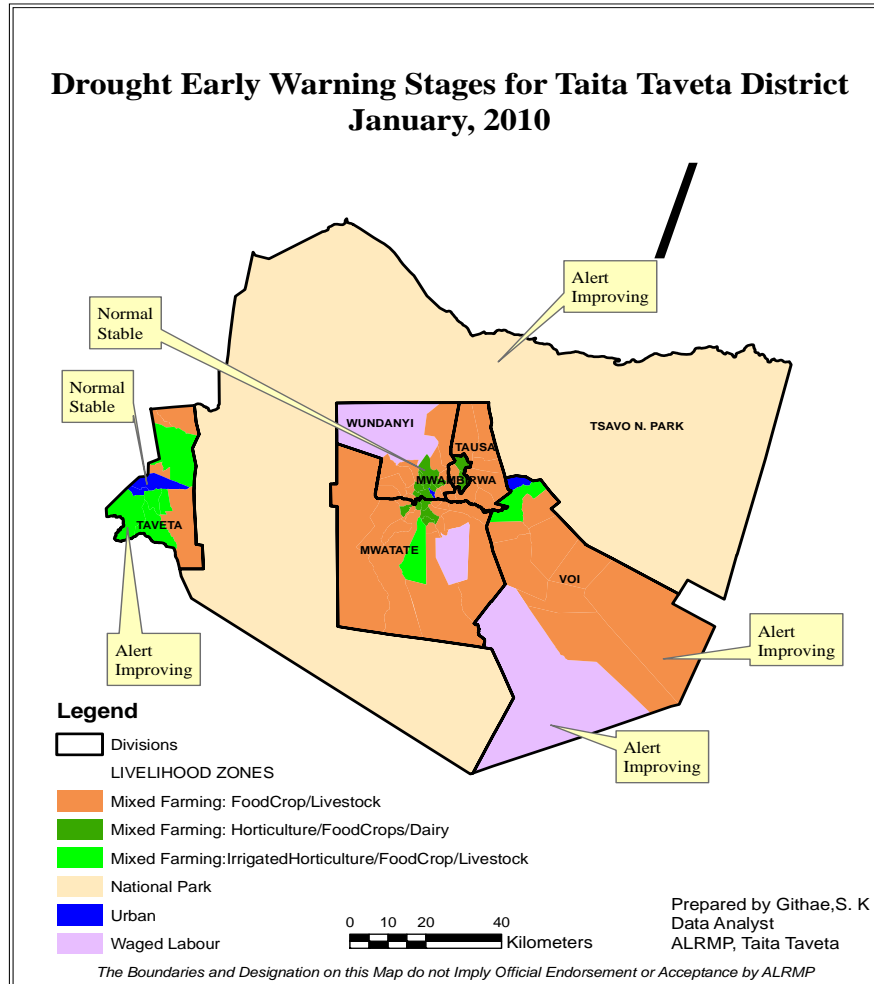




**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS  
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

**DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN, JANUARY 2010**

**TAITA TAVETA DISTRICT**



**Seasonal calendar**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short rains harvests</li> <li>• Short dry spell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting/Weeding</li> <li>• Long rains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long rains harvests</li> <li>• A long dry spell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short rains</li> <li>• Planting/weeding</li> </ul>								
<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sept</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>

## **Situation overview**

- A total of 299 mm of rainfall was received in January compared to 966 mm recorded the previous month. This rainfall amount was recorded in the first two weeks of the month. Heavy downpours that caused flash floods were reported in Taveta district and resulted in death of three people and destruction of 28 houses and property.
- Although the rains resulted in recharge of water sources, this started dwindling fast.
- Condition of natural vegetation and pasture was still good but if high temperatures continue to prevail, pasture will be unavailable in the next two months. The distance to grazing areas reduced significantly from 6.0 km in December to 2.7 km.
- Maize harvests will eventually result in fall in prices, impacting positively on food security. In Kishushe location 80% of the maize dried up at the flowering stage due to inadequate rainfall. Crop failure in rain-fed areas of Taita Taveta will intensify cases of food shortage.
- A few cases of human/wildlife conflict were reported in Kasigau and Sagalla.
- Government of Kenya through the Ministry of State for Special Programmes continued to distribute relief food.
- The nutrition status of children below five years (based on the Mid Upper Arm Circumference-MUAC<135mm- measurement) was stable, with the percentage of those rated at risk of malnutrition remaining at 3.2 in January. Availability of milk at household continue to impact positively on nutrition status of the under fives.

## **Recommendations to District Steering Group and Kenya Food Security Meeting**

- Farmers should be sensitised to store their bumper stocks for future use instead of selling to middle men at low prices.
- Range officers to increase surveillance in the ranches to address the problem of overgrazing as the dry season approaches.
- Protect existing springs either through fencing or planting trees given that springs are the only source of water.
- Kenya Wildlife Service to increase surveillance to address the problem of marauding elephants and buffaloes.

## **Current interventions**

### **Non-food interventions**

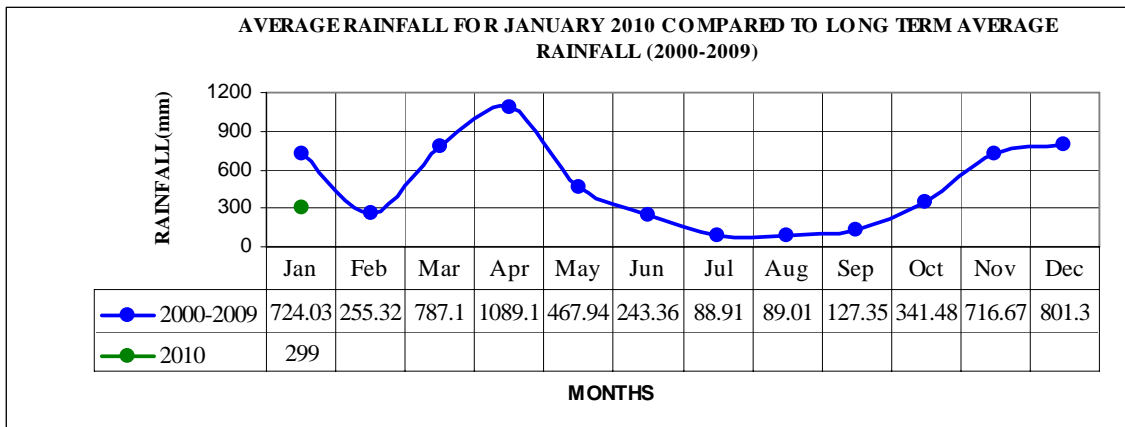
- Kenya Red Cross Society distributed tarpaulins, kitchen sets, blankets, mosquito nets, collapsible water tanks and aqua tabs to 501 families affected by floods in Taveta district.
- World Vision also distributed 1,244 mosquito nets, 660 blankets and 10, 000 Aqua tabs.

