

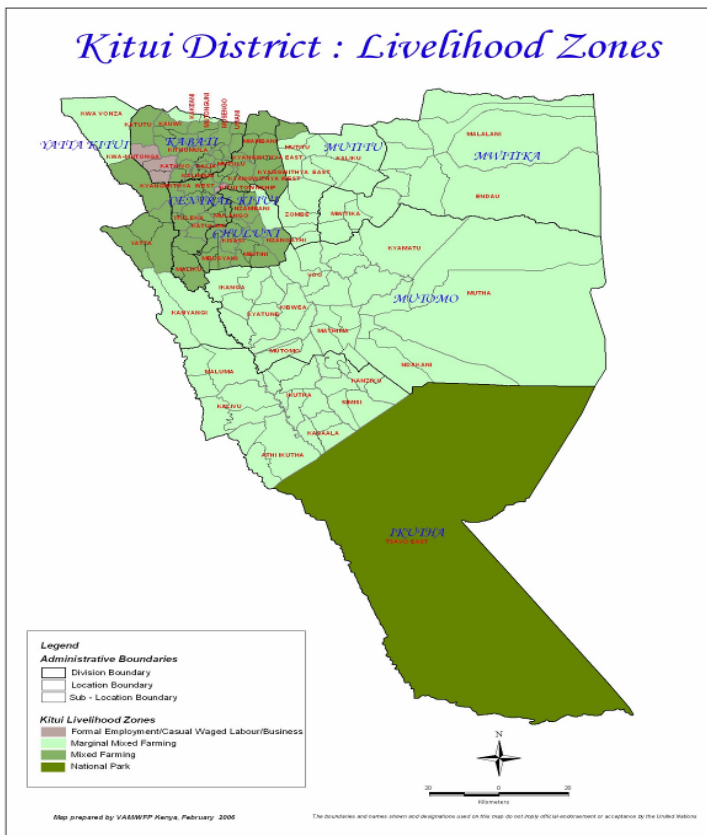


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN FOR JUNE 2009**

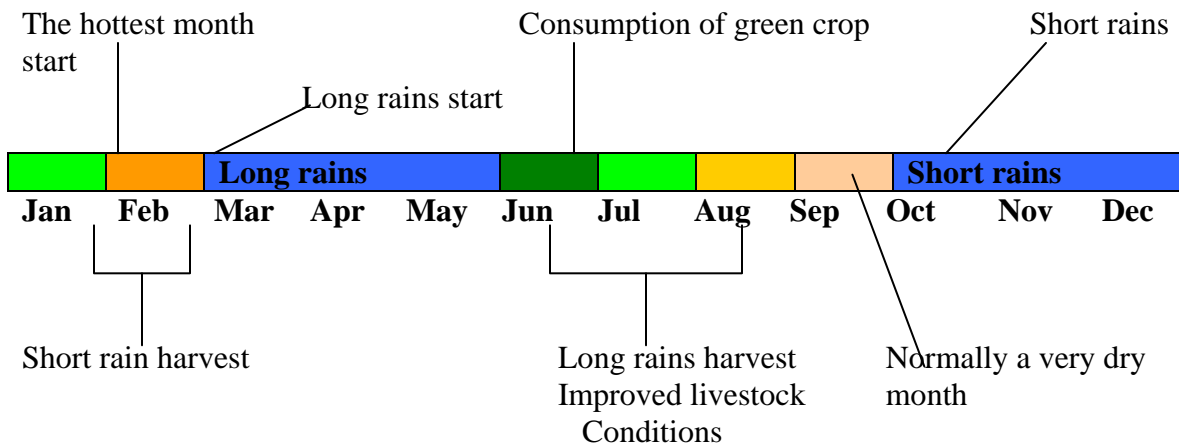
**Kitui District**

**Warning Stages**



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Mixed farming	Alarm	Worsening
Marginal mixed farming	Alarm	Worsening
District	Alarm	Worsening

**Seasonal calendar**



### **Situation overview**

- The month of June remained dry and hot.
- Pasture got depleted and the situation of natural vegetation declined.
- The district faced a water crisis. The main urban water supply (Masinga – Kitui pipeline) was disconnected following a drop in water levels in Masinga dam.
- The price of beans went-up while that of maize remained within the previous month's ranges.
- The body condition of cattle deteriorated, with deaths having been reported in Mutonguni and Matinyani divisions. The body condition of goats ranged from fair to good.
- The price of cattle dropped, while that of goats remained within the previous months' ranges.
- The nutrition status of children below the age of five years slightly improved. The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition was 9% compared to 10 last month.

