



**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**

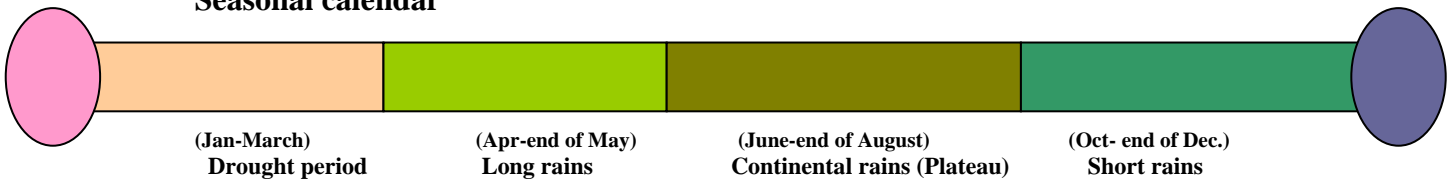
**Samburu District**

**Warning Stages**



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
<b>Pastoral-all Species</b>	Emergency	No change
<b>Agro pastoral</b>	Emergency	No change
<b>District</b>	Emergency	No change

**Seasonal calendar**



### **Situation overview**

- On average the district received 1.7 mm of rainfall compared to 2.3 mm received in July. The amount was 96.6 per cent below the long-term mean average of 47.2 mm. Prevailing hot and dry weather conditions aggravated severity of drought impact on many households across the district.
- Water sources usually utilized this season dried up due to enhanced evaporation rates, leading to increased distances to water points by households and livestock.
- Livestock body conditions generally ranged from fair to poor and prices remained substantially below the long term mean range.
- Milk availability remained scarce at the household level across the district.
- Malaria and upper respiratory tract infections continued to dominate the district human disease profile, but within manageable levels.
- Below normal livestock prices and hiked prices of essential food commodities eroded pastoralists' purchasing power and hence enhanced food insecurity at the household level.
- Insecurity continued to destabilise the western borders of the district, constraining access to utilization of forage resources and human settlement in the affected areas.
- The nutrition status of children below five years worsened during the month, with the percentage of those considered at risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC<135mm measurement) increasing to 37.1 from 31.4 last month.

### **Current interventions**

- Supplementary feeding programme at 9 health facilities in all divisions targeting approximately 49,991 beneficiaries.
- District-wide general relief food distribution targeting approximately 40% of the population in the lowlands and 20% in the plateau.
- Community management of acute malnutrition nutrition project by World Vision Lorroki ADP targeting 1024 beneficiaries.
- Community management of acute malnutrition targeting malnourished in Samburu North and East districts by International Medical Corps (IMC).

