

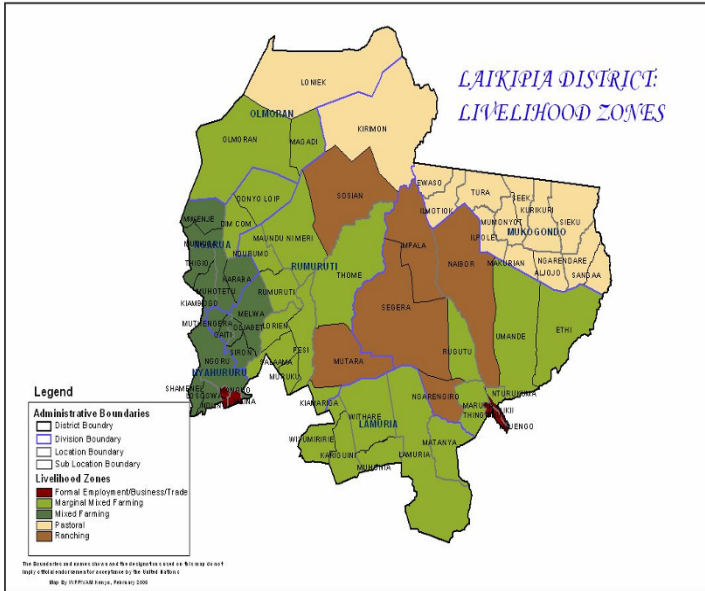


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, AUGUST 2009**

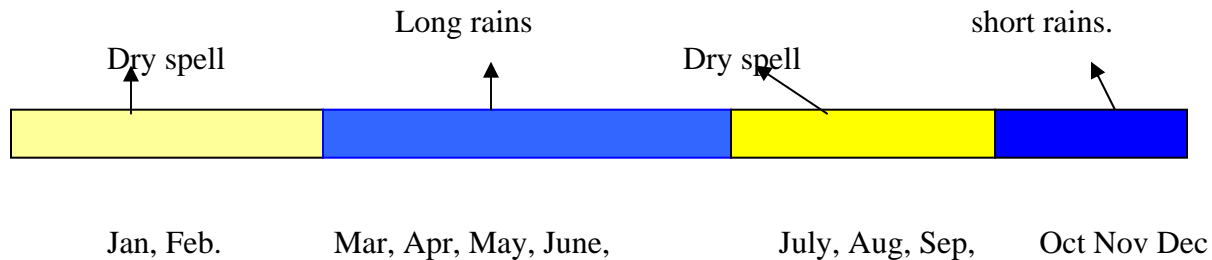
**Laikipia East, West and North Districts**

**Warning Stages**



Livelihood Zone	Warning Stage	Trend
Pastoral All Species	Emergency	No change
Agro – Pastoral	Emergency	No change
Mixed Farming	Emergency	No change
Marginal Mixed Farming	Emergency	No change

**Seasonal Calendar**



### **Situation overview**

- The district did not receive any rainfall during the month under review. The little showers recorded in Laikipia East and West in July actually worsened the dry standing hay and did not continue as expected.
- Pasture continued to get depleted in the pastoral areas of Mukogodo and the marginal agricultures areas and sheep and cattle moved to Mount Kenya for in search of pasture, including those from Samburu, Isiolo and Laikipia are all on the Mount Kenya.
- Cattle continued dying on the mountain due to diseases such as ECF and other cold related diseases.
- Permanent rivers such as the Ewaso nyiro dried up and wildlife and fish carcasses were scattered around pools of water along the river valley. Dams were also drying up, leaving no water to sustain the livestock. Wildlife was also dying due to lack of water and enough pasture in Laikipia north and several elephants were reported to have died in the conservancy ranches. Other animals such as buffaloes and antelopes were also too weak and theyv had no access route to Mt Kenya due to the electric fences erected.
- There were no crops in the rain-fed farms and land preparation was ongoing for the short rains season in Laikipia East. The ranching community also suffered since the grass in the ranches was also depleted.
- Another major challenge facing the livestock sector is water shortage the commodity has become scarce as most of the dams and pans have dried up and the rivers have long dried the only source of water was the Ewaso Nyiro that has also dried up.
- The number of needy cases keeps on increasing and thus need to review the relief register is required. In Ngare Nyiro of Laikipia east one case has been reported as died.
- In the households the ratio of food is reduced. There is a major scarcity of food and the little available is very expensive.