### **Food aid**

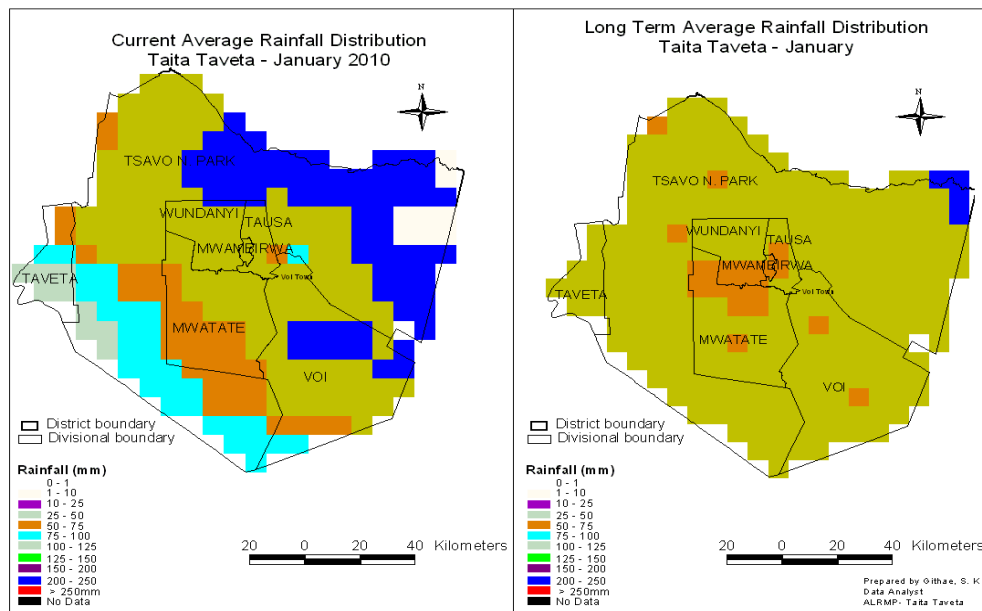
Wundanyi, Mwatate, Voi and Taveta districts received relief foodstuffs from the Ministry of State for Special Programmes. Each district was allocated 1,000 bags of maize (90 kg).

## 1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

### 1.1 Rainfall



- A total of 299 mm of rainfall was received in January compared to 966 mm recorded the previous month. This rainfall amount was recorded in the first two weeks of the month.
- Heavy downpours that caused flash floods were reported in Taveta district in both Bomeni and Jipe divisions. Floods in Taveta district resulted to death of three people and destruction of 28 houses and property in Rekeke village.
- Kasokoni Irrigation scheme in Challa, Block C irrigation scheme and Kamlenza irrigation Scheme in Kimorigho and both Grogan and Block C canals were destroyed and flattened by silt in some sections.
- The rains, however, subsided and the four districts started experiencing high temperatures. Compared to the long term average rainfall for 2000-2009 the trend is normal and the amount of rainfall is low.

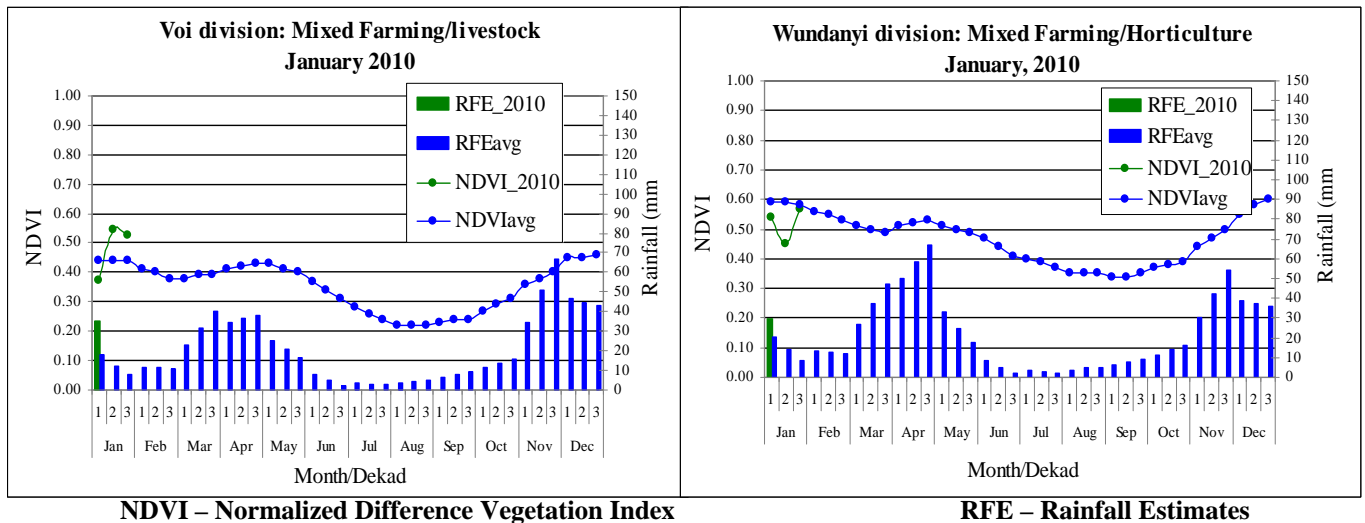


**United States Geological Survey Satellite images – Figure illustrate Comparison of Current January 2010 Rainfall Distribution with the Long Term Averages for Taita Taveta.**

- The images above indicate that Taita Taveta recorded a total rainfall of 315.43 mm, which is 315.27 mm, 0.16 mm and nil mm in dekad 1, 2 and 3 respectively compared to 371.36 mm, 205.22 mm and 612.20 mm recorded in December.
- Taveta district and Tsavo Park bordering Kwale district recorded the highest rainfall amount ranging between 75 – 125 mm.
- Current average rainfall map recorded 315.43 mm compared to 290.65 mm recorded in the long term average rainfall map.