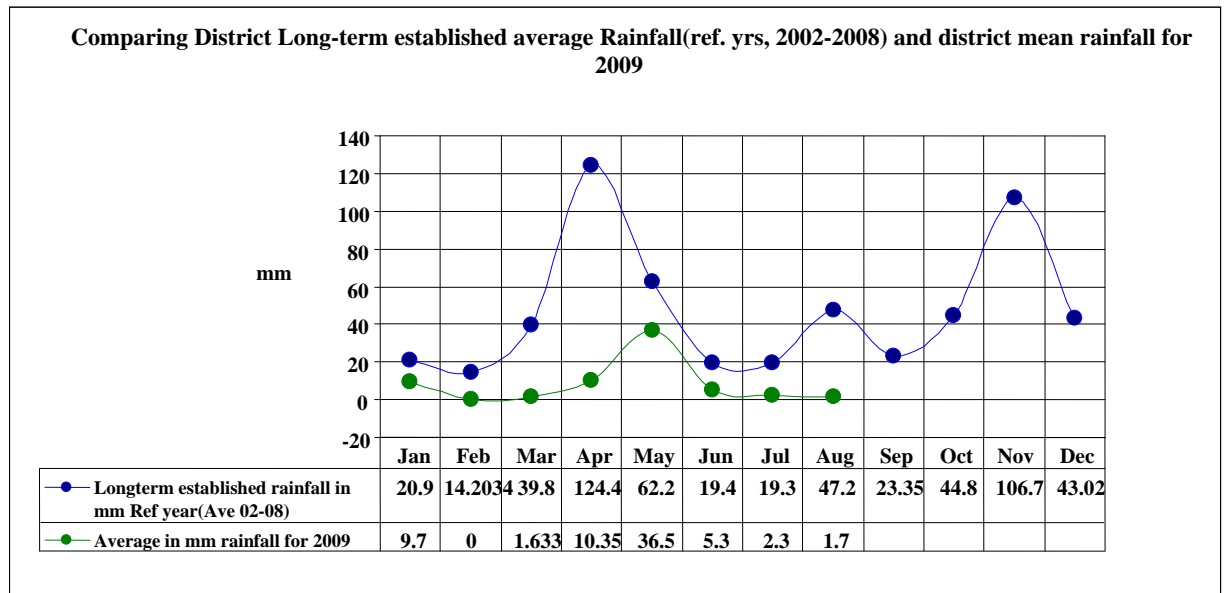
### **Recommendations to DSG and KFSM**

- General relief food distribution to target more beneficiaries (80% of the population) across the district to cushion them from the impacts of the prevailing drought.
- KFSSG and other stakeholders to play a lead role in promoting conflict resolution initiatives among warring communities through facilitation of district peace committees to reach warring communities for dialogue.
- Supplementary feeding programme to target more beneficiaries that are at risk of malnutrition in the district both under and over five years of age.

## 1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall

- Drought stress continued to bite hard across the district. Hot and dry weather conditions experienced during the month aggravated the severity of drought impact.
- The westerns parts of the plateau received light erratic showers. The temporal and spatial distribution was poor and impacted minimally on the drought stress.
- On average the rainfall amount received was 1.7 mm from last month's 2.3 mm. The amount was below the long-term established mean by 96.6 per cent.
- The long term established threshold normally received during this period of the year is 47.2 mm.



Source: District Agriculture/ALRMP II weather station

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Forage resources, particularly pasture, diminished even at dry season grazing zones. Prevailing weather conditions coupled with livestock concentrations in these areas were factors behind the above trend. Insecurity remained a constraint in access and utilization forage resources in the western borders of the district.
- Forage resources were far below average compared to normal times during this period of the year.

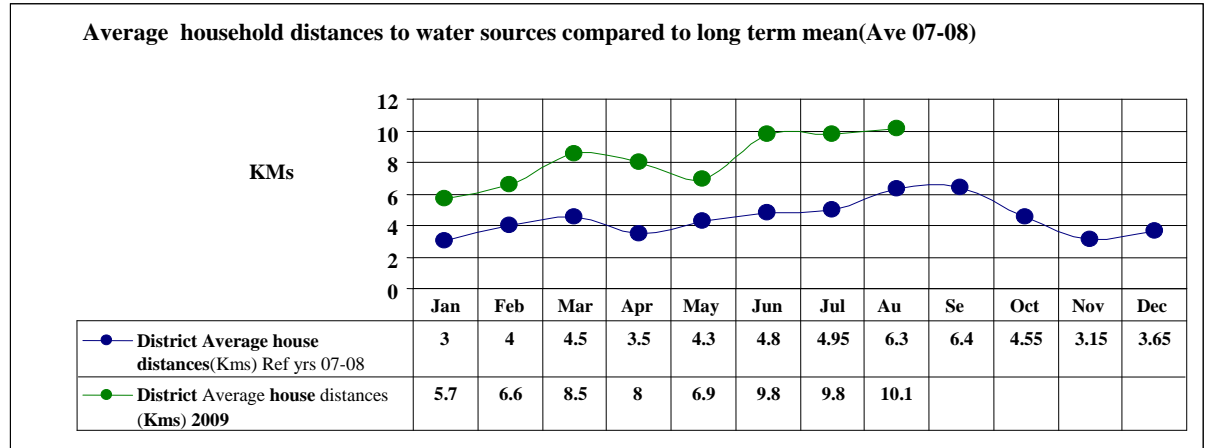
### 1.3 Water sources and availability

#### 1.3.1 Use of water sources

- The main sources of water for livestock and households during the course of the month remained the same as last month and included traditional river wells; natural rivers, boreholes and pans/dams. Existing water sources dried up due to enhanced rates of evaporation leading to increased distances to water points by households and livestock.
- Acute water shortage hit various communities across the district and it remained