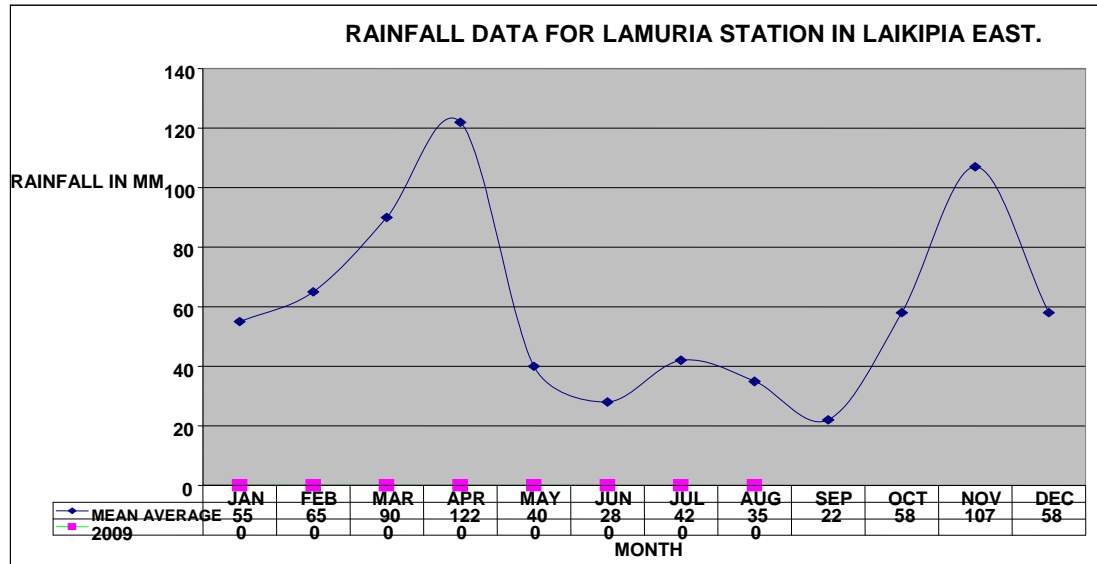
### **Recommendations to DSG and KFSM**

- There was a major shortage of food at the household level due to high prices and scarcity of the items. The purchasing power of the households was also affected due to the crop failure and collapse of the livestock sector and thus they were not able to trade for food. The Government should be more vigilant in ensuring that the needy families are closely monitored.
- The KWS to ensure that wildlife is controlled and directed to Mount Kenya where they can access water and pasture.
- Need to speed up de-silting activities as most of the dams and pans are dry.
- Veterinary to closely monitor the situation of livestock on Mt Kenya as they are dying in big numbers.
- Provide more funds to the key departments to enable them curb the situation. i.e. Veterinary department, water, agriculture, livestock, KWS, health, etc.
- KMC to come down to the ground to buy livestock as the farmers who want to sell their animals and can't do due to the fact most pastoralist would wish to

sell one or two animals and the cost of taking the animals to Nairobi for market was too high.

## 1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

### 1.1. Rainfall



*Rainfall data provided by (Ewaso Nyiro River Catchment Authority) from Matanya station in Lamuria division this data does not cover the entire district Matanya is an Agropastoralists zone but the situation is different in the rest of the livelihood zones.*

- The district did not receive any rainfall during the month under review. The little showers recorded in Laikipia East and West in July actually worsened the dry standing hay and did not continue as expected.

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Pasture was depleted in the pastoral areas of Mukogodo and the marginal agricultures areas. Sheep and cattle moved to Mount Kenya in search of pasture. Cattle and sheep from Samburu, Isiolo and Laikipia were also on Mt Kenya.

### 1.3 Water sources and availability

- The Ewaso nyiro dried up and wildlife and fish were dying in the scattered pools of water along the river valley. Dams were also drying up, with no water to sustain the livestock.
- Wildlife was also dying due to lack of water and enough pasture in Laikipia North. Several elephants died in the conservancy ranches, while buffaloes and antelopes were too weak and had no access route to Mt Kenya due to the electric fences erected.