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

- Enhanced de-stocking in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- Intensify the off-take programme in the district.
- Intensify malnutrition surveillance.
- De-worming of children in schools.
- Continued fuel supplementation to contingency water supplies in the entire district.
- Intensify borehole monitoring, repair and servicing.
- Sinking and equipping of new drought contingency boreholes.
- Procurement of stand by gen-sets to contingency water supplies.
- Intensify water trucking to schools and health institutions.
- Resume the school-feeding programme.

### **Current interventions**

#### **Food aid**

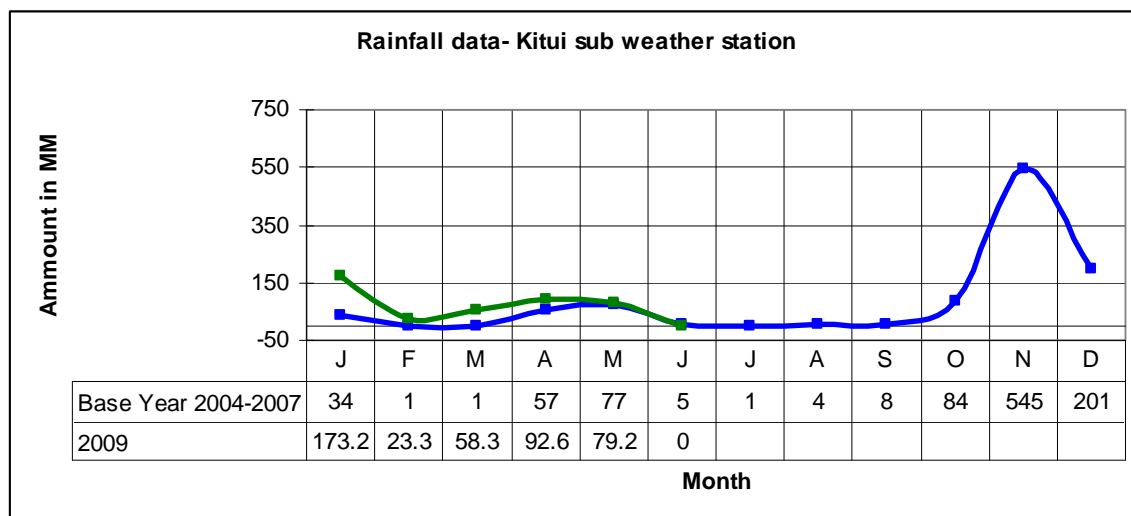
- PRRO covering 10 divisions.
- Supplementary-feeding programme for the under fives, pregnant and lactating mothers.

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

- Enhanced water trucking in both Kitui and Mutomo districts.
- Sinking and equipping of boreholes by Tanathi Water Service Board.
- Destocking campaigns.
- Livestock migration to reserve grazing areas.
- Normal extension services in crop production.
- Capacity building on nutrition surveillance and reporting.
- Social mobilisation on cholera alert and vitamin A supplementation.

## 1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall



- The month of June remained dry.
- The first half of the month was characterised by hot weather whereas the second was characterised by cold and windy days.

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The situation of natural vegetation in the district declined. In the mixed farming livelihood zone, In Mutonguni, Yatta and Matinyani divisions pasture got depleted and trees scanty.
- In Kabati Market it was observed that a batch of grass was retailing at Ksh 30 which most community members cannot afford.
- In the mixed-farming livelihood zone, grass is fast depleting and trees and shrubs have begun shedding leaves.
- The situation was more severe in Ikutha and Mutha divisions. The trend was not normal.

