



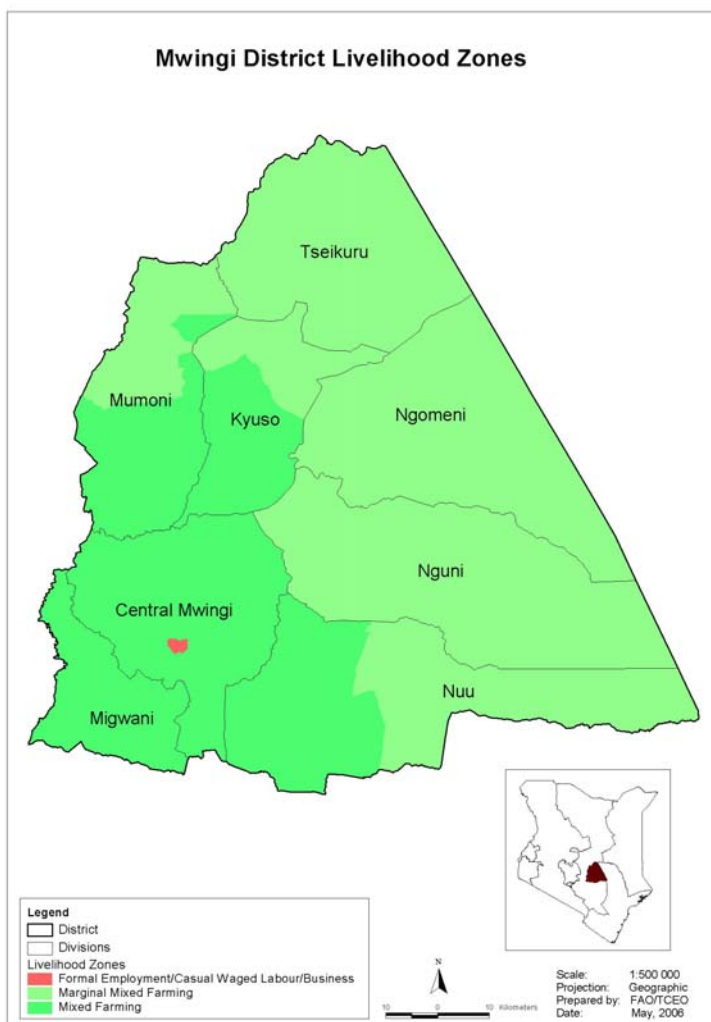
**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, JANUARY 2010**

**Mwingi District**

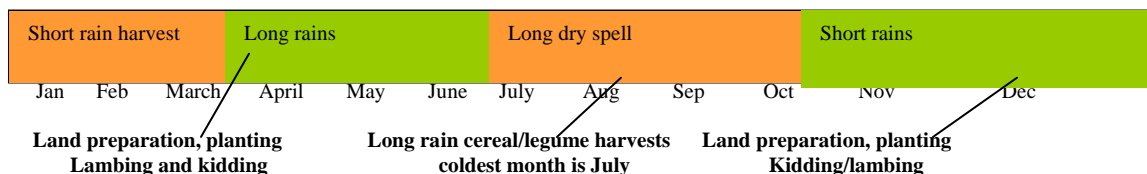
**Warning Stage**

**Mwingi District Livelihood Zones**



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

**Seasonal calendar**



## **Situation overview**

- Some rains were reported during the last week of December and the first week of January, though they were less intense and with poor distribution. Central Mwingi recorded about 11mm in 3 days, Nuu division 36mm in 3 days, Migwani 17mm in 2 days, Ngomeni 33mm in 2 days, Tseikuru 6mm in 2 days and Nguni 114mm in 3 days.
- Water access and availability was fair.
- Condition of natural vegetation was good, leading to improved animal body condition. Livestock prices were also improving.
- Some households started harvesting, though the expected yield will be below average.
- The nutrition status of children below five years improved during the month, with 13% of sampled children rated at risk of malnutrition compared to 15% last month. Tseikuru had the highest level at 21% followed by Nguni at 19% and Nuu at 18%.

## **Current interventions**

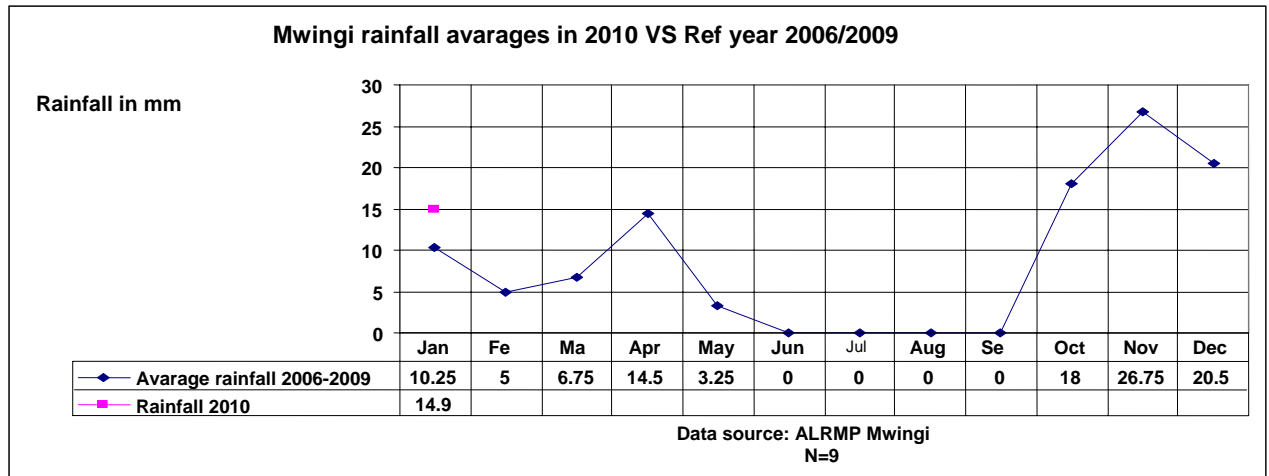
- Immunisation and vitamin A supplementation by the Health ministry.
- Distribution of free mosquito nets and anti-malarial drugs.
- Supplementary and therapeutic feeding in health facilities.
- Adoption of drought-tolerant crops was observed in the district.
- Soil and water conservation measures were undertaken in selected areas.
- Water harvesting techniques were being adopted for crop production.
- Traditional and modern technologies were being used to preserve the harvested cereals.
- Conservation of crop residues and left over for feeding livestock during times of scarcity is being undertaken by some farmers.

