



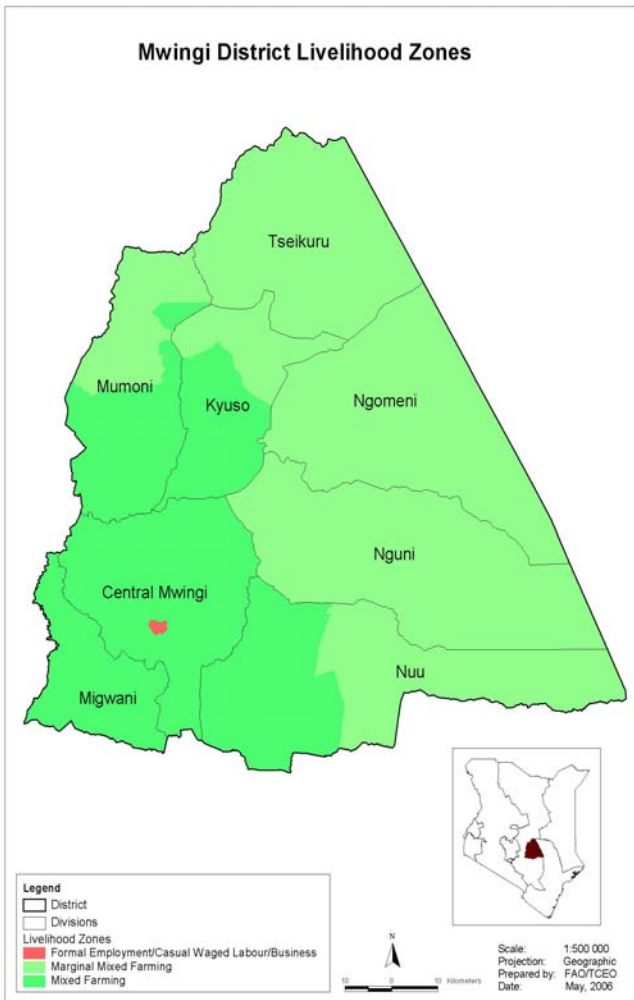
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

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

DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, JULY 2009

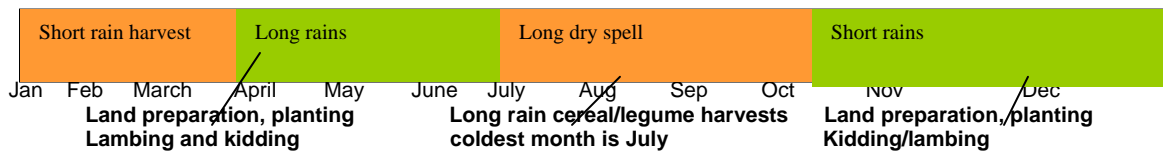
Mwingi District

Warning Stage



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Agro pastoral zone	Emergency	No change
Mixed farming zone	Emergency	No change
District	Emergency	No change

Seasonal Calendar



Situation overview

- The district did not receive any rainfall during the month.
- Condition of natural vegetation and pastures deteriorated further due to worsening drought.
- Water access and availability worsened as the average walking distance increased. There was a lot of congestion at the few serving boreholes.
- Livestock body condition continued to deteriorate due to lack of pastures and water. This resulted in dropping of livestock prices.
- Milk production was very poor due to poor livestock body condition.
- Cereal prices were high compared to the long term average.
- The nutrition status of children below five years declined, with the percentage of those rated at risk of malnutrition rising to 16% due to worsening food security.

