

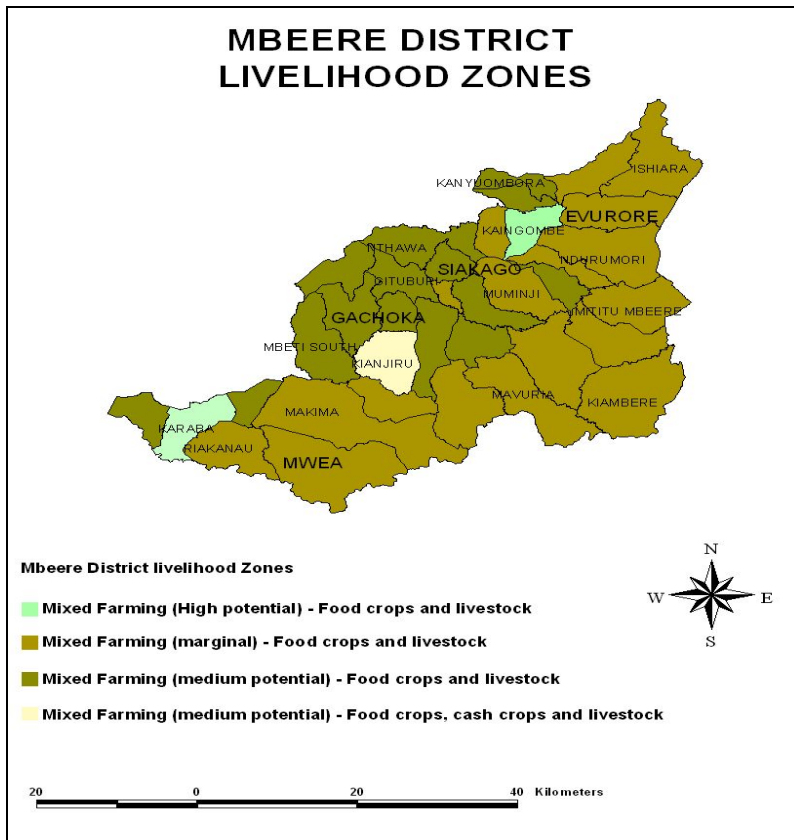


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, JULY 2009

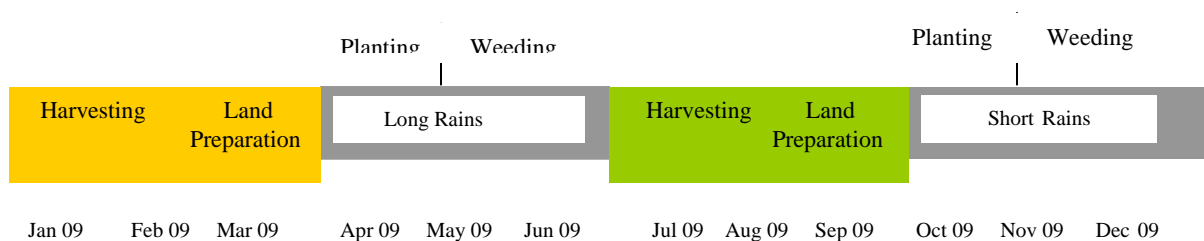
Mbeere District

Warning Stage



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Mixed farming – food crops	Alert	Worsening
Mixed farming – coffee/dairy	Alert	Worsening
Marginal mixed farming	Alarm	Worsening
	Alarm	Worsening
District	Alarm	Worsening

Seasonal Calendar



Situation overview

- Cool and dry weather conditions prevailed across the entire district.
- Pasture and browse availability and accessibility poor across the District. Livestock body conditions were fair to poor and the prices remained relatively low for cattle and goats in the District.
- Water availability and accessibility was poor. Both permanent and seasonal water reservoirs have depleted their water, consequently increasing pressure and congestion on the few available watering points.
- There were no major agricultural activities taking place across the District.
- Food purchase prices remained relatively high.
- In human health, there were no major ailments which were reported within the district.
- The nutrition status of children under 5 years of age improved slightly in comparison to the month of June.
- The district was at alarm phase due to lack of precipitation within the month. There was significant deterioration of the environmental indicators, rural indicators and welfare indicators. The trend was worsening.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Deworming/ drenching of livestock to improve resilience and livestock disease surveillance within the mixed marginal livelihood zones to be undertaken by the Ministry of Livestock.
- Surveillance of the malnutrition levels within the district, especially divisions with alarm/emergency levels of MUAC by the ALRMP II and Ministry of Public Health.
- Rehabilitation and monitoring of the strategic boreholes and watering points within the worst hit areas i.e. Mutuovare, Makima, Karaba, Riakanau, Ndurumori, Gichiche, Mavuria, Kiambere, Ndurumori and Ishiara locations by ALRMP II and Ministry of Water.

Current interventions

Non-food interventions

- Rehabilitation of Critical boreholes within the entire District by ALRMP II and Ministry of Water.
- Excavation of Matilamu sand dam by ALRMP II.
- Construction of Bindii sand dam by ALRMP II.
- Extension of the Kogari pipeline by ALRMP II.
- Disease surveillance and response by the Ministry of Public Health.
- Aflatoxin surveillance by the Ministry of Public Health.

