

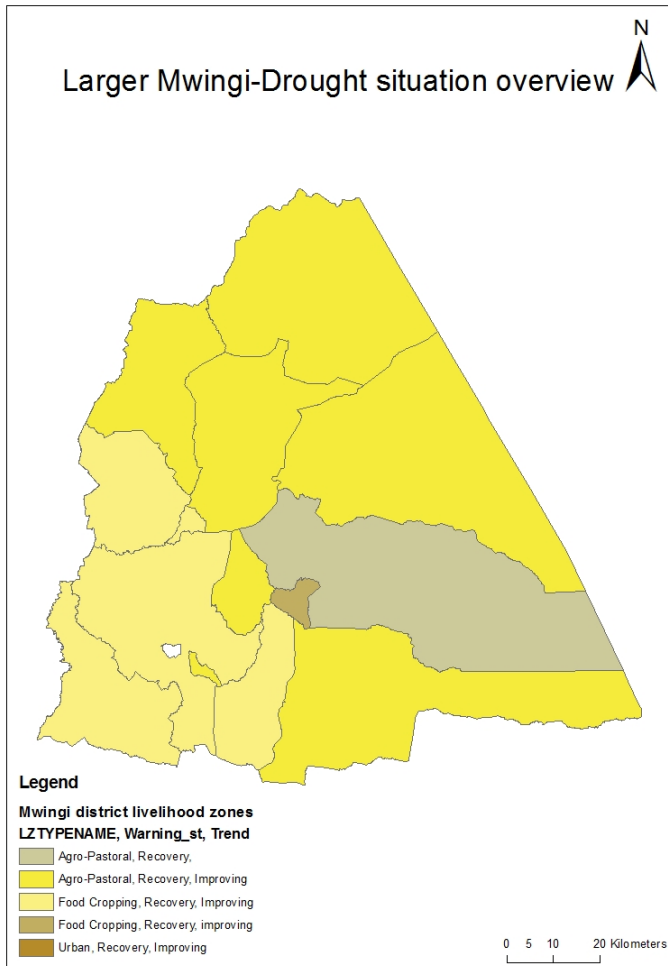


OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II

DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, NOVEMBER 2009

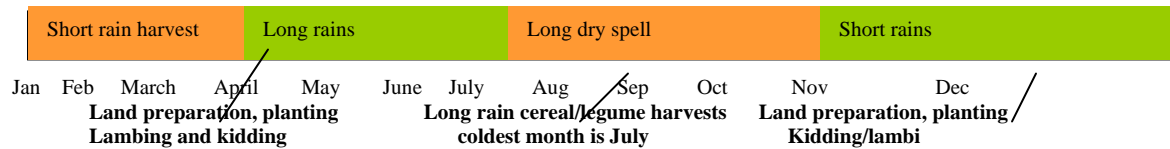
Mwingi District

Warning Stage



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Agro pastoral zone	Recovery	Improving
Mixed farming zone	Recovery	Improving
District	Recovery	Improving

Seasonal Calendar



Situation overview

- The district received some rains in November but was less in intensity and poorly distributed compared to last month. Central division received 111mm of rains in 6 days followed by Migwani at 79mm in 5 days while Ngomeni received the least with 12mm of rains in 1 day.
- Water access and availability has quite improved.
- Quality and quantity of natural vegetation has improved compared to previous month.
- Tseikuru and Nguni divisions showed high levels of malnutrition.