Ongoing interventions

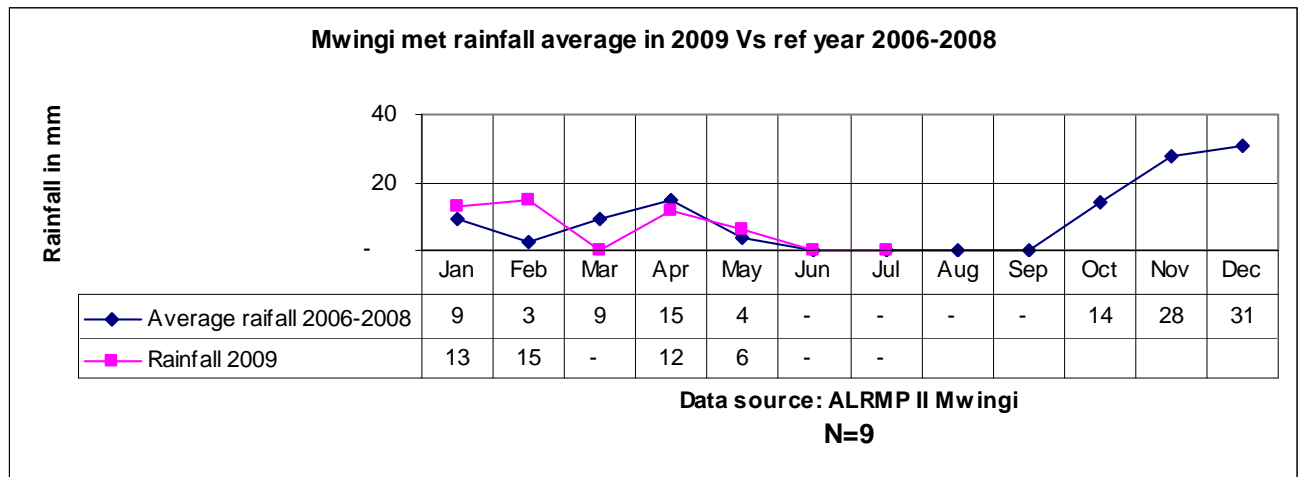
- Water trucking was ongoing in selected institutions. This was being done by the Ministry of Water.
- Distribution of livestock relief such as hay and supplements was taking place on a small scale.
- Distribution of relief food under the protracted relief and emergency operation (PRRO) was ongoing, targeting 60% of population in Mwingi and Kyuso districts.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Expansion of Food for Asset programme to target at least 65% of the population in the two districts. The ratio being offered to households should be scaled up from the current 50% to 75% due to the worsening drought.
- Water trucking to be expanded to cover more needy areas as the water situation gets worse.
- Supplementary feeds for children should be availed to various health facilities and schools in order to minimise malnutrition incidents.
- Provision of livestock relief to selected areas should be expanded in order to minimize livestock losses through drought.
- Livestock disease surveillance should be enhanced so as to watch out for opportunistic drought related diseases.
- Security surveillance along Tana River belt should be enhanced to avoid conflicts between communities as well as human/wildlife conflicts.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and other stakeholders should consider up-scaling of micro-irrigation activities to groups that are able to access water in order to improve food security.

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall

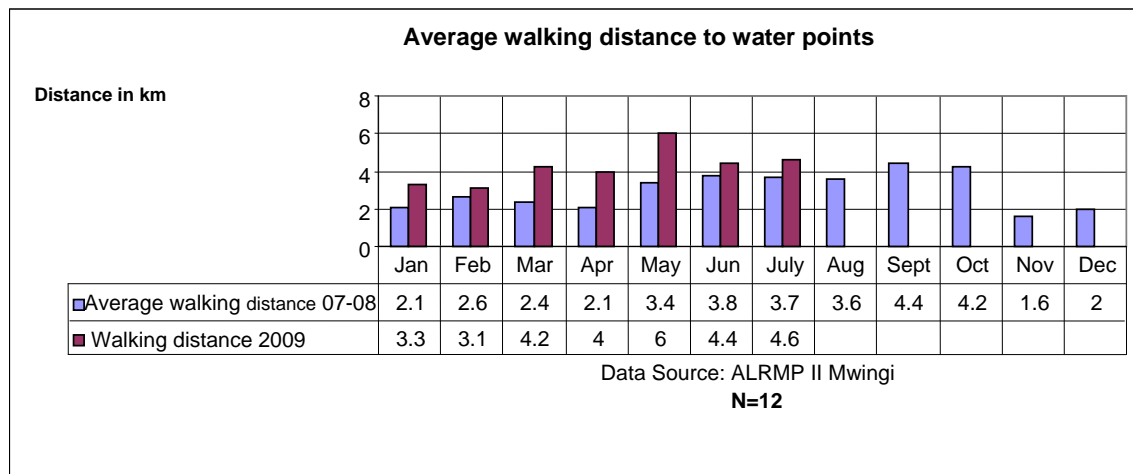


- No rains were reported in the district during the month.
- The weather was characterised by cold and cloudy mornings followed by warm afternoons. It was mainly very windy during both day and night.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- **Quality:** The quality of natural vegetation was very poor. All the shrubs shed their leaves and grasses were non-existent.
- **Quantity:** The quantity of natural vegetation was very poor. This was quite abnormal at the time of the year. This scenario has not been observed for a long time. In some places like Tseikuru division, herders moved to game reserves along Tana River belt. Purchase of hay was common for those who had some cash.