Food aid

- Distribution of relief food from the World Food Programme by the lead agency, Catholic Diocese of Embu, targeting 55,942 beneficiaries within the whole district.
- Distribution of relief food by CCS Mayori (Anglican Church) targeting 800 beneficiaries within Ngoce, Makima and Machanga.
- Homegrown school feeding programme targeting 110 schools within the district.

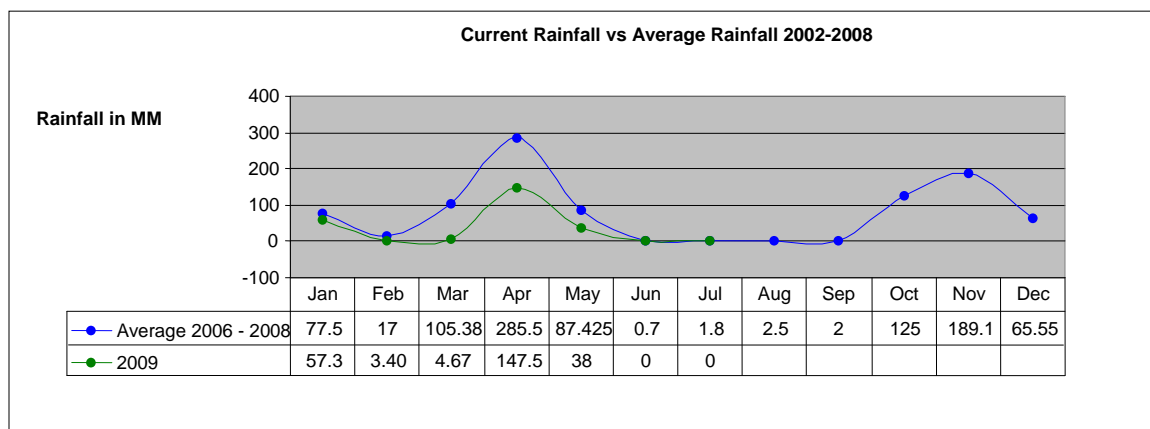
Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- UNIMIX/Supplementary feeding Vitamin A supplement and for under 5 year old children in the worst affected divisions by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group and Ministry of Public Health.

- Sensitisation of water treatment and the provision of aqua tabs for domestic water treatment by the Ministry of Public Health and Ministry of Water.
- Livestock off-take and de-stocking campaigns within the worst hit areas by the Ministry of Livestock.
- De-worming/drenching of the animals to improve resilience and disease surveillance within the worst hit areas by the Veterinary Department.
- Water trucking to primary and secondary schools within the worst hit areas by the Ministry of Water and Arid lands Resource Management Project II.
- Rehabilitation and monitoring of the strategic boreholes and watering points within the worst hit areas Arid Lands Resource Management Project II.

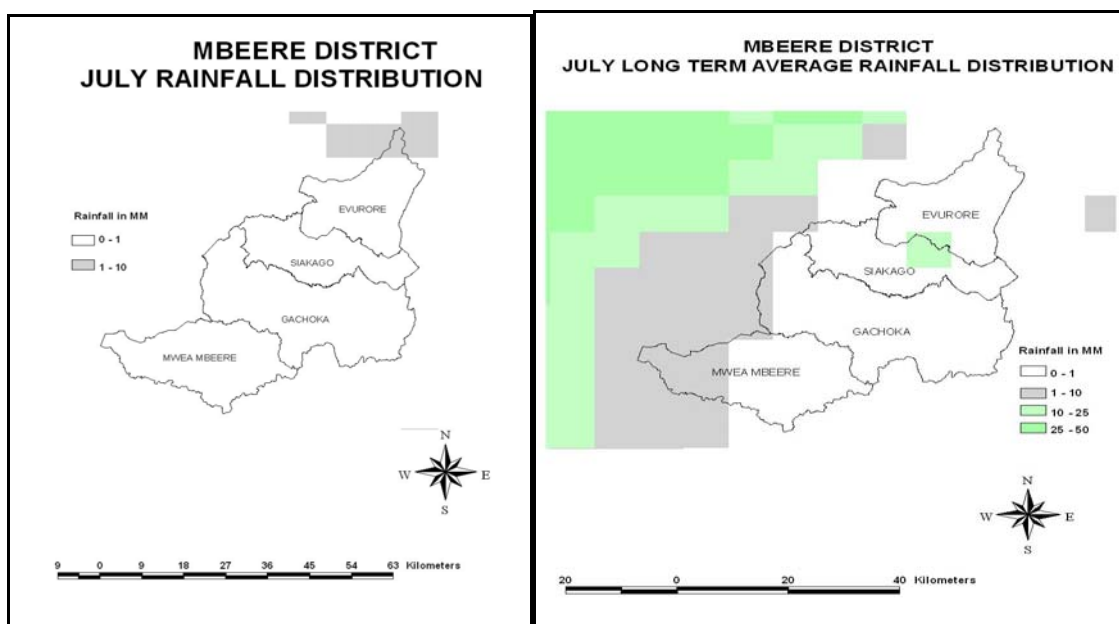
1. Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall



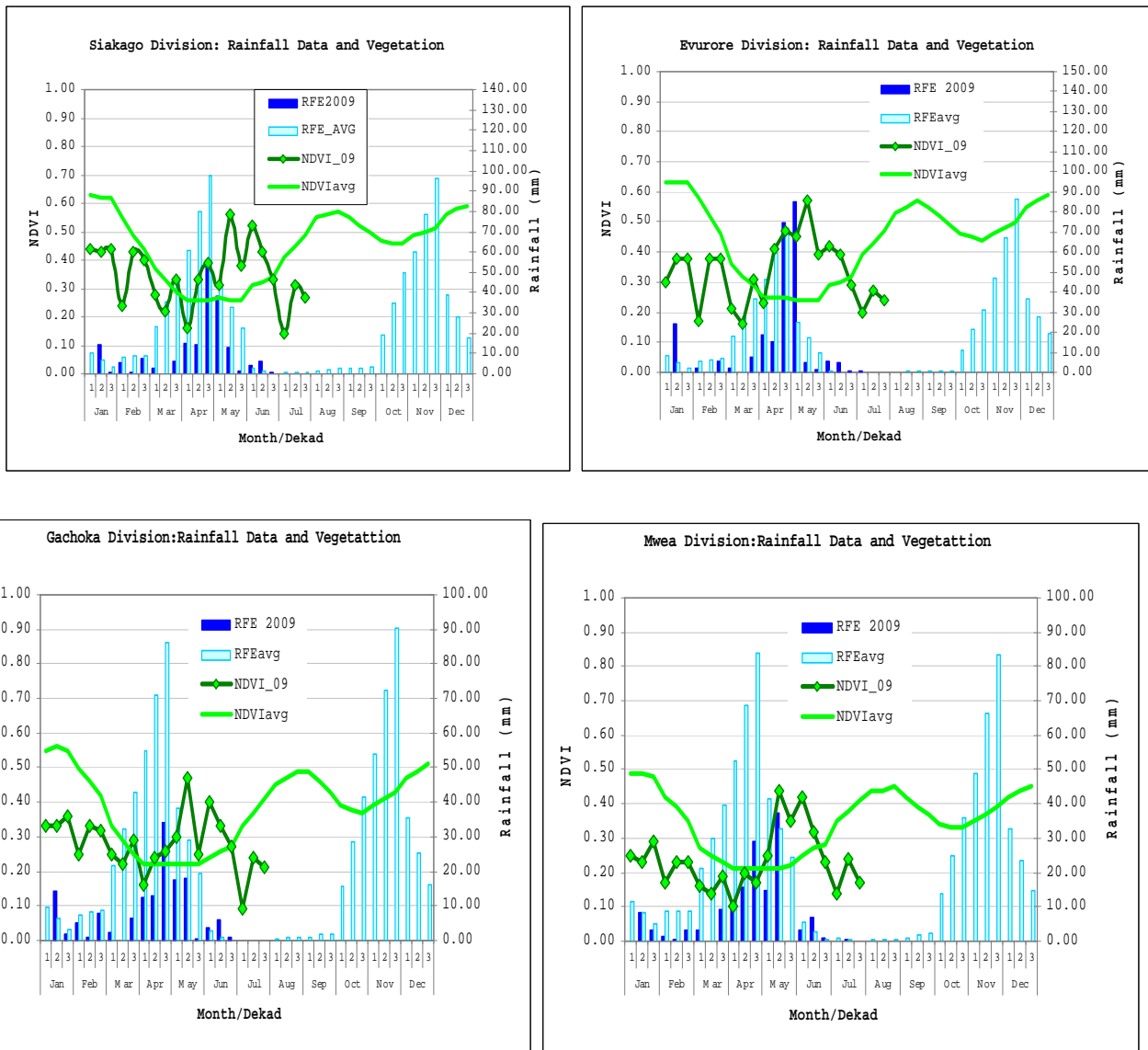
(Source: Divisional Agricultural Offices)

The district did not receive any rainfall in the month of July. This reveals a below normal trend during this period of the year.



(Source: FEWSNET)

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture



(Source: ALRMP II/ FEWSNET)

- Pasture and browse quality was poor across the entire district.
- The situation was not normal at this period of the year. As shown by the NDVI and rainfall tables above, the pasture and browse quality was deteriorating due to lack of rainfall in the district.
- Some of the most affected areas include: Mutuovare, Makima, Karaba, Riakanau, Ndurumori, Gichiche, Mavuria, Kiambere, Ndurumori and Ishiara locations.
- Pasture and browse availability was poor and the prevailing situation is not normal at this period of the year although this varied from one division to the other as shown from the above graphs.
- The Ndvi data shows the current situation of vegetation in relation to the amount of received rainfall within the month.
- The quantity of pasture and browse was on a declining trend as shown on the NDVI graphs for the four Divisions above. This is attributed to the lack of rainfall within the month of July.

- Pasture and browse quantity is expected to diminish even further due to lack of rainfall.