Ongoing interventions

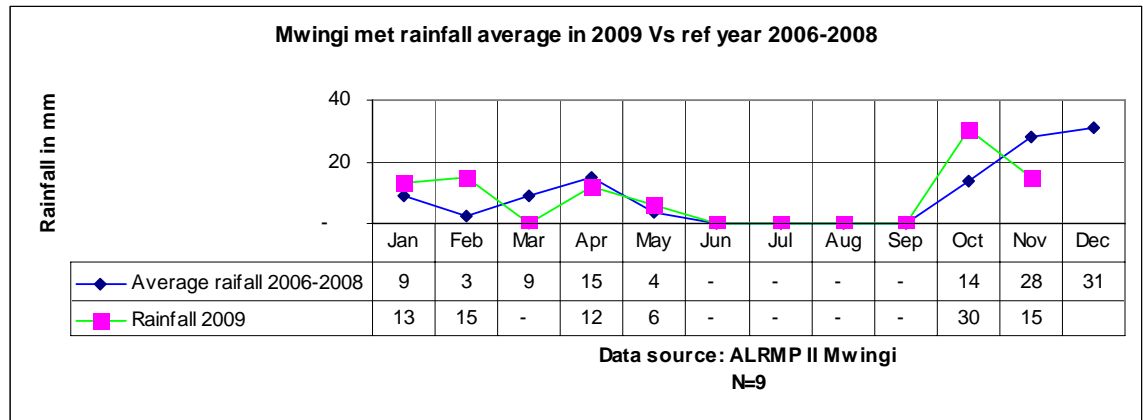
- The Veterinary department conducted a vaccination campaign in selected parts of the district like Ngomeni against Rift Valley fever, Lumpy skin diseases.
- Mwingi ALRMP facilitated peace committee meetings in the larger Kyuso district.
- Rapid response team was still in the field working on community water facilities to bring them to optimum operating conditions.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Due to lack of drought animals that would have assisted in weeding, the DSG recommended the adoption of communal weeding under the Food for Asset programme so as to cope up with the problem of weeds.
- More efforts should be geared towards rehabilitation of denuded rangelands during this rain season. This will ensure sufficient pastures in future and minimize livestock deaths in times of drought.
- WFP should fast track food deliveries to the beneficiaries so as to curb rising cases of malnutrition. There is a lot of farm work going on and beneficiaries require this food to enable them to work hard.
- There is need to have close surveillance of water structures like dams to prevent damages associated with overflows.
- Some roads in the district have been damaged by rains and there is need to rehabilitate them immediately to improve transportation.
- Public health facilities ought to be well equipped with anti malaria drugs to cope up with increasing cases of malaria due to the current rains.

