

Situation overview

- Short rains season sufficiently recharged equally in third week of the month where highland areas registered an average of 46 mm in four days and lowlands at 28 mm in three days. All areas experienced floods, resulting in impassable roads in greater Marsabit district. The quality and quantity of forage were adequately recharged in all ecological zones.
- Water sources were adequately recharged in all parts of the greater Marsabit district and no water stress was reported.
- Forage availability was reported in most parts of the district while some parts of lowland areas including Loiyangalani division in Marsabit north district had the least though it's expected to fairly recharge with materializing
- Body conditions of all livestock species improved though slightly varied as a result of short rains distribution.
- Cattle price averages decreased compared to long term averages of the years 2000 to 2008. This decrease can be linked to thin body condition besides lack of market.
- There was no EMOP relief allocation made for both November and December and as a result there were food shortages especially among fisher folk and pastoralist communities. Prices increased by 23.82 percent. No GoK relief food was distributed.
- Malaria and diarrhea cases were reported among children and few adults, which is normal for this time of the year.
- The nutrition status of children below five years was stable during the month but still lower than the long term mean. The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition was 25.7 compared to 25.9 last month.
- Cases of banditry and livestock raids were reported among pastoralists' communities of North Horr and Loiyangalani division where hundreds of shoats were stolen and one person injured around Moite sub location of Loiyangalani location. However, security situation has fairly improved and it's expected to improve further with notification of disarmament.
- Low and unstable livestock prices coupled with marginal increase of food commodities compared to this time of long term averages, impacted negatively on the pastoralist and fishermen economy and seriously threatened household food security in greater Marsabit district.

Ongoing interventions

- Completion of Cotu Gardi water dam and construction of Badasa water dam is ongoing.
- Provision for fuel and lubricants Marsabit central district.-Ministry of Northern Kenya, MOW, ALRMPII.
- A ten days training workshop was conducted to regional Kenya Red Cross staff for inter marry GoK/ALRMP and community Early Warning System- ICRC/KRCS/ALRMPII.
- Provision for veterinary services includes, vaccinating five thousand five hundred and sixty four cattle (CBPP), eleven thousand shoat's vaccination as only thirteen thousand eight hundred and fifty dozes are instock.- Veterinary services.
- Purchase of fishing gears and vessels for Gura Pau community in Loiyangalani- IFAD.
- Purchase of fishing gears for Loiyangalani community- ALRMPII.

- Disarmament in the greater Marsabit district was locally organised where lesser than one hundred and forty illegal arms were surrendered.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Close monitoring in all food sectors in the coming month with a view of mitigating adverse effects on household food access in most parts of the greater Marsabit district.
- Short rains Assessment should be conducted by KFSSG Team to pave way forward for district intervention measure – KSFSSG/ALRMPII.
- Supply of therapeutic relief (CSB) and scale up supplementary (therapeutic) feeding with wet feeding centres from the current 3,440 beneficiaries (< 5 years children, lactating, pregnant mothers and the aged in 22 centres to 8,400 including HIV patients in the community dispensaries and the district health facilities.
- GoK relief food should be consistent and increased to subsidise the emergency food insecurity in greater Marsabit district targeting from five to at least 20 percent, especially at Marsabit north and south districts where food shortages are still rampant.
- Livestock sector should initiate de-worming and vaccination campaigns with prevailing wet season and incoming livestock from cross border i.e. Ethiopian country, Samburu district and Arbijaan district.
- Fostering of peace should be encouraged within and without district borders. Indeed, disarmament of illegal guns should be encouraged by the concerned authority to curb the declining trend of raids and tribal clashes in the greater district.
- Improve sanitation condition especially to cholera prone areas and as an intervention measure during such wet season.
- Disarmament should be encouraged to curb the declining raids and tribal clashes.
- Provision of seeds and seedling should be availed the soonest as possible to farmers to utilize the currently prevailing short rains. - MOA, ALRMP and Forest department.
- Farm input measures should be put in place to control army worms and other seasonal pest diseases – MOA/ALRMPII.
- Anti-cholera and other dysenteries treatments should be availed to Loiyangalani and Illeret locations which are currently affected by chigelea and cholera infections.