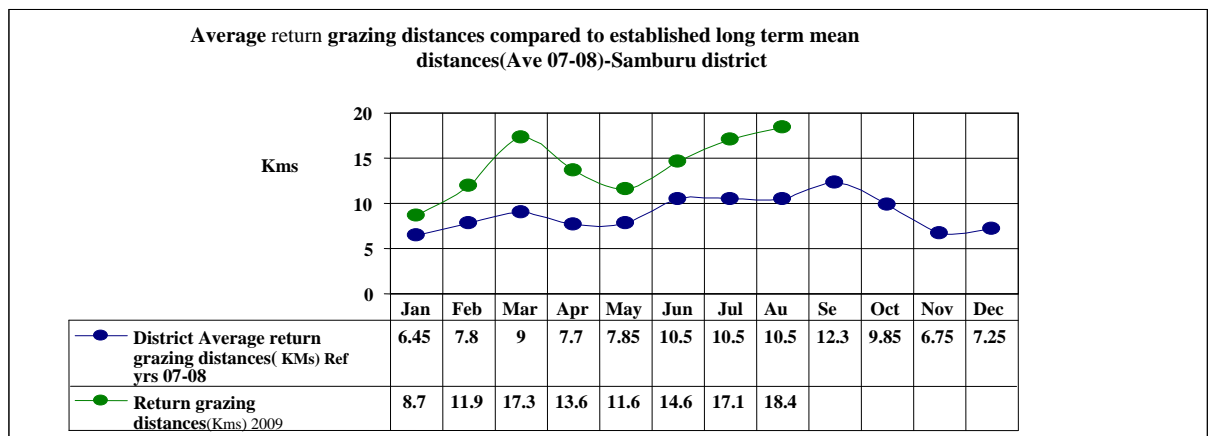
pronounced in parts of Wamba and Waso, with 11 communities hit by the shortage.

### 1.3.2 Distance to water sources



Number of communities (N) =29

- Average house distance to nearby water sources increased to 10.1 Km from last month's 9.8 Kms. The distance was above the long term average by 60.3 per cent.
- The increase was mainly due to drying up of main watering points due to enhanced evaporation rates. This implied that more time was spent in search of water by household members particularly women and children.
- Average return grazing distance to main sources of water also increased to 18.4 Kms from last month's 17.1 Kms. Return grazing distance was above the long term mean by 67.3 per cent. Main watering points normally utilized by livestock this season were dry and forage resources scarce, hence livestock trek long distances in search of water and pasture.



Number of communities (N) =29

## **1.4 Emerging issues**

### **1.4.1 Insecurity/ conflict**

- Tension remained high in Samburu North district as livestock from the two warring communities' approached the insecure dry season grazing fields and raids were reported in Kawop and parkati locations. In Samburu Central district, bandits from Baringo East district terrorised residents along the western border. Livestock were stolen and three people killed during the course of the reporting month.

### **1.4.2 Migration**

#### **a) Livestock Migration**

- Livestock from various regions within and without the district remained in dry season grazing zones of the upper parts of the plateau (Kirisia/Lorroki divisions), and western parts of Samburu North district (Baragoi, and Nyiro divisions).

#### **b) Human Migration/Displacement**

- Many families remained displaced in parts of Samburu North district and tension heightened amongst warring communities following cattle rustling incidences at Kawop areas. Households in the western parts of the Agro pastoral livelihood zone too remained displaced and are concentrated in cluster villages in Lolmolog, Angata Rongai, Logorate and Longewan sub-locations.

## **1.5 Implications on food security**

- The extended precipitation deficiency amplified severity of drought effects and impacted gravely on household food security status.
- Insecurity continued to undermine efforts to attain food security in areas affected within the district.

## **2.0 Rural economy indicators**

### **2.1 Livestock production**

#### **2.1.1 Livestock body conditions**

- Cattle and sheep body conditions remained poor across the district. Goats' body conditions range from fair to poor. Cattle and sheep succumbed to starvation and massive deaths were reported across the district.
- Long trekking distances to watering points and grazing areas, susceptibility to diseases such as FMD and the poor quality/ diminished forage resources for the last six months were factors that contributed to poor cattle and sheep body conditions and deaths. Compared to a normal year livestock body conditions remained far below normal across the district.