## **Recommendations to DSG and KFSM**

- Up scaling production of drought tolerant/early maturing crops in the district in the next planting season by all stakeholders.
- Sensitizing the communities on proper sanitation and hygiene e.g. construction of latrine and toilets.
- Up scaling of supplementary and therapeutic feeding.
- Up scaling of mobile immunization activities in the district.
- Conservation of crop residues and left over for feeding livestock during times of scarcity.
- Practice restricted grazing as opposed to free grazing so as to minimise wastage of pastures.
- There is need to undertake post harvest management activities to sensitize farmers who have harvested on how to preserve their harvested crops.

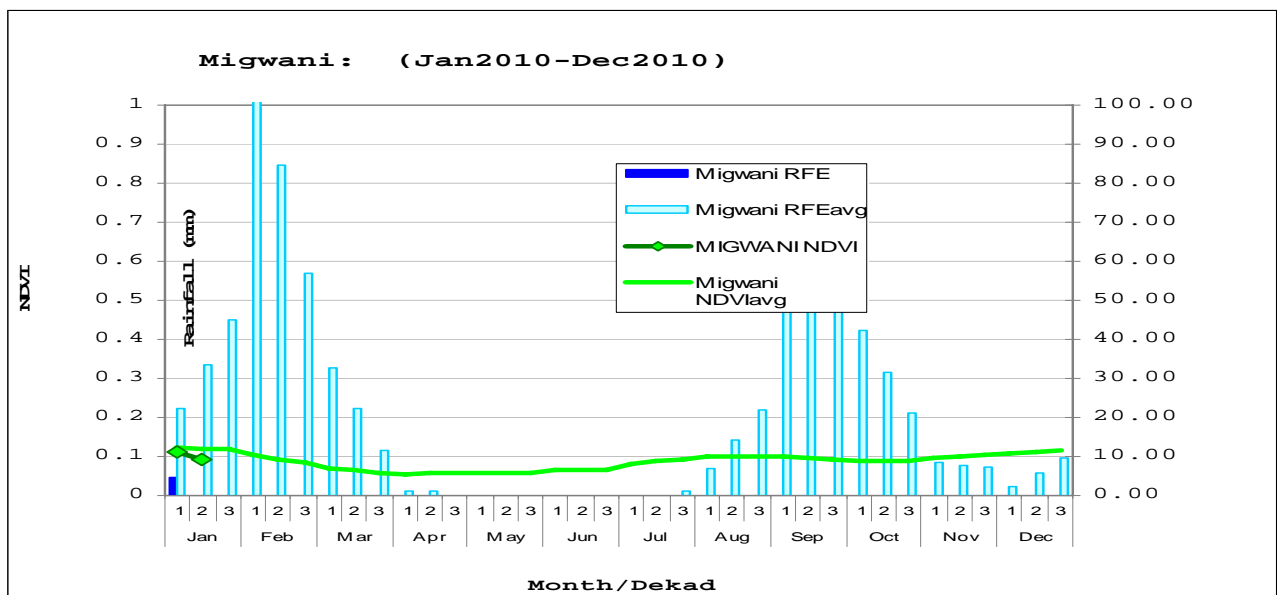
## 1.0 Environmental indicators (stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall

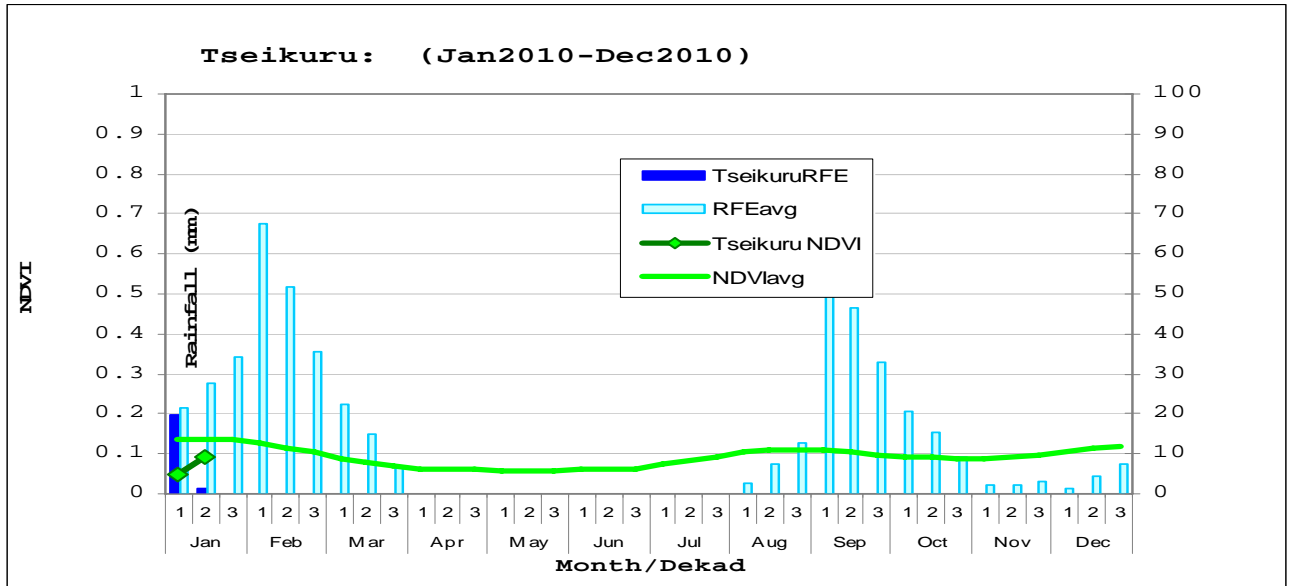


- There were some rains recorded in the district during the last two weeks of December and the first one week of January. The intensity was low compared to the earlier weeks of December. The rains have since ceased since the second week of January. In January, Central Mwingi had about 11mm of rain in 3 days, Nuu division had 36mm in 3 days, Migwani had 17mm in 2 days, Ngomeni had 33mm in 2 days, Tseikuru had 6mm in 2 days while Nguni had 114mm in 3 days.
- The weather was cold and cloudy in the mornings followed by very hot afternoons and warm nights.

### 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture



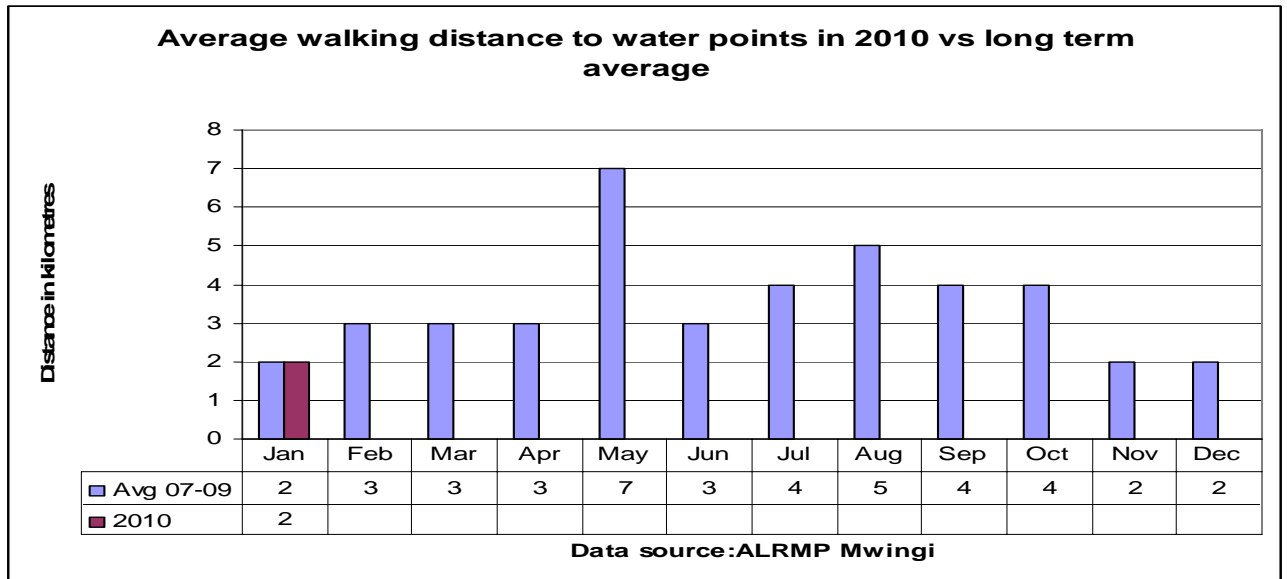
(Mixed farming livelihood zone)



Normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) and rainfall estimates (RFA) for Tseikuru district (Agro pastoral livelihood zone)

- Rainfall performance was generally better during the last decad of December and the first decad of January, with agro pastoral regions doing better than mixed farming zones as seen from the above diagrams.
- The quality and quantity of natural vegetation was good, though it has not changed since last month with an NDVI index of 0.1 being maintained.

1.3 Water sources and availability



Water access and availability was fair, with the average walking distance to water points remaining at two kilometers. Households got their water from the usual traditional water sources such as shallow wells, rock catchments among others. Households spent their time in other productive activities as they spent less time ferrying water.

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

- The performance of rains had a positive impact on water and livestock sectors. The regeneration of perennial and annual pastures ensured that the district had sufficient pasture, which can last up to the next long rains season. There was enough water for both domestic and livestock consumption.
- On crop sector, the poor distribution of the rains resulted in mixed fortunes for the farmers with some expecting to get some harvest while in other farms, crops performed poorly.

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

#### **2.1 Livestock production**

##### **2.1.1 Livestock body condition**

The animal body condition is fair for the large stock and good for the small stock.

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

There was no outbreak of major livestock disease in the district although there were rumours of suspected cases of foot and mouth disease in Ngomeni, Migwani and Kyuso regions.

##### **2.1.3 Milk production**

Milk production was fair, though it remained the same compared to last month. The improved pasture and water availability contributed to improved milk production. The biggest hindrance to milk production was the small livestock population as most of them were decimated by the previous drought.

#### **2.2 Crop production**

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

- Crops were at different level of maturity. Some harvesting of millet, maize and sorghum. Others that were planted late were still young. Almost all the beans crop failed due to poor distribution of rains.
- The performance of the crops can be said to be below average due to several factors. These include poor and inadequate planting materials, poor rains, low acreage planted, and lack of draft animals among others.

##### **2.2.2 Pests and disease**

Several pests have been reported to have attacked crops. These include weevils, chaffer grubs, aphids, loppers, ball worms, termites and stalk borers. Legumes such as green grams were most affected.