### 1.4 Emerging issues

#### 1.4.1 Insecurity / human wildlife conflict

- Human/wildlife conflicts increased at the water points due to scarcity of the commodity.
- Cases of robbery were reported every day.
- Rustling stopped due to the fact that the livestock body condition cannot allow them to run.

#### **1.4.2 Migration /human displacement**

- Most of the livestock was camped on Mt Kenya where they moved in search of pasture. The pasture on the mountain was about to get depleted, forcing the animals to move to the other side of the mountain in Nyandarua district.

## **2.0 Rural economy indicators (Stability)**

### **2.1 Livestock production**

- Livestock sector was very much affected during this period was thousands of animals died and were still dying in Mukogodo. The livestock left behind grazing in the conservancy areas that were set aside for wildlife and ecotourism activities was also dying.
- Livestock on Mt Kenya was dying in hundreds due to ECF and cold related diseases. The ranching community also suffered as the grass in the ranches got depleted.
- Another major challenge facing the livestock sector was water shortage. The commodity became scarce as most of the dams, pans and rivers dried up. The only source of water was the Ewaso Nyiro, which also dried up.

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

- Livestock prices were not good and this was attributed to their body condition.

#### **2.1.2 Livestock diseases**

- Cattle were dying on Mt Kenya due to ECF and other cold related diseases.
- The veterinary department needs to monitor the situation on the mountain as the livestock was at risk of getting wiped out.

## **2.2 Crop production**

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

- There were no crops in the farms. Crop failure was recorded even in the high potential areas of the district, which are not expecting any harvest.
- Farmers in Laikipia East were preparing their land for short rains expected in November.

#### **2.2.2 Harvests**

No harvest was expected in the entire district.

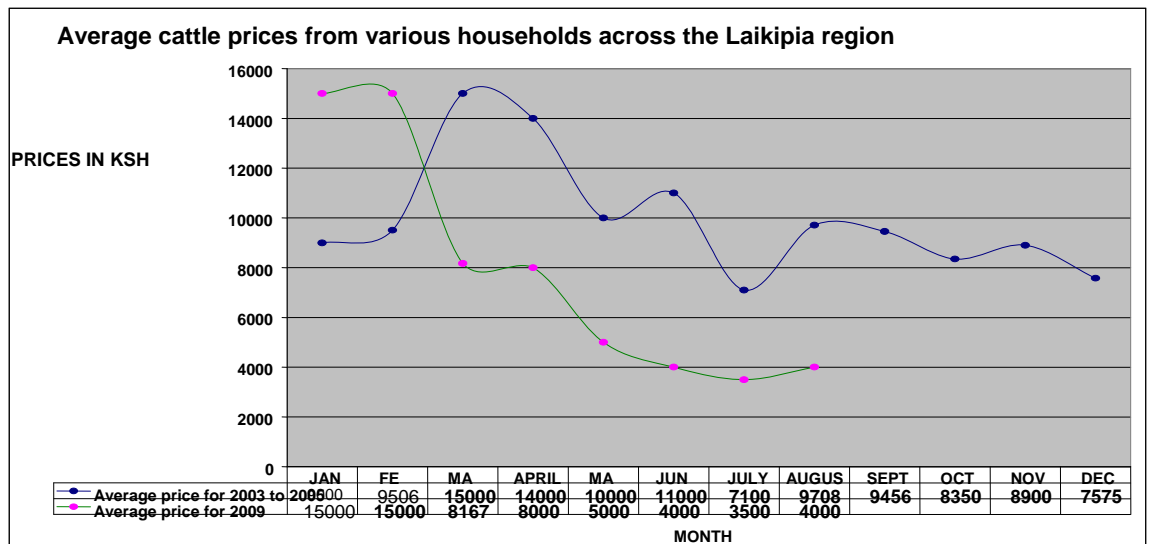
## **2.3 Implications on food security**

- Maize became scarce in the entire district, with millers hiking prices.
- In case of good short rains, the next expected harvest is in March 2010 in Laikipia East. However, Laikipia West has only one planting season and thus they only plant in March and harvest in November.

