

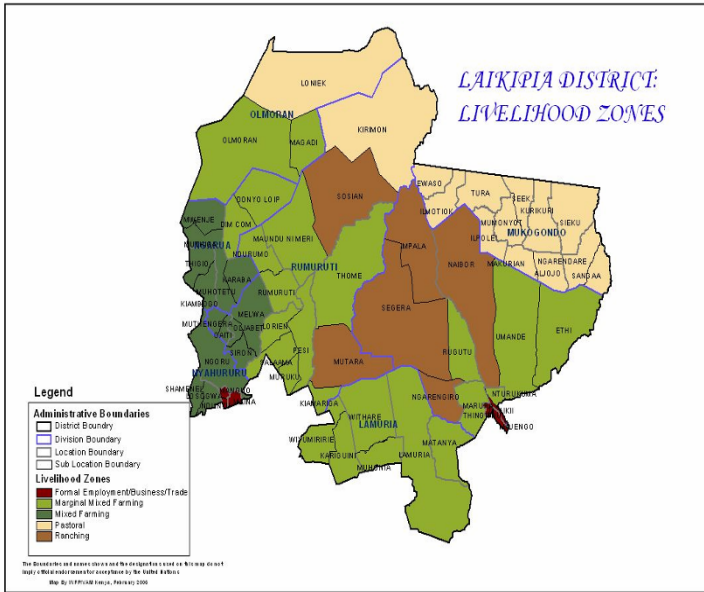


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, JULY 2009**

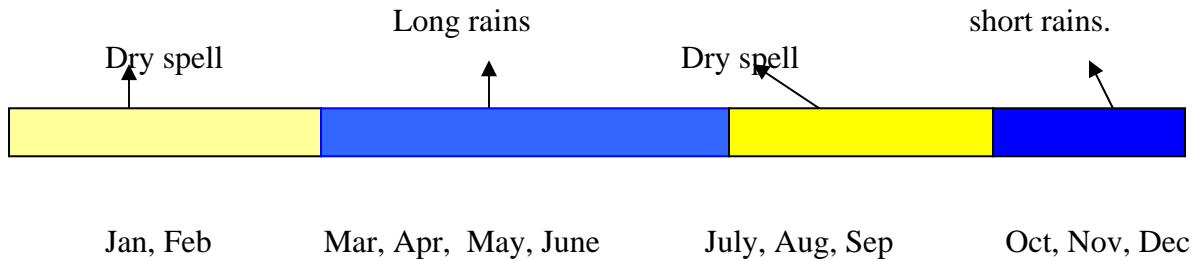
**Laikipia East, West and North Districts**

**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**

- No rainfall was recorded in the district during the month.
- Pasture was totally depleted in the pastoral areas of Mukogodo and livestock moved to Mt Kenya in search of pasture. Pasture on the mountain was also on a decline due to the influx of livestock into the area. In the marginal agriculture zones the pasture was able to sustain only the goats.
- Water shortage was a major issue that affected the farmers and pastoralists following drying up of rivers, pans and dams. The livestock that remained in the marginal agriculture zones was concentrated around the few watering points remaining.
- Distances to water sources increased for both livestock and household use.
- Livestock on the mountain faced the cold effects and was dying in big numbers from cold-related diseases and tick-borne disease. Cattle were too weak and had to be assisted to stand up. The el-Niño rains predicted might even worsen the situation of the cattle as they are too weak to withstand the rains.
- There were no crops in the farms and total crop failure was registered. The high potential areas of the district were not expecting any harvest.
- Maize, which is normally about three meters at this time in Ngarua and Nyahururu was just 100cm tall, an indication that it can only serve as animal feed.
- In Laikipia East farmers were already preparing their farms awaiting short rains that sometimes start in August. Animals in Nyahururu and Ngarua divisions were expected to have a hard time as they are used to zero grazing on the maize stalks from the harvested maize for the next one year. The available stalks might not sustain them for even three months and this is expected to also affect the commercial milk production in the district.
- The markets were very poorly stocked and the livestock markets were in their worst state, with very few livestock that were weak and very cheap prices in the markets of Mukogodo and Rumuruti divisions.
- Millers in the urban centers imported maize from Mombasa and Busia, thus the prices of maize were very high.
- The nutrition status of the children under five years declined during the month due to the drought stress, with the percentage of those rated at risk of malnutrition rising to 12% from 7 in June.