1.3 Water sources and availability



- Water sources and availability deteriorated further compared to last month.
- Nearly all the traditional shallow wells dried up.
- The average walking distance increased compared to last month.
- In some places like Ngomeni and Kyuso divisions, people walked for 8km-13km in search of water.
- Communities in Nuu and Nguni divisions dug up certain plant tubers/roots to extract some water for livestock.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Worsening drought

- The drought status reached emergency levels, leading to serious shortage of food, water and pasture in the district.
- Cases of livestock death, especially cattle were reported in Tseikuru, Kyuso, Ngomeni, Migwani, Nguni and Nuu divisions.
- Increased drop out cases in schools were reported across the district. Madongoi Primary school in Ngomeni division was closed due to lack of water.
- Malnutrition cases started rising, an indication that food insecurity was worsening.

1.4.2 Implication on food security

- Food security situation has never been this worse compared to other recent years.
- The only source of food was relief food and purchases. Households that were without working members were the most vulnerable.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

- The animal body condition was very poor for all the species but cattle were the most affected.
- This affected livestock prices negatively.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

- There was no outbreak of any notifiable disease in the district.
- However, cases of poultry deaths were quite common. An outbreak of Newcastle disease was predicted due to the prevailing drought.

2.1.3 Milk production

- Milk production continued to decline further by about 3% due to prevailing drought.
- Many households opted not to milk the animals due to lack of pasture and water.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities

- There were no standing crops in the farms and nearly all the land was bare.

2.2.2 Pests and diseases

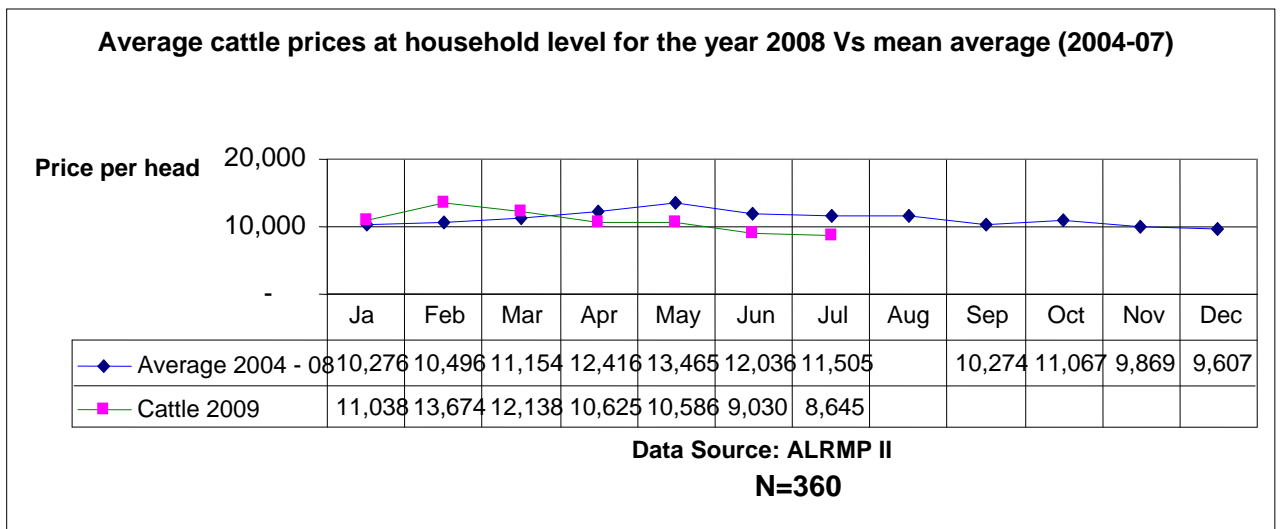
- This was not an issue since there were no crops on farms.

