

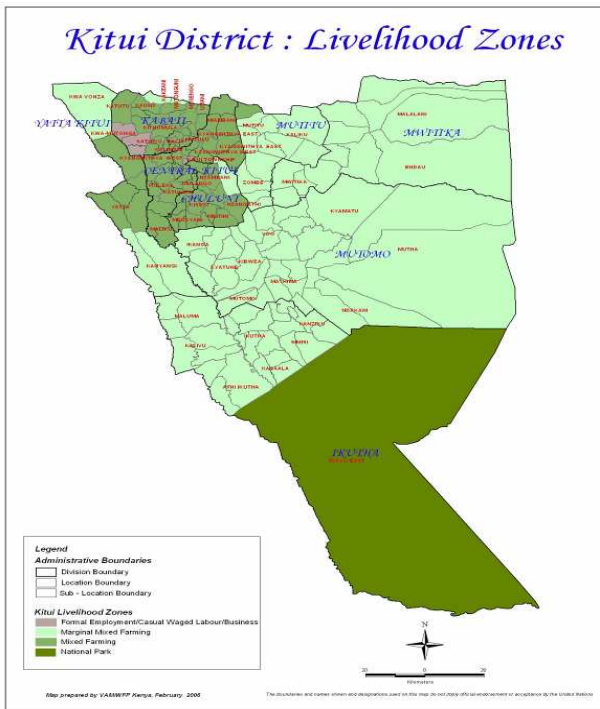


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, SEPTEMBER 2008**

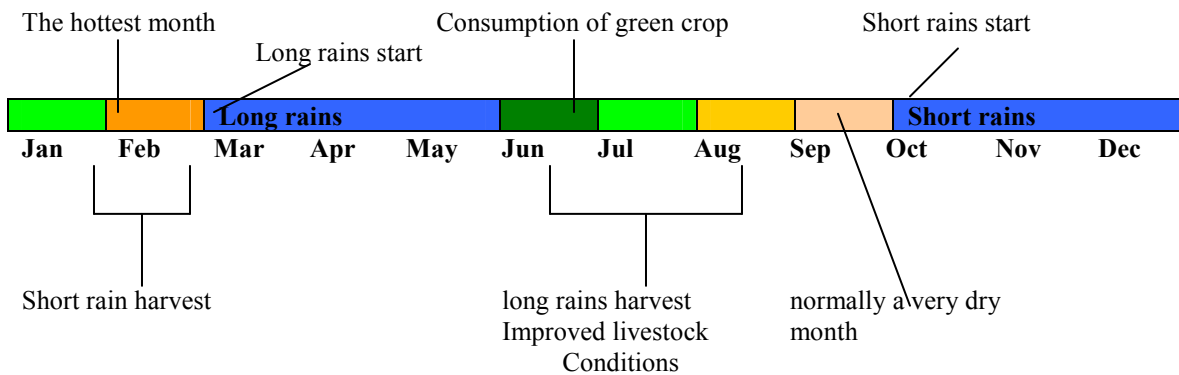
**Kitui District**

**Warning Stages**



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

**Timeline Activities**



### **Situation overview**

- Only 3.66mm of rainfall was recorded within the township. The rain was scanty and did not produce any run-off. The month was dry save for the three days of precipitation.
- The condition of pasture and natural vegetation declined, leaving the ground bare and livestock was let loose to graze on their own. Mutomo and Ikutha divisions, where a big percentage of land was left bare, were hardest hit.
- The main source of water in the district was traditional river wells. Mutomo district experienced water stress, with communities in Simisi and Kanziku locations spending up to 2 days queuing for water.
- The return distances to water points in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone ranged from 10 to 15 Kilometres. Distances in the mixed farming livelihood zone ranged from 3-7 kilometres.
- The body conditions of livestock varied between the various species, with cattle body conditions ranging from poor to fair while shoats ranged from fair to good.
- The price of both cattle and goats dropped due to the prevailing livestock body conditions. The prices were also affected by the quarantine following the outbreak of *Peste des petits ruminants* (PPR).
- Cattle sales dropped from 2 per cent in August to 1.8 per cent, while goat sales dropped from 2.1 per cent to 1.6.
- The price of maize and beans remained stable and the trend was attributed to stability in supplies from the National Cereals and Produce Board.
- The nutrition status of children below five years improved slightly compared to the previous month. The percentage of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition dropped to 8 per cent from 9 per cent in August.