1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

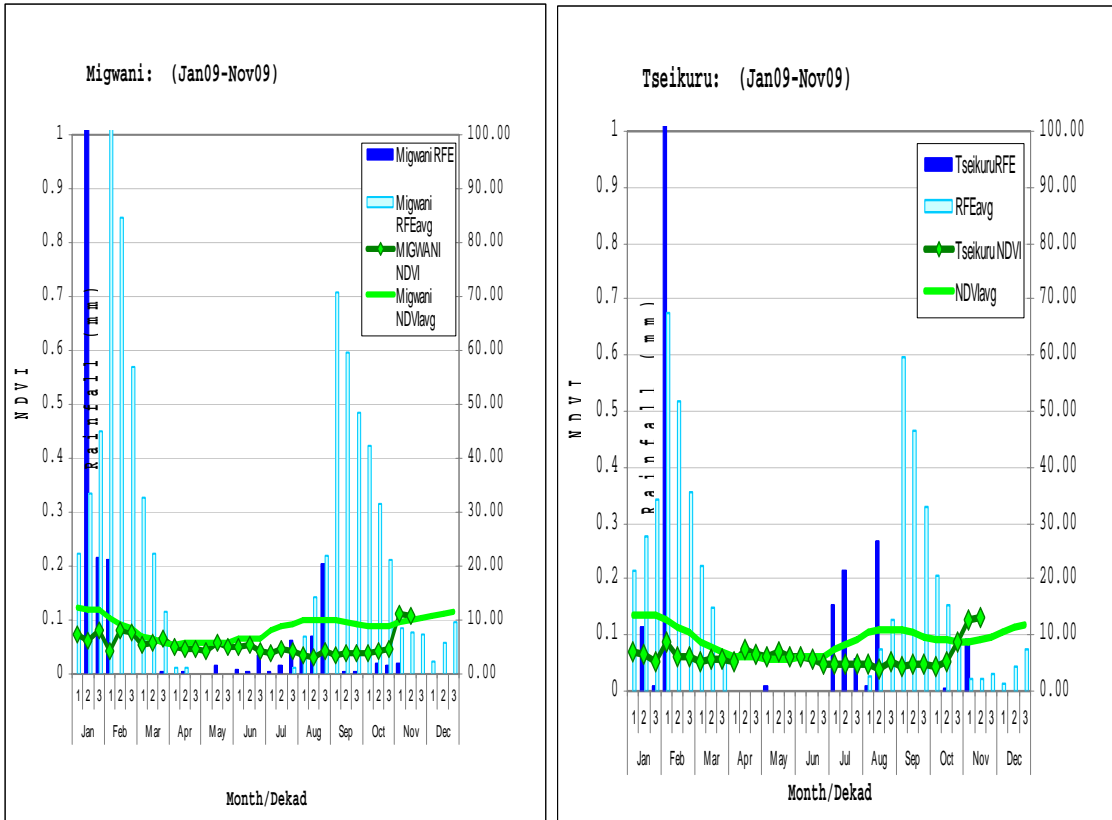
1.1 Rainfall



- The district started receiving rains from mid of October. All the divisions and livelihood zones did receive the rains although differing in intensity and distribution. Last month, Nguni division had the highest amount of rains totaling 297mm realized in 7 days followed by Kyuso division with 198.5mm in 4 days. Ngomeni had the least with 30mm in 2 days.
- In November, the rains were quite erratic. Central division received 111mm of rains in 6 days followed by Migwani at 79mm in 5 days. Again Ngomeni has so far received the least with 12mm of rains in 1 day.
- The weather was quite warm and humid. Rain clouds could be seen hovering around but it has not been raining most of the time. Both temporal and spatial distribution of the rains has so far not been good and this is having adverse effects on cropping activities. Crops have started to weather in places like Mumoni, Ngomeni and Tseikuru regions.

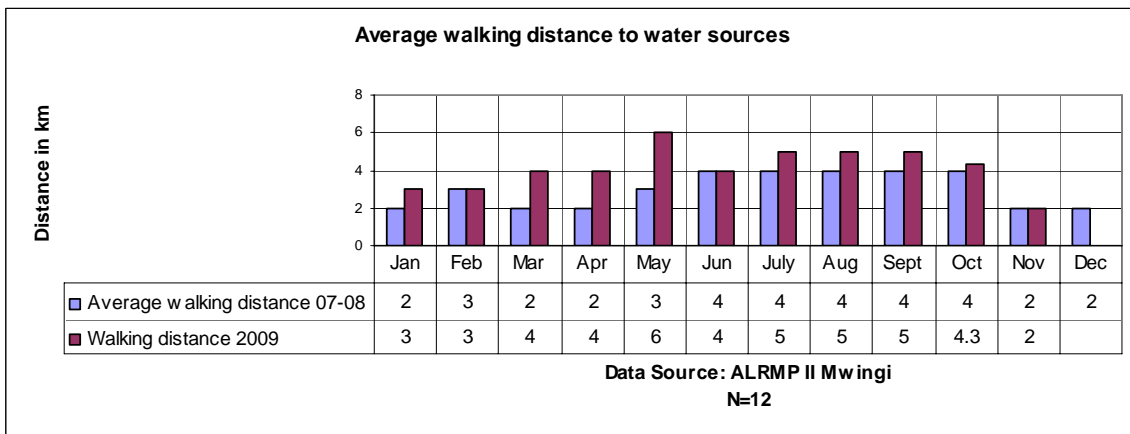
1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- As can be seen from the graphs below, the district recorded some rains last months and during the first decad of November resulting in improved pastures in both agropastoral and mixed farming livelihood zones. Both livelihoods are exhibiting an NDVI index of above 1.1.
- The quality of natural vegetation has significantly improved over the last one month. The landscape is covered by evergreen grasses and browse. The lush pastures are maturing.



Normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) AND Rainfall estimates (RFE)

1.3 Water sources and availability



Water source access and availability improved for the last one month, leading to reduced walking distances to water points in most places. People and livestock accessed water from their usual traditional rain season water sources.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Erratic rains

The rains have been quite erratic this month. Most affected are the farmers who have invested a lot in planting seeds. The dry spell has affected many crops leading to weathering. Urgent rains are required immediately to save crops otherwise the district might just get another crop failure.

1.4.2 Implications on food security

The rains had a positive effect on livestock sector. This is expected to improve animal body condition and milk production although most households will need to undertake restocking. The crop sector is still vulnerable to failure due to poor rain distribution in the district. The district still requires 2-3 weeks of regular rains for it to be assumed to be out of danger of crop failure.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.1 Livestock body condition

The animal body condition for large stock has been improving gradually due to presence of water and pastures. As for the small stock, their body condition is quite good.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

There was no outbreak of notifiable livestock disease although cases of worm and tick infestation are being reported due to the current rains. Cases of diarrhea were also reported due to consumption of wet lush pastures.