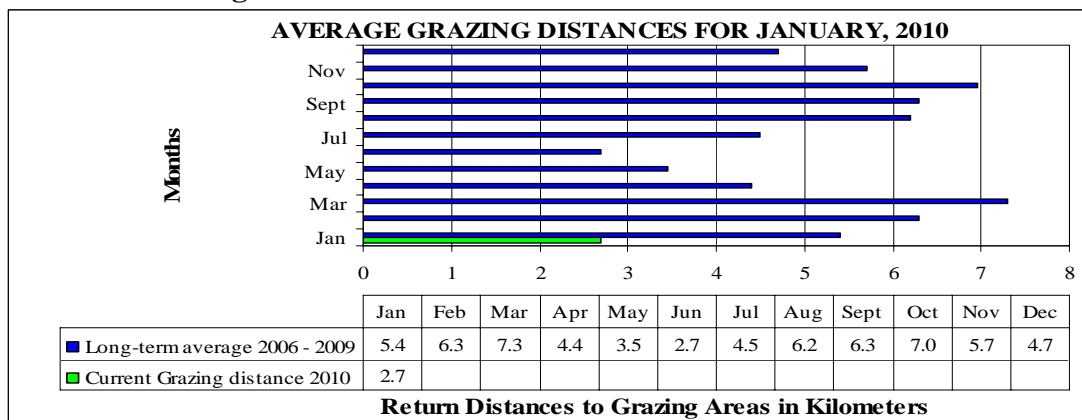
## 1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

### 1.2.1 Quality and Quantity



- Condition of natural vegetation and pasture is still good. However if these high temperatures continue to prevail pasture will be unavailable in the next two months.
- Voi division recorded 0.37, 0.54 and 0.53 vegetation indexes in dekad 1, 2 and 3 respectively compared to 0.44, 0.47 and 0.44 in the previous month. Wundanyi recorded 0.54, 0.45 and 0.57 in dekad 1, 2 and 3 respectively compared to 0.47, 0.52 and 0.53 in December.
- Compared to the long term vegetation index averages both livelihood zones exhibit a normal trend.

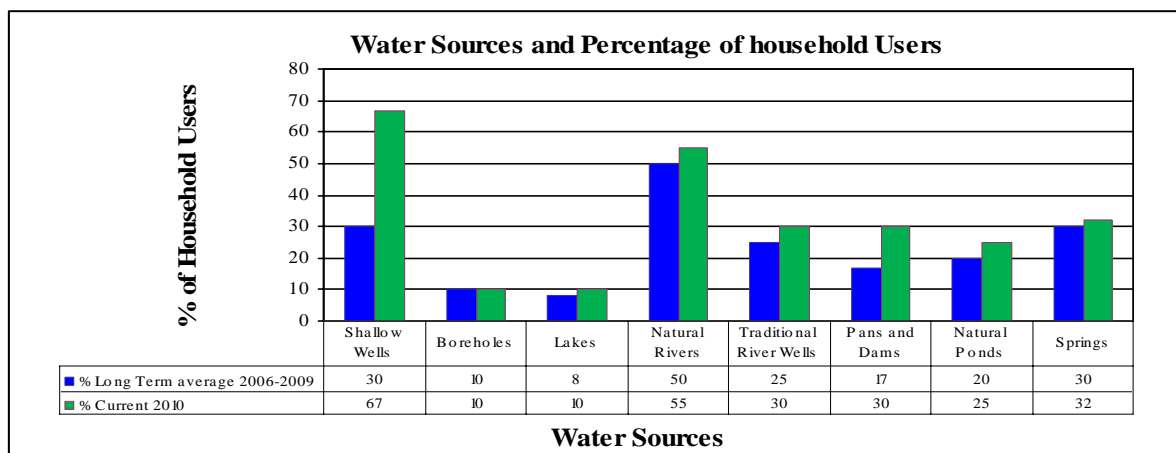
### 1.2.2 Distance to Grazing Areas



The distance to grazing areas reduced significantly from 6.0 km in December to 2.7 km and this could be attributed to availability of pasture and water at shorter distances. Compared to the long term average the distance is considerably low.

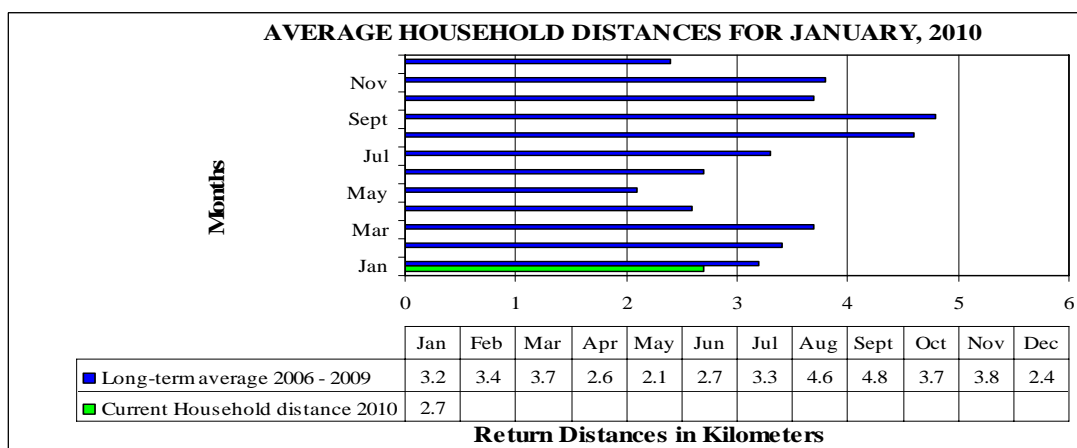
### 1.3 Water sources and availability

#### 1.3.1 Water sources



In January household members used 67% and 55% of Shallow wells and Natural rivers respectively. Other water sources for both human and livestock use included tap water, springs, boreholes and water pans. Although the rains had resulted to recharge of water sources, the rate of dwindling is very high.