#### **2.1.2 Livestock diseases**

- The major livestock diseases reported were FMD, ECF, and Anaplasmosis in cattle, sheep pox, diarrhoea, and enterotoxaemia in sheep, goat pox, PPR and diarrhoea in goats. FMD outbreak was reported in various areas of the larger Samburu district as from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009-these areas are Ngilai and Marti in Baragoi division, Bukoi and Barsaloi in Kirisia divisions. The affected cattle

population was approximately 50,000 while the cattle population at risk of disease infection in the district was 200,000. Reported cases subsided compared to the previous months.

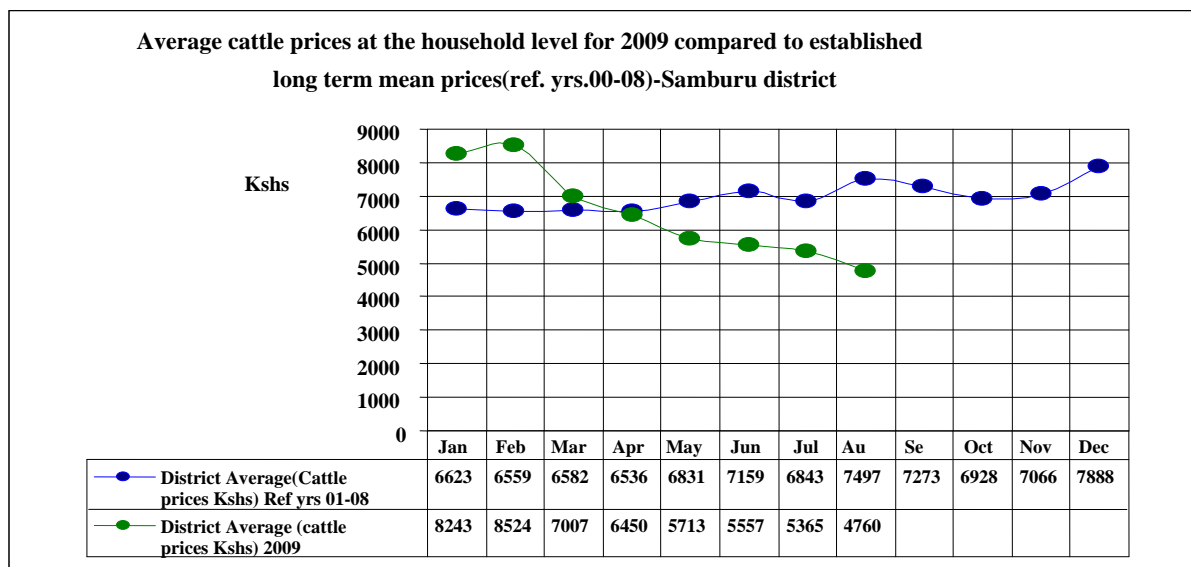
## 2.2 Implications on food security

Poor livestock body condition was detrimental to the pastoralists' economy and impacted negatively on their food security.

## 3.0 Access to food

### 3.1 Livestock marketing

#### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



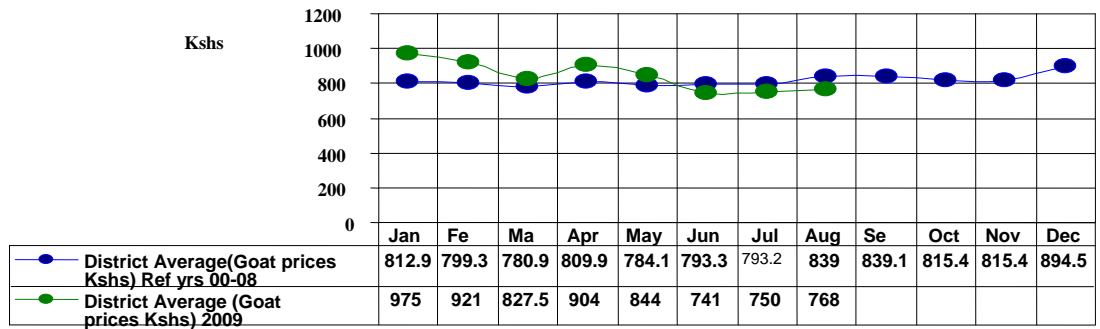
Number of households (N) =351

- Average cattle prices fell to Ksh4,760 from Ksh5,365 in July. The price was below normal by 36.5 %. Below normal average cattle price was attributable to poor cattle body conditions and quarantine imposed by veterinary department to curb FMD spread.