### 3.0 Access to food

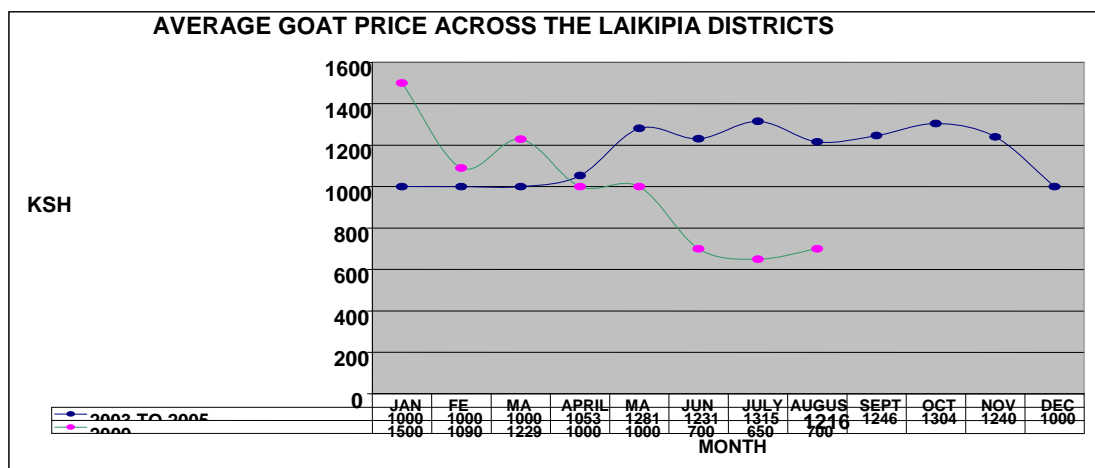
#### 3.1 Livestock marketing

##### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



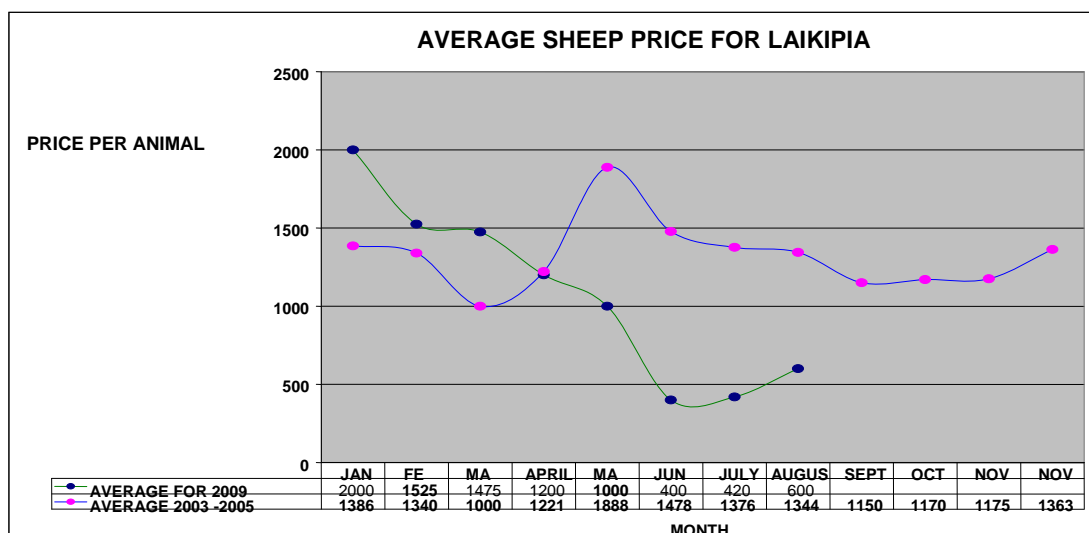
- Cattle prices were still very low owing to the poor livestock body condition. The average price during the month was
- The total number of cattle being sold was low due to the fact that majority of the cattle were very weak. The middle men buying cattle were exploiting the farmers as they bought animals for as low as Ksh1,000 and transporting them to Nairobi.

##### 3.1.2 Goat prices



- The average price of goats rose to Ksh 700 from Ksh 650 in July. They are the only animals that remained at home as they are browsers and thus the improved prices.
- Supply was more than the demand for the goats as the pastoralists were not able to sell their livestock at good prices.