### **Current interventions**

#### **Food aid**

- EMOP Food for Assets distribution in 9 divisions.
- General food distribution in non-EMOP areas.
- Regular school feeding programme.

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

- Sinking and rehabilitation of shallow wells by AMREF, ALRMP & DASS.
- Water trucking by Catholic Diocese of Kitui, Ministry of Water in Mutomo and Kitui, particularly to institutions.
- Repair and servicing of contingency boreholes by water department and ALRMP.
- Pipeline extension from Tiva to Mutomo town-Ministry of Water
- Construction of Usiani rock dam by World Vision and construction of earth dam in Ikutha by Red Cross.
- Construction of Tiva sand dam by the Ministry of Water Mutomo.
- Construction of sand dams by SASOL, GOAL, DASS and ALRMP.
- Tarmacking of Kanyonyoo- Kitui road
- Upgrading of meat goat by ALLPRO, ALRMP, DASS, World Vision and KICEDA and procurement and distribution of dairy goats by ALLPRO, ADRA, ALRMP, World Vision and Farm Africa
- Hay bailing in mixed farming livelihood zone

- Support to irrigation by ALRMP
- NALEP- capacity building of CIGs
- NMK (community grant)- value addition of cotton in Ikutha
- Soil and water conservation through Food For Assets.

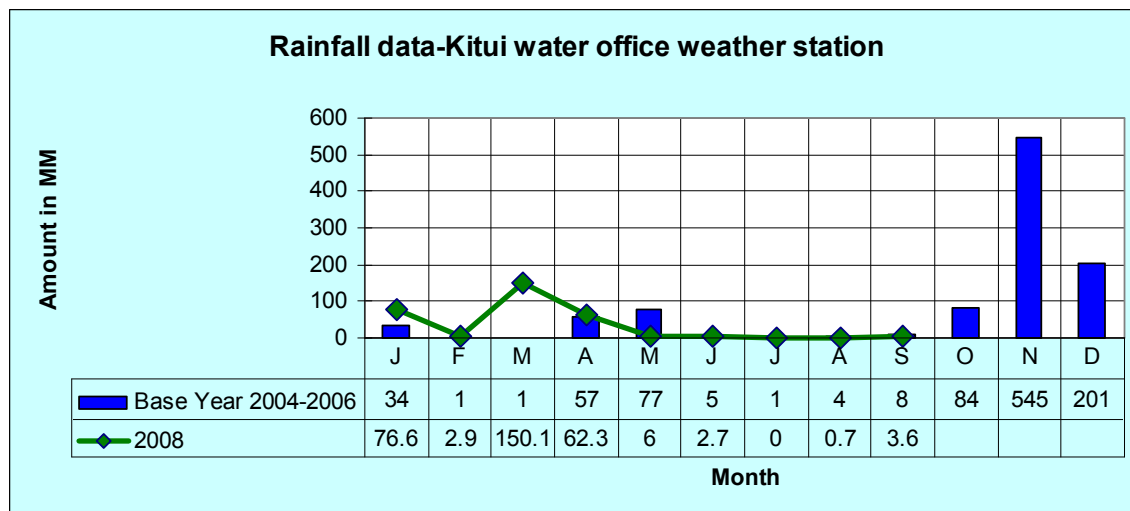
### Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- Repair and servicing of the contingency boreholes (Ndilili and Kaliani boreholes).
- Fuel supplementation to the contingency boreholes and construction of water harvesting structures.
- Construction of more water storage tanks in the rock catchments and springs.
- Revise the district contingency plan.
- Timely distribution of certified seeds before the onset of rains and capacity building for farmers.
- Intensify promotion of drought-tolerant crops and promotion of emerging crops such as aloe and jatropha.
- Intensify surveillance on aflatoxin food contamination
- Encourage farmers to form livestock marketing groups and intensify vaccination campaigns and disease surveillance.
- Develop livestock water structures and intensify water trucking
- Increase the coverage under the school-feeding programme, intensify routine deworming and promote school greening programme.

## 1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall

- A total of 3.6mm of rainfall was recorded within the township during three days of precipitation.
- The rains were scanty and did not produce any run-off.



### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The condition of natural vegetation continued to decline, with most plants shedding leaves and grass drying up.

- The quantities ranged from poor to fair. The pasture condition was poor in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, in Kyamatu, Ikutha and Mutomo.
- The situation was more severe in lower Yatta in the mixed farming livelihood zone, where most of the fields were bare and livestock struggled to access forage.

### 1.3 Water sources and availability

- Water was scarce and most communities relied on traditional river wells as their main sources of water.
- All the open water facilities dried up in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone and recharge of both shallow wells and boreholes declined. Traditional river wells deepened and the salinity levels were high.
- The return distance to water point in the zone varied from one area to the other, with the worst being Mutomo township, Simisi and Kanziko locations.
- In Simisi, members of community spent up to two days queuing for two (20 litre) water jerricans from Ndilili contingency borehole and walked up to 15 Kms one way.
- In the mixed farming livelihood zone, the main sources of water were traditional river wells, shallow wells, boreholes and the Masinga pipeline water.
- Unlike during previous droughts, shallow wells started drying up and the water level in the Masinga dam dropped, leading to water rationing in the district.
- Following the increase in fuel prices globally, most boreholes were unable to break even and doubled the price of water from Ksh 2 to Ksh 4 per 20 litre jerrican.

#### Water sources in use and % of households accessing them between July and September 2008

Source	Traditional river wells	Pans/Dams	Shallow wells	Rock catchments	Boreholes	Natural rivers
July 2008	53%	6%	21%	2%	2%	6%
August 2008	56%	6%	13%	0	17%	6%
September 2008	54%	4%	18%	0	13%	9%

### 1.4 Implications on food security

- The decline in pasture quantity and water shortage weakened the livestock body conditions, leading to reduction in productivity.
- The rise in the price of water made it inaccessible to the poor, forcing them to walk long distances to rivers, which are poorly spread, to fetch water.
- Due to congestion at the water points chances of water contamination were high.
- Household members spent long hours (both days and night) queuing for water.

## 2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

### 2.1 Livestock body conditions

- The livestock body conditions deteriorated compared to the previous month.
- The decline was attributed to inadequate pasture and increased distance to water points.
- Livestock also fed on fallen leaves and other dry vegetation, which are of low nutritive value and require a lot of water for digestion.

## 2.2 Livestock diseases

- No major livestock disease outbreaks were reported.
- A few farmers in Mutitu and Mwitika divisions were reported to have lost goats to suspected cases of CCPP.

## 2.3 Crop production

### 2.3.1 Timeliness and situation of crop production activities

- September is normally a very a hot and dry month and very few crops can survive the drought.
- Maize was at various stages of development ranging from germination to maturity along Nzeeu, Thua, Tiva and Athi Rivers, where farmers practice small-scale irrigation.
- The commonly available fruits in the district were paw paws and bananas and were available in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- There was a lot of vegetable farming ongoing along rivers Athi, Tiva and Thua.
- Cassava and sweet potatoes were ready for harvesting in Central, Chuluni and Matinyani divisions and harvesting was ongoing.

### 2.3.2 Crop pests and diseases

- No major crop pests or diseases were reported in the district during the month.