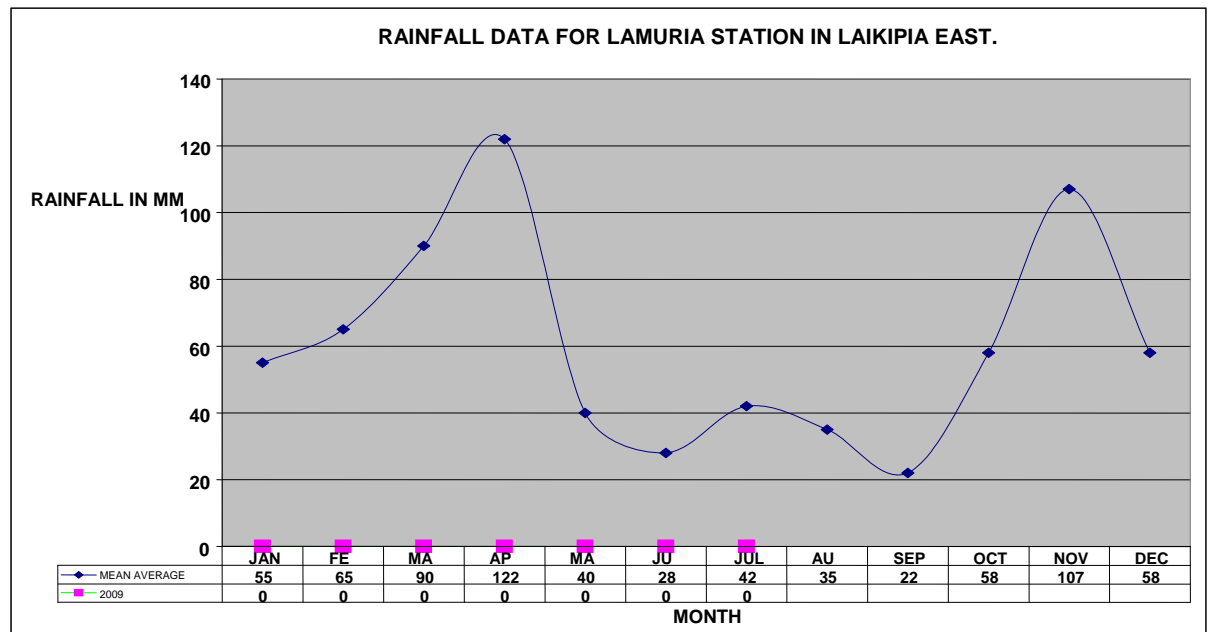
### **Recommendation to DSG and KFSM**

- Since the metrological department has warned of heavy rains then we should start advising the farmers on the right crops to plant.
- Provide the farmers with relief seeds before the rains.
- Provide medication to the livestock on the mountain as the cold related diseases are killing them in big number over 100 animals per day.
- As the drought is increasing the needy people keep on increasing and need to update the register is necessary.
- Human/wildlife conflict to be controlled as the elephants are becoming a threat at the watering points in Mukogodo.
- To continuously provide the farmers with clean water for consumption as the available water is very dirty in pools of the dried rivers.
- The contingency funds to be increased as the emergency situation is worsening.
- Mobilise more funds to the key departments as the situation is worsening.

- Laikipia district was importing maize from Busia and Mombasa and thus more food needs to be imported before the stocks from Busia get depleted.

## 1.0 Environmental indicators

### 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.*

- No rainfall was recorded in the district during the month.

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- Pasture was totally depleted in the Mukogodo pastoral areas and livestock moved to Mt Kenya for pastures.
- On Mount Kenya pasture was also getting depleted due to the number of livestock camped on the mountain.
- In the marginal agriculture zones the pasture was able to sustain only goats.
- Water shortage affected farmers and pastoralists as rivers, pans and dams dried up.
- The livestock on the mountain had difficulties accessing water as the river banks were too steep and thus they had to go a long distance to get to points of access.