#### 1.3.2 Household access to water



Average household distance remained at 2.7 km in January. Compared to the long term average the distance has decreased. Time taken to fetch water decreased to 1.1 hrs from 1.8 hrs in the previous month.

### 1.4 Emerging issues

#### 1.4.1. Insecurity/conflict/human displacement

- In Kishushe location 80% of the maize dried up at the flowering stage due to inadequate rainfall.
- Floods in Taveta district resulted in death of three people and destruction of 28 houses and property in Rekeke village.

- Kasokoni Irrigation scheme in Challa, Block C irrigation scheme and Kamlenza irrigation Scheme in Kimorigho and both Grogan and Block C canals were destroyed and flattened by silt in some sections. A few cases of human wildlife conflict have been reported in Kasigau and Sagalla.

#### **1.4.2. Migration**

No major in or out migration was reported.

#### **1.4.3. Implication on food security**

- Crop failure in rain-fed areas of Taita Taveta will intensify cases of food shortage.
- Food for Assets programme is on going in the rain-fed lowlands in Taita Taveta addressing the problem of food shortage.
- Government of Kenya through the Ministry of State for Special Programmes continued to distribute relief foodstuff targeting vulnerable people especially the elderly, disabled persons and needy institutions.
- Wildlife destruction of food crops in all livelihood zones will impact negatively on food security.
- Almost 40% of maize farmers are now harvesting. This will impact positively on food security.

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

#### **2.1 Livestock production**

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

In both districts cattle body condition improved due to availability of pasture and water. Compared with a normal year livestock body condition was good.

##### **2.1.2. Milk production**

- Milk production from 12 sampled sentinel sites increased from 7,407 litres to 9,424 litres. Mwarungu sample site in mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone recorded the highest amount of milk production at 3,030 litres.
- In mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone, Mwachawaza recorded 2,100 litres. Mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone continued to dominate the dairy sector recording 61% situated in the wetlands, mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone 35% and casual waged labour: sisal farms 4% found in the rain fed lowlands.

#### **2.2 Crop production**

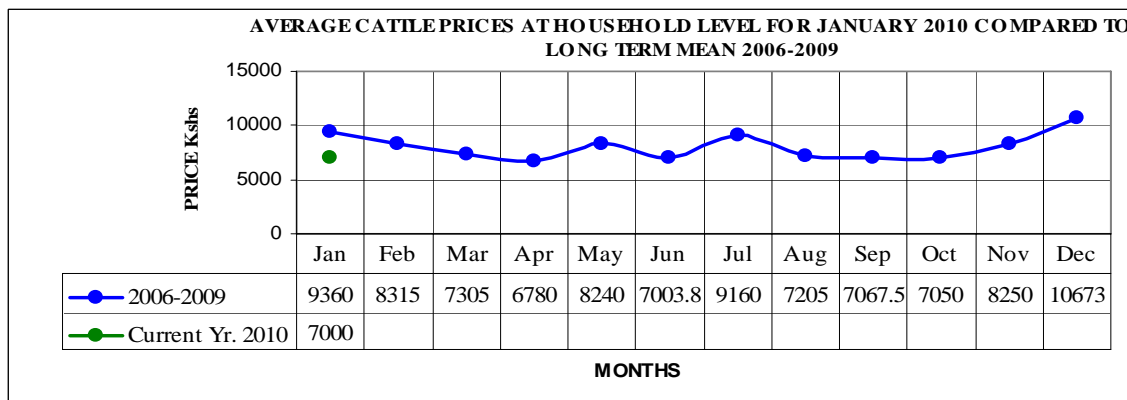
##### **2.2.1. Timeliness and condition of various crop production activities**

- In the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone farmers who dry planted their maize are harvesting while those who planted late or replanted maize is at flowering stage. However, in the casual waged labour: sisal farms livelihood zone some casual waged labourers no major activity is on going.
- In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone farmers are harvesting maize and vegetables. In the mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops livelihood zone most farmers are harvesting maize, tomatoes and onions.