2.2.3 Implications on food security

- The poor livestock body condition adversely affected livestock prices and milk productivity.
- This severely affected household incomes derived from livestock sales and reduced milk production compromised nutritional status of household members, especially children, leading to increase in malnutrition cases.
- Failure of crops exposed many households to food insecurity. Over 50% of households relied on relief food.

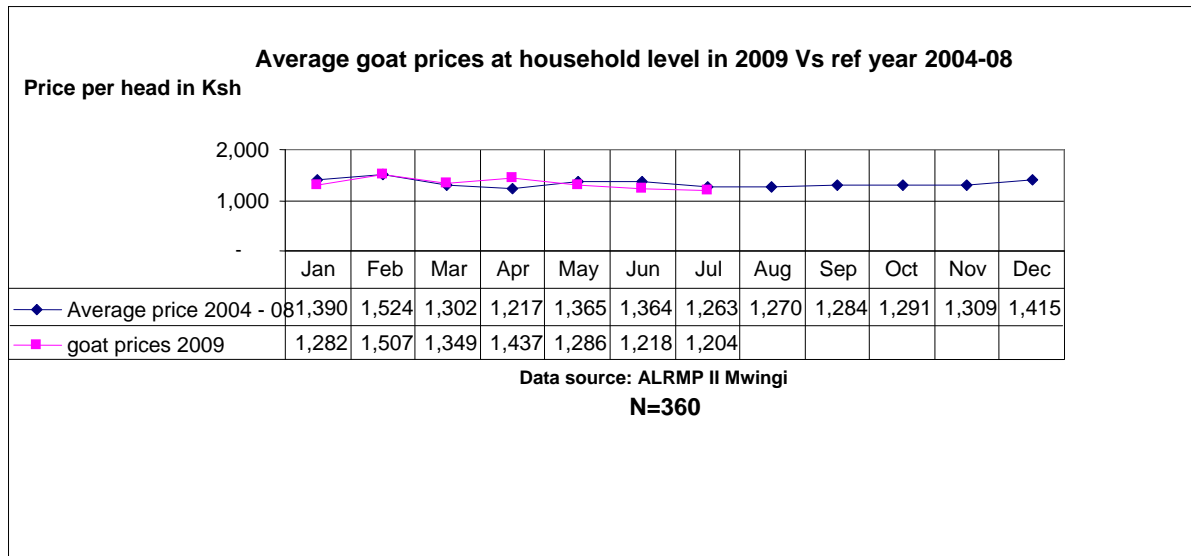
3.0 Access to food

3.1.1 Cattle prices



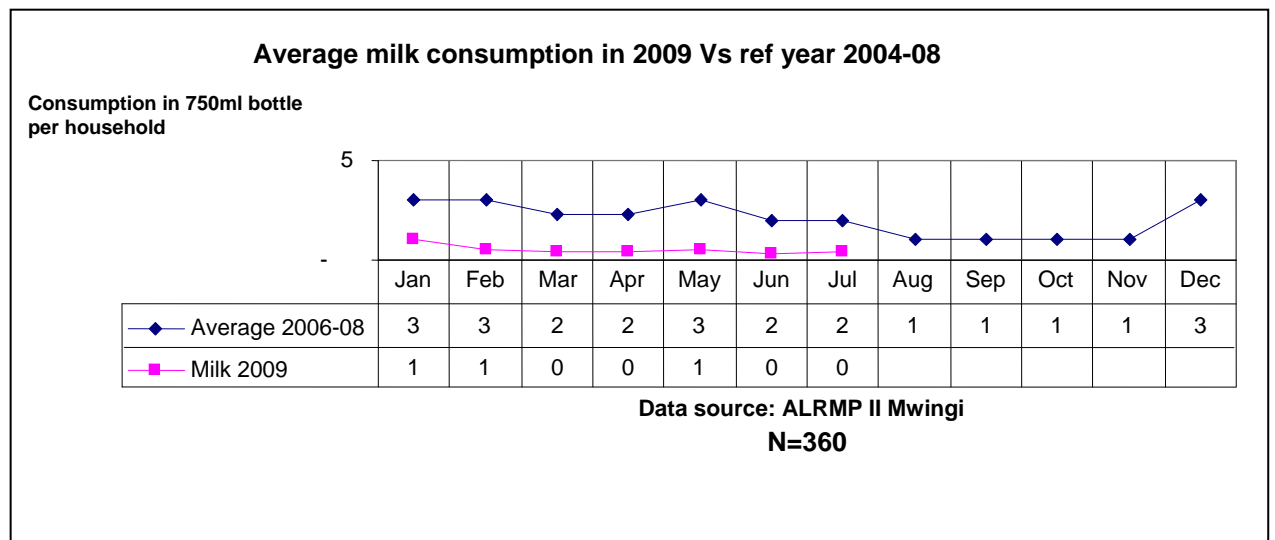
- The average household cattle prices dropped from Ksh 9,030 last month to Ksh 8,645. Compared to long term average, these are very low prices. The highest price was observed in Kyuso division at Ksh 13,000 while the lowest price was in Migwani at Ksh 5,500.
- The drop in prices is due to the prevailing drought that has caused shrinkage of animal body condition. Farmers are disposing livestock in desperation leading to oversupply in the local markets.