## 2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

### 2.1 Livestock production

#### 2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock body condition was very poor and most animals were too weak to fetch any good money.
- Over 30% of the cattle herds were supported manually by herders in the morning, a situation that depicts weak body conditions.
- Animals in Nyahururu and Ngarua divisions are expected to have a hard time as they are used to zero graze on the maize stalks from the harvested maize for

the next one year. But the stalks this time might not sustain them for even three months. This will also affect the commercial milk production in the district as they are the main source for milk production.

- The livestock that remained on the marginal agriculture zones are concentrated in the little watering points that have remained.
- Livestock on the mountain are now facing the cold effects and they are dying in big numbers due to the cold related diseases and tick borne disease.
- Even the remaining stock of cattle is so weak that they are being pulled up in the morning.
- As the metrological department is predicting el-Niño rains this might even worsen the situation of the cattle as they are so weak to withstand the rains.

### **2.1.2 Livestock diseases**

- There was a major immunization exercise against PPR and CCP that was carried out in the district by Ministry of Veterinary with support from arid lands.
- Livestock on the mountain was dying in hundreds from cold related disease. These animals were weak and they require urgent medication.

### **1.3 Water sources and availability**

- Water scarcity was a major issue affecting the farmers and pastoralists as most of the rivers were dry. This also affected the wild animals, resulting in conflicts with humans at the available watering points in Mukogodo.
- Cases of elephants dying due to thirst were reported.
- There was a major threat of water-borne diseases in Laikipia East as the farmers took water from pools that had very little water.
- The shallow wells and springs dried up in Laikipia West as the drought was ongoing. The distance to water was increasing.
- Livestock on the mountain also had a problem accessing water as the watering points on the rivers banks were too steep and thus they had trek long distances to access water.

### **2.2 Crop production**

#### **2.2.1 Condition of various crops**

- There were no crops in the farms and total crop failure was expected even in the high potential areas of the district, which are not expecting any harvest.
- Maize, which is normally three meters high in Ngarua and Nyahururu at this time was only about 100cm tall, an indication that it will only be used as animal feed.
- In Laikipia East, farmers were already preparing their farms awaiting short rains that sometimes start in August.

#### **2.2.2 Pest and diseases**

- No pest or diseases were reported during the month under review.

#### **2.2.3 Harvests**

- There were no harvests expected in the district.

