

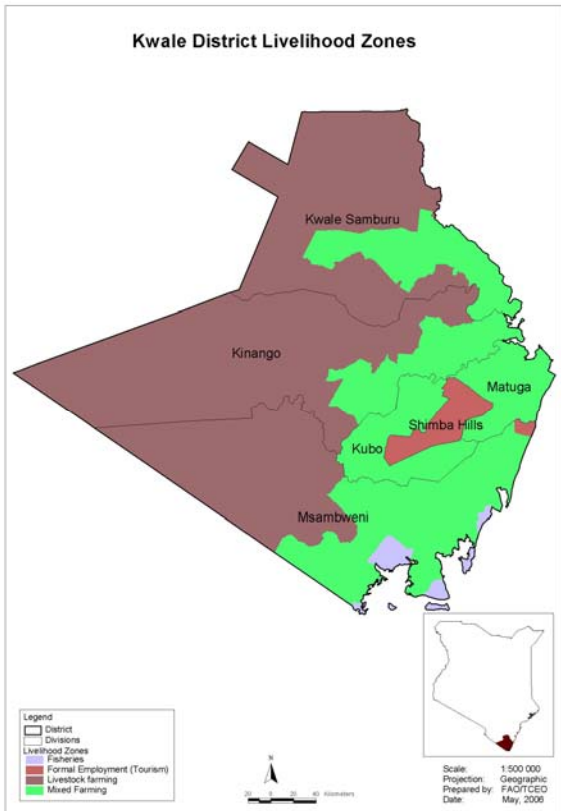


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, OCTOBER 2008**

**Kwale District**

**Warning Stages**



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Livestock Farming	Alert	Improving
Mixed farming	Alert	Improving
District	Alert	Improving

**Timeline activities**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short rains harvests</li> <li>Short dry spell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting/Weeding</li> <li>Long rains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long rains harvests</li> <li>A long dry spell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short rains</li> <li>Planting/weeding</li> </ul>								
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

## **Situation Overview**

- The short rains started in the district, with most areas reported to have received some rains. The rainfall was low and started mid month, which was later than usual. Kinango Division recorded 17.4mm for three days, Samburu Division 13mm for four days and Kasemeni Division 102mm for two days.
- Availability of water improved, while pasture and browse was expected to regenerate following the rains.
- Livestock body condition was fair due to the effects of drought, with cattle being the most affected.
- The month reported a decline in livestock prices, while cereal prices rose.
- Human migration was reported as people moved in search of casual labour, which was available in most farms.
- A livestock disease control programme, particularly *Peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) vaccination, was conducted in the district.
- The nutrition status of children below five years stabilized during the month. The percentage of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC measurement) dropped slightly to 5.6 from 5.7 in September.
- The food security situation in the district still remained at 'alert' stage as food deficit continued to be experienced in most households. The situation was expected to change only after the short rains harvests next year.

## **Current interventions**

### **Non food interventions**

- ALRMP facilitated an integrated health outreach programme for communities in Nyango – Vigurungani location.
- Natural resource management awareness training conducted in Lungalunga Division funded by ALRMP.
- Livestock disease control programme – vaccination against PPR (goat plague) was conducted in the district and the entire province.

### **Food aid**

- Food for Asset programme ongoing in Kinango District. Distribution of food to the targeted beneficiaries started on October 29 in all the divisions of the district.
- Food aid consignment for distribution under FFA targeting 57,494 beneficiaries.
- The food included 20.697mt of vegetable oil, 68.99mt of pulses and 390.946mt of maize.

## **Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG**

- To address the impending food insecurity in the district, households should be sensitised on the need to grow drought-tolerant, early maturing crops and use of certified seeds appropriate for the season.
- Malaria control measures should be enhanced as the mosquito breeding season starts.

- Enhance health services and nutrition programmes with close focus on rural areas.
- Relevant ways should be employed to address incidences of malnutrition.
- Livestock disease control to be enhanced as livestock deaths were still reported and may have a negative impact on household food security.
- Although goat plague (PPR) vaccination was conducted in the district, the veterinary department should continue to be on alert for any disease outbreak.
- Capacity building for District Peace Committees to address any conflict on sustainable utilisation of natural resources.
- Promotion of agro-forestry and afforestation programmes to compensate the destruction of forest resources, especially through charcoal burning.

### **DSG meeting**

- The last District Steering Group meeting was held in Msambweni District on October 14.
- The meeting adopted the September drought early warning bulletin.
- The main agendas were the Long Rains Assessment report recommendations for the district and the progress of the Arid Lands Resource Management Project activities in the district.
- The committee recommended a rapid assessment of the situation and thereafter, an appeal for food intervention in the district based on the Long Rains Assessment recommendations.