2.1.3 Milk production

Milk production has improved over the last one month. This could be attributed to availability of pastures and water. Improved body condition for goats has improved milk production.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities

Crops that were planted early reached weeding stage. Some legumes like beans were at flowering stage whereby households started consuming their green leaves. Some households were doing late planting but they are most likely to be affected by erratic rains.

2.2.2 Pests and diseases

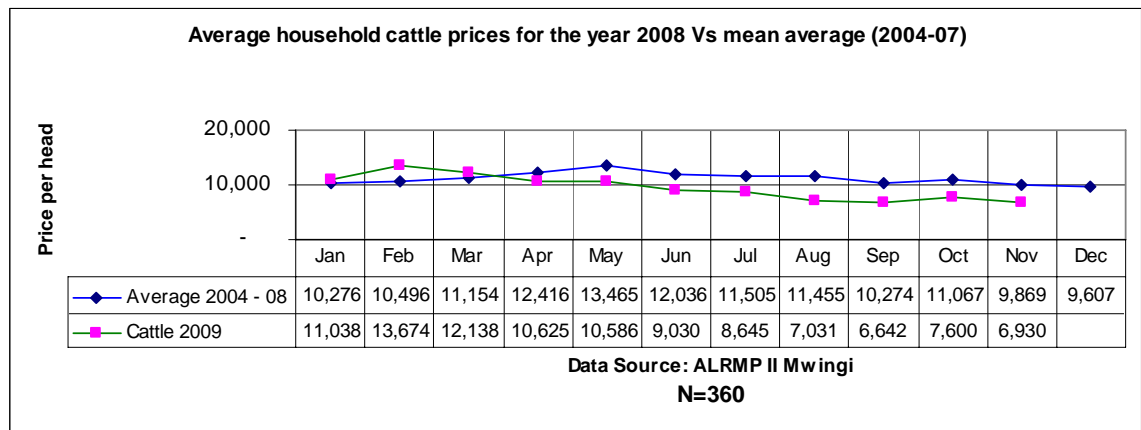
Cases of major crop pests and diseases have so far not been reported but there is mushrooming of weeds in the farms. A type of caterpillar that is eating legume leaves has been spotted in Tseikuru, Ngomeni and Mui divisions.

2.2.3 Implications on food security

Improved livestock sector is going to have a positive effect on food security especially within agro pastoral zones. Crop production sector was still at vulnerable stage and it requires sustained rains in the next few weeks for each to reach maturity.

3.0 Access to food

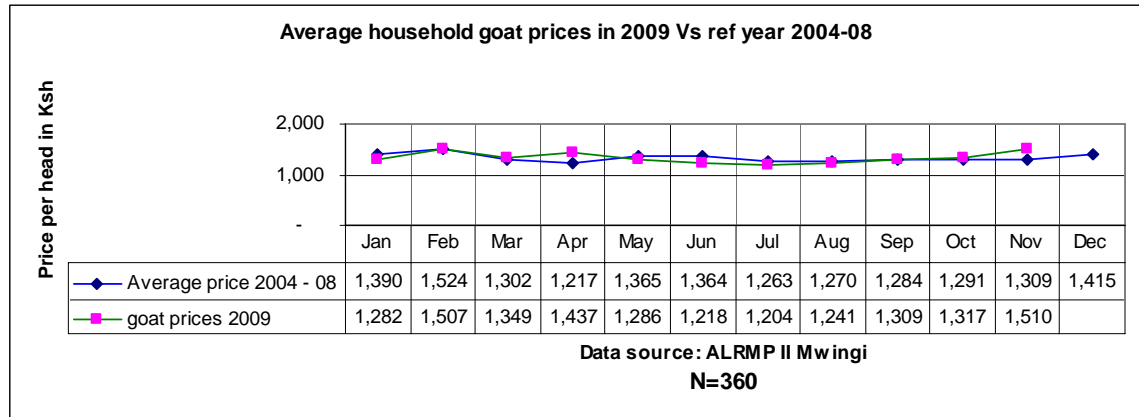
3.1 Cattle prices



There was a reduction in cattle prices from an average of Ksh7,600 per head last month to Ksh6,930. The prices were quite low compared to the long term prices. The highest prices were in Migwani area at Ksh10,250 while the lowest was in