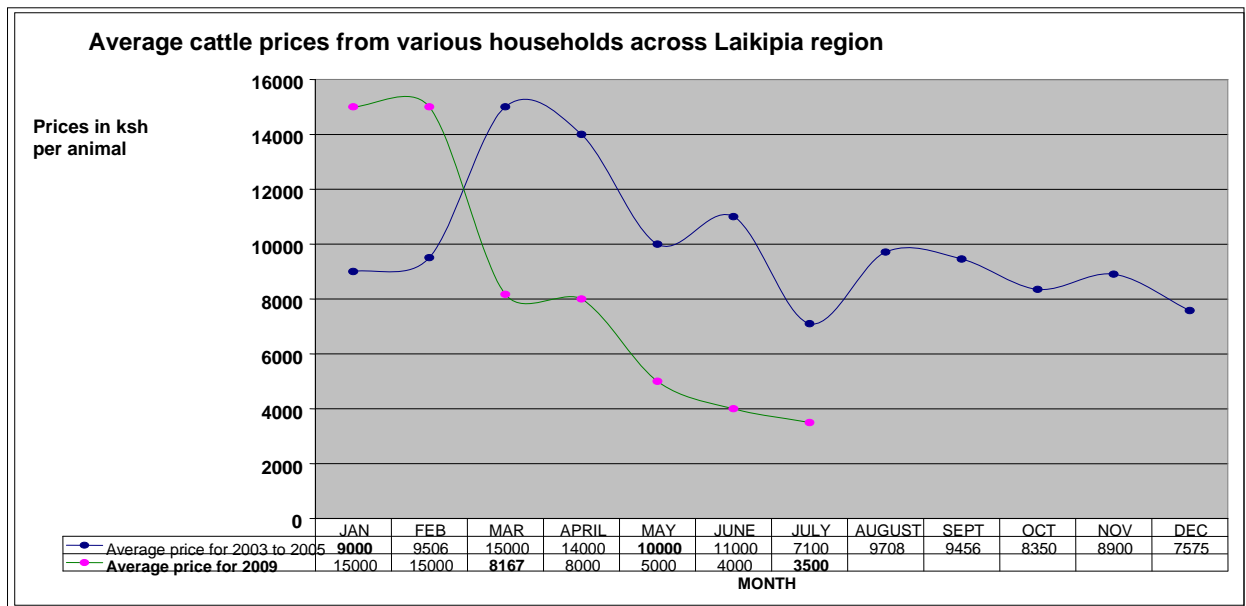
### 2.3 Implications on food security

- Millers in the district imported maize from Mombasa and Busia. Depending on how long the Busia maize will last, they also explored the Tanzania option though they say it's expensive.
- In case of good short rains, the next expected harvest is in March 2010 in Laikipia East but in Laikipia West it is a one season planting and thus they only plant in March and harvest in November.

