

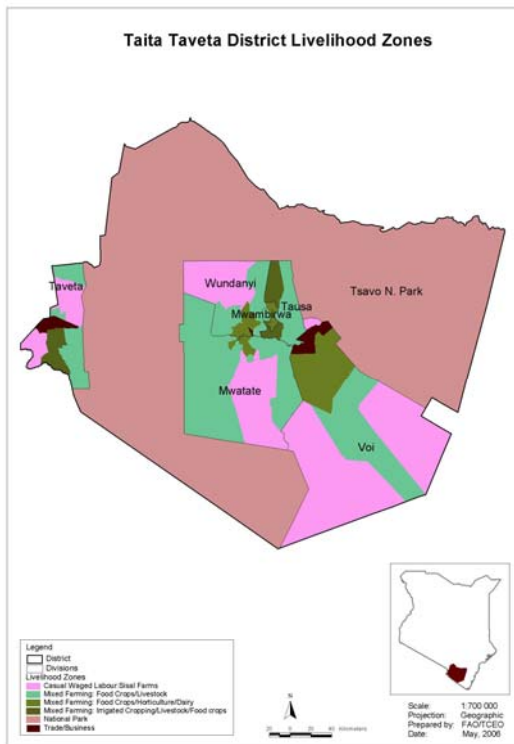


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, OCTOBER 2008**

**Taita/Taveta Districts**

**Warning Stages**



Livelihood zone	Warning Stage	Trend
Casual Waged Labour: Sisal Farms	Normal	Stable
Mixed Farming: Food Crops/Livestock	Alert	Deteriorating
Mixed Farming: Food Crops/Horticulture/Dairy	Normal	Stable
Mixed Farming: Irrigated Cropping/Livestock/Food Crops	Normal	Stable
National Park	Normal	Stable
Trade/Business	Normal	Stable
<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>Normal</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**TIMELINE ACTIVITIES**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Maize	Harvesting	Planting	Weeding				Harvesting	Planting	Weeding			
Beans	Harvesting		Planting	Weeding		Harvesting				Planting	Weeding	
Vegetables						Sowing Transplanting	Top dressing	Harvesting				
Cattle	Milking											
Goats	Weaning		Mating/Kidding					Weaning		Mating/Kidding		
Rainfall			Long rains							Short rains		

## **Situation Overview**

- The two districts recorded 100.6 mm of rainfall during the month under review compared to 94.6 mm in September. Out of 15 sentinel sites, only Mwarungu, Lushangonyi, Lagho, Wongonyi (hill masses) and Mwakitau (lowlands) recorded light showers. The trend was normal compared to the long term average for 2000-2007 but with rainfall amount lower.
- Most farmers prepared their farms for planting, while some had already planted.
- The condition of natural vegetation and pasture deteriorated, with the quantity being inadequate for livestock and wildlife. However, parts of the Tsavo National park that received light showers showed good regeneration of pasture and forest cover. The situation was worse compared to the same month in a normal year.
- The average grazing distance from sampled sentinel sites remained at 10.1 km.
- Seasonal rivers dried up, while main rivers such as Voi, which is a major source of water in the lowlands for both human and livestock, also dried up. This could be attributed to lack of rainfall and environmental degradation.
- Ngangu water project, which supplies water to Chunga Unga and Kwa-Kele and Iyombonyi, which serves Mruru, Manganga, and Maribongonyi, dried up resulting in water stress.
- Large herds overcrowded at water points in both districts and this may result in increased cases of livestock diseases. Serious overcrowding was observed at Msorongu in Mwakitau, Taita district and Madulu, Sainte and Kitobo springs in Taveta district.
- The main form of insecurity/conflict reported was human/wildlife conflict, with elephants posing a major threat to both human and livestock. Areas affected by human-wildlife conflict were Mwachabo, Mwakitau, Mwachawaza, Kishushe, Paranga, Kajire, Talio, Rahai and Kasigau in Taita district and Mata, Challa, Njukini in Taveta district.
- Kenya Wildlife Service wardens shot dead one elephant, while 10 sheep were killed by lions from the national park at Bura location and Bachuma sub location. Elephants continued to destroy food crops in areas under irrigation, damaging water conservation structures and irrigation infrastructure that is not fenced with solar electric wire.
- Hippos, wild pigs, baboons and monkeys also posed a serious challenges to the farmers in the two districts.
- Wild fires were reported in Mwambirwa, Sagalla and Bura forests.
- Though both districts showed indications of food stress, Taita district was more affected compared to Taveta. Households in the hill masses of Taita district urgently need food assistance.
- Milk production was good, enabling consumption by majority of household members, especially children. However, milk production was expected to fall drastically if the short rains are inadequate.
- Cereals and legumes were readily available at market level but at very high prices. The price of maize stood at Ksh40 per kilo, while a kilo of beans traded at Ksh 90. The high prices compromised the purchasing power of households, forcing them to operate on a shoe-string budget.