1.3 Water sources and availability

1.3.1 Water sources

- Water availability and accessibility was poor within the district.
- The situation was not normal at the time of the year.
- The community prominently depended on natural rivers, boreholes, traditional river wells, pans and springs for both domestic and human consumption.
- Most of these water sources had very low volumes of water while some dried up due to continued consumption.
- The situation is expected to deteriorate further due to the absence of rainfall to recharge these sources.

1.3.2 Livestock access to water

- Distances from grazing areas to main water sources increased from 5 km in the month of June to 5.3 km in July.
- The prevailing distances are not normal at this period of the year. Water levels on various watering points' e.g. seasonal rivers, catchments pools, earth dams and water pans decreased drastically, increasing the pressure and congestion on these watering points.
- It's anticipated that the distances to watering points will increase even further due to lack of rainfall to recharge these water sources.

1.3.3 Household access to water

- Average distances from households to the main water sources also increased from 3.1 km in the month of June to an average of 4.4 km in July.
- The prevailing distances were not normal at this period of the year.
- Water levels on various water reservoirs e.g. catchments pools, earth dams and water pans greatly declined while some dried up, thus the increase in distances covered in search of water for domestic use.
- Distances covered in search of water are expected to increase even further.

1.4 Implications on food security

Declining water levels in various water reservoirs and the poor quantity and quality of pasture and browse were an indication of food insecurity.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- Livestock body condition was fair to poor for all animal species within the district.
- The prevailing body conditions were not normal at this period of the year.
- The prevailing physical conditions could be attributed to the fair to poor availability of forage and water for livestock consumption.
- The cattle body conditions within the mixed marginal zones i.e. Ndurumori, Ishiara, Kiambere, Mutuovare, Karaba, Gichiche, Mavuria and Makima were noted to be poor due to the poor availability of forage and water within this zones leading to migration of these animals to the upper mixed farming zones.

- There was also migration by animals from neighboring districts i.e. Mwingi and Kitui into the district in search of pasture and water which is increasing congestion and pressure within the watering points.
- The livestock body conditions are expected to deteriorate even further due to lack of adequate forage and water.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

Livestock health condition remained good for all animal species. There were no reported cases of mortalities on all animal species.

2.1.3 Milk production

- Average milk production per household declined from an average of 5 bottles of 750ml in June to an average of 4.5 bottles of 750ml.
- The decline in milk production could be attributed to the low quantity and quality of pasture and browse within the district and decreased birth rates for livestock.
- Gachoka Division had the highest milk output. Output variation was influenced by livestock population density, distribution per household and varying degree of pasture and browse availability.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities

- There were no major agricultural activities taking place in the farms.
- In the mixed farming zones, beans were harvested in some pockets while maize wilted at the tussling stage with very little yield being experienced.
- Within the marginal mixed farming zones, i.e. Mutuovare, Makima, Karaba, Ndurumori, Gichiche, Mavuria, Kiambere, Ndurumori and Ishiara locations, there was total crops failure due to moisture stress.

2.2.2 Pests and diseases

- There were no major incidences of pest and diseases attack reported.

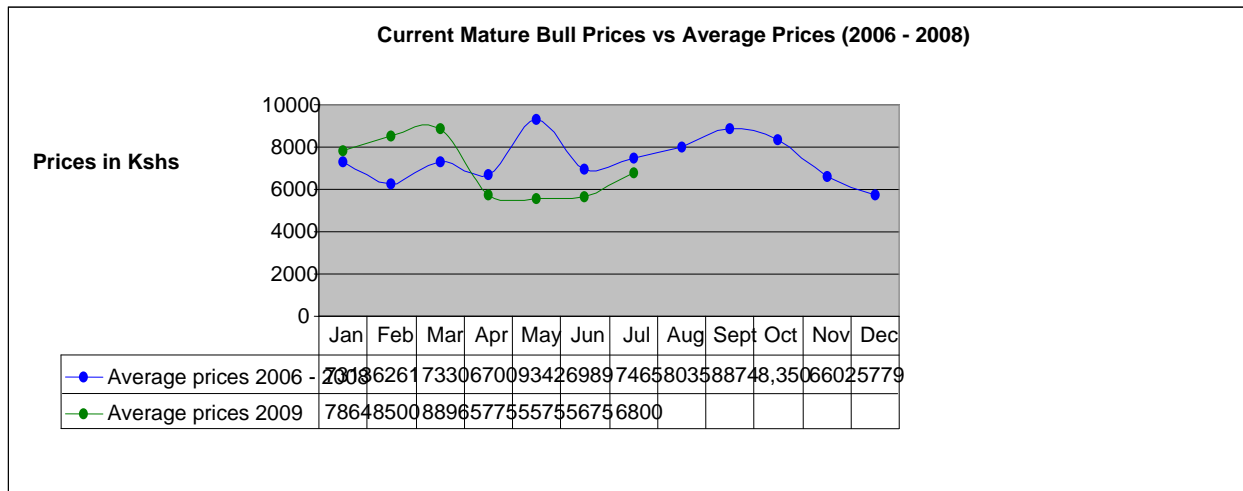
2.2.3 Implications on food security

Lack of rainfall, low crop yield and declining milk production within the District translates to food insecurity.