#### 3.1.2 Goats prices

- Average goat price rose slightly to Ksh780 from last month Ksh750. However, goat prices remained below the long-term average by 8.5 per cent. Fair goat body condition was a factor behind the upward price trend.

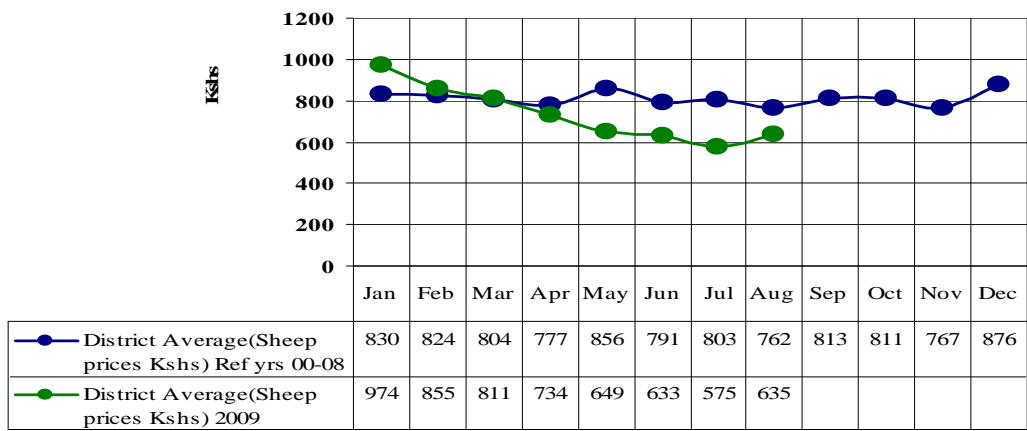
Average goat prices at household level for 2009, compared to long term established mean(Ave 00-08)-Samburu district



Number of households (N) =351

### 3.1.3 Sheep prices

Average sheep price at household level for 2009 compared to long term established mean(Ave 00-08)-Samburu district



Number of households (N) =351

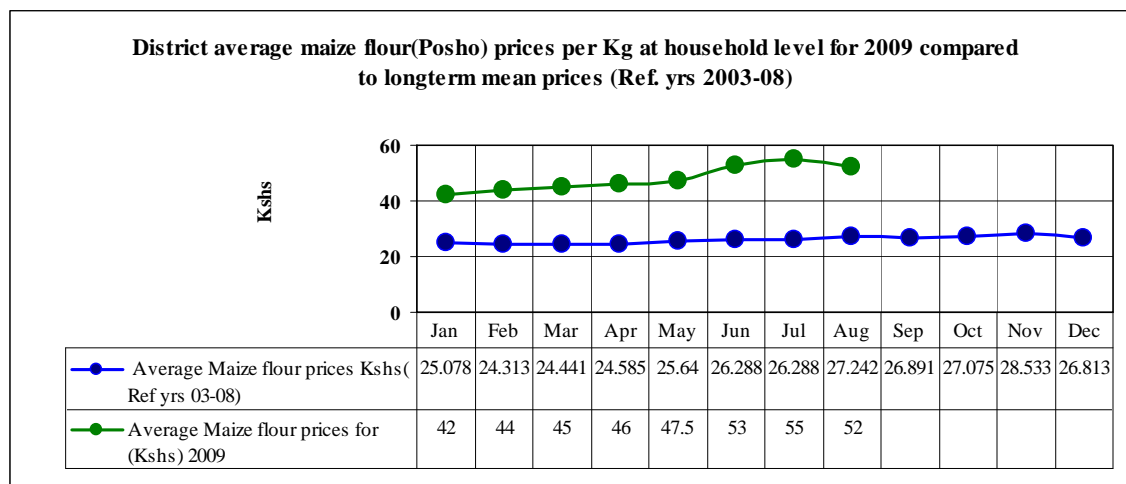
- Average sheep price rose to Ksh668 from Ksh575 in July.
- However, the price was below the long term average by 16.7 per cent.
- Poor sheep body condition was a key factor that contributed to below normal price trend.