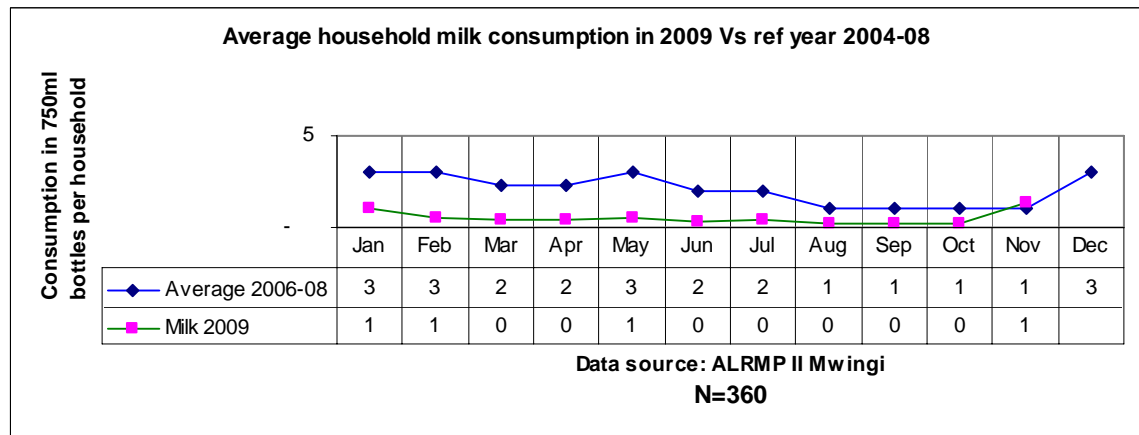
Central division at Ksh3,900. Cattle prices have been poor for the last few months due to their poor body condition since they were the hardest hit by drought.

3.2 Goat prices



The average household goat prices improved slightly from Ksh1,317 per head last month to Ksh1,510. The highest prices were in Migwani at Ksh2,110 while the lowest were in Central at Ksh1,245. The improved prices were affected by improved body condition of goats due to availability of pastures and water.

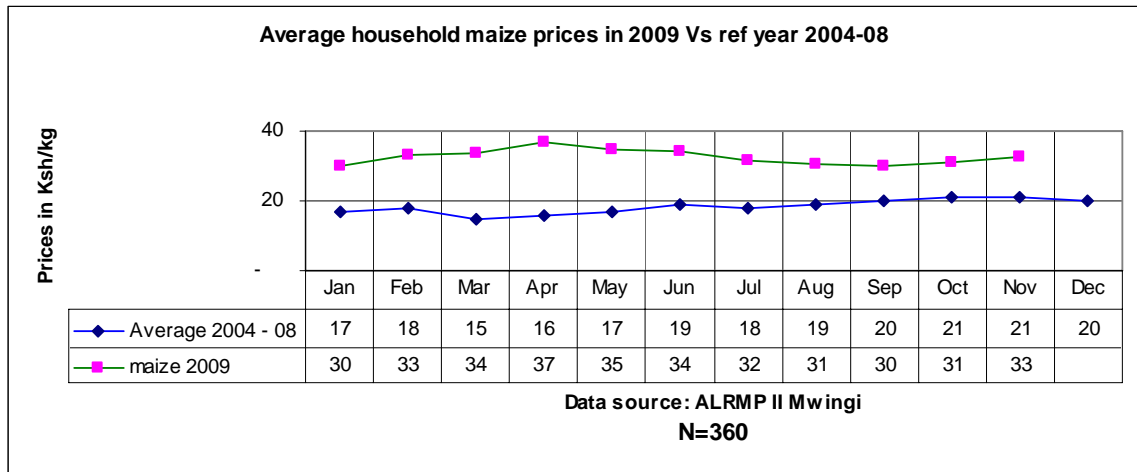
3.3 Milk consumption



Due to improved milk production over the last one month, milk consumption also improved to one bottle per household. As pasture improved in terms of quality and quantity, it is expected that milk production and consumption will improve in the near future. The biggest hindrance to milk production and consumption was the low number of livestock as most of them were decimated by drought.