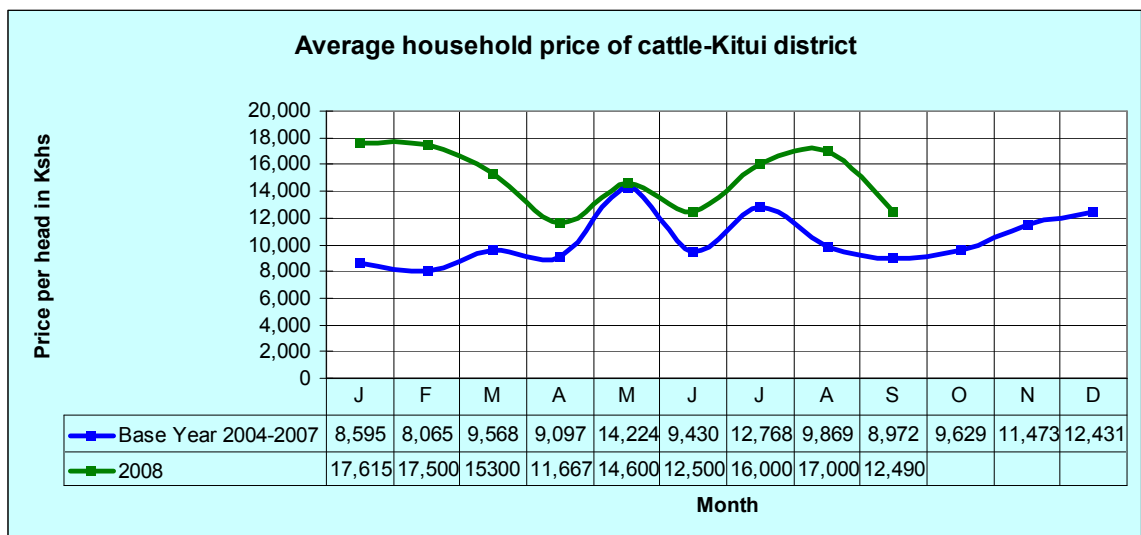
## 2.4 Implications on food security

- The decline in livestock body conditions led to reduced prices of the various species.
- In addition, weak animals were susceptible to diseases and any outbreak could lead to massive deaths, thus need to carry out massive livestock vaccination and treatment.

## 3.0 Access to food

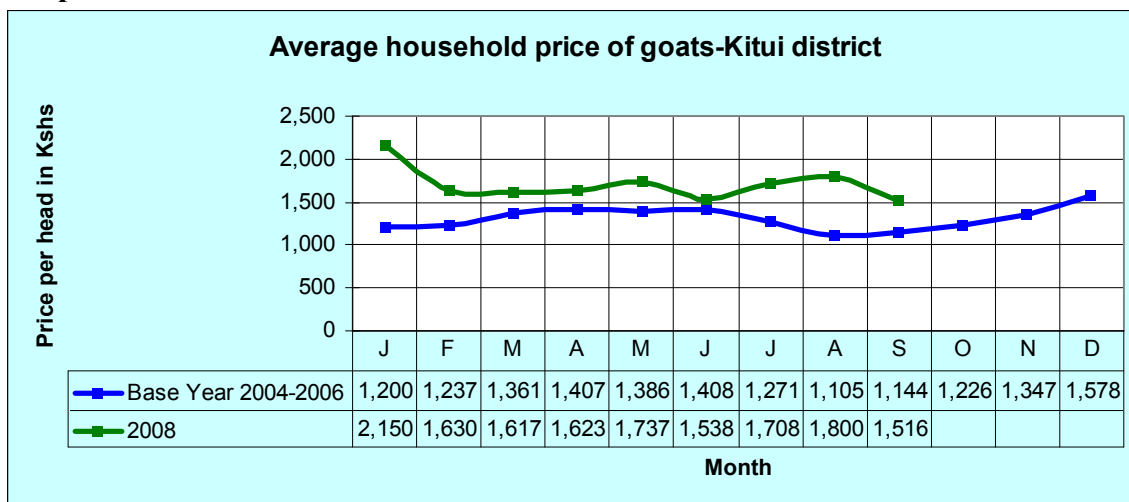
### 3.1 Livestock marketing

#### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



- Cattle prices plummeted due to decline in body conditions as a result of inadequate pasture and long distances to water points.
- However, prices were fair for the cattle whose body condition was good. In Ikutha division some farmers reported prices of between Ksh 20,000 and Ksh25,000 for mature livestock.
- The trend was normal but the rate high.