### 1.3 Water sources and availability

- The district faced a water crisis. The urban water supply (Masinga- Kitui Water Supply) was disconnected following drop in water levels in Masinga dam.
- This led to an acute water shortage in the entire mixed farming livelihood zone. The distances to the water points increased drastically and access to water significantly reduced.
- Communities in this livelihood zone are walking long distances to fetch water from traditional river wells which are far and their recharge was poor.
- Following this shortage, the price of water rose from Ksh3 per 20 litre jerrican to Ksh20.

**The table below shows the current sources of water as compared to 2008**

Source	Traditional river wells	Pans/Dams	Shallow wells	Rock catchments	Boreholes	Natural rivers
Year 2008	44.6%	2%	18%	1%	12.3%	9.3%
June 2009	55%	2%	7%	1%	27%	5%

#### **1.4 Implications on food security**

- The depletion of pasture and natural vegetation led to decline in the body condition of cattle.
- The disconnection of the Masinga –Kitui water pipeline has led to increased distances to water points and has made the commodity inaccessible to many.
- Due to congestion at the watering points communities are at risk of contracting water borne diseases due to contamination.
- Farmers in the mixed farming livelihood zone are desperate and are disposing their animals at throw away prices since they can no longer afford to feed them.

#### **2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)**

##### **2.1 Livestock body conditions**

- The livestock body conditions of cattle in the district declined.
- This trend was attributed to lack of forage and water in the grazing areas. The situation was more severe in Mutonguni, Yatta and Matinyani divisions where animals are currently dying out of starvation.
- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, the body condition of cattle was fair. This was due to availability of acacia pods.
- Donkeys in Mutonguni and Matinyani divisions are dying out of starvation and overworking.
- The body condition of the small stocks ranged from fair to good.

##### **2.1.2 Livestock diseases**

- No major livestock disease outbreak was reported during the month.
- Unconfirmed cases of ECF (*East Coast Fever*) and *New Castle Disease* (NCD) in poultry were reported in Central Division.

#### **2.2 Crop production**

##### **2.2.1 Timeliness and status of various crop production activities**

- Farmers in Central, Chuluni and Matinyani divisions were consuming green pigeon peas but the podding was poor.
- Fruit crops, including oranges, bananas, paw paws and avocado and water melons were at various stages of growth in Central, Chuluni and Matinyani divisions.

##### **2.2.2 Crop pests and diseases**

- No major crop pest and disease outbreaks were recorded during the reporting period.

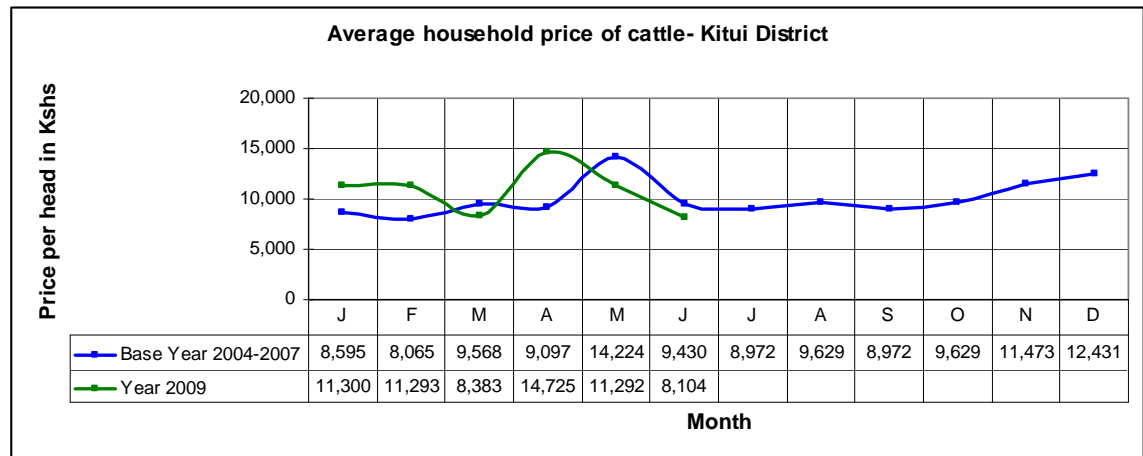
#### **2.3 Impact on food security**

- The poor body condition of cattle has led to lose of incomes and livelihood.
- The availability of pigeon peas in the above divisions has offered farmers reprieve from purchase of pulses.
- The absence of livestock disease outbreaks ensured that markets remained open and livestock trade flowed smoothly.