## **1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)**

### **1.1 Rainfall**

- The short rains season started, with most areas of the district reported to have received some rains.
- The rainfall was low and started later than normally expected as rains were reported to have started mid month.
- Kinango Division recorded 17.4mm for three days, Samburu Division 13mm for four days and Kasemeni Division 102mm for two days.
- However, the rains were expected to continue.

### **1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture**

- Most parts of the district registered an improvement in natural vegetation as most of it turned green, while pasture and browse started regenerating.
- The condition of pasture and forage was expected to be favourable until the next season if the environmental conditions prevail.

### **1.3 Water sources and availability**

- Availability of water improved as most sources; pans/dams, natural ponds, depressions and wells recharged following the rains received.
- Most water sources were reported to have harnessed water slightly above a quarter of their capacities.

## **1.4 Emerging issues**

### **1.4.1 Migration**

- Livestock migration back to normal grazing areas started following the onset of the short rains.
- Human migration in search of labour was also reported during the month.

### **1.5 Implications on food security**

- Following the availability of water within reach, households which used to purchase it were able to increase purchase of food stuffs from the money saved.
- Time taken to access water for both livestock and domestic use was expected to decrease, an indication that more time would be utilized for farm work, which was positive for food security.

## **2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)**

### **2.1 Livestock production**

#### **2.1.1 Livestock body condition**

- Livestock body condition was fair.
- Both the grazers and browsers were affected by the effects of drought, with the grazers being the most affected.
- However, the situation is expected to change for the better due to availability of the range resources.

#### **2.1.2 Livestock diseases**

- Reports from the areas sampled indicate that some livestock (both cattle and shoats) succumbed to the effects of drought.
- Livestock diseases reported during the month included pica (soil eating), tsetse/tick infestation and pneumonia.

### **2.2 Crop production**

#### **2.2.1 Timeliness and Condition of crop production activities**

- Following the onset of the rains, there were a lot of farm activities during the month, ranging from land preparation to planting.
- Most fields remained bare following the drought that had prevailed and most farmers were planting directly without needing to prepare the land.
- There was a notable adoption of modern farming techniques in most parts of the district as majority of the farmers used oxen ploughs – which enable ploughing and planting simultaneously.
- Maize crop planted during the month was about 10 – 15cm long and progressing well.

#### **2.2.1 Pests and diseases.**

- No serious crop diseases were reported during the month.

### 2.2.2 Harvests

- Harvesting of sweet potatoes, green grams, cassava, coconut, bixa, passion fruits, tomatoes and oranges was ongoing, mostly in the mixed farming livelihood zone.

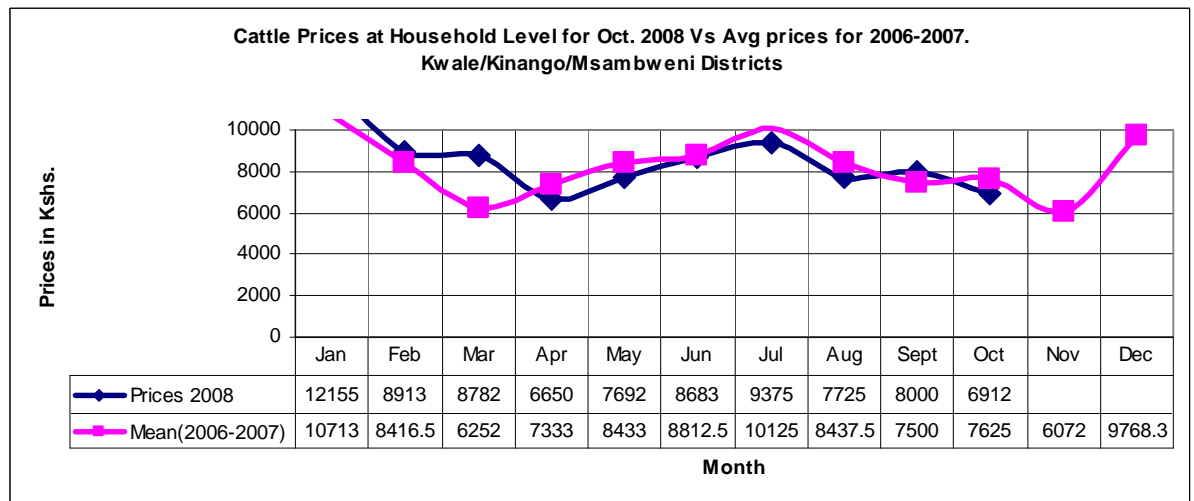
### 2.3 Implications on food security

- Availability of natural vegetation and pasture was expected to impact positively on body condition of livestock, hence positive impact on food security.
- Though the livestock body conditions are likely to improve, the food deficit experienced may still affect the livestock prices until the next harvest in January 2009.