3.1.2 Goat prices



- The average goat prices dropped from Ksh1,218 last month to Ksh 1,204.
- The highest price was observed in Kyuso division at Ksh1,478 while the lowest price was in Tseikuru division at Ksh845.
- The goats exhibited a relatively fair body condition compared to cattle, thus the prices were relatively stable compared to that of cattle.

3.2 Milk consumption

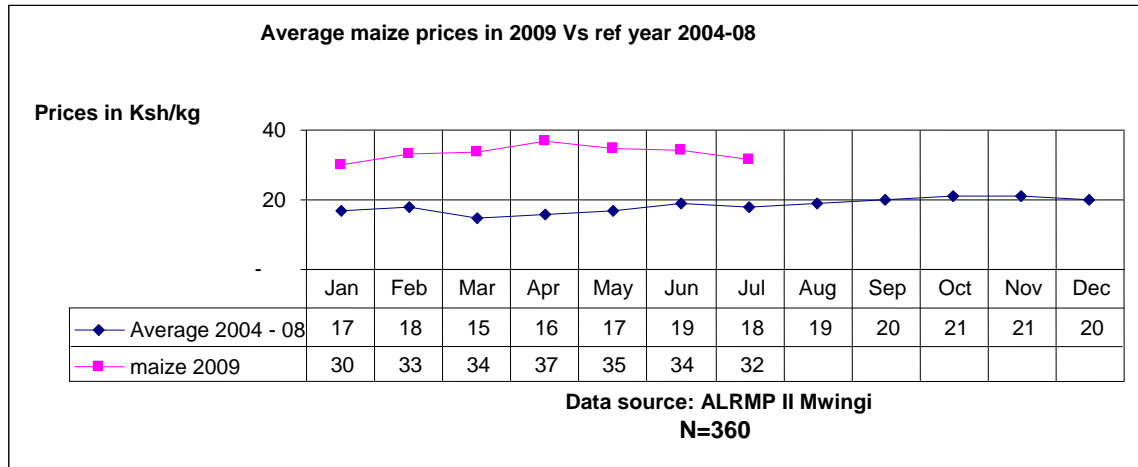


- The average household milk consumption was less than a bottle per household. This was not normal compared to the mean average.
- The drop in milk consumption was due to the prevailing drought, which caused scarcity of pastures and water. This resulted in poor livestock body condition, affecting milk productivity negatively.

- This will adversely affect nutritional status of household members.