### 3.2 Milk consumption

- Milk availability at the household level remained scarce as drought stress bites hard across the district. This was attributable to poor livestock body conditions and a record low birth rates.

### 3.3 Food prices

#### 3.3.1 Posh (maize flour) prices



**Number of communities (N) =29**

- Maize flour prices on average fell to Ksh52 per kilogram of locally milled maize from Ksh55 in July. Compared to the long term mean, Posho prices were above normal by 90.9 per cent. The district remained an importer of maize and increased supply led to a slight price drop.
- Added transport costs also contributed to high posho prices in many lowland areas compared to the plateau.

### 3.4 Income

#### 3.4.1 Livestock income

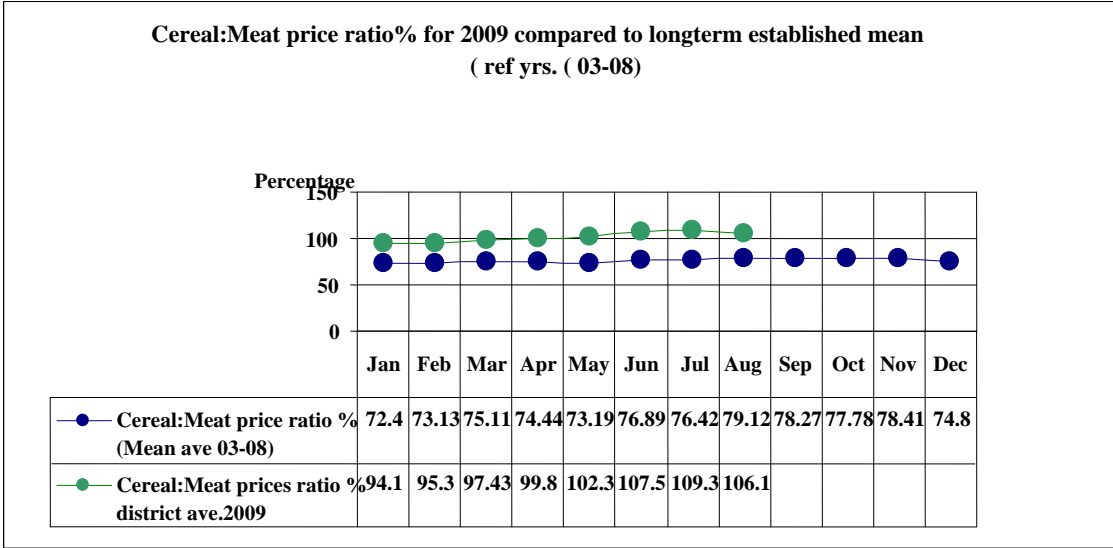
- Sale of livestock remained the major source of income for many households across all the livelihood zones.

#### 3.4.2 Other income

- Casual labour, sale of charcoal, petty trade, sale of wood products, remittances and formal employment were the other income sources for many households within the district.

### 3.5 Cereal/ meat price ratio (%)

- Pastoralists' households required 0.1061 kilogram of meat in exchange of a kilo of cereals. The exchange rate remained exorbitant as the established long-term mean average is 0.791 kg of meat against a Kilogram of cereals.
- Pastoralists' purchasing power slightly improved to 106.1 per cent from 109.3 per cent in July and was below the long-term mean by 34.1 per cent. This was pegged to below normal livestock prices coupled with highly priced cereals, particularly maize.