1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

1.1 Rainfall

- Short rains season continued in third week of the month where highland areas registered an average of 46 mm in four days and lowlands at 28 mm in three days. All areas experienced floods, resulting in impassable roads in greater Marsabit district. Indeed, above normal rainfall amounts were recorded in all parts of the district attributed to predicted El Nino.
- Weather situation remained cloudy and windless days especially on the fourth week of the month in all ecological zones of the greater district. Moreover, cool and humid weather conditions prevailed in fourth week of the month thus alerting for malaria and other cool weather infections in near future. However, short rain season is expected to continue not beyond first week of January 2010.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Availability of forage and pastures was varied as high areas had lush pastures while lowland parts had minimal but regenerating forage as a result of the delayed rains.
- Forage availability and accessibility is expected to sustain livestock for next four months in most parts of the district while lowland areas is expected to last in next three months.

1.3 Water sources and availability

1.3.1 Use of water sources

- The main sources of water for both livestock and domestic use were sufficiently recharged toward the end of the month and it's expected to sustain livestock and domestic use for the next three to four months. The main water sources for both domestic and livestock use were traditional wells, pans, springs, shallow wells and other short live sources.
- Comparatively, no significant water-borne related diseases was noted apart from normal diarrhea cases in Kalacha sample area in Marsabit north district.

1.3.2 Distances to water sources

- Average distances to domestic water use sources significantly decreased from an average of 3 to 4 kms while for livestock use also decreased from 12kms to 6kms. This indicates a positive impact toward the materializing short rains compared to previous drastic months.
- During the month under review, there were no emergent water shortages reported in any part of greater Marsabit district.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Insecurity/ Conflict

Security situation improved in most parts of the greater district, though a raid of ten camels was reported at Central division of Marsabit central district which were not recovered. Raids are expected in far flung areas within and outside administrative boundaries, which is a normal phenomenal of the season.

1.4.2 Migration

a) Livestock migration

- Livestock migration was on increasing trend as a result of the short rains which was equally received in all ecological zones of the district. Indeed, livestock migration was reported from high elevated areas back to their homesteads.
- In the pastoral livelihood of North Horr division, livestock was concentrated in the northern part around Dukana, Sababre and in southern Ethiopian border and Koobi Fora while those from Maikona division were around Hurri hills and towards Arbijaan in Wajir west district.
- Livestock from Agro/pastoral livelihood of Marsabit central and Gadamoji divisions are still at Sololo of Moyale district and others at Arbijaan in Wajir west district.

b) Human migration/ displacement

Human displacement remained minimal in most areas. Few cases of migration from grazing areas to urban settlement in search of labor were reported.

1.5 Implications on food security

Depleted milk availability at household level compounded food insecurity among pastoral and fisher folk livelihoods. These food shortages are expected to continue further to July, 2010.

2.0 Rural economy indicators

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock health among all species was at recovering stage, particularly for cattle and shoats while it was good for camels. Generally, the emaciated livestock body condition, especially in lowland areas resulted to about six percent mortalities on the onset of the prevailing season.
- Distances to pastures and water decreased to 1 - 2kms on hilly parts while in lowland it reduced slightly to between 4 to 7 kms.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

- Contagious Caprine Pleural –pneumonia (CCPP) and worm infestation become endemic among shoats and few cases of Contagious Bovine Pleuro Pneumonia (CBPP) for cattle species were reported in Kalacha sample area of Marsabit north district where the veterinary has curbed the situation.
- Generally, there were no significant livestock diseases reported in most parts of the district thus reflect for positive indication.
- Comparatively, livestock diseases such as enterotoxaemia, worms, bloat and PPR among shoat's and bloat, CBPP, RVF, Triponosmiasis and FMD diseases among cattle and camel species are expected as seasonal infections.