### 3.0 Access to food

#### 3.1 Livestock prices

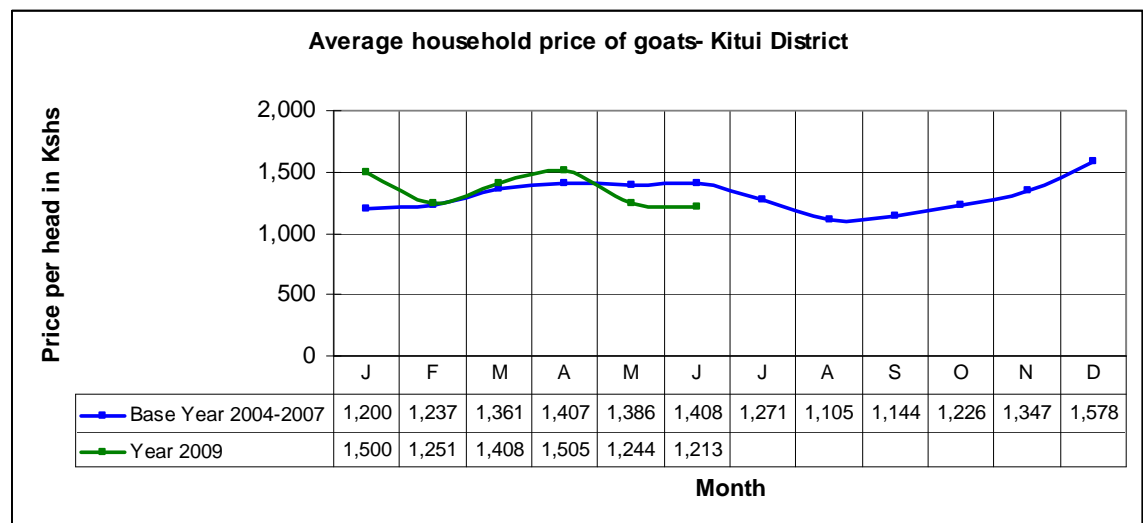
##### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



**N=330**

- The average price of cattle declined during the month.
- This trend was attributed to decline in body conditions of cattle in the district.
- The condition of cattle in Mutonguni division was so poor that no prices were offered for animals brought for sale in the markets.
- Compared to the long term average the trend was normal but the price value is low.

##### 3.1.2 Goat prices



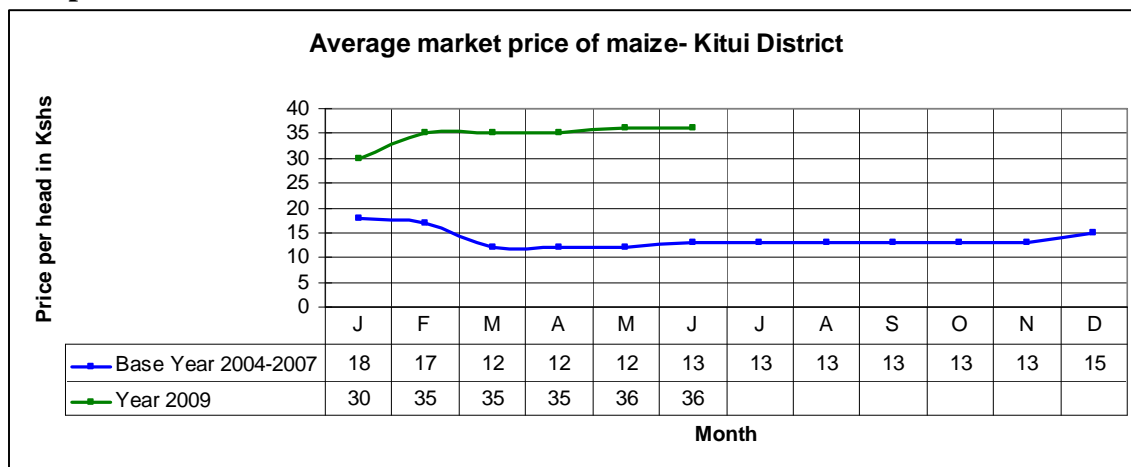
**N=330**

- The price of goats remained within the previous months' ranges. This stability was attributed to the prevailing good body conditions of goats in the district.
- The highest prices were reported in Central Division of Ksh1,667 whereas the lowest prices were reported in Ikutha Division of Ksh924.