### 3.1.2 Goat prices



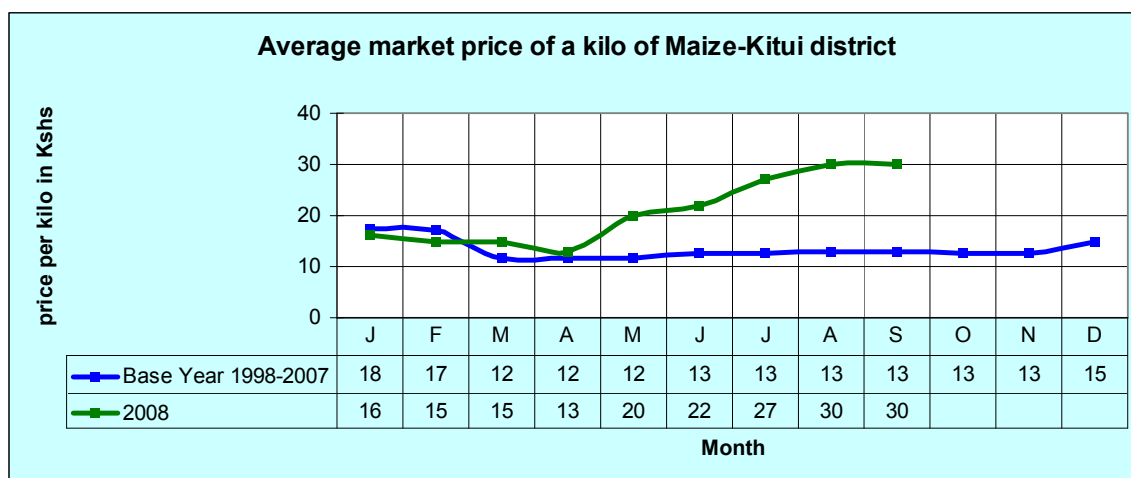
- The price of goats dropped from Ksh 1,800 in August to Ksh 1,516.
- The decline was attributed to the quarantine on movement of small stock in the country due to the outbreak of PPR.
- Compared to the long term average, the trend was not normal.

### 3.1.3 Livestock sales

- The sales rate of cattle dropped from 2% in August to 1.8 % , while that of goats dropped from 2.1% to 1.6%.

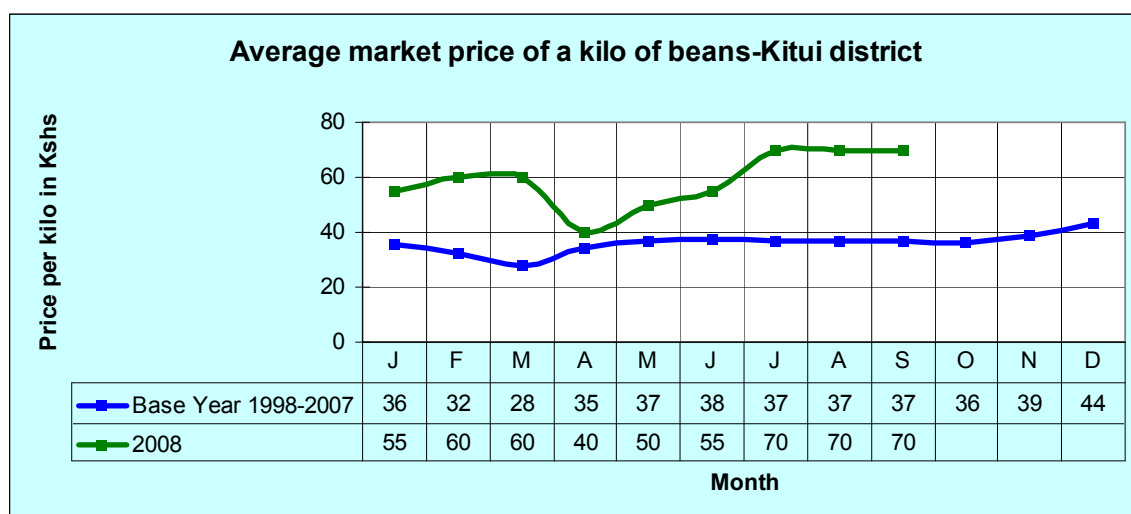
## 3.2 Crop prices

### 3.2.1 Maize prices



- The average price of a kilo of maize remained stable at Ksh 30.
- The stability was attributed to the moderation of prices by the National Cereals and Produce Board, which served as the main supplier of cereals in the district.
- The trend was normal but the prices still high.

### 3.2.2 Beans prices



- The price of beans remained stable at Ksh 70 per kilo.
- The stability was attributed to the availability of supplies from Loitotok, supplemented by the availability of pigeon peas stocks in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The trend was normal but the price too high and unaffordable for the majority of households.

### 3.3 Incomes

#### 3.3.1 Crop income

- The income from sale of crops compared to other sources remained stable at 3 per cent.
- The stability was attributed to shortage of stocks at the household level. Only few people had stocks and were mostly hoarding for sale.