### 3.0 Access to food

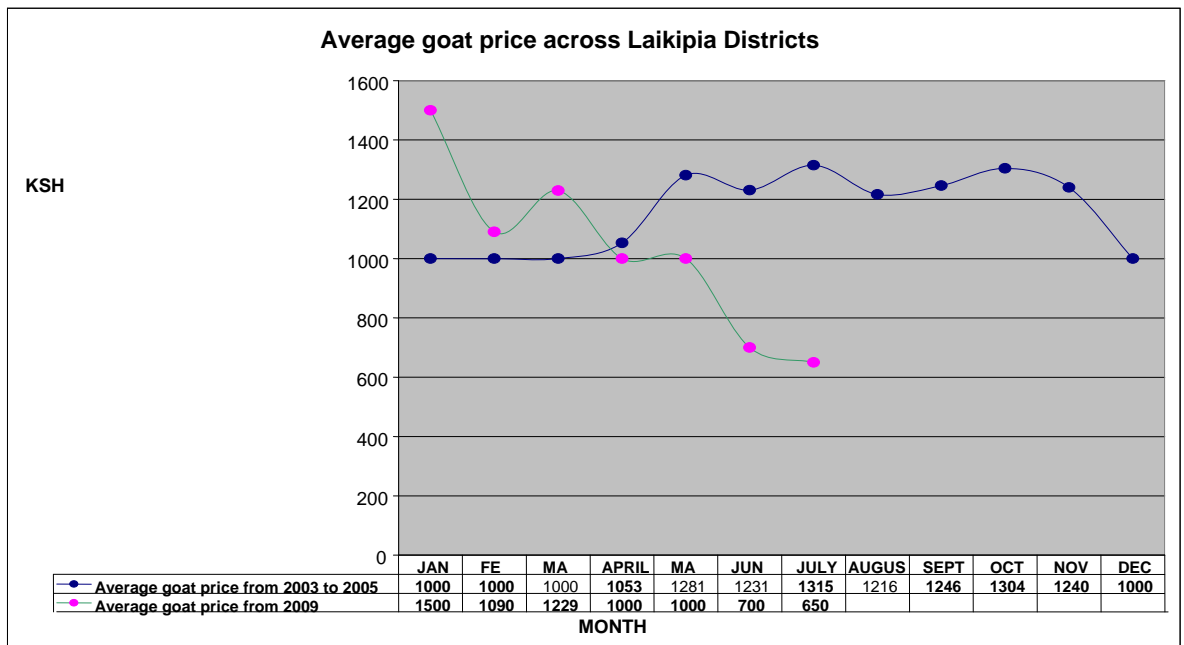
#### 3.1 Livestock markets

##### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



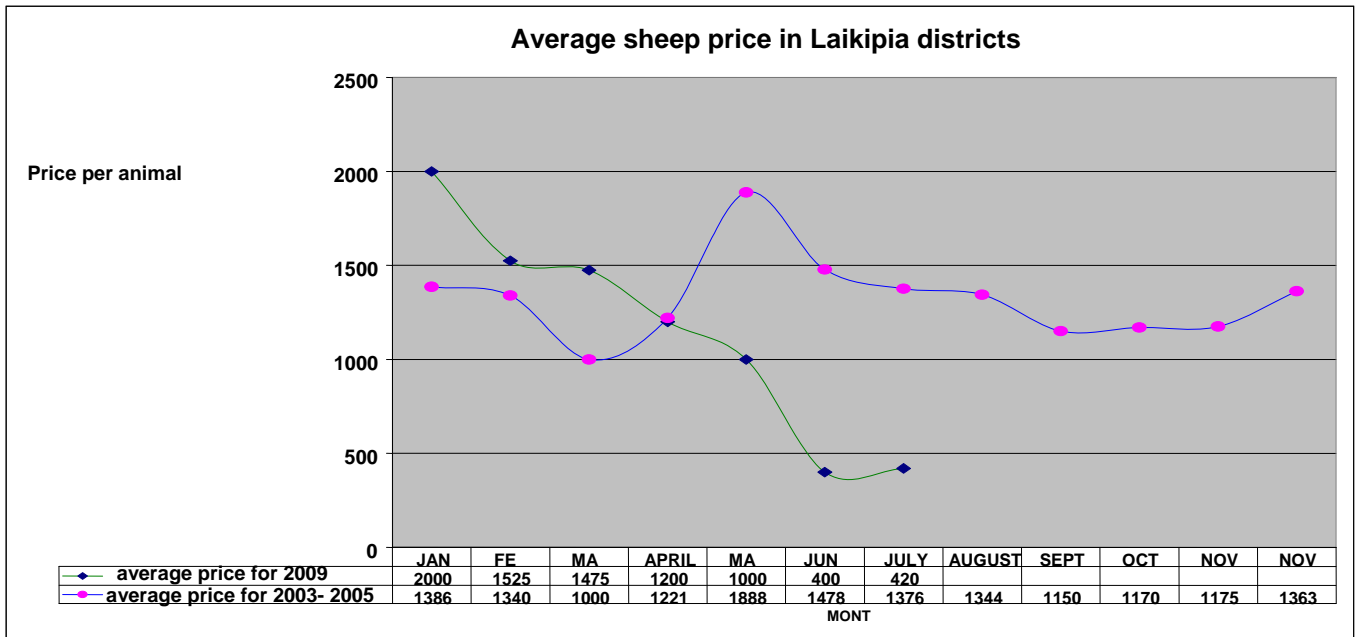
- Cattle prices continued falling, with the average price standing at Ksh 3,500 compared to Ksh4,000 in June.
- The price was too low compared to the Ksh7,100 long term mean.
- The low price was attributed to poor livestock body condition.
- Most of the livestock was deep in Mt Kenya forest, which is far from the livestock markets.
- Pastoralists depended on relief food and sales of small stock and the number of cattle appearing in the markets are extremely few.

##### 3.1.2 Goat prices



- Goat prices continued falling during the month.
- The average price was Ksh650 compared to Ksh700 in June.
- The low prices were due to poor body condition of goats, which was worsening.
- However, goats dominated the markets, leading to more supply than demand as the pastoralists desperately tried to sell them to meet other household needs.
- In Mukogodo and Rumuruti, which have the major livestock markets, no cattle were on sale and goats dominated the markets.