2.2 Implications on food security

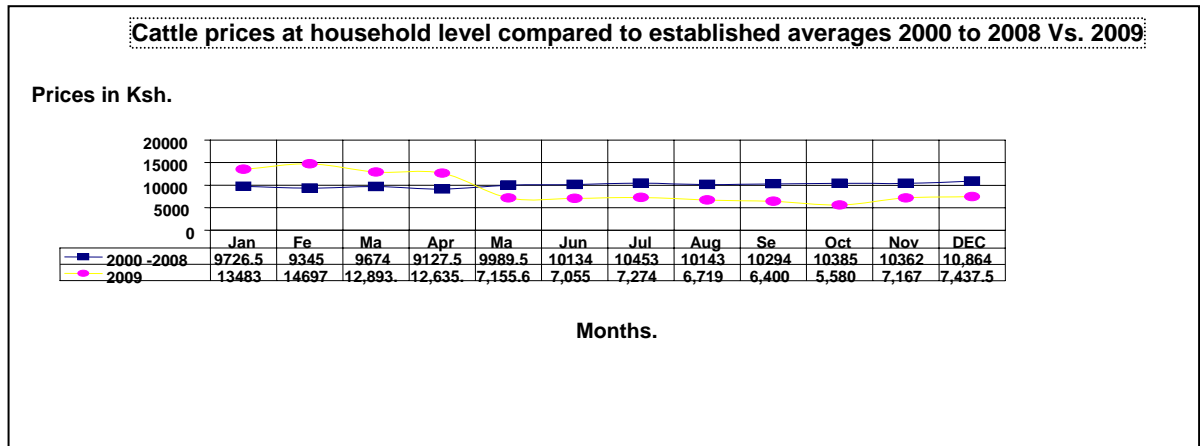
- Food security remained at alert and alarm stages in all three main stay of greater Marsabit district.

- Collapsed livestock prices as a result of low and stable rates, negatively affected food security situation at household level especially among pastoralist and fisher folk communities. Despite this, pastoralist and fisher folk communities were at alarm and emergency/alarm stages and Agro/Pastoral livelihood remained at Alarm stage of the drought cycles.

3.0 Access to food

3.1 Livestock marketing

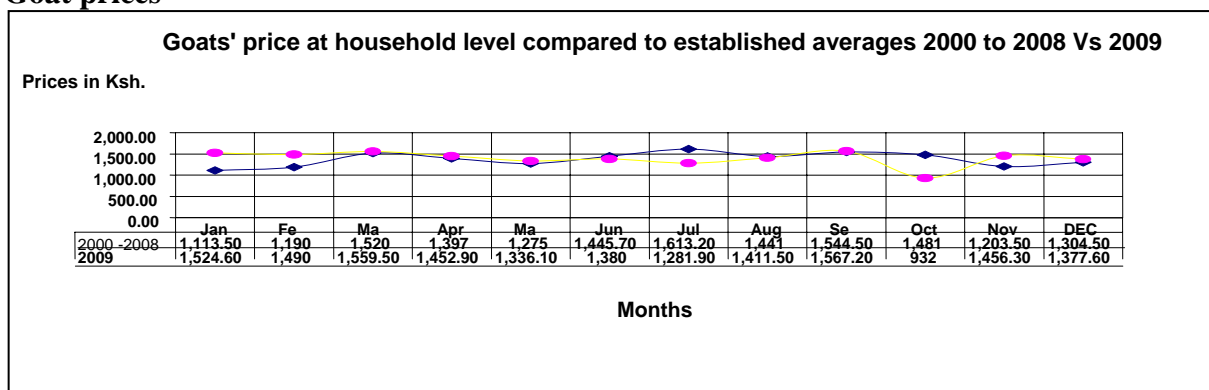
3.1.1 Cattle prices



Ref: N =9 (No. of the sold cattle) by 13 Sentinels x 30 Households

- Average cattle prices currently decreased by thirty one point five three percent compared to this time of the year as a result of thin body condition.
- However, cattle prices are expected to increase with recovering body condition after the materializing short rains.
- Higher price rates was recorded in Laisamis division (pastoral livelihood) of Marsabit south district at Ksh. 8,000.00 and Central and Gadhamoji divisions (Agro/pastoral livelihood) being the second at 6,875.00 while other divisions sold none.