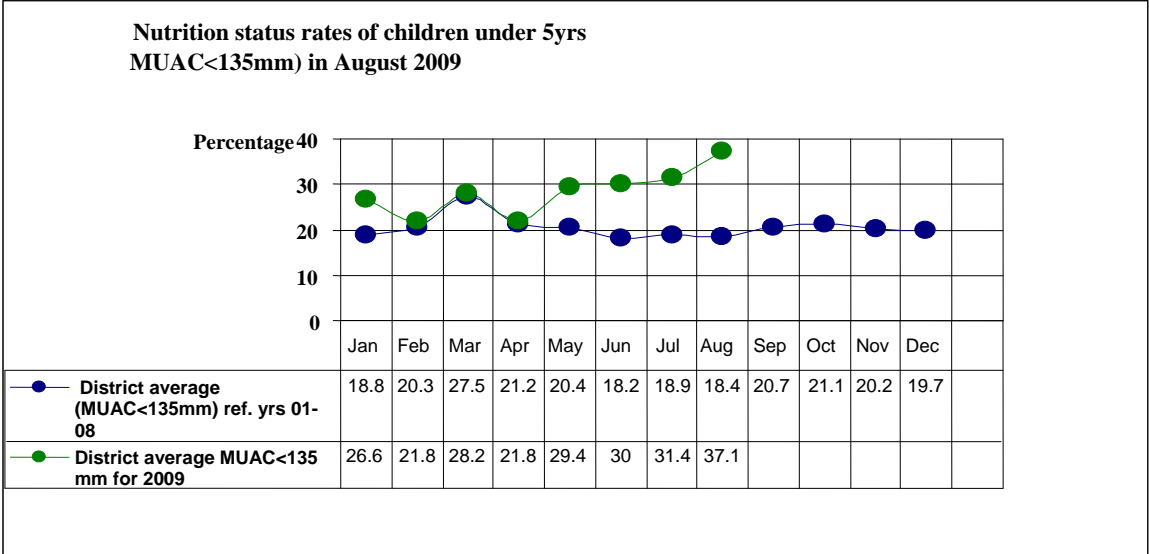
Number of households (N) = 351

**3.6 Implications on food security**

- Below normal livestock prices compounded by highly priced essential household food commodities. This adversely eroded pastoralists’ purchasing power and impacted severely on food security at the household level.

**4.0 Human welfare indicators (utilisation of food)**

**4.1 Nutrition status**



Number of children (N) =1552 from 351 households

- The nutrition status of children below five years worsened during the month, with the percentage of those considered at risk of malnutrition (based on MUAC<135mm measurement) increasing to 37.1 from 31.4 last month.
- Nachola, Kawop, West Gate, South Horr and Tuum sentinel sites portrayed

alarming trends with the percentage of those at risk increasing to 78.7, 76.3, 67.5, 52.8, and 49.6 respectively. Apparently, the alarming trends were due to unavailability of adequate and nutritionally balanced food at the households.

#### **4.2 Human health**

- Malaria, upper respiratory tract infections and diarrhoea were the major human ailments reported in various parts of the district but within manageable levels. The ailments were countered at the household level through medical assistance sought from public health centres/ dispensaries, private clinics and use of local herbs/ concoctions.

#### **5.0 Current interventions**

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

- District-wide livestock disease surveillance.
- Quarantine imposed to curb spread of FMD.

##### **5.2 Food-aid interventions**

- Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) in 9 health facilities in all divisions targeting approximately 49,991 beneficiaries.
- District-wide general relief food distribution targeting 20% of the population in the plateau and 40% of the population in the lowlands.
- Community Management of acute malnutrition nutrition project by World Vision Lorroki ADP, targeting 1,024 beneficiaries.
- Community management of acute malnutrition targeting malnourished children in Samburu North and East districts by International Medical Corps (IMC).

##### **5.3 Coping strategies**

- The household coping mechanisms worsened compared to the previous months.
- Sentinel sites in Kawop and West Gate portrayed abnormal trends of 5.1, and 4.4 respectively against a coping strategy index (0 to 10), depicting the devastating impacts of the current drought situation to many households.

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

- Re-targeting of beneficiaries for general relief food aid to include more beneficiaries (approximately 80% of the district population) who are in dire need of food, this will cushion them from the impacts of the currently experienced drought and famine situation.
- Supplementary feeding programme to target more beneficiaries at risk of

malnutrition in the district under and over five years of age.

- KFSSG and other stakeholders to play a lead role in promoting conflict resolution initiatives among warring communities through facilitation of district peace committees. (*Action: DSC, District Peace committees, Pastoral associations, KFSSG and Communities*).
- Massive vaccination campaigns against FMD should be rolled out immediately in areas that cattle have not contracted the disease to contain it from engulfing the whole district during this drought period.