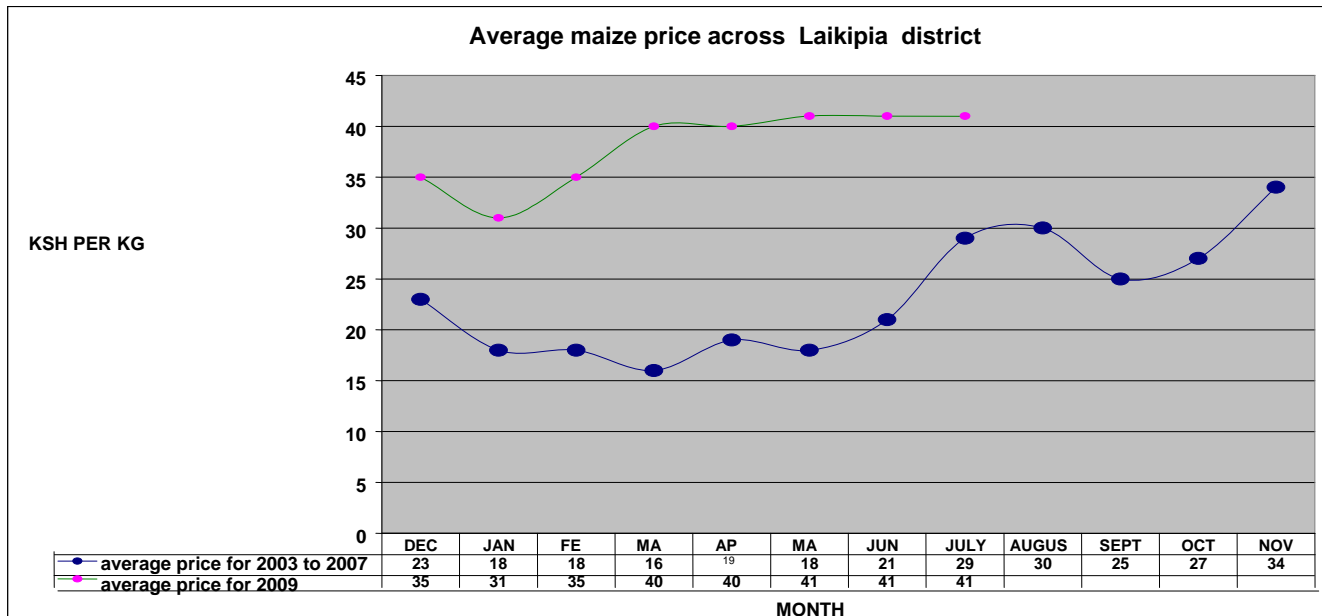
### 3.1.3 Sheep prices



- The average price of sheep was Ksh 420 compared to Ksh400 in June.
- The sheep were too weak and were dying in hundreds due to drought and thus few sales were registered in Laikipia East.

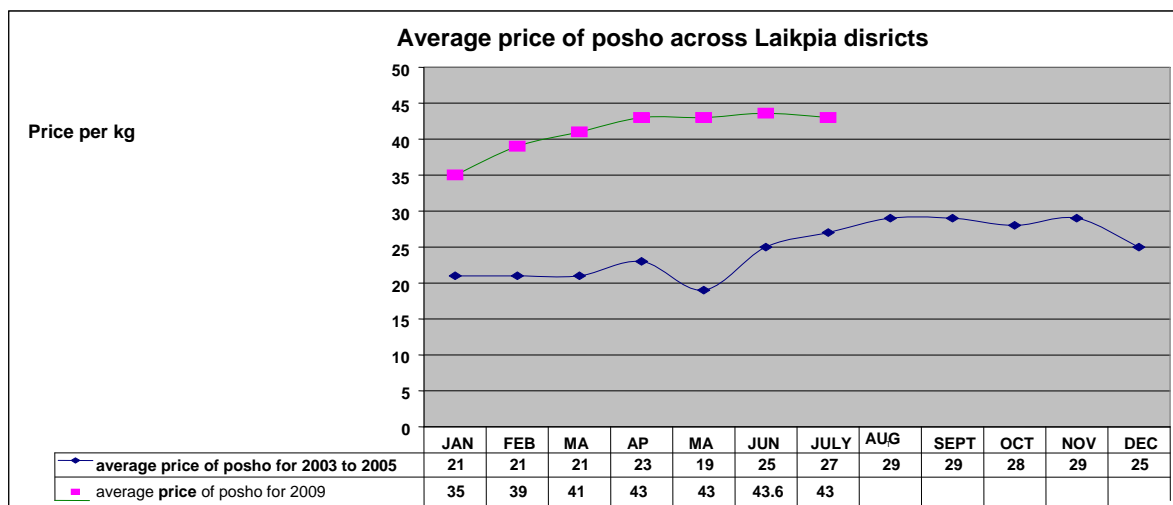
### 3.2 Food prices

#### 3.2.1 Maize prices



- Maize was very scarce and the available stock was from Busia and Mombasa though the price was stable at Ksh 41 per kilo. However, the price is soon expected to rise as the stocks from Busia dwindle.
- Millers are expected to start importing maize from Tanzania though, they are complaining that this might hike up the prices.