- However, it is important to note that the absolute prices are low as compared to the long term average.
- The trend was not normal.

### 3.2 Crop prices

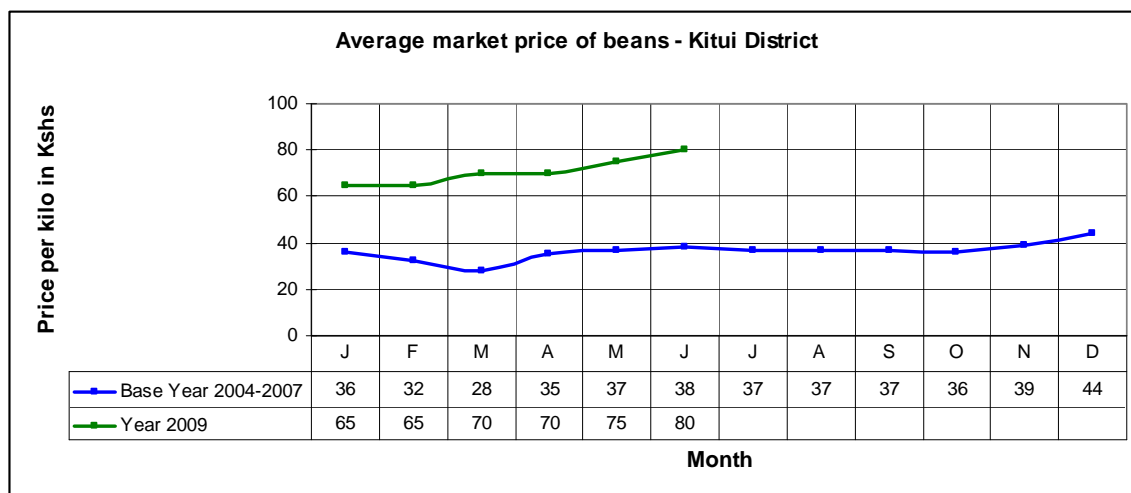
#### 3.2.1 Maize prices



**N=330**

- The average price of maize remained within the previous months' ranges.
- This stability was attributed to the reduction in demand for the commodity since part of the communities' food requirements were being met under the protracted relief and recovery operation in the district.
- The trend was not normal.

#### 3.2.2 Beans prices

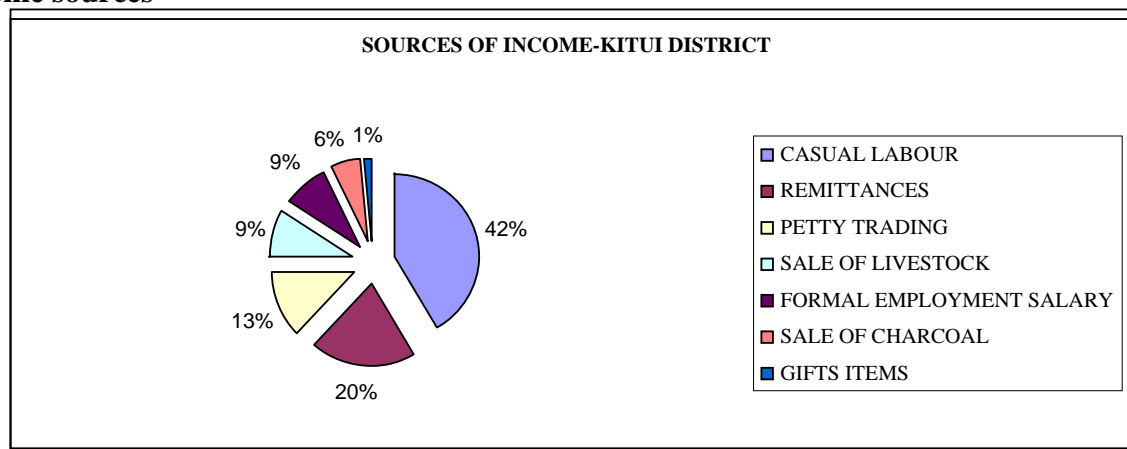


**N=330**

- The average price of beans in the district went-up. This was attributed to shortage of the crop in the market.
- The prices varied across the livelihood zones. In the mixed farming livelihood zone the commodity was trading at between Ksh70 and 80 depending on the location of the market.