- Areas adversely affected by effects of high prices and need particular attention in regard to food security are Mwakine and Riata in Kimorigho division, Jipe division, Challa division and parts of Njukini location in Taveta district. Others are Kajire, Marapu, Rahasi, Ndara, Bungule, Bachuma, Marungu, parts of Rukanga, Mwakitau, Kamtonga, Chunga Unga, Mukuki, Mbulia, Ndome, Mbololo, Wongonyi, Paranga, Sangenyi, Nyache, Mwaroko, Mbale and Kishushe in Taita district.
- The nutrition status of children below five years declined slightly, with percentage of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC measurement) rising to 3.8 from 3.2 in September. Out of 1,356 children under-five sampled in 15 sample sites areas, 56 were found with MUAC < 135.

### **Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG**

- Food for Assets projects to target rain-fed lowlands of both districts to enhance food security.
- Communities neighboring gazetted and non-gazetted forests to take precautions on fires during the dry spell and assist in putting off fires while they contact the forest department.
- Rehabilitation and excavation of water pans in the rain-fed lowlands of the two districts.
- Increase small-scale irrigation, protect water springs by fencing to reduce degradation and construct water harvesting structures in the lowlands to enhance crop production.
- Electric fencing of parts of the national park next to farming areas to safeguard food crops from destruction by wild animals.
- Expansion of area under irrigation through de-silting of canals and opening of new ones in Taveta district and Tausa and Mwatate in Taita district.
- Promotion of drought-tolerant crops such as cassava, sorghum, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, green grams and millet.
- Capacity building on modern farming technologies and issuance of certified seeds.
- Discourage farmers from using fire to prepare land due to destruction of organic matter and friendly micro-organisms that aid in crop production.
- Provincial Administration and the County Council to control or regulate sand harvesting along Voi River.
- Strengthening of routine services through the introduction of ‘malezi bora’ weeks to ensure quality services are offered to children under five, pregnant and lactating mothers and to educate the community on the need for a balanced diet to eliminate cases of kwashiorkor and marasmus in the two districts.

### **Current interventions**

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

- Phase VIII of EMOP (FFA projects) came to an end and the next phase is set to start late next month. The projects will continue to be implemented in conjunction

- with ALRMP II, World Food Programme, Government departments and communities, with World Vision being the lead agency.
- Environment and natural resources sector projects;
    - ALRMP bought 30 rain gauges to be installed in sentinel sites to enable recording of reliable rainfall data in both districts.
    - Catchment conservation measures on the hill masses, with purchase of 20,000 tree seedlings to be planted in Bura forest Mwatate divisions during the short rains.
  - Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Sector projects.
  - An order was placed for 5,000 tissue culture bananas at KARI-Mtwapa and 225 kg of NERICA rice purchased from NIB Mwea to be planted in Kimorigho, Taveta district(ALRMP).
  - Construction of a milk cooling plant at Wumingu and construction of Mwasima Nuru water project by County Council.
  - Livestock Sector projects
    - ALRMP Taita Taveta purchased 50 langstroth bee hives for a Common Interest Group in Mwatate and Kitughi youth Group.