3.0 Access to food

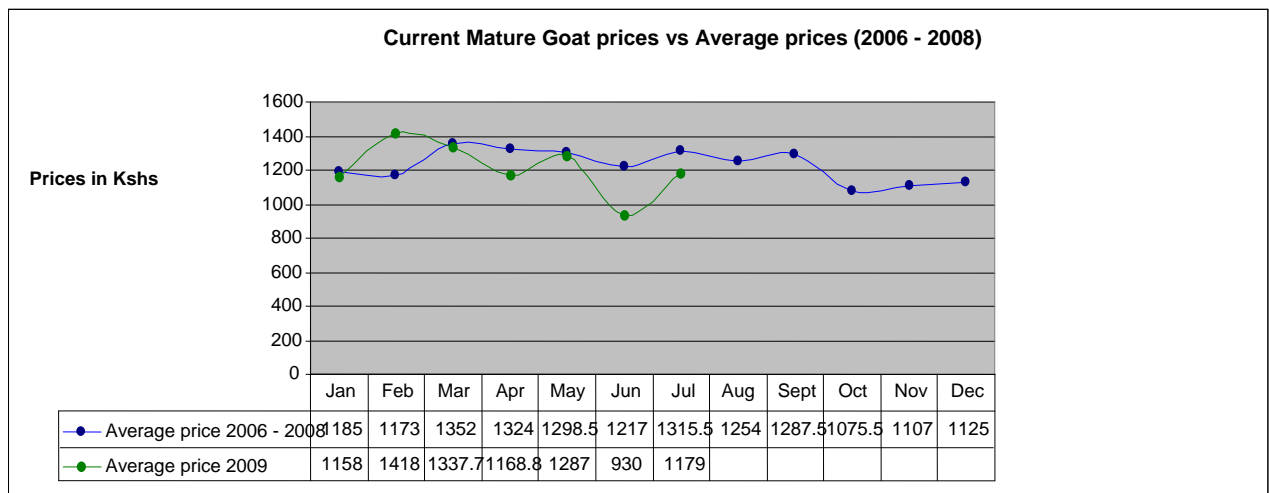
3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



- Cattle prices increased slightly within the district.
- The average price was Ksh 6,800 up from Ksh 5675 in June.
- The prices were below normal at this period of the year.
- The price increase could be attributed to the decreasing selling rate within the District.
- The sales rate decreased from 3.2% in the month of June to 1.2 % in the month of July.
- Siakago Division recorded the highest selling rate of 1.2% and also the highest price of Ksh6,800.

3.1.2 Goat prices



- Goat prices increased from Ksh 930 in June to Ksh1,179.
- The prices were below normal at this time of the year.
- The increasing price could be attributed to the declining selling rates within the District.
- The sales rate declined from 3.8% in the month of June to 1.2% in the month of July.
- Siakago division had the highest selling rate of 2.5% while Evurore had the lowest selling rate 0.3%. Siakago had the highest selling price of Ksh 1,267 while Mwea had the lowest of Ksh 1,000.

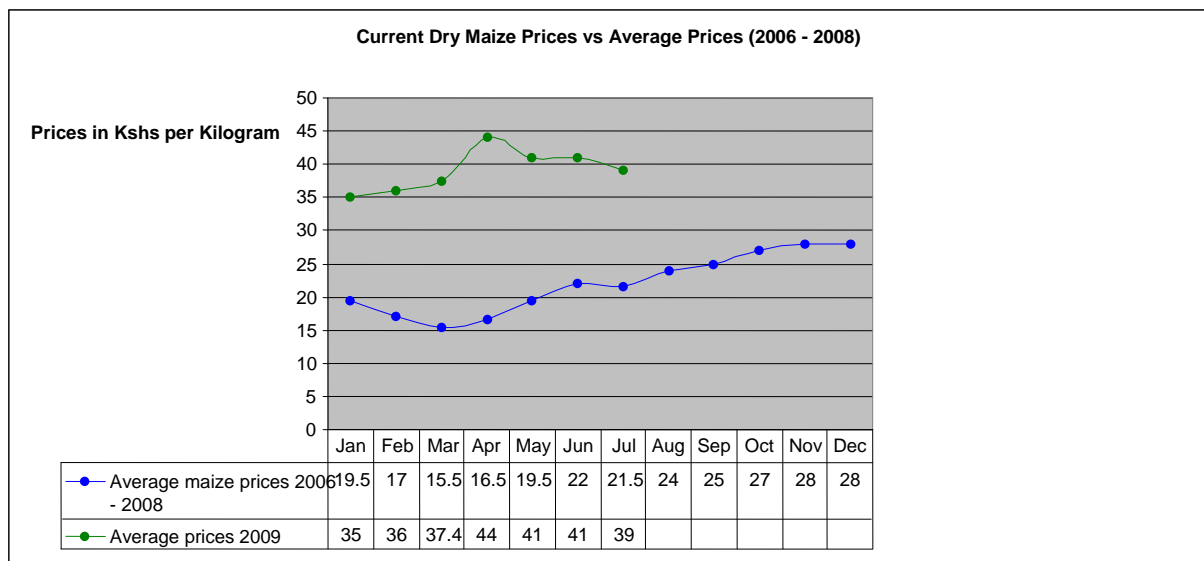
3.2 Milk consumption

- Average milk consumed per household declined from 5 bottles of 750 ml in the month of June to 4.5 bottles of 750ml in the month of July.