## 3.0 Access to food

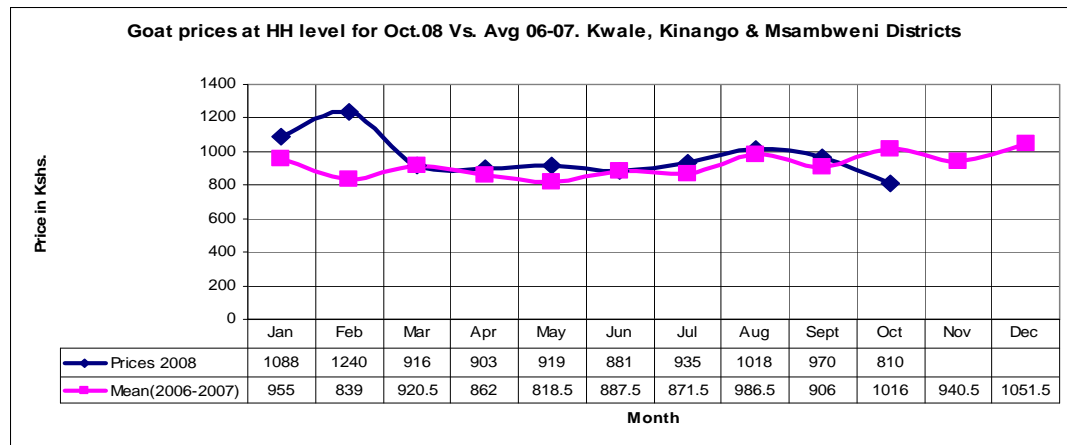
### 3.1 Livestock marketing

#### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



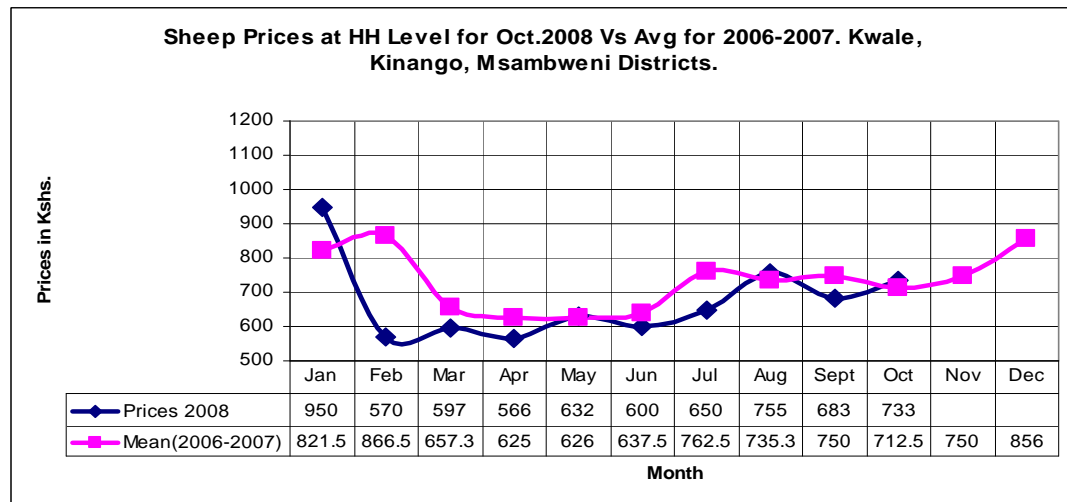
- The average cattle price dropped marginally to Ksh6,912 from Ksh8,000 in September.
- The price was even much lower than the mean price at the same time in 2006-2007.
- The drop may be attributed to the effects of drought that leading to loss of cattle, forcing the livestock keepers to dispose them off hurriedly.
- The drop could also be attributed to the food deficit experienced in majority of the households, forcing them to sell livestock to meet food needs.

#### 3.1.2 Goat prices



- A decline in average price of goats was recorded during the month under review.
- The average price stood at Ksh 810 , down from Ksh 970 in September.
- The drop was attributed to the increase in the number of goats presented in the market to enable households to purchase other food commodities.

### 3.1.3 Sheep prices



- Sheep prices rose during the month from Ksh 683 in September to Ksh 733.
- Consumers have low preference for sheep and the price may therefore be attributed to the size of the animal presented in the market during the month.