### 3.0 Access to food

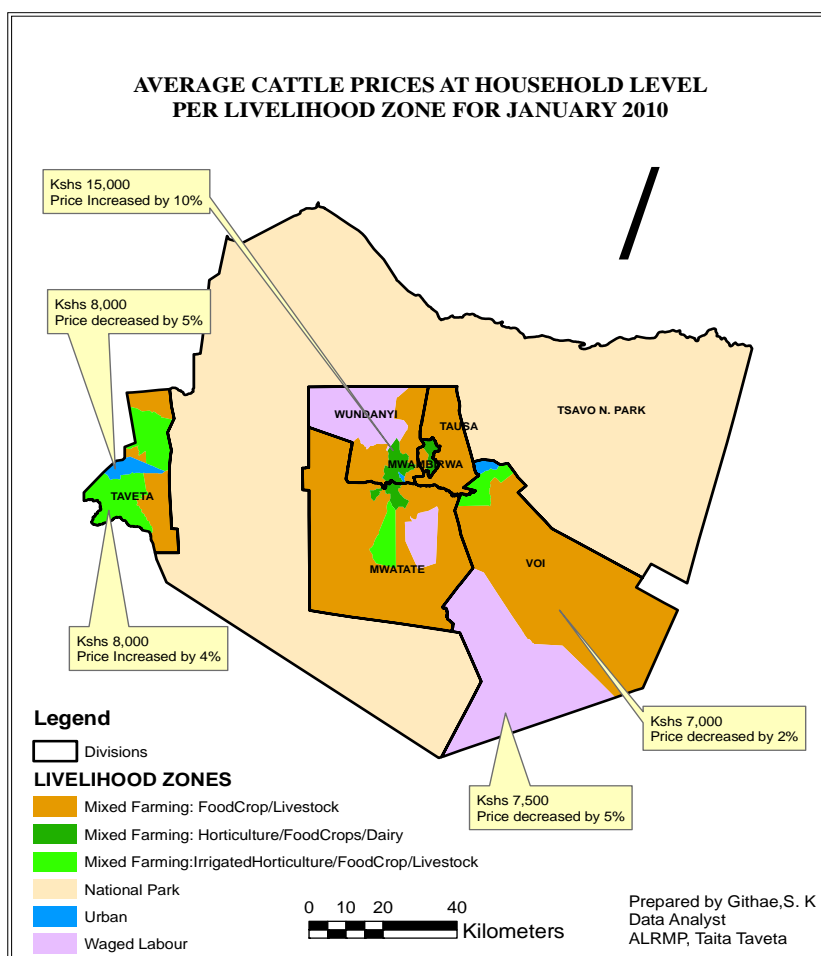
### 3.1 Livestock marketing

### 3.1.1 Cattle prices



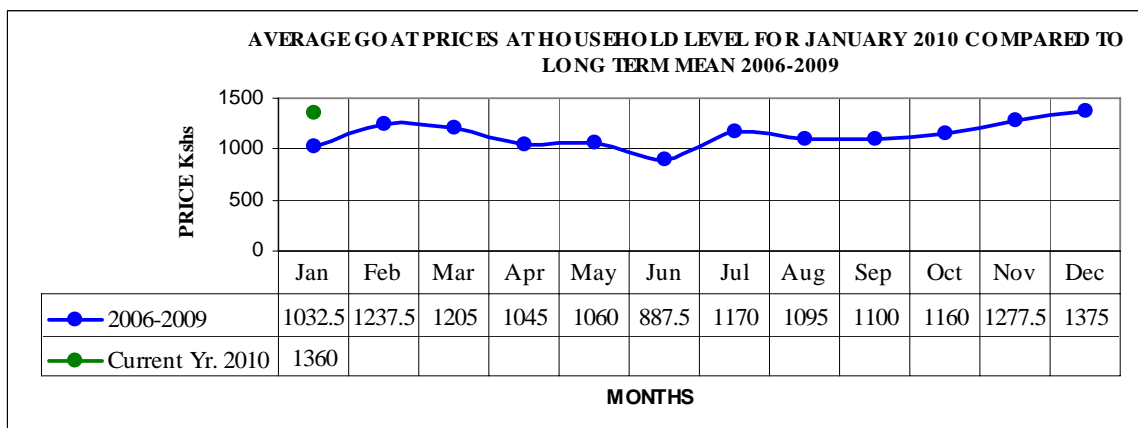
N = 360 households

The average cattle price at household level decreased from Ksh9,000 in December to Ksh7,000 in January. Compared to the long term mean the trend is normal and the price is low.



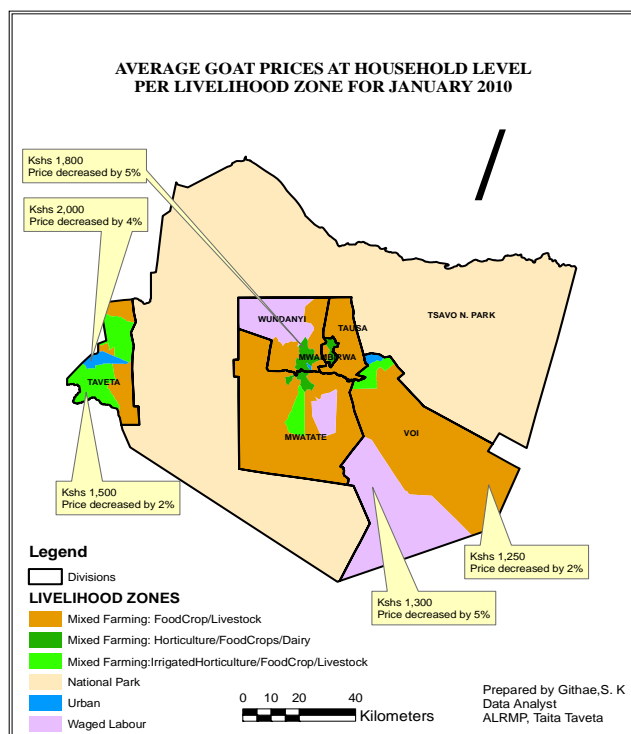
High prices were reported in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone at Ksh15,000 while low prices prevailed in the casual waged labour: sisal farms at Ksh7,500 and Ksh 7,000 in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zones.

### 3.1.2 Goats prices



N = 360 households

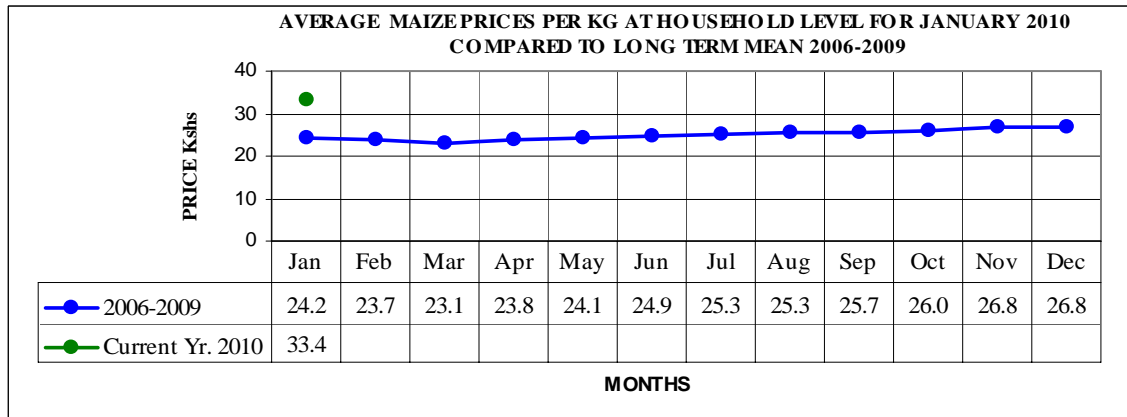
The average goat price at household level increased from Ksh1,300 in December to Ksh1,320. High prices were recorded in Wongonyi and Rukanga at Ksh1,600 and Ksh1,500 respectively. Compared to the long term mean trend is normal and the price is high.