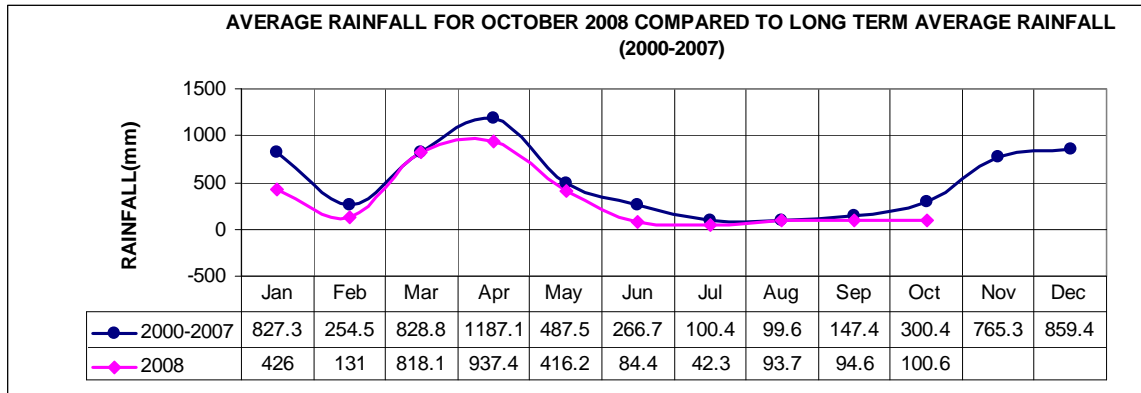
#### Food aid

- Taita district received 3,000 bags of maize (90 kgs), 200 bags of beans (50 kgs), 600 bags of rice (50 kgs) and 100 cartons of cooking oil (6 x 3 litres) as relief food from the Office of the President Ministry of State for Special Programmes department of Relief and Rehabilitation.
- DSG-Taita district agreed that food distribution targets children homes and households not covered by FFA programme.

Divisions	Population Projection	Population targeted	Maize	Beans	Rice	Cooking Oil			
1. Mwatate	61,237	9,186	874	58	170	27			
2. Voi	38,206	7,641	730	47	143	24			
3. Tausa	22,028	4,406	420	27	83	14			
4.Mwambirwa	5,353	1,071	103	7	21	3			
5. Nyangala	21,072	4,214	404	27	81	14			
6. Wundanyi	59,505	4,760	456	30	90	14			
7. Children H.		(200)	13	4	12	4			
<b>Total</b>	<b>210,370</b>	<b>31,278</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>			

## 1. Environmental indicators (Stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall



- The two districts recorded 100.6 mm of rainfall during the month under review compared to 94.6 mm in September.
- Out of 15 sentinel sites, only Mwarungu, Lushangonyi, Lagho, Wongonyi (hill masses) and Mwakitau (lowlands) recorded light showers.
- The trend was normal compared to the long term average for 2000-2007 but with lower amount of rainfall.
- Most farmers prepared their farms ready for planting while some had already planted.
- Compared to the long term average for 2000-2007 the trend was normal but the rainfall amount lower.

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Condition of natural vegetation and pasture deteriorated due to lack of rainfall in most parts of the district and environmental degradation.
- However, parts of the national park that received light showers showed good regeneration of pasture and forest cover.
- Compared to the previous month, the average grazing distance from sampled sentinel sites remained at 10.1 km.
- Compared with the same month in a normal year, the situation was worse.

