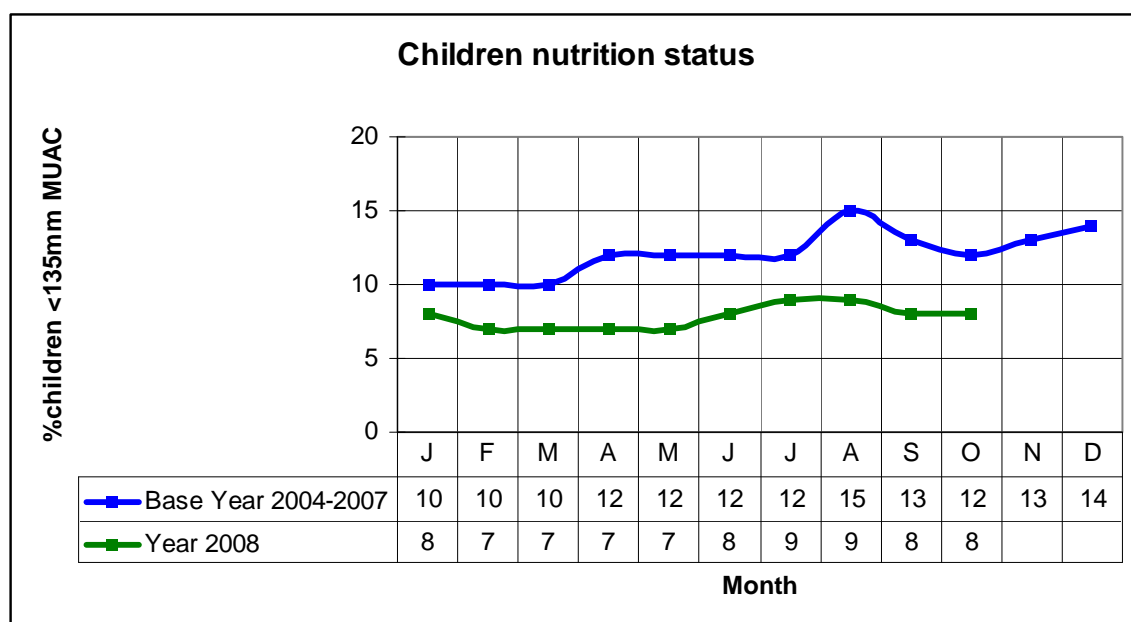
### 3.2.2 Beans prices



- The period was marked by a sharp rise in the price of beans.
- Average price rose to Ksh 80 per kilo from Ksh 70 in September.
- The rise was attributed to shortage of beans and other pulses at the household level and increased demand for seeds for planting.
- The trend was normal and expected to continue but the rise sharp.

#### 4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

##### 4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children under the age of five years remained within the previous month's range.
- The number of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC measurement) stabilized at 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**

- EMOP food distribution in 9 divisions.
- General food distribution to non-EMOP areas by the provincial administration.
- Regular school-feeding programme

##### **5.2 Non-food interventions**

- Construction of sand dams supported by ALRMP, water department and World Vision.
- Water trucking in Mutomo supported by provincial administration, water dept. ARLMP and Catholic diocese of Kitui.
- Repair and servicing of contingency boreholes supported by ALRMP and water dept. in Kitui and Mutomo districts.
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#### **6.0 Recommendations**

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- Continued water trucking to institutions.
- Intensify capacity building for farmers.
- Promotion of soil and water harvesting structures.