- The Districts average milk price per litre was Ksh40.
- The decrease in milk consumption is attributed to the declining livestock birth rates and the poor availability of forage and water within the District.

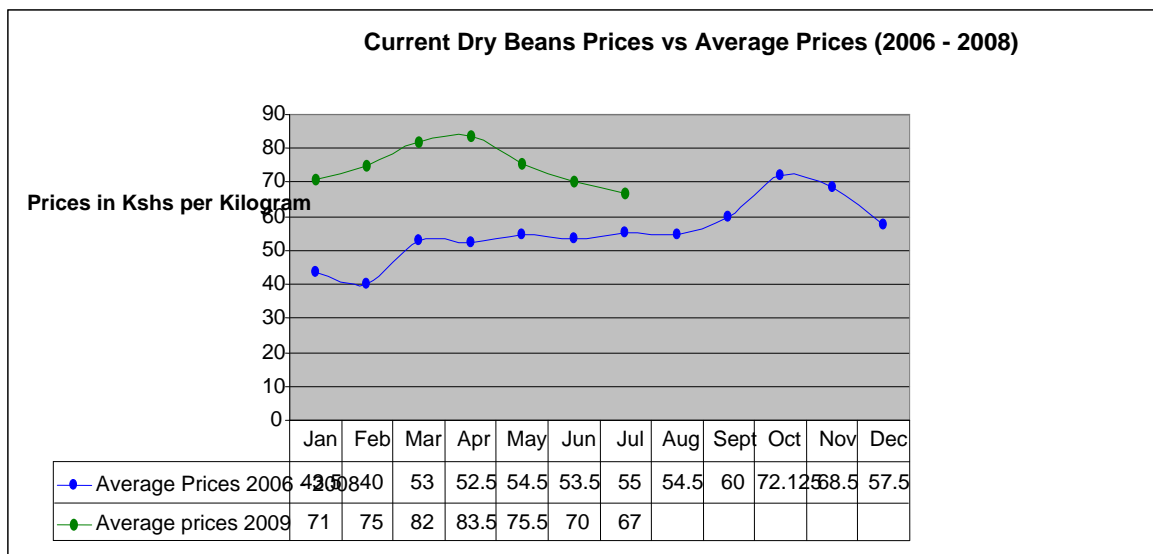
3.3 Crop prices

3.3.1 Maize prices



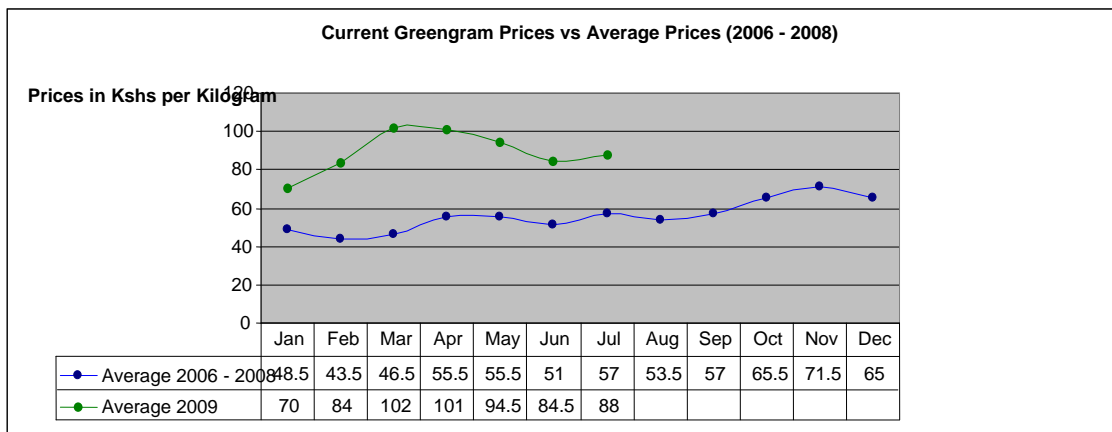
- Maize prices declined slightly from Ksh41 per kilogram in the month of June to Ksh 39 per kilogram.
- The prices were above normal at this period of the year.
- The decline in the price was attributed to the little maize harvest experienced in some pockets of the District and the circulation of maize received as relief food from the World Food Programme .
- Mwea Division had the highest maize prices at Ksh45 per kilogram while Evurore Divisions had the lowest at Ksh38 per kilogram.