3.1.2 Goat prices

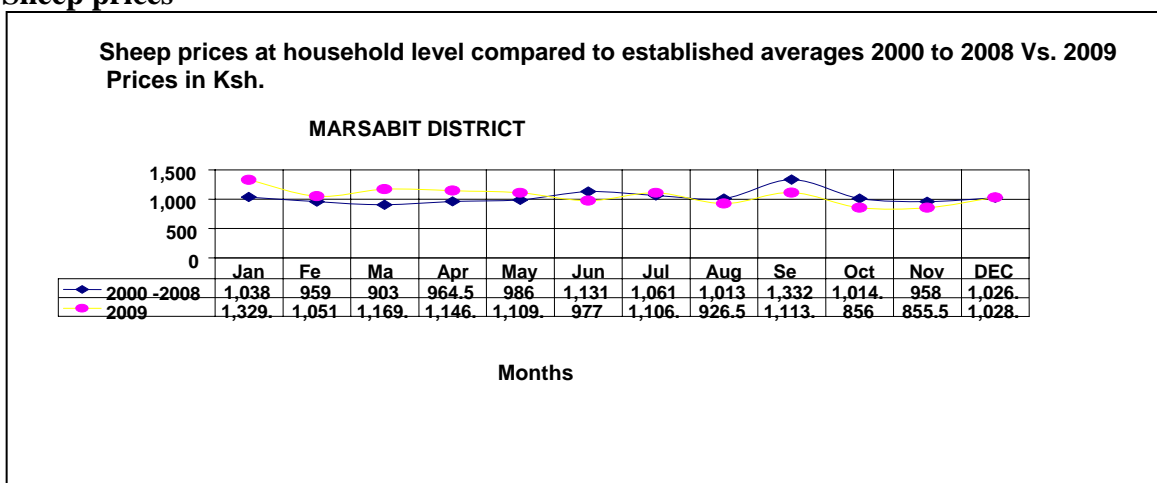


Ref: N =63 (No. of sold goats') by 13 Sentinels x 30 Households

- Goat prices declined slightly to Ksh1,377 from Ksh1,456 in November. However, prices are expected to increase in near future due to recovering body conditions.

- Sales were minimal at 75 heads compared to the long term mean of 182.
- Higher prices were recorded in central and Gadhamoji divisions (Agro pastoralist Lv.) of Marsabit central district at Ksh2,027.30, seconded by Maikona division of Marsabit north district at Ksh 1,750 and Loiyangalani of Marsabit south district (fisher folk) had the least Ksh833. These differences could be linked to limited access to markets in many lowland areas and variation in body condition.

3.1.3 Sheep prices



Ref: N =55 (No. of Sheep sold) x 13 Sentinels each by 30 Households

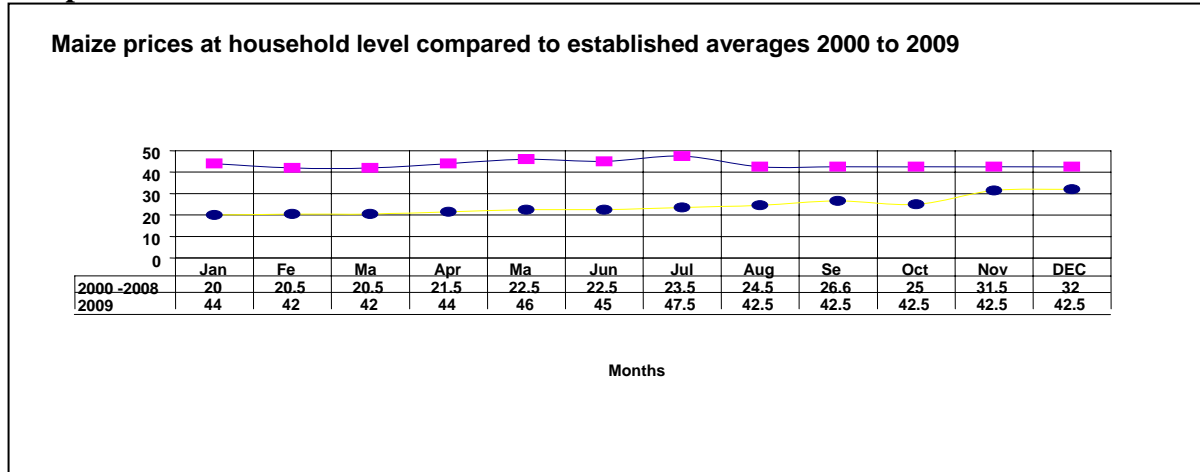
- Sheep prices remained stable compared to established long term averages. However, sheep prices increased compared to previous two months as a result of improving body condition and it's expected to be in increasing trend. The average price was Ksh 1,028 compared to ksh855 in November.
- Higher sheep prices were recorded in Laisamis division (pastoral livelihood) in Marsabit south district at Ksh1,290, followed by Maikona division in (pastoral livelihood) in Marsabit north district at Ksh1,172.70 and lowest in Loyangalani division (fisher-folk) in Marsabit south district at Ksh800. Sheep sales decreased by 20.4% compared to the long term mean.