Prices remained higher in the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy livelihood zone at Ksh 1,800 than in both the casual waged labour: sisal farms livelihood zone at Ksh1,300 and Ksh1,250 in the mixed farming: food crops/livestock livelihood zone.

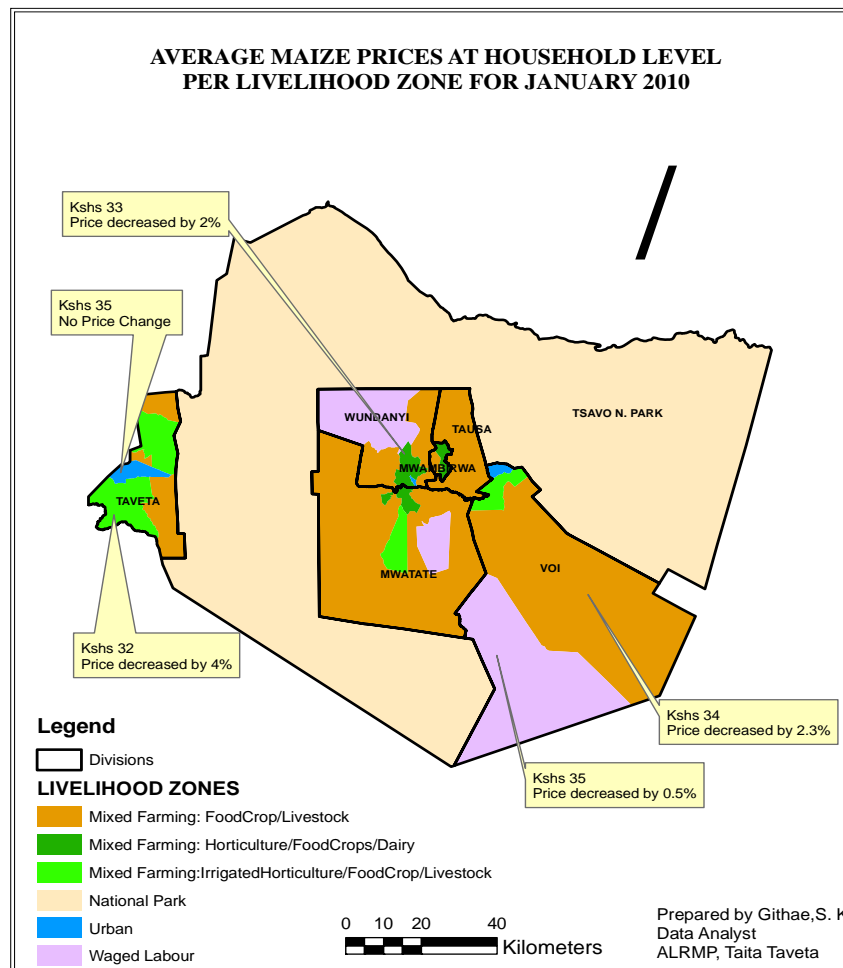
### 3.2 Crop prices

#### 3.2.1 Maize prices



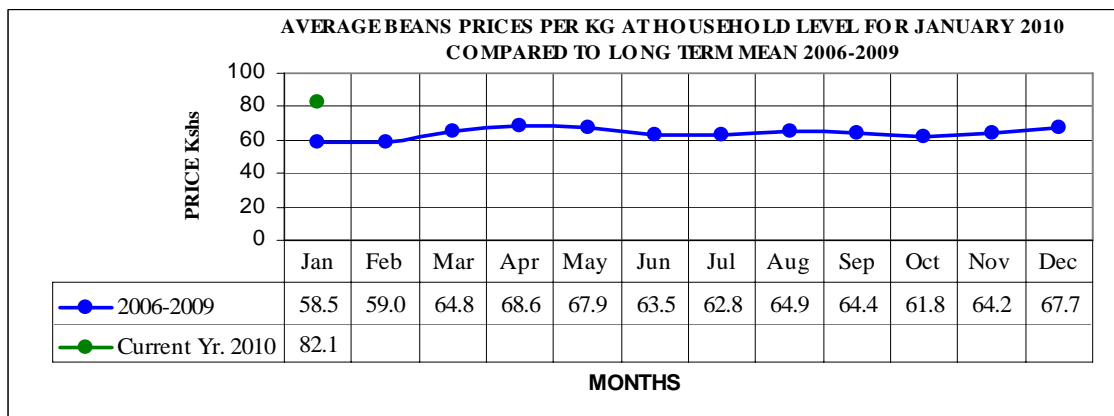
N = 360 households

Average maize price at household level decreased from Ksh34.2 to Ksh33.4 per kilo. The slight fall in price could be attributed to on going harvests especially in the rain fed areas. Compared to the long term mean the trend is normal but the price is still very high.