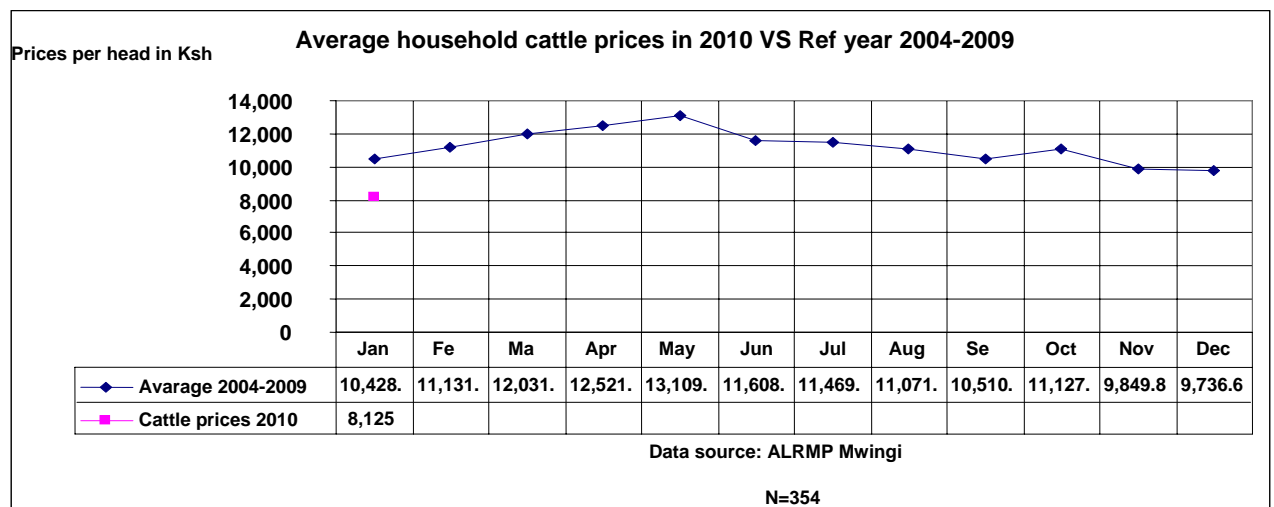
### 2.2.3 Implications on food security

- Even though the district has few pockets of abundance in crop production, majority of the households are expected to get a yield of below average. This is due to the factors highlighted above.
- The acreage that was put under cultivation was less than a half due to lack of oxen . Animals that are normally relied upon for cultivation had succumbed to drought or were too weak to work.
- The planting materials were inadequate and expensive thus farmers were not able to plant their normal acreage.
- Most of the maize was consumed on farm. Households that planted drought tolerant crops such as millet and sorghum will get a fair harvest.
- Generally, the expected yield is expected to last for one to two months and the vulnerable households will continue to rely on relief food.