3.2 Milk consumption

- There was no milk availability reported in either sample area though very little at for a camps among camel herders. This abnormality was attributed by the ending prolonged drought situation which has resulted to emaciated livestock body conditions.
- Depleted milk availability, especially among pastoralist households in the greater Marsabit district, aggravated food shortages at household level.

P3.3 Food prices

3.3.1 Maize prices



Ref: N =356 Households purchasing out of 13 sentinel each by 30 households.

- Maize prices were stable during the month at Ksh42.5 per kilo. However, the price was 28.83% percent higher compared to this time of the years 2000 to 2008. Indeed, maize prices were highly stable due to poor rainfall performance in the previous two to three seasons. These reflect the collapsing meat ratio and hence threaten purchasing power of pastoral and fisher folk livelihoods and temporarily for Agro/pastoralist livelihood.
- Similarly, higher maize prices at district averages were recorded in Loiyangalani division of fisher folk livelihood reporting a kilo sold at Ksh fifty, Laisamis division of pastoral (Marsabit south) at forty five and agro/pastoral livelihood Mt. Marsabit in Central and Gadhamoji divisions of Marsabit central district reporting the least at 32.50.
- Maize prices are expected to remain high in the next two to three months. Farm preparation was minimally exercised by Agro/pastoral livelihoods on Mt Marsabit as about eighty percent embracing it and seventy percent at Hurri hills or else Khat being a cash crop is mostly planted than food crops.
- Comparatively, crops harvests are expected to be harvested on Jan to early February.

3.4 Income

3.4.1 Livestock income

Livestock sales remained the leading source of income though are on downswing trend. Livestock sales numbers currently reduced by 48% compared to this time of the year. Low sales were attributed to poor body condition of livestock and collapsed market. Livestock sales are expected to increase in one month time as body conditions are recovering stage.

3.4.2 Other income

Other income sources were casual labor where seven percent of sampled households stating so, few others reporting sale of charcoal, sales of khat (miraa), formal

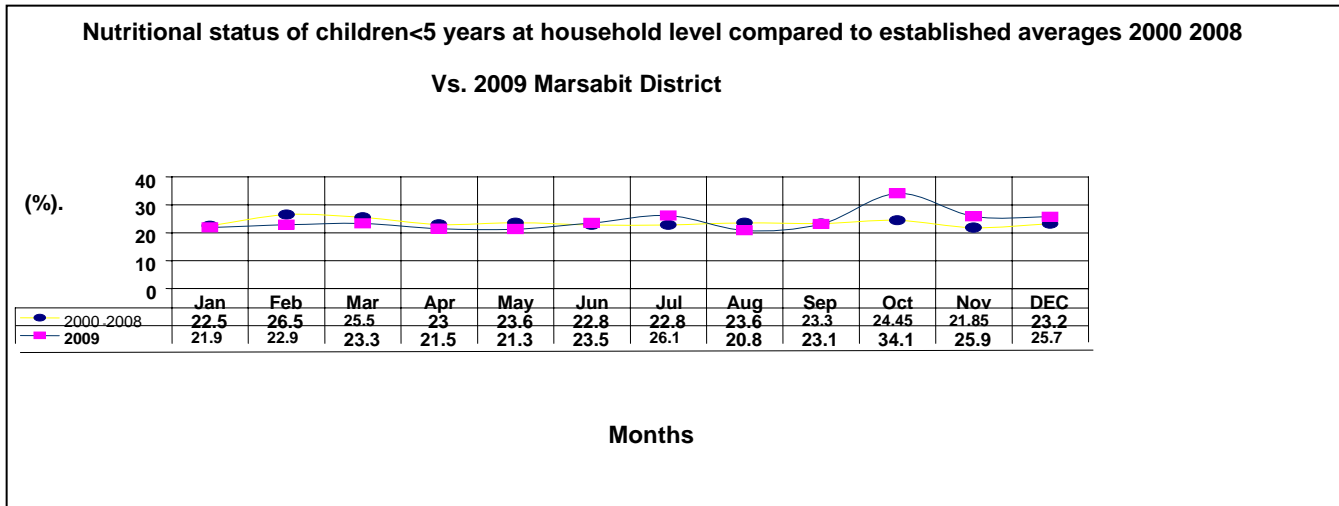
employment between ksh. 150 to 700.00 and engaging in degrading jobs that fetches between Ksh40 to 150 per day.