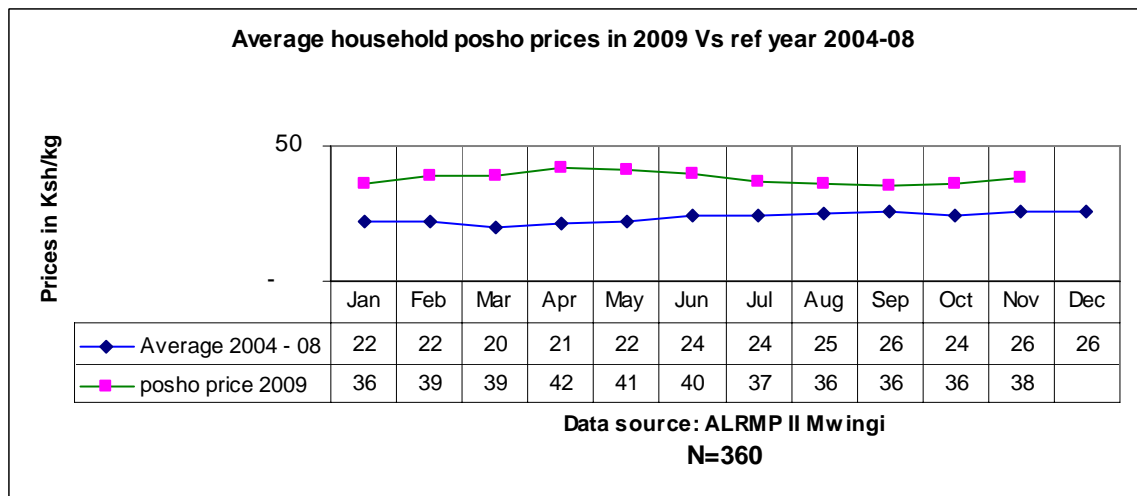
3.4 Crop prices

3.4.1 Maize prices



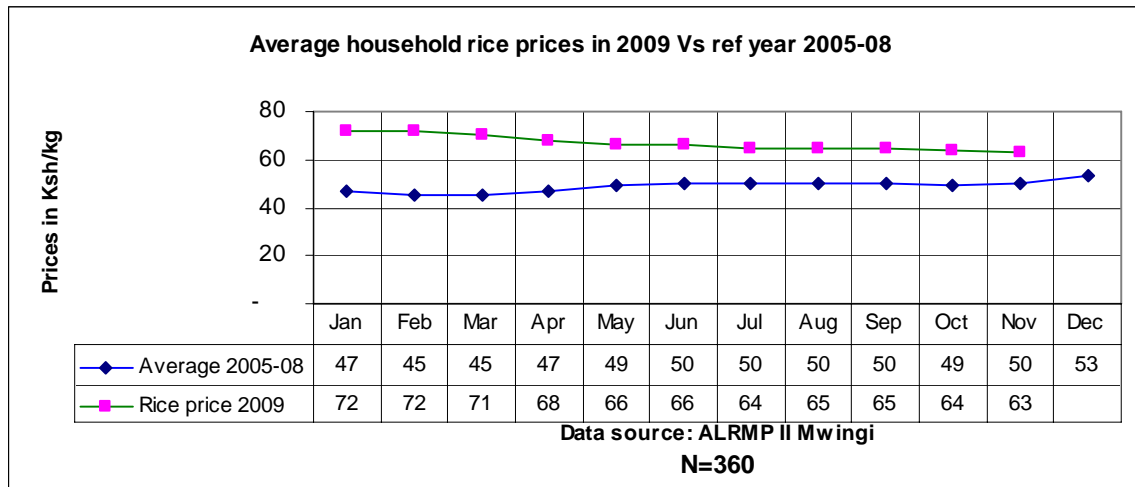
The average household maize prices rose from Ksh31 per kilo last month to Ksh 33. The price ranged from Ksh30 to Ksh35 with Nguni having the lowest at Ksh 30. The prices were stable due to good market supplies.