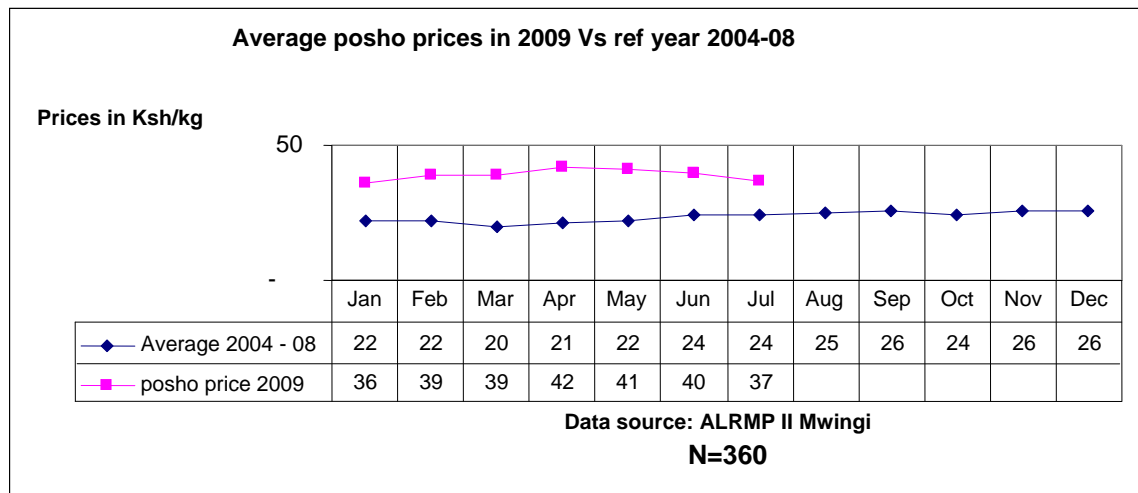
3.3 Crop prices

3.3.1 Maize prices



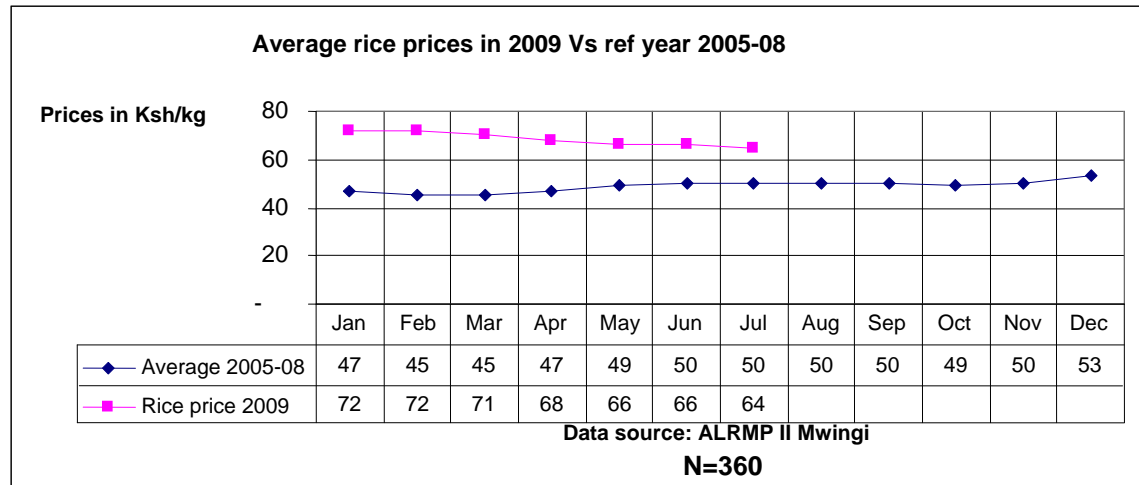
- The average household maize prices dropped slightly from Ksh 34 per kilo last month to Ksh 32.
- The prices were still high compared to the mean average and therefore unaffordable by majority of the households.
- Maize supplies in the market were good, leading to little price fluctuation.