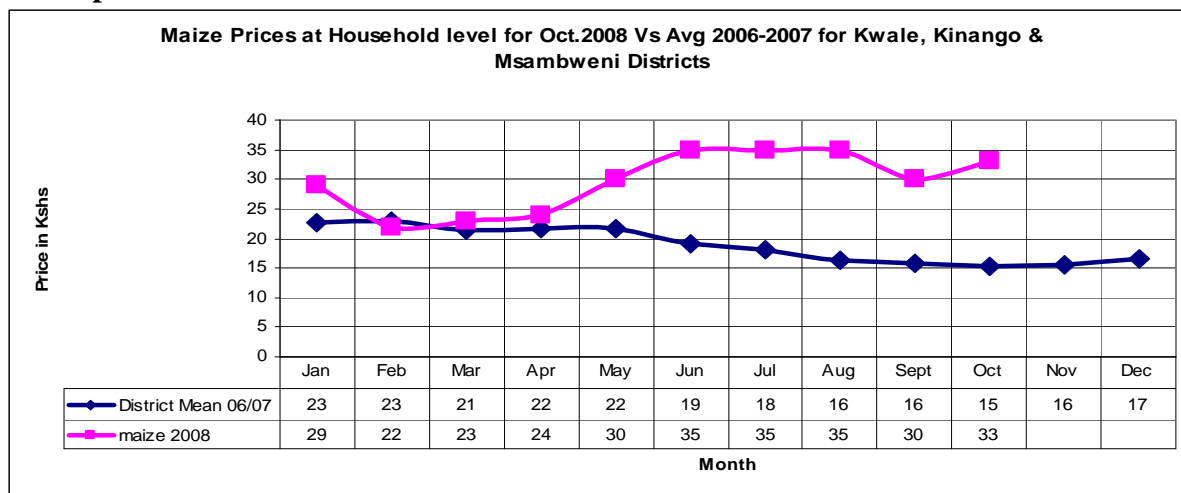
### 3.2 Livestock sales

- Sale of livestock accounted for 16 per cent of the total household income during the month.

- The rate was higher compared to last reporting month due to households disposing more livestock because of the effects of drought and to supplement household food and/or other needs.

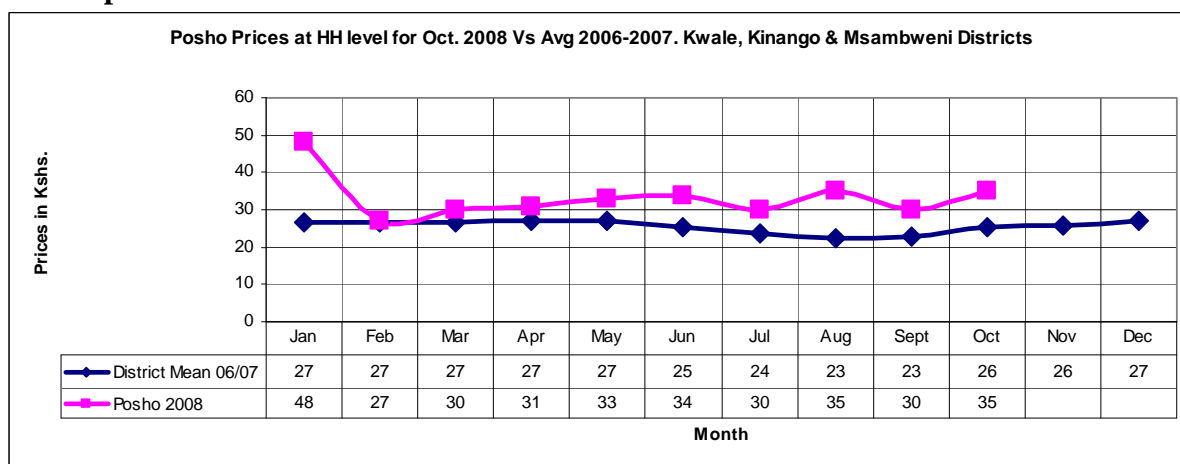
### 3.3 Crop prices

#### 3.3.1 Maize prices



- Average maize prices rose by three shillings during the month.
- The price rose to Ksh 33 from Ksh 30 in September.
- The trend was expected to persist due to the long rains crop failure and the little stock left in some pockets got depleted.

#### 3.3.2 Posho prices



- The average price of posho rose by Ksh 5 per kilo from Ksh 30 in September to Ksh 35.
- The price increase may be attributed to high transport costs as the commodity was sourced from distributors either in Mombasa or Mariakani.