3.3.2 Beans prices



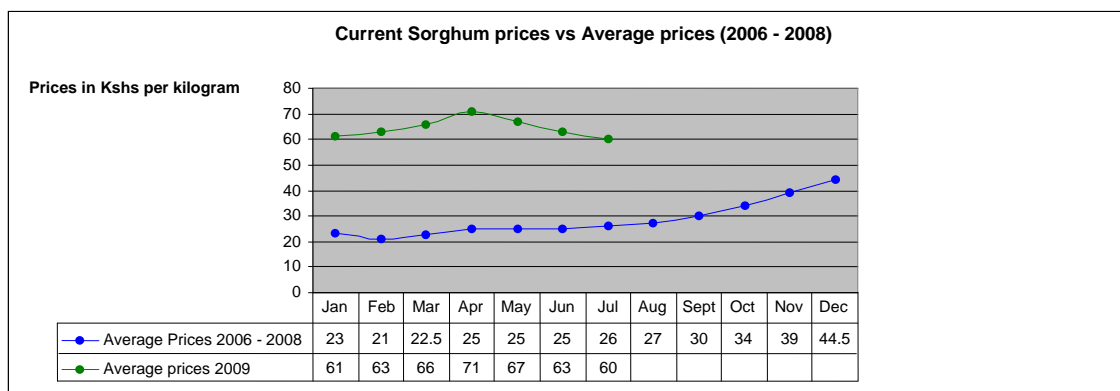
- Beans prices declined slightly from Ksh70 per kilogram in the month of June to Ksh 67 per kilogram in the month of July.
- The prices were above normal at this period of the year.
- The decrease in the prices was attributed to the little beans harvest experienced in some pockets of the districts and the circulation of beans received as relief food.
- Mwea Division had the highest beans price at Ksh80 per Kilogram while Evurore Division recorded the lowest at Ksh52 per Kilogram.

3.3.3 Green grams prices



- Green gram prices increased slightly from Ksh 84.5 per kilogram in the month of June to Ksh88 per Kilogram in the month of July.
- The prices were above normal at this period of the year.
- The increase in the prices was attributed to poor performance of the crop within the District.
- Siakago Division had the highest price at Ksh100 per Kilogram while Mwea and Evurore Division recorded the lowest at Ksh 75 per Kilogram.

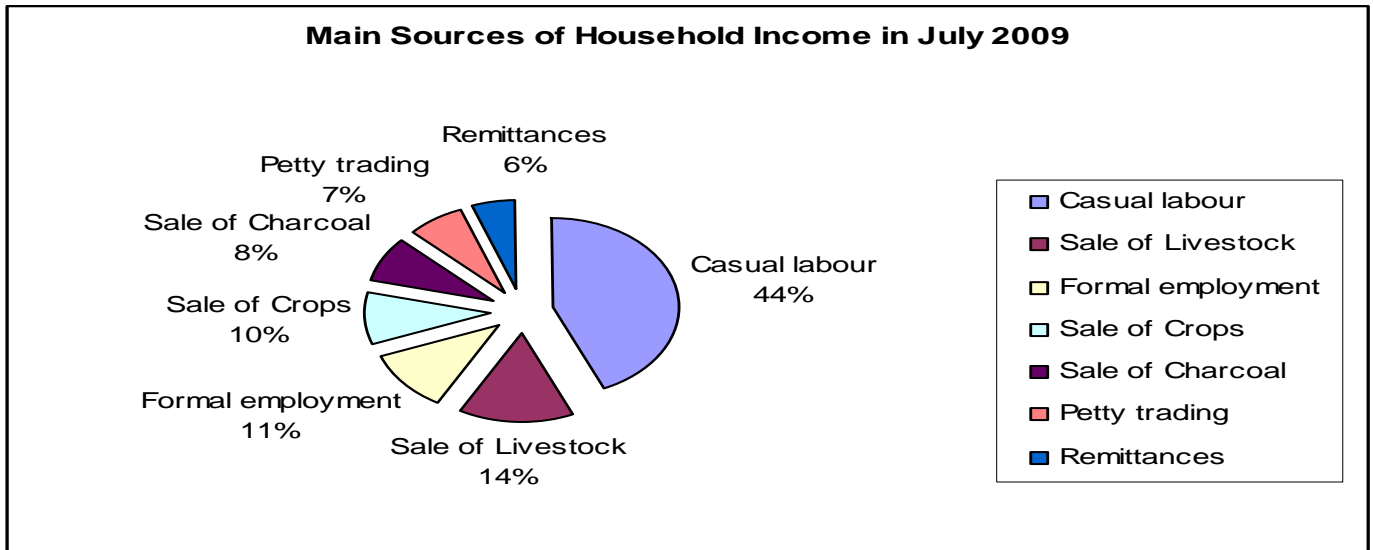
3.3.4 Sorghum prices



- Sorghum prices declined from Ksh 63 per kilogram in the month of June to Ksh 60 per Kilogram in the month of July.
- The prices were above normal at this period of the year.
- The declining sorghum prices could be attributed to the little harvest within some pockets of the District and inflow of the crop from neighbouring Districts.

- Siakago Division had the highest sorghum prices of Ksh75 per Kilogram while Evurore Division had the lowest at Ksh 47 per Kilogram.