3.3.2 Posho prices



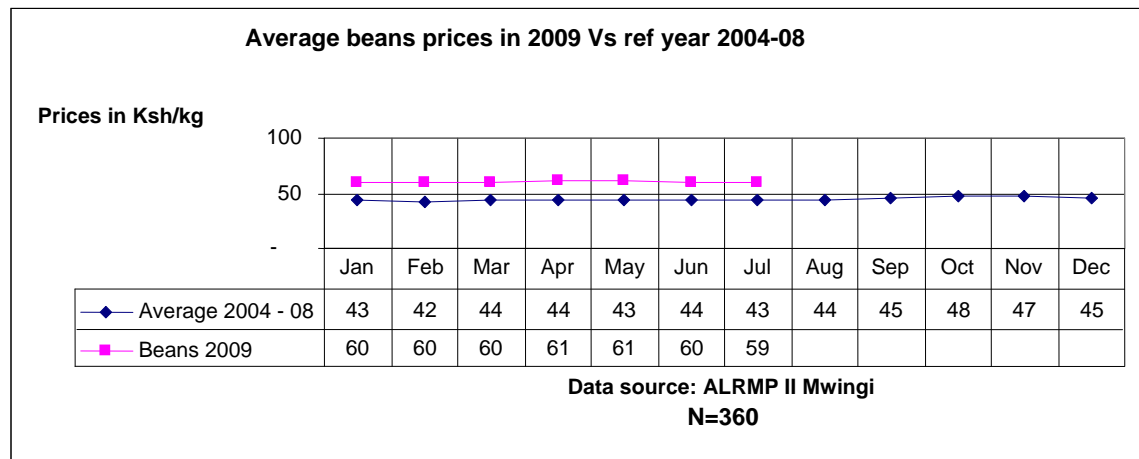
- The average household posho prices declined from Ksh 40 per kilo last month to Ksh 37.
- This was due to a drop in maize prices. However, the prices were still high compared to the mean average, making the commodity unaffordable.

3.3.3 Rice prices



- The average household rice prices dropped from Ksh 66 per kilo last month to Ksh 64.
- The prices were still high compared to the mean average.
- However, rice is not a popular meal in the district and therefore demand is low.

3.3.4 Beans prices



- The average household beans prices dropped slightly from Ksh 60 per kilo last month to Ksh 59.
- The prices were high compared to the mean average and therefore unaffordable. This was due to failure to harvest any leguminous crop from the farms during the last two seasons.

3.4 Income

3.4.1 Crop income

- There was no income from crops due to crop failures.

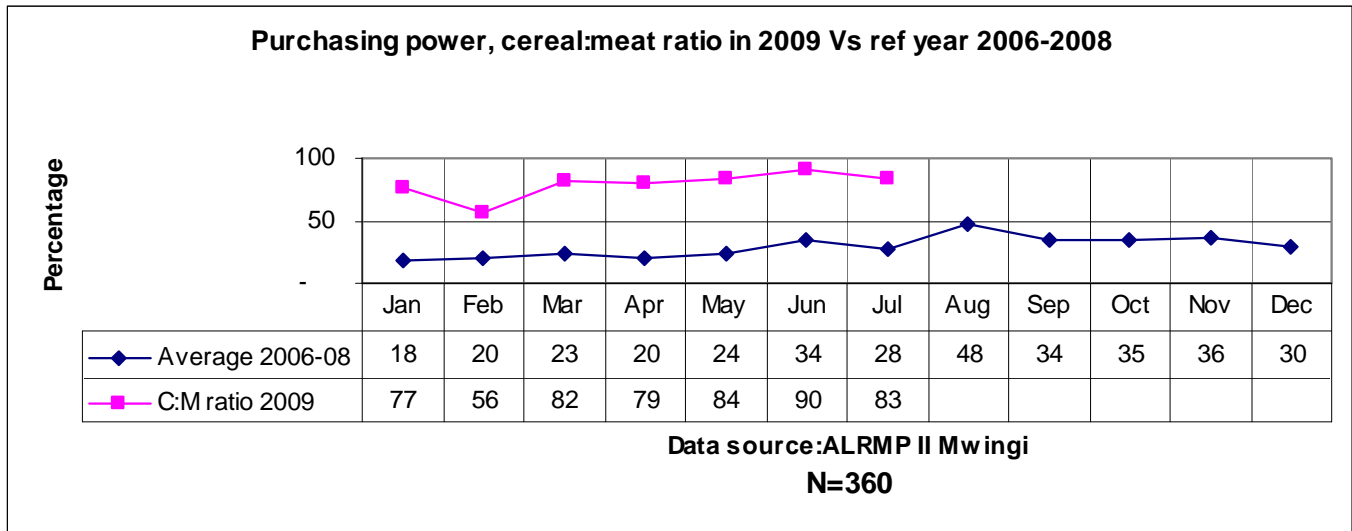
3.4.2 Livestock income

- About 15% of the households were involved in sale of livestock during the last one month.
- Compared to last month, this was an increment of about 8%. This could be attributed to the effects of drought where households are disposing extra herds due to lack of pasture and water.