3.4.2 Posho prices



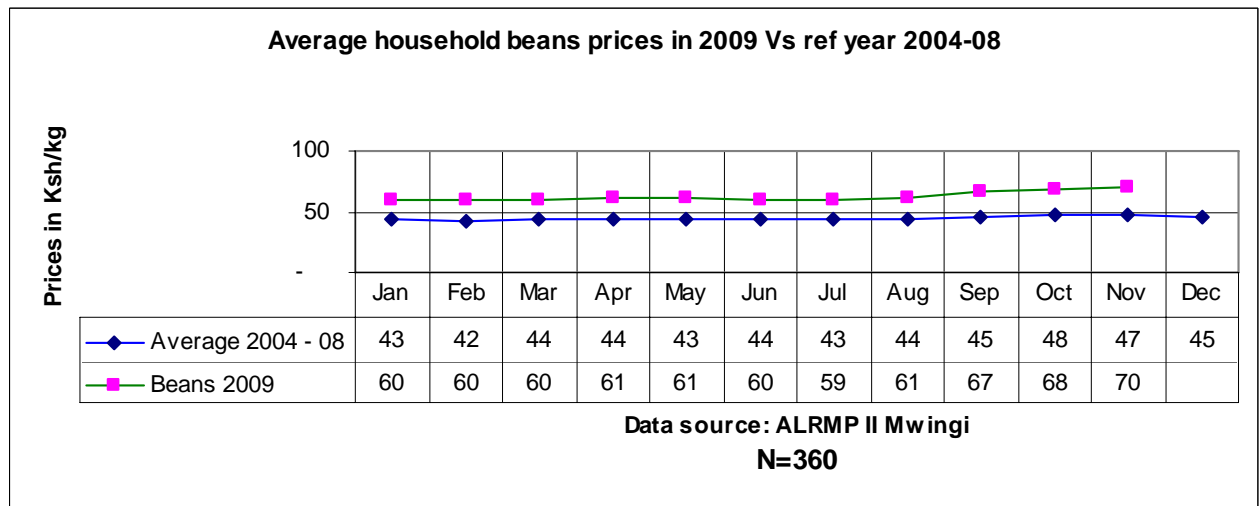
The average household posho prices rose from Ksh36 per kilo last month to Ksh 38. This was being affected by rise in maize prices over the same period.

3.4.3 Rice prices



The average household rice prices declined slightly from Ksh64 per kilo last month to Ksh63. The prices have not been changing so much due to low demand of rice.

3.4.4 Beans prices



The average household beans prices increased slightly from Ksh68 last month to Ksh70 per kilo. The increase in prices could be due to high demand for planting beans seeds.

3.5 Income

3.5.1 Crop income

There was no crop income at the moment since harvesting of crops is yet to be done.

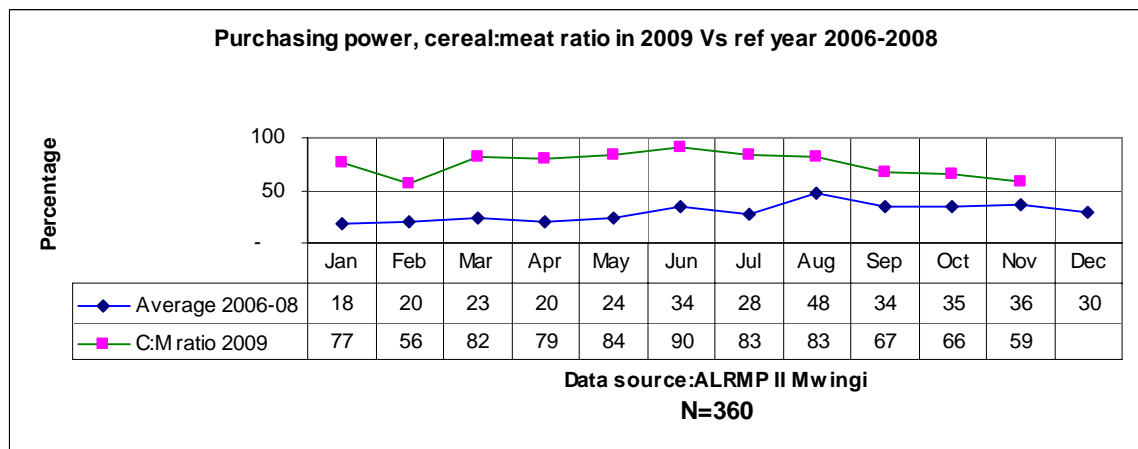
3.5.2 Livestock income

About 10% of the households were involved in livestock sales. Goats were the most traded livestock comprising of 76% of all traded livestock.