### 1.3 Water sources and availability

- Water sources during the month under review were springs, natural rivers, boreholes and tap water.
- Drying up of Ngangu water project, which supplies water to Chunga Unga and Kwa-Kele and Iyombonyi water project which supplies water to Mruru, Manganga, and Maribongonyi resulted in serious water shortage.
- Livestock crowded water points, which result in cases of livestock diseases.
- A serious case of overcrowding was observed at Msorongu in Mwakitau, Taita district and Madulu, Sainte and Kitobo springs in Taveta district.

- The average distance and time to and from the water sources remained at 4.8 km and 2.0 hrs respectively.

## **1.4 Emerging issues**

### **1.4.1. Insecurity/conflict/human displacement**

- The main form of insecurity/conflict reported was human/wildlife conflict, with elephants posing a major threat to both human and livestock. Areas affected by human-wildlife conflict were Mwachabo, Mwakitau, Mwachawaza, Kishushe, Paranga, Kajire, Talio, Rahai and Kasigau in Taita district and Mata, Challa, Njukini in Taveta district.
- Kenya Wildlife Service wardens shot dead one elephant, while 10 sheep were killed by lions from the national park at Bura location and Bachuma sub location. Elephants continued to destroy food crops in areas under irrigation, damaging water conservation structures and irrigation infrastructure that is not fenced with solar electric wire.
- Hippos, wild pigs, baboons and monkeys also posed a serious challenges to the farmers in the two districts.
- Areas affected by human-wildlife conflict are Mwachabo, Mwakitau, Mwachawaza, Kishushe, Paranga, Kajire, Talio, Rahai and Kasigau in Taita district and Mata, Challa, Njukini in Taveta district.
- Wild fires were reported in Mwambirwa, Sagalla and Bura forests.

### **1.4.2. Migration**

- Unusual livestock in-migration continued in Mwatate and Voi divisions of Taita district during the month under review.
- In Taveta, herders from Salaita and Mahandakini, especially the Maasai, moved their livestock across to Tanzania in such of pasture, while others grazed in the national park.

### **1.4.3. Implications on food security**

- Though both districts showed indications of food stress, Taita district remained more affected compared to Taveta district.
- Some households situated in the hill masses of Taita district urgently need food assistance.
- Household members in the lowlands of Taita district and rain-fed areas of Taveta appealed to Government and NGOs for more assistance either through Food For Work or general food distribution.
- Areas facing acute food shortage and requiring immediate attention include Mwakitau in Mwatate division, Kasigau and lower Sagalla in Voi division, Tausa division, Wongonyi in Mwambirwa, Paranga, Sangenyi, Nyache, Mwaroko, Mlechi, Choke, Wanganga, Irido and Saghasa in Wundanyi division in Taita district.
- Others were Nakuruto, Kasokoni, Chokaa, Kidong'u, Challa kati, Uthiani, Kijijini, Vikwatani, Chumvini A & B, Langata, and Ulawani in Challa division, Njoro, Mtakuja, Kazamoyo, Kachero, Mata village, Nasaini in Jipe division and Lessessia, Kasarani, parts of Mjini, Langata, Chewa, Mahoo, Salaita, Vikwatani, Mwakine, Riata, Madarasani, Lotima A & B, Riata Ndogo/Kubwa in Bomeni division of Taveta district.

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

### **2.1 Livestock production**

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

- Livestock body condition was generally good in both districts.
- However, body condition of cattle deteriorated though not at an alarming rate.
- In Salaita and Mahandakini in Taveta, cattle exhibited notable weight loss due to long trekking distances in search of pasture in neighbouring Tanzania.
- Livestock in Tausa and Mwatate divisions in Taita district also showed notable weight loss.
- Compared with a normal year, the livestock body condition was normal.

#### **2.1.2. Milk production**

- Milk yield from sampled households was 9,056 litres during the month under review compared to 9,475 litres recorded in September.
- The decrease in milk production could be attributed to deteriorating condition of natural vegetation and pasture in mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone.
- Casual waged labour: sisal farms and mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zones recorded the lowest amount of milk production due to livestock trekking long distances in search of water and pasture.
- Mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone remained the leading producer of milk at 82 per cent, followed by mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone at 16 per cent and casual waged labour: sisal farms at two per cent.