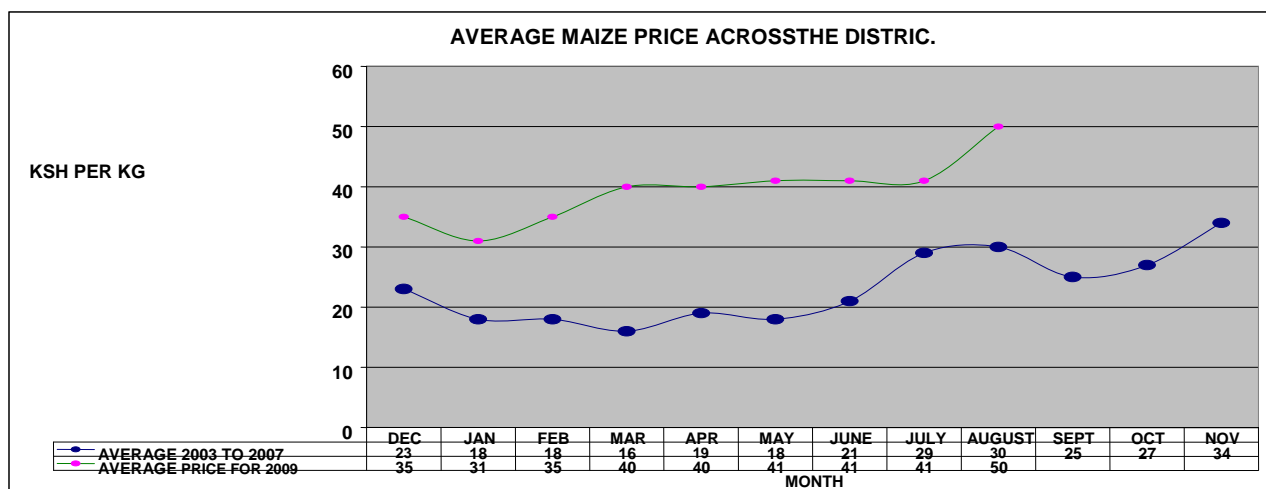
### 3.1.3 Sheep prices



- Just like cattle, the sheep were weak and they were not contributing to the food security of households.
- The average sheep price during the month was Ksh600, up from Ksh420 in July. Sheep mortality rate improved since they can cope with the cold mountain climate but this also drove them far from the markets, thus supply was low.

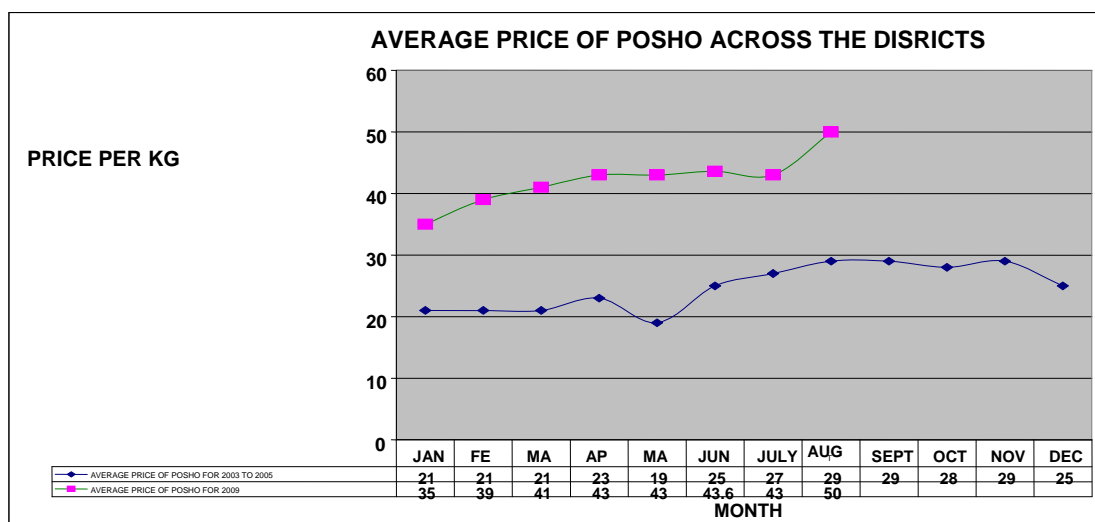
## 3.2 Food prices

### 3.2.1 Maize prices



- Maize is the staple food in the district and thus the demand is usually very high. The maize was mainly imported from Busia and Mombasa and thus the price escalated.
- The average price was Ksh 50 per kilo, which was too high. Majority of the people are low income earners and they were now forced to buy food at the higher price.