#### 3.2.2 Posho prices



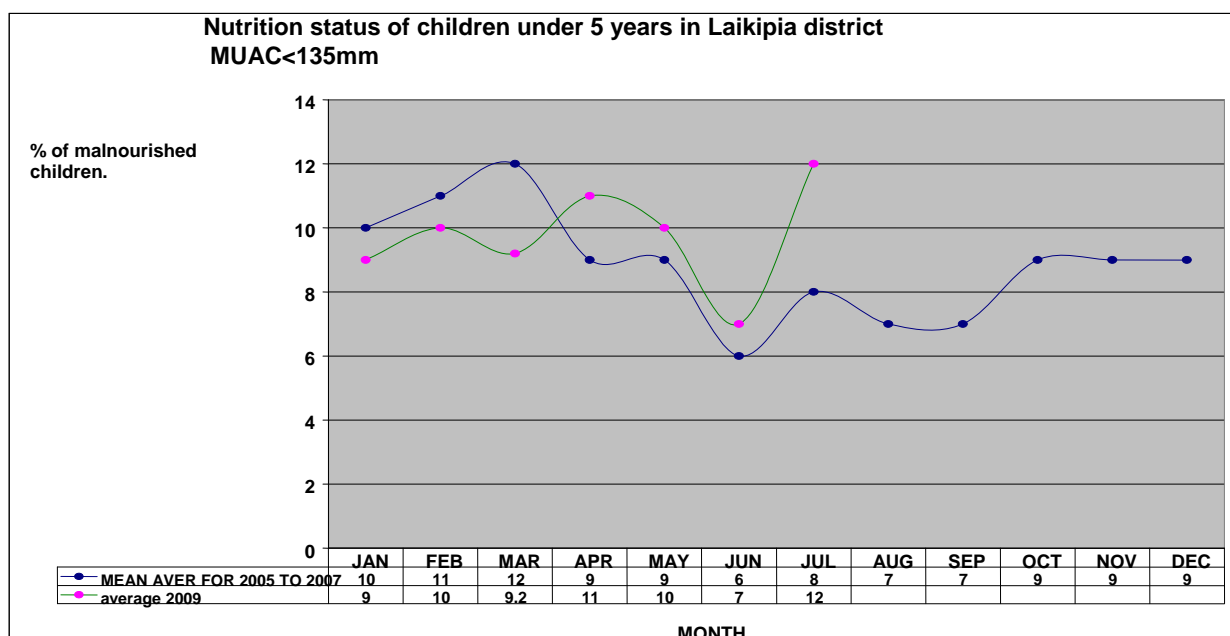
- The price of posho was still high during the month.
- The high price of this staple food was attributed to scarcity of whole maize, with the last harvest having been recorded last year in November.
- The situation is expected to worsen due to the failure of the long rains as the planting season in Nyahururu and Ngarua is once per year.

### 3.3 Implications on food security

- The markets were very poorly stocked and were in their worst state, with very low prices.
- Millers in the urban centers were importing maize from Mombasa and Busia thus the prices of maize were very high.
- All these factors had a negative impact on food security in the district.

## 4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

### 4.1 Nutrition status of sampled children in the district.



- The nutrition status of children under 5yrs ( based on MUAC<135mm measurement) declined during the month.
- The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition rose to 12% from 7 in June.
- Close monitoring should be stepped up along with supplementary feeding for the vulnerable categories in the district.

#### **4.2 Human health**

- Cases of cold-related diseases increased at the health centres.
- Cholera was still a major threat to the residents of the larger Laikipia district.

#### **5.0 Current interventions**

##### **5.1 Food aid**

The EMOP was ongoing though it needs to be up-scaled.

##### **5.2 Coping strategies**

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

#### **6.0 Recommendation to DSG and KFSM**

- As the metrological department is warning of heavy rains then we should start advising the farmers on the right crops to plant
- Provide the farmers with relief seeds before the rains.
- Provide medication to the livestock on the mountain as the cold related diseases are killing them in big number over 100 animals per day.
- As the drought is increasing the needy people keep on increasing and need to update the register.
- Human wildlife conflict to be controlled as the elephants are becoming a threat at the watering points in Mukogodo.
- To continuously provide the farmers with clean water for consumption as the available water is very dirty in pools of the dried rivers.