## **2.2 Crop production**

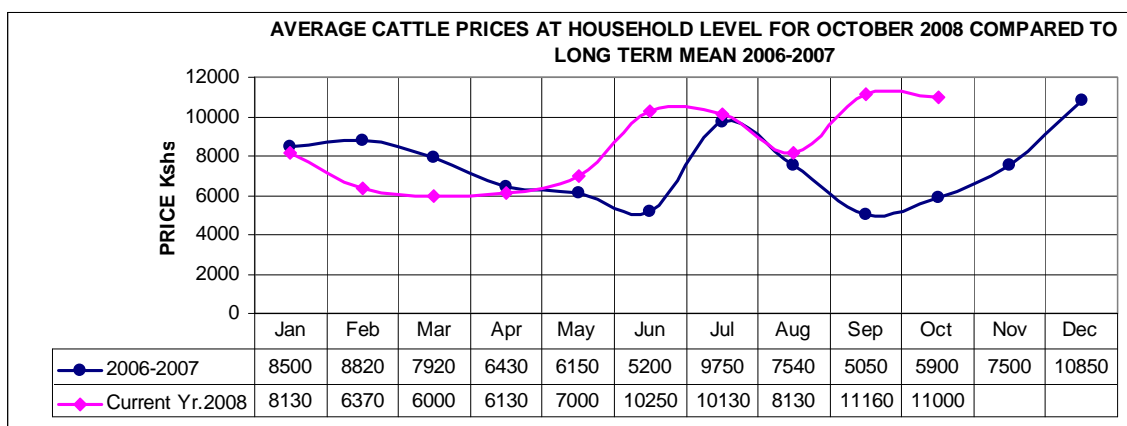
### **2.2.1. Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities**

- Most farmers in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone were busy planting maize and a few farmers were still preparing their farms and constructing water conservation structures to capture more run off water during the rainy season.
- However, in the casual waged labour: sisal farms livelihood zone casual waged labourers were busy weeding the sisal crop.
- In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone some farmers were harvesting vegetables, while others were weeding maize crop.
- In the mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops, farmers were busy harvesting beans, kales, bananas and sugarcane, while others were weeding maize crop.
- This was normal at the time of the year.

## **3.0 Access to food**

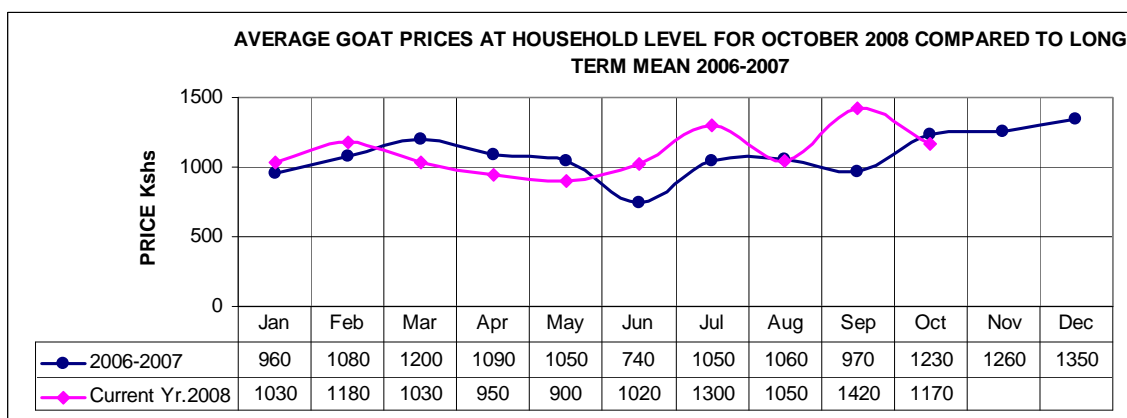
### **3.1 Livestock marketing**

#### **3.1.1 Cattle prices**



- The average price of cattle dropped to Ksh11,000 from Ksh11,160 in September.
- The decrease could be attributed to deteriorating cattle body condition due to long trekking distances in search of pasture.
- However, high prices were recorded in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone at Ksh11,500 due to good livestock body condition.
- Low prices prevailed in the casual waged labour: sisal farms at Ksh9,000 and Ksh 9,500 in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock zones.
- Compared to the long term mean, the trend was normal and the price high.