3.5 Implications on food security

- Despite the significant decrease in independent livestock sales as a result of poor body condition, collapsing of terminal market and inflated cereal ration against meat ratio obviously affirms food implications particularly among pastoral and fisher folk livelihoods and Agro pastoralist at household level.
- Increasing livestock movement (68%) from far flung fora camps within and without their normal seasonal concentrations are currently migrating back to their homesteads.
- Moreover, inflated farm produce prices, prolonged and frequent drought interval contrarily implicate food security situation thus increasing poverty level than were in previous three to four years.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutrition status



Ref: N=3.4 (Avg. No. of children) x 12 Sample sites x 30 Households

- The nutrition status of children below five years was stable during the month but still lower than the long term mean.
- The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition was 25.7 compared to 25.9 last month. 686 girls and 714 boys were sampled. The high rate compounded by poor feeding habits as a result of prolonged drought period in the larger district.
- Rates remained high in Loiyangalani division (fisher folk) of Marsabit south district at 44.2% followed by North Horr division with 37.0% and central and Gadhamoji divisions have the least at 13.1%.
- The rates are expected to remain high due to by prevailing drought in lowlands of larger of Marsabit district.

4.2 Human health

- During the month under review, common human diseases were diarrhea, malaria and upper respiratory infection (UTR) among children and few adults which are within

normal situation of the year. Despite the prevailing cool and humid heat which is commonly experienced in most parts of the greater Marsabit district alerts for increasing URT and other wet season infections.

- Human health condition has been implicated by lack of food, conditions that make people susceptible to diseases. Cool weather infections are expected to increase with prevailing wet season that alerts the concerned authority to take swift measures to restock the community dispensaries.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

- Completion of Cotu Gardi dam – MNK/ MOW.
- Conducted a ten days training workshop on inter marring GoK and community Early Warning Systems for Kenya Red Cross regional staff and two facilitators from ari lands resource Mgt project- KRCS/ ICRC.
- Continuation on livestock insurance research- ILRI.
- Provision of veterinary medic and services in central division of Marsabit district- Vet. Dept.
- Purchase of fishing gears and vessels to Gura Pau community- IFAD.
- Purchasing of fishing gears for fisher folk community in Loiyangalani sub location of Marsabit south district.- ALRMPII .

5.2 Food aid

Minimal GoK relief allocation was reported in some parts in greater Marsabit district targeting only between four to five percent of the population thus being uneven – GoK.

5.3 Other coping strategies

The currently applied coping strategies among households include;

- Increased number of households skipping meals, sharing of relief and purchasing food on credit across all the three main livelihoods, which is an indication of a serious inadequacy of food compared to similar period of the previous years.
- Agro /pastoral livelihood zone reported increasing sales of firewood/charcoal to urban dwellers.

6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Close monitoring of household food security situation in the coming month with a view of mitigating adverse effects caused by the prevailing drought especially at lowland areas.
- A national team (KFSSG) to conduct a short rains assessment to pave way forward for the district intervention for seasonal measures.
- Scale up Supplementary and therapeutic relief assistance in all affected areas especially to North horr and Loiyangalani divisions being at emergency trend needs wet feeding program and targeting eighty percent of the children.

- Repairs and maintenance for community boreholes should be given a first priority.
- GoK relief food should be consistent and increase the targeting to support needy households who are not targeted under EMOP and transparency should be observed.
- Promote rain water harvesting techniques.
- Provision of additional food seeds and seedlings for utilization of the prevailing short rains season.
- Provision and services of Army worms, locust, guellea surveillance and selective herbicides for weeds.
- The delayed November and December 2009 relief foods should be allocated especially on such heightened food shortages at household level.-EMOP/KRCS.
- Continuous disease surveillance should be emphasized in order to contain disease outbreaks especially PPR, CCBP, CCPP and other wet season infections to areas where livestock are currently affected or concentrated.
- Scale up supplementary and therapeutic wet and dry feeding program to intervene the currently increasing malnutrition rates.
- Intensify disease surveillance.
- Construction and equipping of health facilities and recruitment of personnel's.
- Need for posting of more medical personnel's to community dispensaries and health sectors in greater Marsabit district.
- Ministry of health should rapidly respond to outbreaks such as cholera wherever it is reported.
- Fostering of peace should be encouraged within and without district boundary.
- Cross border peace meetings should be emphasized by all stakeholders to enable free movements of livestock.
- Disarmaments from the greater Marsabit district was locally organized where lesser than one hundred and forty illegal arms were surrendered.