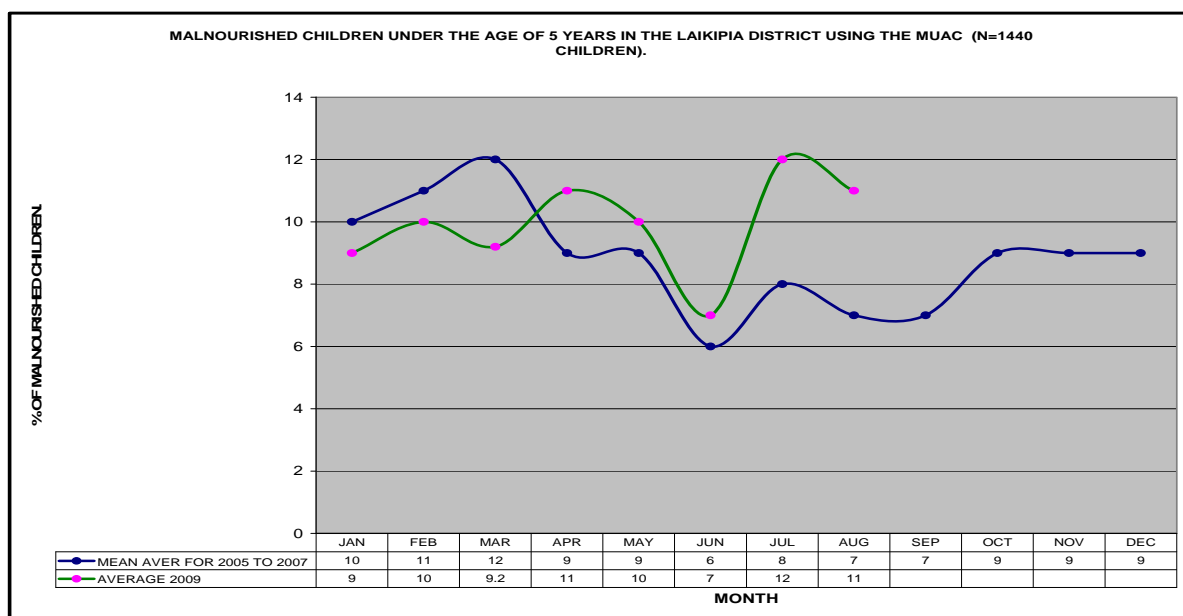
### 3.2.2 Posho prices



- The price of posho worsened due to scarcity. The average price was ksh 50 per kilo, which was too high compared to the Ksh29 long term mean.

## 4.0 Human welfare indicator indicators (Utilisation of food)

### 4.1 Nutrition status



- There was a slight improvement of the nutrition status of children below five years, with the percentage of those rated at risk of malnutrition dropping to 11 % from 12% in July. This was due to the fact that the most malnourished children were given food stuffs.
- The situation might improve following the opening of schools and the school feeding programme might improve the nutrition status for children above three years.
- The number of needy cases keeps on increasing and thus need to review the relief register is required. One death was reported in Ngare Nyiro in Laikipia East. There was a major scarcity of food and the little available was too expensive.

#### 4.2 Health

- Cases of cold related disease increased at the health centres.

#### 5.0 Current interventions

##### 5.1 Food aid

- EMOP was ongoing, though it requires to be increased following the increase of the needy cases.

##### 5.2 Coping strategies

- Charcoal burning
- Pastoralists moved to Mt Kenya in search of pasture.

#### 6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- There is major shortage of food at the household level due to high prices and scarcity. The purchasing power of the households was affected due to the crop failure and collapse of the livestock sector and thus they were not able to trade

for food. The Government should be more vigilant in ensuring that the needy families are closely monitored.

- The KWS to ensure that wildlife is controlled and directed to Mt Kenya, where they can survive otherwise they might also get wiped as most of their normal routes have been closed.
- Need to speed up de-silting activities as most of the dams and pans are dry.
- Veterinary department to closely monitor the situation of livestock on the Mt Kenya as they are dying in large numbers.