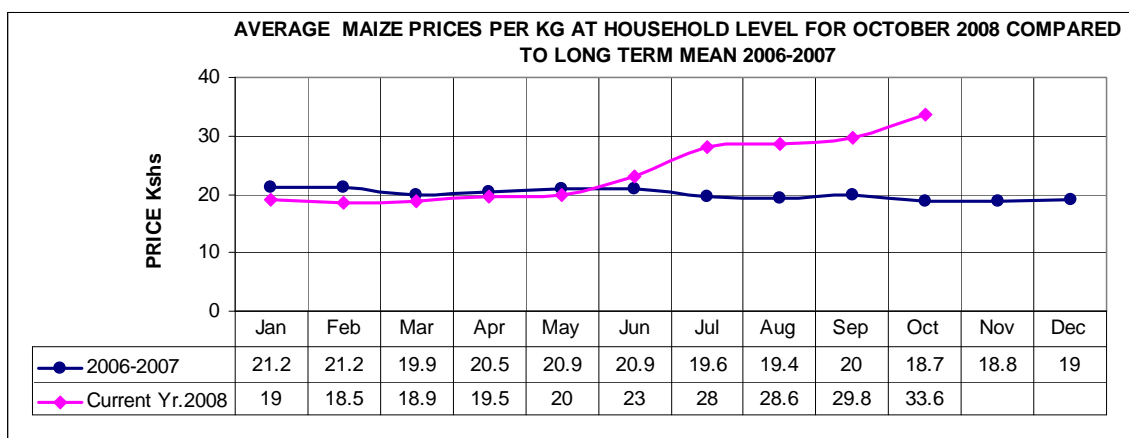
### 3.1.2. Goats prices



- The average goat price at household level fell to Ksh1,170 from Ksh1,420 in September.
- The price drop could be attributed to increase in supply of goats in the market.
- Prices remained higher in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone at Ksh1,500 than in both the casual waged labour: sisal farms (Ksh1,100) and mixed farming: food crops/livestock (Ksh1,000) livelihood zones.
- Compared to the long term mean, the trend was normal but the price higher.