### 3.3.2 Livestock income

- The percentage of income derived from sale of livestock declined to 7 per cent from 8 per cent in August.
- The decline was attributed to the decline in prices of livestock.

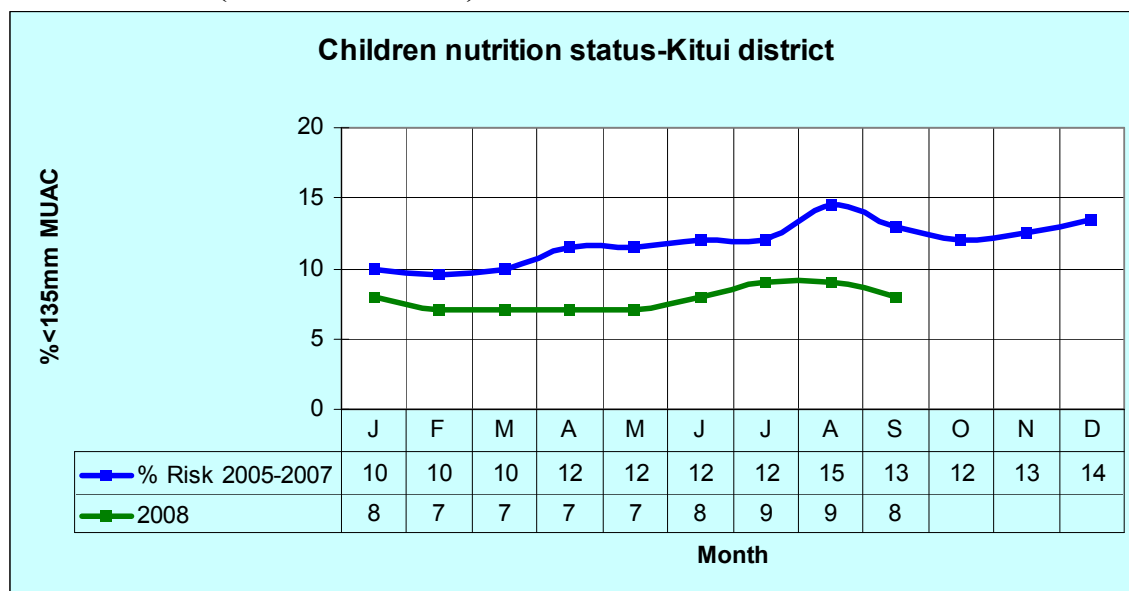
### 3.3.3 Other sources

- Casual labour was the main source of income contributing 40 per cent of the communities' income.
- Other sources included remittances (23%), employment (10%), petty trade (11%) and charcoal (6%).

### 3.4 Implications on food security

- The above indicators had a mixed implication on food security.
- The decline in the price of livestock eroded the purchasing power of the household.

## 4.0 Welfare indicators (utilisation of food)



- The nutrition status of children below five years improved slightly compared to the previous month.
- The percentage of those rated as being at risk of malnutrition dropped to 8 per cent from 9 per cent in August.

### 4.2 Human health

No major human disease outbreak was reported during the reporting period.

## **5.0 Current interventions**

### **5.1 Food aid**

- EMOP Food for Assets distribution in 9 divisions.
- General food distribution in non-EMOP areas.
- Regular school feeding programme.

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

- Sinking and rehabilitation of shallow wells by AMREF, ALRMP & DASS.
- Water trucking by Catholic Diocese of Kitui, Ministry of Water in Mutomo and Kitui, particularly to institutions.
- Repair and servicing of contingency boreholes by water department and ALRMP.
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- Support to irrigation by ALRMP
- NALEP- capacity building of CIGs
- NMK (community grant)- value addition of cotton in Ikutha
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## **6.0 Recommendations**

- Conduct baseline survey to ascertain the situation of the water facilities in Mutomo
- Extension of water pipelines for Muselele, Kanyongonyo, Ngaaka and Kinanie boreholes.
- Repair and servicing of the contingency boreholes (Ndilili and Kaliani boreholes).
- Fuel supplementation to the contingency boreholes and construction of water harvesting structures.
- Construction of more water storage tanks in the rock catchments and springs.
- Revise the district contingency plan.
- Timely distribution of certified seeds before the onset of rains and capacity building for farmers.
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