- The price was expected to rise further if the rains persist as most roads may become impassable.

### 3.4 Income

#### 3.4.1 Crop income

- Very minimal income was reported from crops during the month from the households sampled.
- However, there was income from sales of sweet potatoes, cassava, bixa and coconuts.

#### 3.4.2 Livestock income

- Sale of livestock accounted for 16% of the total household income in the month. This may be due to the livestock disposal because of the effects of drought and also to supplement household food and other needs.

#### 3.4.3 Other income

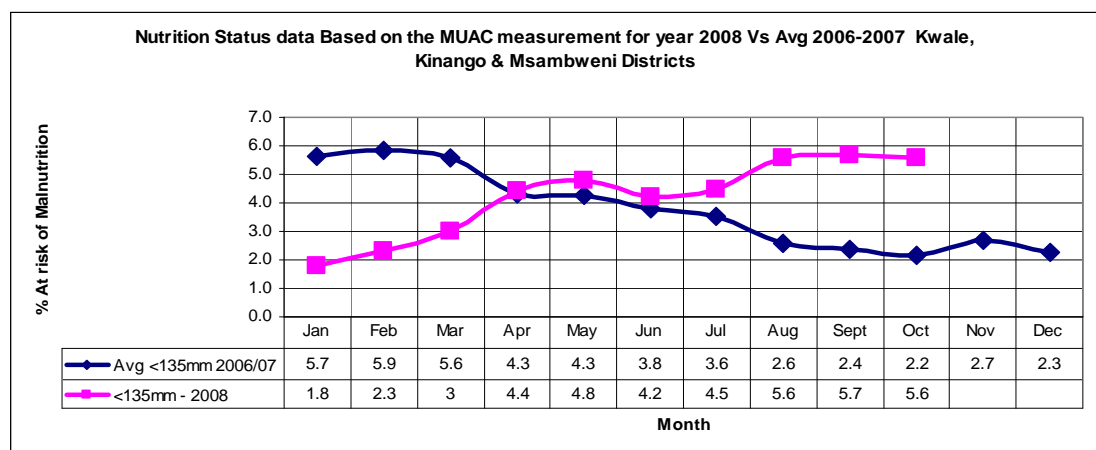
- Other major sources of income at the household level included casual labour at 52 per cent, up from 40 reported last month.
- Petty trade accounted for 21 per cent, down from 23 per cent last month.

### 3.5 Implications on food security

- Increased sales of livestock in search of income to purchase food may lead to mass disposal of livestock, thus compromising prices and also affecting the size of the household herds.
- Increase in cereal prices may also affect the purchasing power of most of the households.

## 4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

### 4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years stabilized during the month.
- The percentage of children rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC measurement) dropped slightly to 5.6 from 5.7 in September.

## **4.2 Human health**

- No major human disease incidences were reported during the month.
- However, rampant cases of malaria-related illness, diarrhoea, coughing, skin infections and worm infestations were reported.

## **5.0 Current interventions**

### **5.1 Non food interventions**

- ALRMP facilitated an integrated health outreach programme for communities in Nyango – Vigurungani location.
- Natural resource management awareness training conducted in Lungalunga Division funded by ALRMP.
- Livestock disease control programme – vaccination against PPR (goat plague) was conducted in the district and the entire province.

### **5.2. Food aid**

- Food for Asset programme ongoing in Kinango District. Distribution of food to the targeted beneficiaries started on October 29 in all the divisions of the district.
- Food aid consignment for distribution under FFA targeting 57,494 beneficiaries.
- The food included 20.697mt of vegetable oil, 68.99mt of pulses and 390.946mt of maize.

### **5.3 Coping strategies**

Some of the coping strategies employed by most households during the month were:

- Skipping of meals, reducing meal portions and survival of relief food (FFA beneficiaries).
- Feeding on wild vegetables.
- 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**

- To address the impending food insecurity in the district, households should be sensitised on the need to grow drought-tolerant, early maturing crops and use of certified seeds appropriate for the season.
- Malaria control measures should be enhanced as the mosquito breeding season starts.
- Enhance health services and nutrition programmes with close focus on rural areas.
- Relevant ways should be employed to address incidences of malnutrition.
- Livestock disease control to be enhanced as livestock deaths were still reported and may have a negative impact on household food security.

- Although goat plague (PPR) vaccination was conducted in the district, the veterinary department should continue to be on alert for any disease outbreak.
- Capacity building for District Peace Committees to address any conflict on sustainable utilisation of natural resources.
- Promotion of agro-forestry and afforestation programmes to compensate the destruction of forest resources, especially through charcoal burning.