3.5 Income



3.5.1 Crop income

- Income from crop sales increased from 8.3% in the month of June to 10% in the month of July as the source of total household revenue. The increase in crop sales as a source of total household revenue is attributed to the little harvest that has been experienced within some pockets of the District.

3.5.2 Livestock income

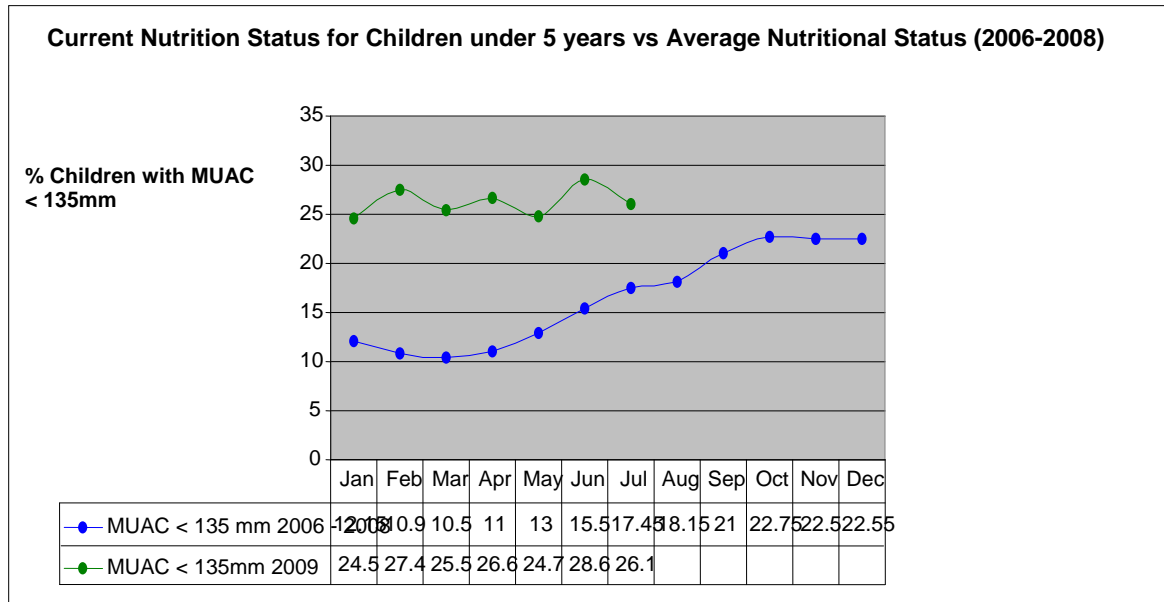
- Contribution from livestock sales declined from 15 % in the month of June to 14 % in the month of July.
- The decline was attributed to the flooding of the local livestock markets by animals from both within and outside the district, causing the prices to fall thus discouraging the farmers from disposing their animals resulting in reduced selling rates.
- Casual labor was the major source of aggregate household income in Mbeere District but declined from 52% in the month of June to 44% in the month of July. The decline was attributed to lack of any agricultural activities taking place within the District and the scaling down of activities under the “Kazi kwa vijana” initiative.

3.6 Implications on food security

- High food purchase prices and declining livestock price, declining opportunities for casual laborers indicate a food insecure situation.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years improved slightly during the month.
- The percentage of children with MUAC <135mm was 26.1 compared to 28.6 in June.
- A total of 1,860 children were sampled in 10 sentinel sites within the district.
- The improvement was attributed to the circulation of the relief food.
- The status was however, worse than the normal at this period of the year.
- Siakago Division had the highest percentage of children with MUAC < 135mm at 27.7%, Gachoka Division had MUAC < 135mm at 26.6%, Mwea Division had MUAC < 135 mm at 26.1% and Evurore Division had MUAC < 135mm at 24.1%.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

- Rehabilitation of critical boreholes within the entire district by ALRMP II and Ministry of Water.
- Excavation of Matilamu sand dam by ALRMP II.
- Construction of Bindii sand dam by ALRMP II.
- Extension of the Kogari pipeline by ALRMP II.
- Disease surveillance and response by the Ministry of Public Health.
- Aflatoxin surveillance by the Ministry of Public Health.

5.2 Food aid

- Distribution of relief food from the World Food Programme by the lead agency Catholic Diocese of Embu targeting 55,942 beneficiaries within the whole district.
- Distribution of relief food by CCS Mayori (Anglican Church) targeting 800 beneficiaries within Ngoce, Makima and Machanga.
- Homegrown school feeding programme targeting 110 schools within the District.

6.0 Recommendations to Dsg and KFSM

- Deworming/ drenching of livestock to improve resilience and livestock disease surveillance within the mixed marginal livelihood zones to be undertaken by the Ministry of Livestock.

- Surveillance of the malnutrition levels within the district, especially divisions with Alarm/emergency levels of MUAC by the ALRMP II and Ministry of Public Health.
- Rehabilitation and monitoring of the strategic boreholes and watering points within the worst hit areas i.e. Mutuovare, Makima, Karaba, Riakanau, Ndurumori, Gichiche, Mavuria, Kiambere, Ndurumori and Ishiara locations by ALRMP II and Ministry of Water.