## 3.0 Access to food

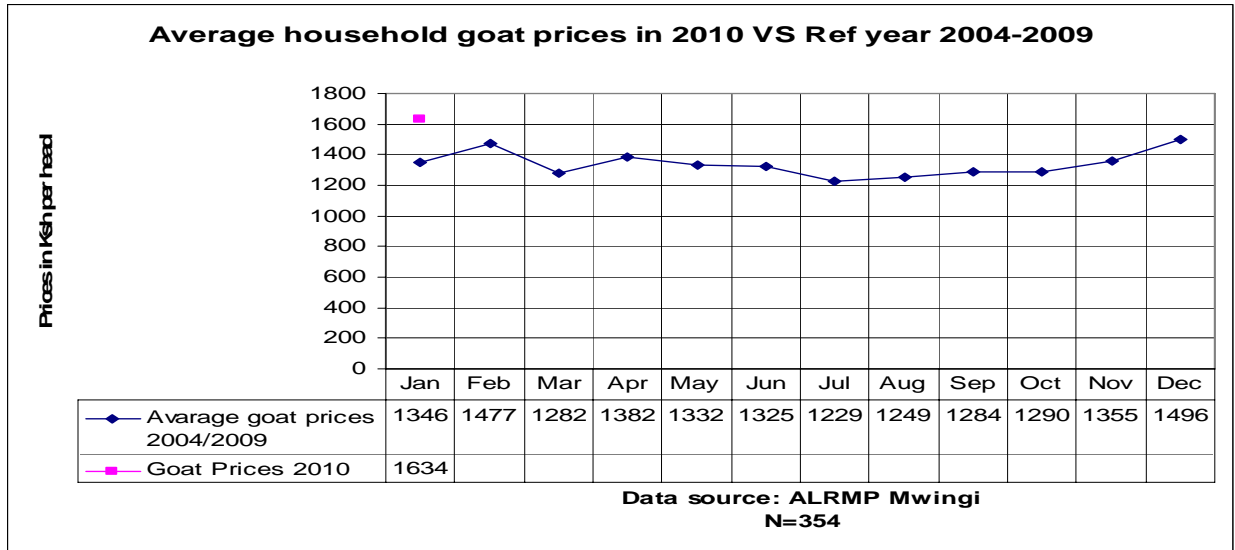
### 3.1 Livestock marketing

#### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



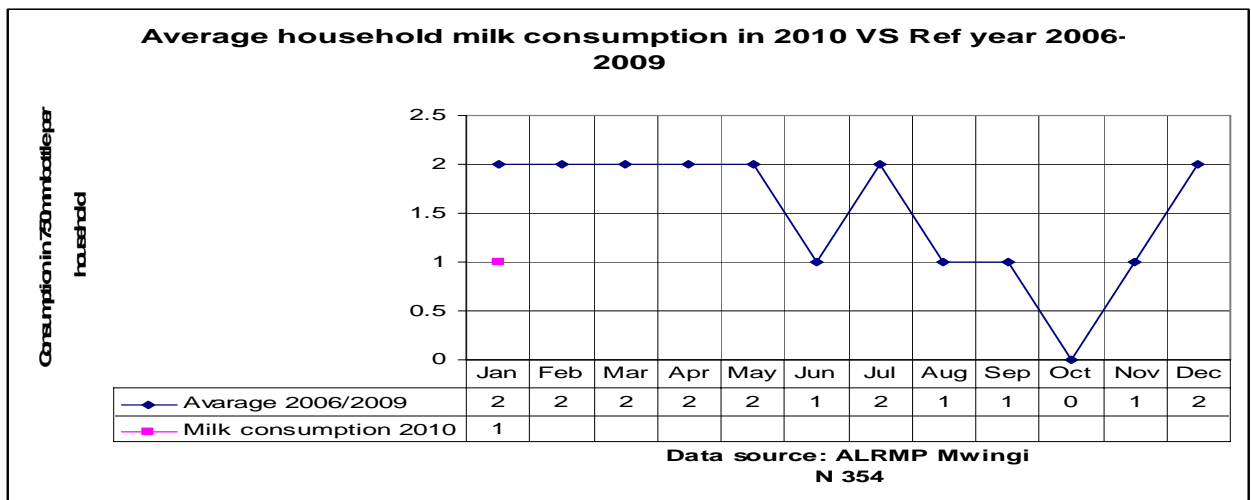
The average household cattle prices remained the same at Ksh 8000 compared to last month although they were still below the long term prices. The highest prices were in Kyuso division at Ksh10,500 while the lowest prices were in Ngomeni division at Ksh 5000 per head. The improving body condition of cattle is expected to improve cattle prices gradually.

### 3.2 Goat prices



The average household goat prices remained more or less the same at Ksh1,600 per head. The highest prices were observed in Mui division at Ksh2,060 while the lowest was in Nguni at Ksh1,142. The good body condition contributed to improving goat prices in the district.

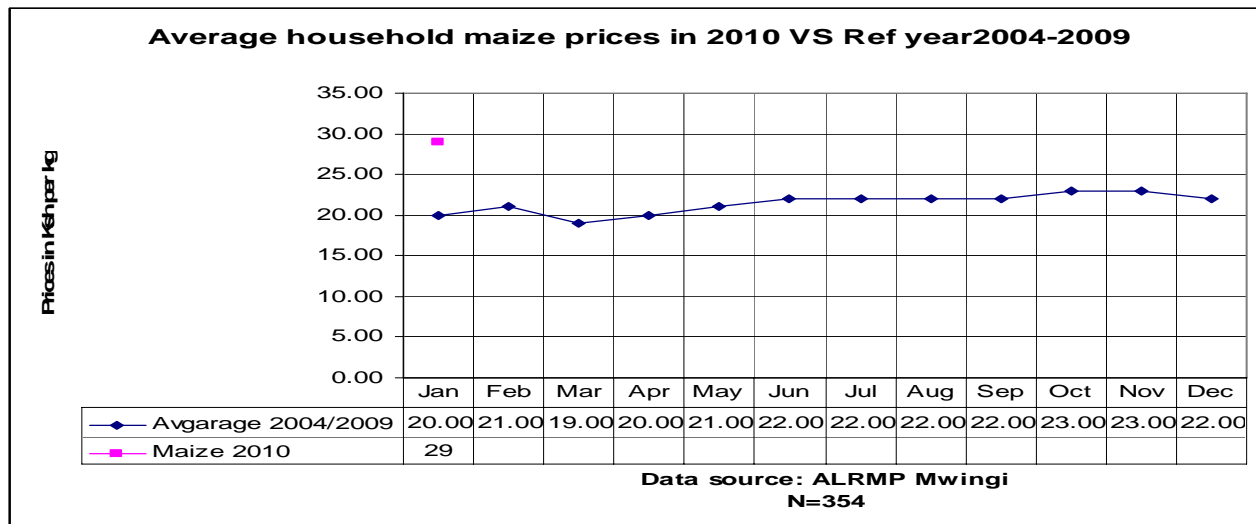
### 3.3 Milk consumption



The average household milk consumption remained the same at one bottle (750mm bottle) per household. The livestock population was quite low as most succumbed to drought last year, contributing to low milk production and consumption.