3.4.3 Other sources of income

- Casual labour was the main source of income with about 36% of households being involved.
- Other main source of income was remittance from relatives working in urban areas.
- Petty trade was also important as numerous roadside kiosks were common.

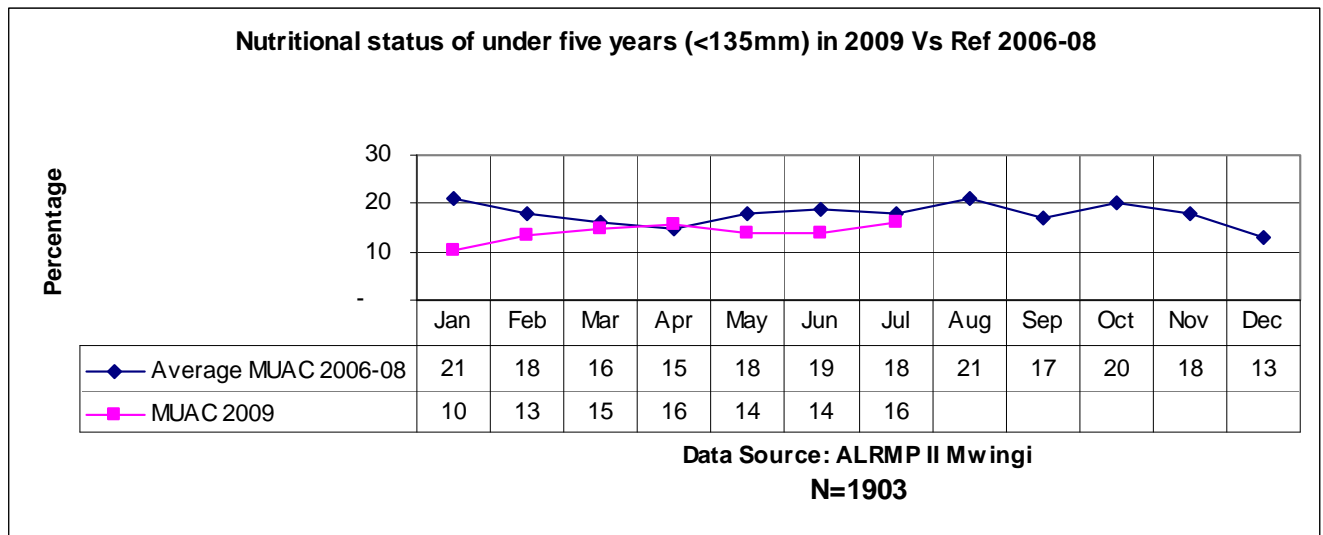
3.5 Cereal: Meat price ratio



- The terms of trade based on cereals:meat ratio dropped from 90% last month to 83%.
- This may be attributed to fluctuations in livestock prices and soaring cereal prices. This was not normal at the time of the year.
- Exchange rate remained unfavorable to the local economy, limiting cereals access by high percentage of households.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years declined during the month.
- The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition based on MUAC<135mm increased from 14% last month to 16%.
- The most affected areas were Tseikuru (31%), Ngomeni (21%), Nguni (18%) and Migwani (16%) divisions.
- The rising rates were due to deteriorating food insecurity situation in the district and there were no more supplementary feeds for children.

4.2 Human health

- There was no outbreak of notifiable human disease in the district.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non food intervention

- Water trucking was ongoing in selected institutions by the Ministry of Water.
- Distribution of livestock relief such as hay and supplements was ongoing on a small scale.

5.2 Food intervention

- Distribution of relief food under the protracted relief and emergency operation (PRRO) was ongoing, targeting 60% of population in Mwingi and Kyuso districts.

5.3 Coping strategies

- Skipping of meals was very common across the district.
- Extraction of water from plant tubers in Nuu and Nguni divisions was quite common.
- Casual labour was the main source of income. Other households relied on remittances from relatives.

- Selling of hay was common in Nuu and Migwani divisions.

6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Expansion of Food for Asset programme to target at least 65% of the population in the two districts. The ratio being offered to households should be scaled up from the current 50% to 75% due to the worsening drought.
- Water trucking to be expanded to cover more needy areas as the water situation gets worse.
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