- In the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, the prices were as high as Kshs. 85 in Mutha division.
- The trend was normal but the prices high compared to the long term average.

### 3.3 Income sources

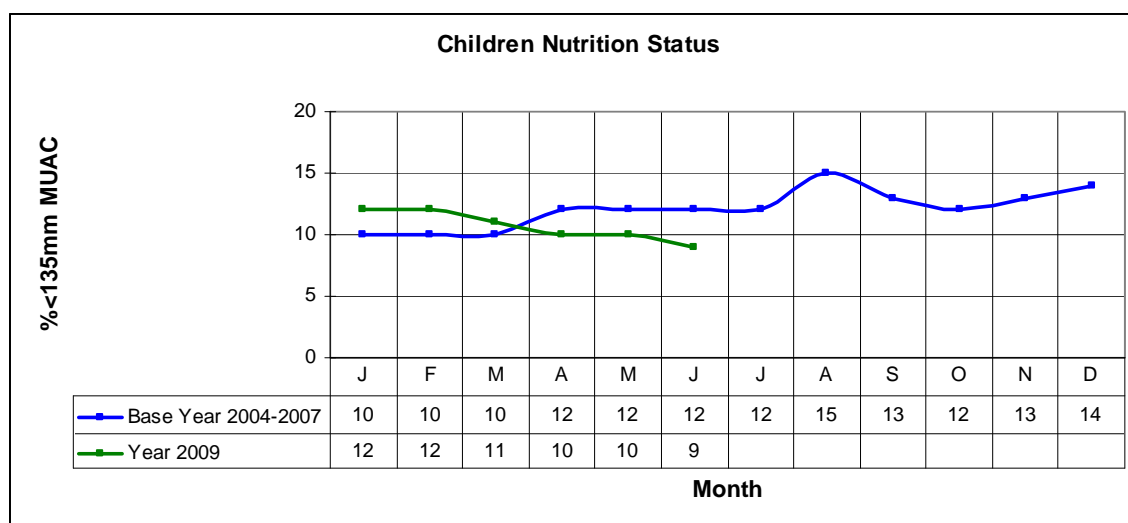


**N=330**

The main source of income in the district was casual labour, followed by remittances. Following the failure of the long rains, there was no income from sale of crops.

## 4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

### 4.1 Nutrition status



**N=1008**

- The nutrition status of children under the age of five years improved slightly.
- The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition was 9% compared to 10 last month.
- This improvement was attributed to the on-going PRRO and supplementary feeding Programme ongoing in the district.

- The highest percentage of children at risk of malnutrition was reported in Yatta (20%) followed by Ikutha (10.9%) and the lowest was recorded in Mutomo division of 3 %. The trend was not normal.

## **5.0 Current interventions**

### **5.1 Food aid**

- PRRO covering 10 divisions.

### **5.2 Non- food interventions**

- Enhanced water trucking in both Kitui and Mutomo districts.
- Sinking and equipping of boreholes by Tanathi Water Service Board.
- Destocking campaigns.
- Livestock migration to reserve grazing areas.
- Normal extension services in crop production.
- Capacity building on nutrition surveillance and reporting.
- Social mobilisation on cholera alert vitamin A supplementation.

### **5.3 Coping mechanisms**

- Reduction in the size of meals.
- Reduction in the number of meals per day.
- Borrowing food from friends.
- Petty trade.
- Rural-urban migration.

## **6.0 Recommendations to DSG & KFSM**

- Enhanced de-stocking in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- Intensify the off-take programme in the district.
- Intensify malnutrition surveillance.
- De-worming of children in schools.
- Continued fuel supplementation to contingency water supplies in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.
- Intensify borehole monitoring repairs and servicing.
- Sinking and equipping of new drought contingency boreholes.
- Resume the school-feeding programme.