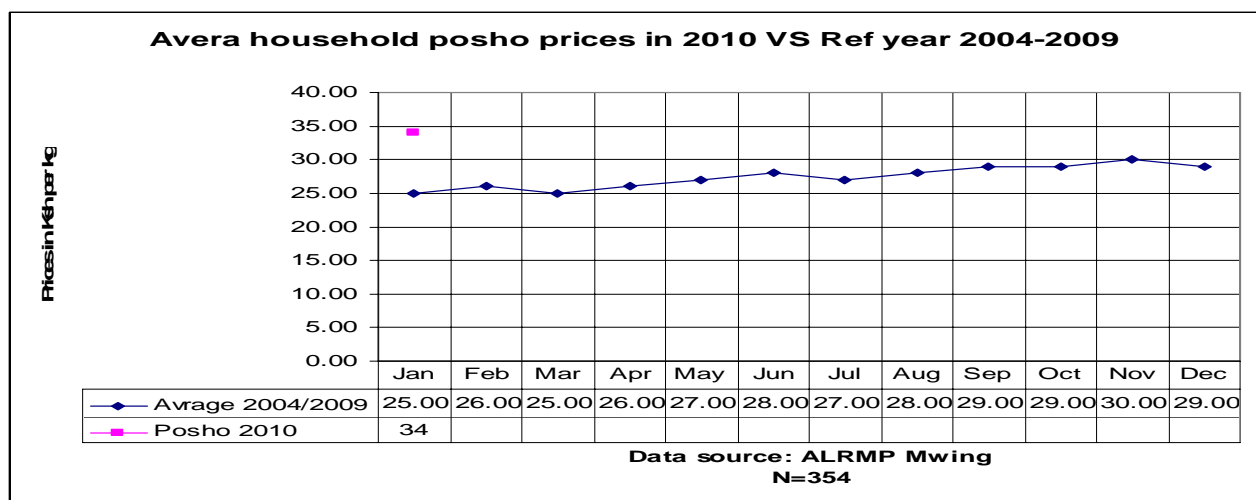
### 3.4 Crop prices

#### 3.4.1 Maize prices



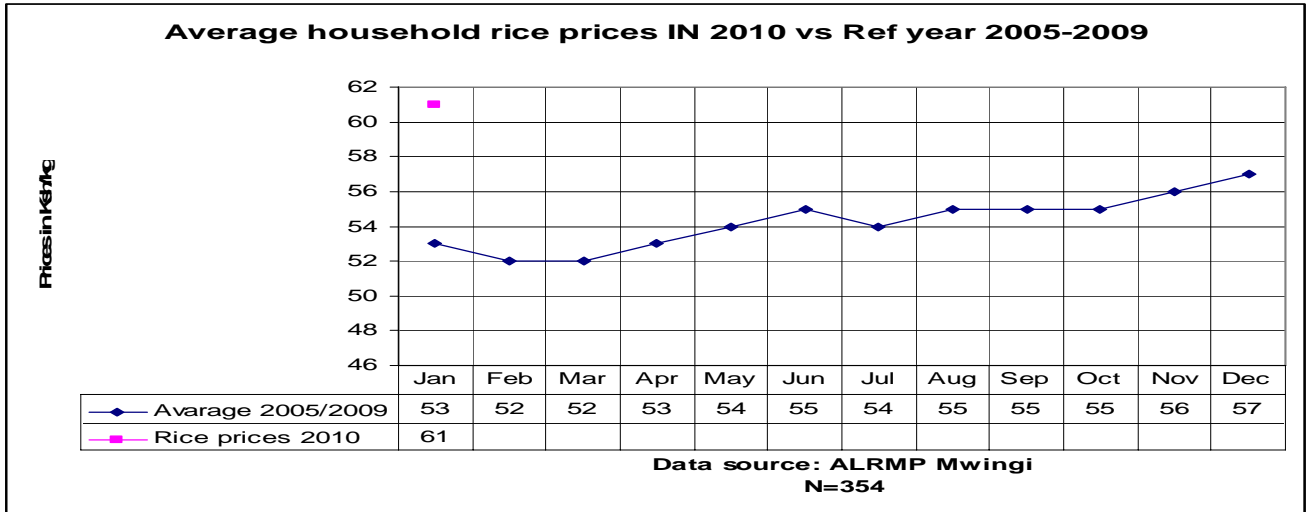
The average household maize prices dropped from Ksh30 per kilo last month to Ksh 29. The prices are going down due to supplies coming from other districts that are harvesting maize. However, the prices were still higher than the long term averages and are highly unlikely to come down soon due to poor maize harvest in the district.

### 3.4.2 Posho prices



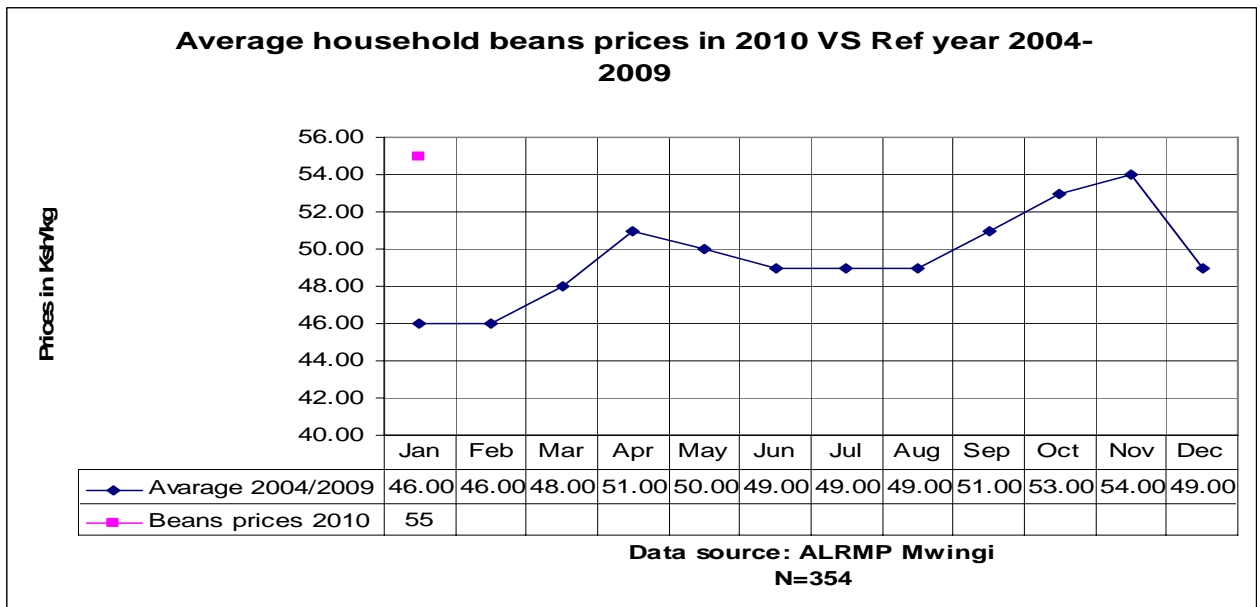
The average household posho prices dropped slightly from Ksh35 per kilo last month to Ksh34. This is due to reduction in maize prices over the last one month.