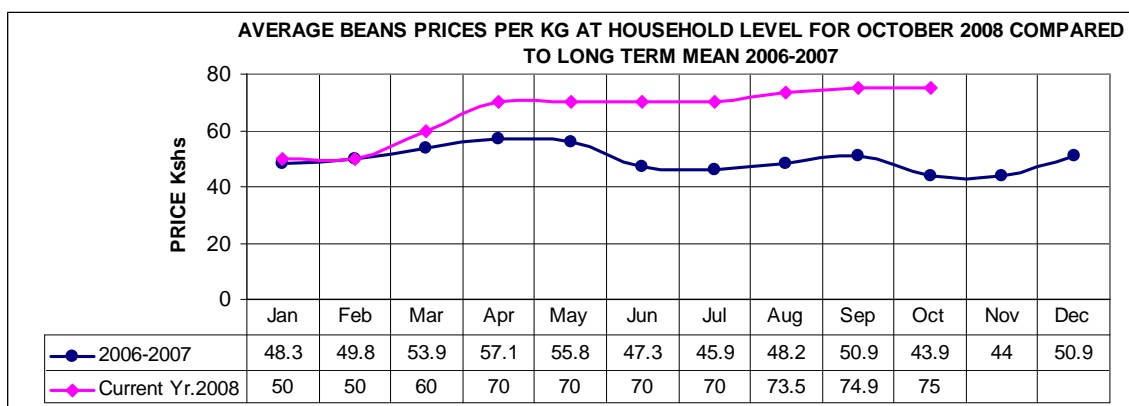
## 3.2 Crop prices

### 3.2.1. Maize prices



- The average maize price increased to Ksh33.6 per kilo from Ksh 29.8 recorded in September.
- The gradual increase in price could be attributed to depleted maize stocks at household level, therefore household members relied on purchases.
- Low prices were recorded in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone (Ksh28), while higher prices were realized in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone (Ksh38) and mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops (Ksh30).
- Compared to the long term mean, the trend was rising and prices high.

### 3.2.2. Beans prices



- Average beans price increased slightly to Ksh75 per kilo from Ksh74.9 recorded in September.
- The consistent high price in both districts could be attributed to depletion of bean stocks at household level, increasing demand, which resulted in increase in prices.
- In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone, average beans prices at household level were high (Ksh90) due to decreased stocks of pulses after harvests.
- Prices were lower in both mixed farming: food crops/livestock (Ksh80) and mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops (Ksh70).
- Compared to the long term mean, the trend was normal.

### 3.3 Income

### 3.3.1. Livestock income

- Income from livestock sales obtained from 360 sampled households during the month under review decreased.
- Sale of seven cattle at Ksh11,000, 18 goats at ksh1,170 and 105 chickens at Ksh210 realized ksh120,110 compared to Ksh138,520 realised in September.
- The decrease could be attributed to fall in prices for cattle, goats and chicken.
- Mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone recorded the highest sales since most farmers depend on livestock sales for income.

### 3.3.2. Other income sources

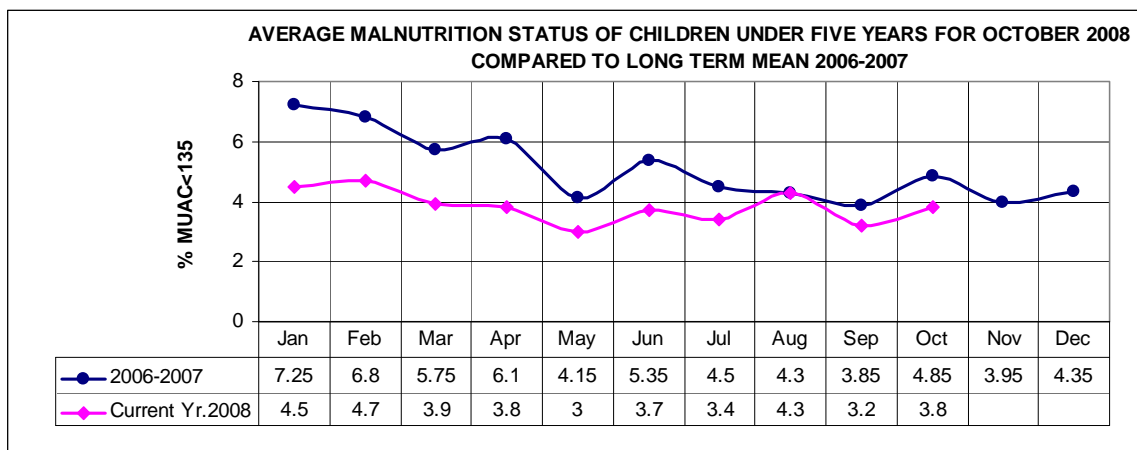
- Other income sources during the month remained casual labour, petty trade, formal employment, remittances, sand and brick selling, charcoal selling, miraa selling, fishing and small scale mining.
- Income obtained from these sources remained the same and this was normal for the time of the year.

### 3.4 Implications on food security

- Milk production was still adequate and majority of household members enjoyed the commodity, especially children.
- However, if the two districts do not receive rainfall, milk production is expected to fall drastically.
- Cereals and legumes were readily available at market level but at very high prices, which forced household members to operate on a shoe-string budget.