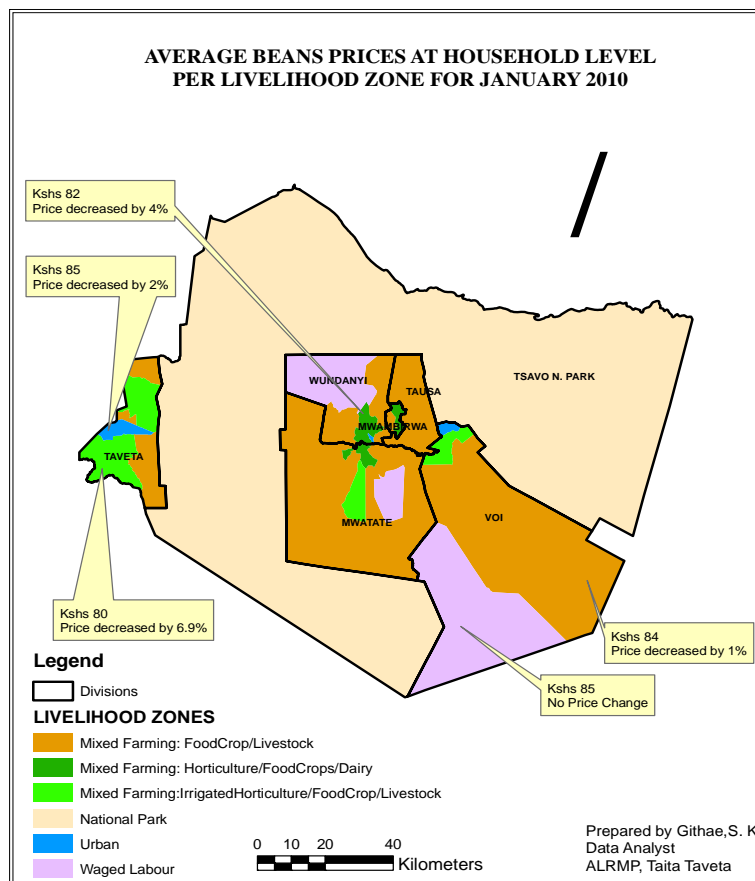
In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy, mixed farming: food crops/livestock and mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops livelihood zones average maize prices at market level were Ksh33, Ksh34 and Ksh32 respectively.

### 3.2.2 Beans prices



N = 360 households

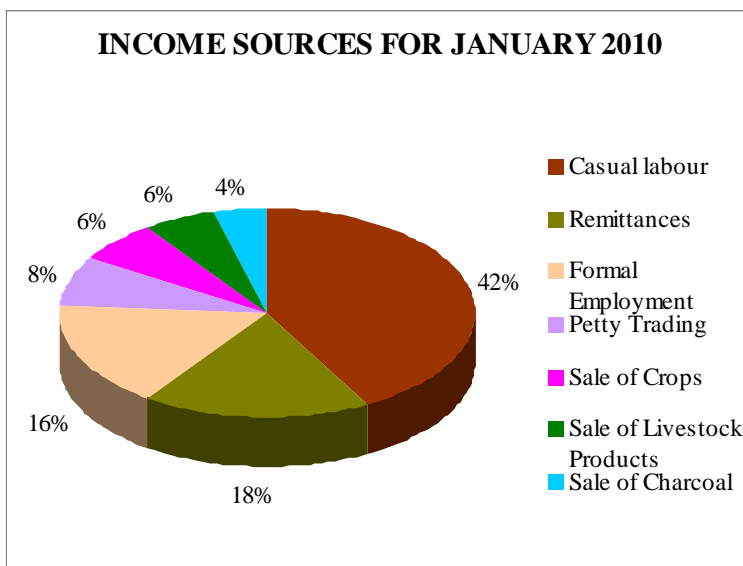
Average beans price at household level decreased from Ksh86 to Ksh82.1. The fall in price could be attributed to on going harvests especially in the irrigation schemes. Compared to the long term mean the trend is normal and the price is extremely high.



In the mixed farming: food crops/horticulture/dairy, mixed farming: food crops/livestock and mixed farming: irrigated cropping/livestock/food crops livelihood zones average beans prices at market level were Kshs 82, Kshs 84 and Kshs 80 respectively.

### 3.3 Income

#### 3.3.1 Income sources



In January most households accrued income from casual labour, remittances and formal employment at 42%, 18% and 16% respectively.

#### 3.3.2 Livestock income

Livestock income obtained from 360 sampled households indicated sale of 6 cattle @ Ksh7,000, 47 goats @ Ksh1,360 and 115 chickens @ Ksh229, realising Ksh132,255 compared to Ksh206,920 in December.

#### 3.3.3 Other income sources

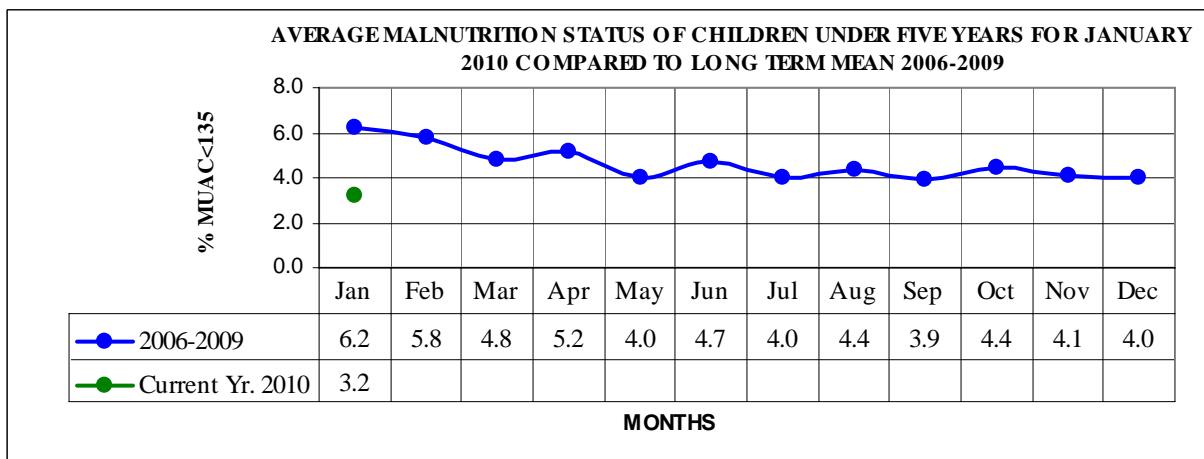
Others income sources were casual labour, petty trade, formal employment, remittances, sale of sand, brick, charcoal, fire wood, ballast and miraa, fishing and small-scale mining.

### 3.4 Implications on food security

- Increased livestock income will improve living standard of household members.
- Maize harvests will eventually result to fall in prices impacting positively on food security.
- Availability of milk at household continue to impact positively on nutrition status of the under fives.