### 3.4.3 Rice prices



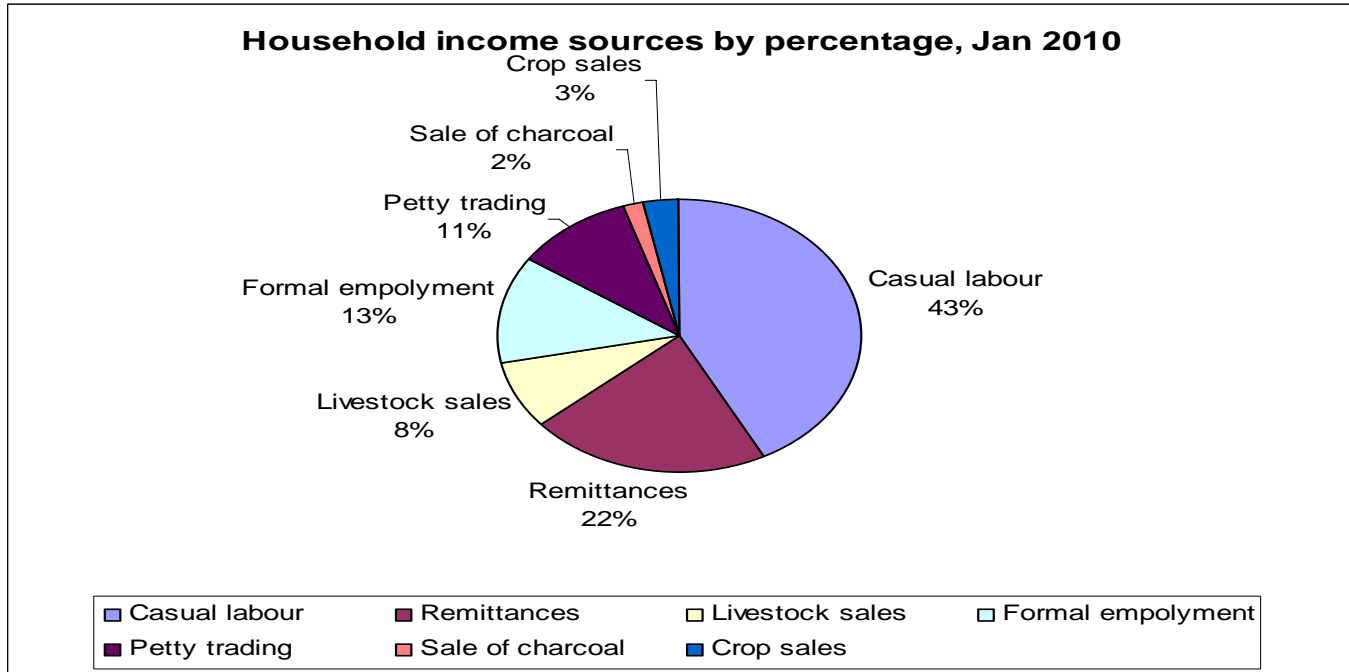
The average household maize prices declined slightly from Ksh62 per kilo last month to Ksh61. The prices were still high compared to the long term average.

### 3.4.4 Beans prices



The average household beans prices dropped from Ksh59 per kilo last month to Ksh 55g. The prices are coming down due to availability of legumes being harvested locally or supplied from the neighboring districts.

### 3.5 Income



### 3.5.1 Crop income

Households have started harvesting some crops and selling them to the markets. Crop sales stand at 3% now. Green grams are the most traded crop as it is considered as a cash crop in this district. Tseikuru region recorded most of these crop sales.

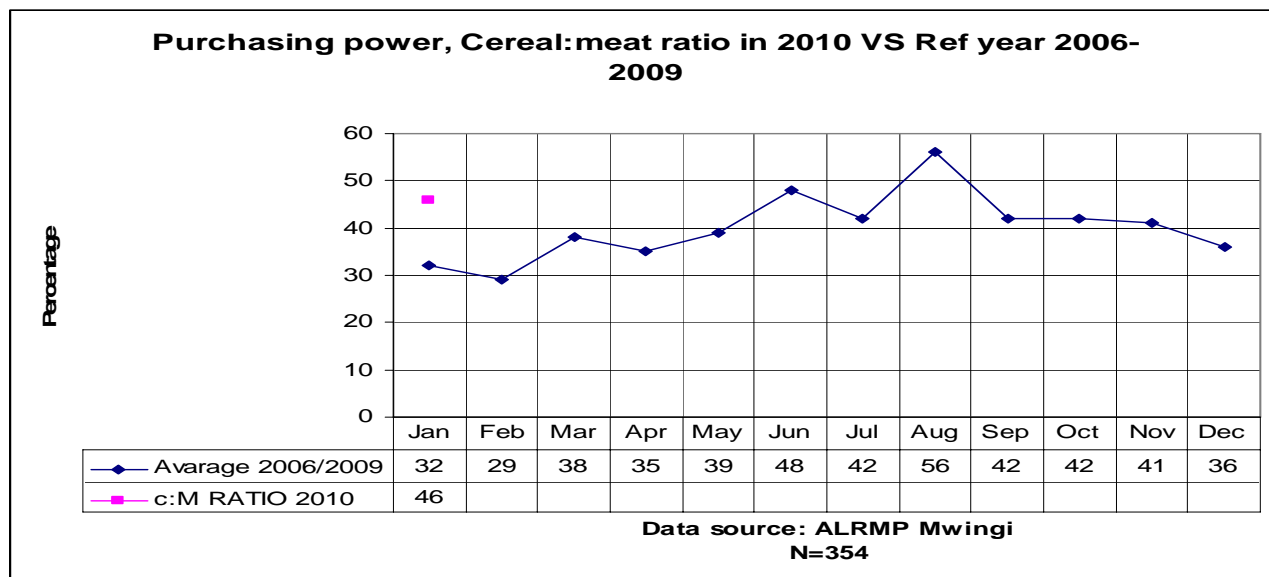
### 3.5.2 Livestock income

About 8% of the households were involved in livestock sales. This was low compared to last month's 12%. Tseikuru had the highest number of livestock sales followed by Kyuso division.