## 4.0 Welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

### 4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years declined slightly, with percentage of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition (based on the MUAC measurement) rising to 3.8 from 3.2 in September.

- Out of 1,356 children under-five sampled in 15 sample sites areas, 56 were found with MUAC < 135.
- The rate was lower than the 4.85 and could be attributed to decline in malaria and pneumonia cases following increased awareness by the Ministry of Health at district level.
- MOH distributed treated mosquito nets to households in the two districts and carried out a district-wide campaign of treating individual nets at homes and shopping centres during the month under review.

## **5.0 Current interventions**

### **5.1 Non-food interventions**

- Phase VIII of EMOP (FFA projects) came to an end and the next phase is set to start late next month. The projects will continue to be implemented in conjunction with ALRMP II, World Food Programme, government departments and communities, with World Vision being the lead agency.
- Environment and natural resources sector projects;
  - ALRMP bought 30 rain gauges to be installed in sentinel sites to enable recording of reliable rainfall data in both districts.
  - Catchment conservation measures on the hill masses, with purchase of 20,000 tree seedlings to be planted in Bura forest Mwatate divisions during the short rains.
- Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Sector projects
  - An order was placed for 5,000 tissue culture bananas at KARI-Mtwapa and 225 kg of NERICA rice purchased from NIB Mwea to be planted in Kimorigho, Taveta district(ALRMP).
  - Construction of a milk cooling plant at Wumingu and construction of Mwasima Nuru water project by County Council.
- Livestock Sector projects
  - ALRMP Taita Taveta purchased 50 langstroth bee hives for a Common Interest Group in Mwatate and Kitughi youth Group.
- Distribution of seeds by the Ministry of Agriculture; 3,000 Kgs of Cowpeas, 400 Kgs of Beans, 500 Kgs of Sorghum and 2,000 Kgs of P/Millet.

### **5.2 Food aid**

- Taita district received 3,000 bags of maize (90 kgs), 200 bags of beans (50 kgs), 600 bags of rice (50 kgs) and 100 cartons of cooking oil (6 x 3 litres) as relief food from the Office of the President Ministry of State for Special Programmes department of Relief and Rehabilitation.
- DSG-Taita district agreed that food distribution targets children homes and households not covered by FFA programme.

### **5.3 Other coping strategies**

The most common coping strategies during the month was were;

- Occasional skipping of meals.
- Borrowing and sharing food from neighbours and friends.
- Selling charcoal, firewood, sand, bricks.

- Hunting of wild game and fishing.

#### **6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG**

- Food for Assets projects to target rain-fed lowlands of both districts to enhance food security.
- Communities neighboring gazetted and non-gazetted forests to take precautions against fires during the dry spell and assist in putting off fires while they contact the forest department.
- Rehabilitation and excavation of water pans in the rain-fed lowlands of the two districts.
- Increase small-scale irrigation, protect water springs by fencing to reduce degradation and construct water harvesting structures in the lowlands to enhance crop production.
- Electric fencing of parts of the national park next to farming areas to safeguard food crops from destruction by wild animals.
- Expansion of area under irrigation through de-silting of canals and opening of new ones in Taveta district and Tausa and Mwatate in Taita district.
- Promotion of drought-tolerant crops such as cassava, sorghum, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, green grams and millet.
- Capacity building on modern farming technologies and assurance of adequate certified seeds.
- Discourage farmers from using fire to prepare land due to destruction of organic matter and friendly micro-organisms that aid in crop production.
- Provincial Administration and the County Council to control or regulate sand harvesting along Voi River.
- Strengthening of routine services through the introduction of 'malezi bora' weeks to ensure quality services are offered to children under five, pregnant and lactating mothers and to educate the community on the need for a balanced diet to eliminate cases of kwashiorkor and marasmus in the two districts.