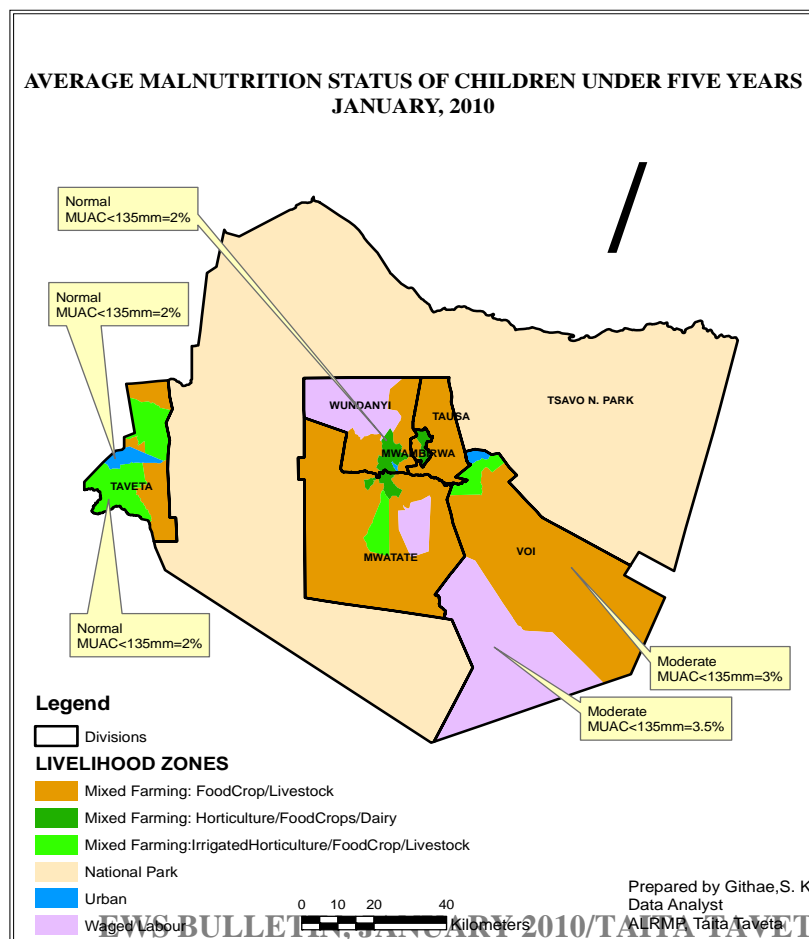
## 4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilisation of food)

### 4.1 Nutrition status



N = 360 households

- The nutrition status of children below five years (based on the Mid Upper Arm Circumference-MUAC<135mm- measurement) was stable, with the percentage of those rated at risk of malnutrition remaining at 3.2 same as the previous month. Out of 1,520 children under-five sampled in 12 sample sites areas, 39 were found with MUAC< 135mm.
- Availability of milk at household continue to impact positively on nutrition status of the under fives. Higher rates were reported in Teri where 12 out of 117 were found with MUAC< 135mm. Compared to long term mean the trend was normal and rate low.



## 5.0 Current interventions

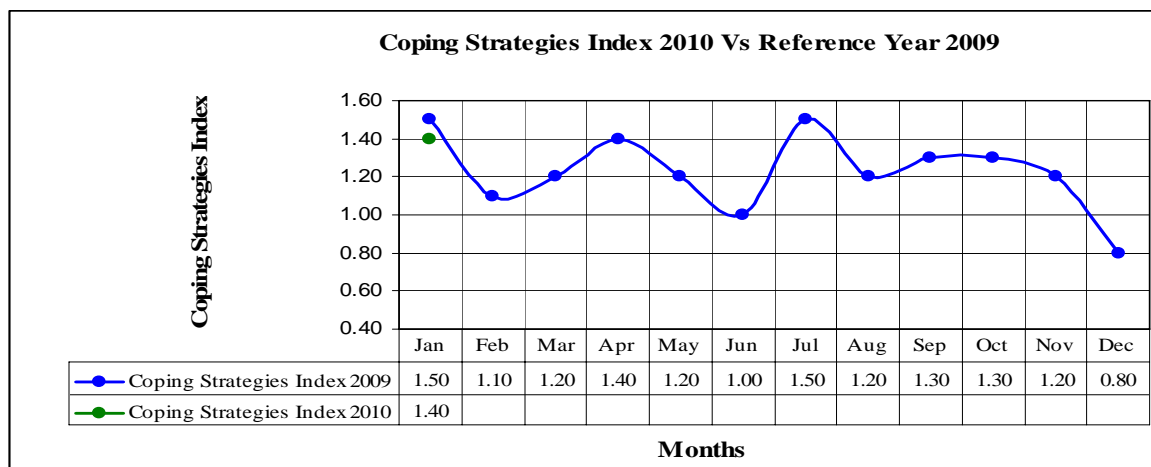
### 5.1 Non-food interventions

- Kenya Red Cross Society distributed tarpaulins, kitchen sets, blankets, mosquito nets, collapsible water tanks and aqua tabs to 501 families affected by floods in Taveta district.
- World Vision also distributed 1,244 mosquito nets, 660 blankets and 10, 000 Aqua tabs.

### 5.2 Food aid

Wundanyi, Mwatate, Voi and Taveta districts received relief foodstuffs from the Ministry of State for Special Programmes. Each district was allocated 1,000 bags of maize (90 kg).

### 5.3 Coping strategies



The coping strategy index stood at 1.4, similar to the previous month. The highest index was recorded in casual waged labour: sisal farms livelihood zone at 2.1.

## 6.0 Recommendations to District Steering Group and Kenya Food Security Meeting

- Farmers should be sensitised to store their bumper stocks for future use instead of selling to middle men at low prices.
- Range officers to increase surveillance in the ranches to address the problem of overgrazing as the dry season approaches.
- Protect existing springs either through fencing or planting trees given that springs are the only source of water.
- Kenya Wildlife Service to increase surveillance to address the problem of marauding elephants and buffaloes.