3.5.3 Other sources of income

Casual labour was the main source of income with at least 46% of households being involved. Remittances were another major source of income especially in Migwani, Central, Mui, Nuu and Nguni divisions.

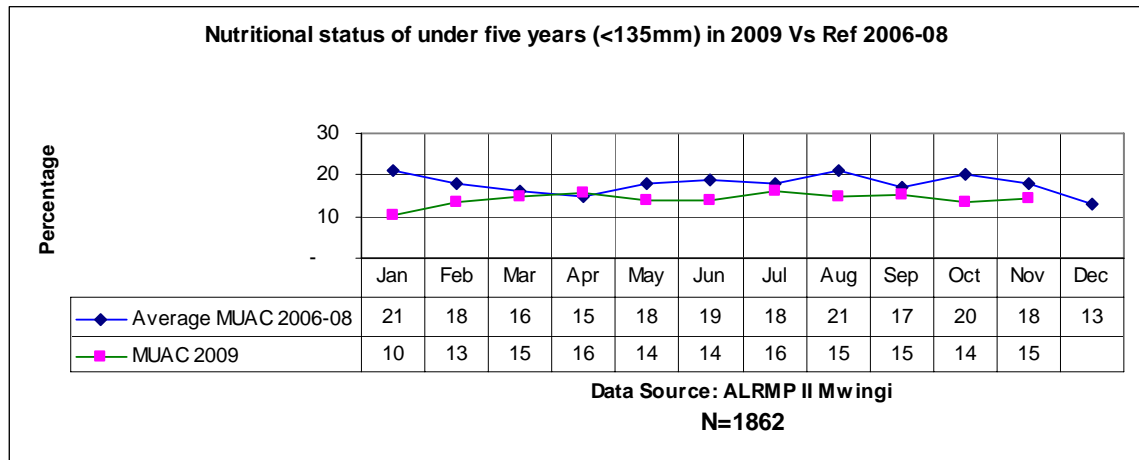
3.6 Cereal: Meat price ratio



- The terms of trade based on cereals to meat ratio dropped from 66% last year to 59% currently. This could be due to increase in prices of livestock products compared to cereal products over the last one year. Compared to last month, a household is able to spend less livestock products to obtain the same amount of cereals.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Stability)

4.1 Nutrition status



- The percentage of children rated at risk of malnutrition rose from 14% last month to 15% . Tseikuru had the highest rate at 34% followed by Nguni division at 22% while Mui division had the least at 7%.
- The high rates were attributed to severe food insecurity. The situation has been aggravated by failure by WFP to provide food under the Food for Asset programme during the last three months.

4.2 Human health

- There wasn't any outbreak of human diseases in the district although cases of malaria are being reported.
- Cases of dog bites have been reported in Tseikuru region and there is a need to conduct anti rabies vaccination immediately.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Non-food interventions

- The Veterinary department conducted a vaccination campaign in selected parts of the district like Ngomeni against Rift Valley fever, Lumpy skin diseases.
- Mwingi ALRMP has facilitated peace committee meetings in the larger Kyuso district.

5.2 Food interventions

- No food distribution took place due to delays in procurement by WFP.

5.3 Coping strategies

Most households relied on casual labour and remittances for hard cash, which was used to purchase food.

6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Due to lack of draft animals that would have assisted in weeding, the DSG recommended the adoption of communal weeding under the Food for Asset programme so as to cope up with the problem of weeds.
- More efforts should be geared towards rehabilitation of denuded rangelands during this rain season. This will ensure sufficient pastures in future and minimize livestock deaths in times of drought.
- WFP should fast track food deliveries to the beneficiaries so as to curb rising cases of malnutrition.
- There is need to have close surveillance of water structures like dams to prevent damages associated with overflows.
- Some roads in the district have been damaged by rains and there is need to rehabilitate them immediately to improve transportation.
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