### 3.5.3 Other sources of income

Casual labour was the main source of income at 42% followed by remittances at 22%.

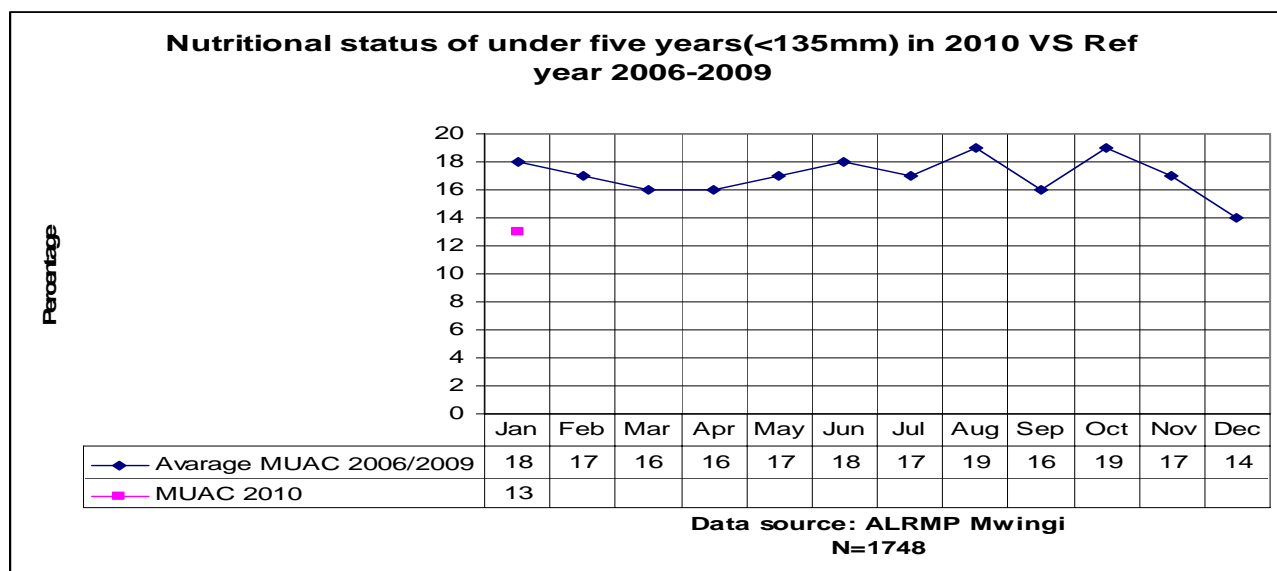
### 3.6 Cereal: Meat price ratio



- The terms on trade on cereals to meat ratio dropped from 55% last month to 46% currently. This could be due to reduction of cereal prices relative to those of livestock products over the last one month.
- Compared to last month, a household is able to spend less livestock products in acquiring the same amount of cereals.

## 4.0 Human welfare indicators

### 4.1 Nutrition status



- The nutrition status of children below five years improved during the month, with 13% of sampled children rated at risk of malnutrition compared to 15% last month. Tseikuru had the highest level at 21% followed by Nguni at 19% and Nuu at 18%.
- The food security situation was slightly better than last month and thought to be contributing to the dropping of nutrition status in the district.
- However, the district is yet to recover from the aftermath of last year's drought and therefore the food security situation is still not good.

## **4.2 Human health**

- Malaria infection is common across the district. This is due to increased breeding of mosquitoes due to the warm weather.

## **5.0 Current interventions**

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

- Immunisation and vitamin A supplementation by the Health ministry.
- Distribution of free mosquito nets and anti-malarial drugs.
- Supplementary and therapeutic feeding in health facilities.
- Adoption of drought-tolerant crops was observed in the district.
- Soil and water conservation measures were undertaken in selected areas.
- Water harvesting techniques were being adopted for crop production.
- Traditional and modern technologies were being used to preserve the harvested cereals.
- Conservation of crop residues and left over for feeding livestock during times of scarcity is being undertaken by some farmers.

### **5.2 Food aid**

A total of 732 metric tonnes of food was distributed under the food for asset programme by the lead agent in the district.

### **5.3 Coping strategies**

The coping strategy index dropped from 1.5 last months to 1.1. Cases of extreme measures to cope with food scarcity have reduced due to modest harvest realized. Casual labour remained the main coping strategy.

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

- Up scaling production of drought tolerant/early maturing crops in the district in the next planting season by all stakeholders.
- Availing planting materials in time and bulking of orphan crops especially roots and tuber crops by MOA, stakeholders and agro input suppliers.
- Enhance soil and water conservation and water harvesting for crop production.
- Promote growing of suitable fruit trees such as mangoes and pawpaws.

- Promote other land preparation technologies such as conservation agriculture instead of relying on animal draft power
- Good agricultural practises e.g. timeliness, pest and diseases control, post harvest management.
- Avail affordable farm inputs credit facilities.
- Improve agricultural extension services.
- Up scaling of supplementary and therapeutic feeding.
- Up scaling of mobile immunization activities.
- Capacity building of health staff on management of malnutrition.
- Sensitizing the communities on proper sanitation and hygiene e.g. construction of latrine and toilets.
- Conservation of crop residues and left over for feeding livestock during times of scarcity.
- Practice restricted grazing as opposed to free grazing so as to minimise wastage of pastures.
- There is a need to undertake post harvest management activities to sensitize farmers that have harvested on how to preserve their harvested crops.