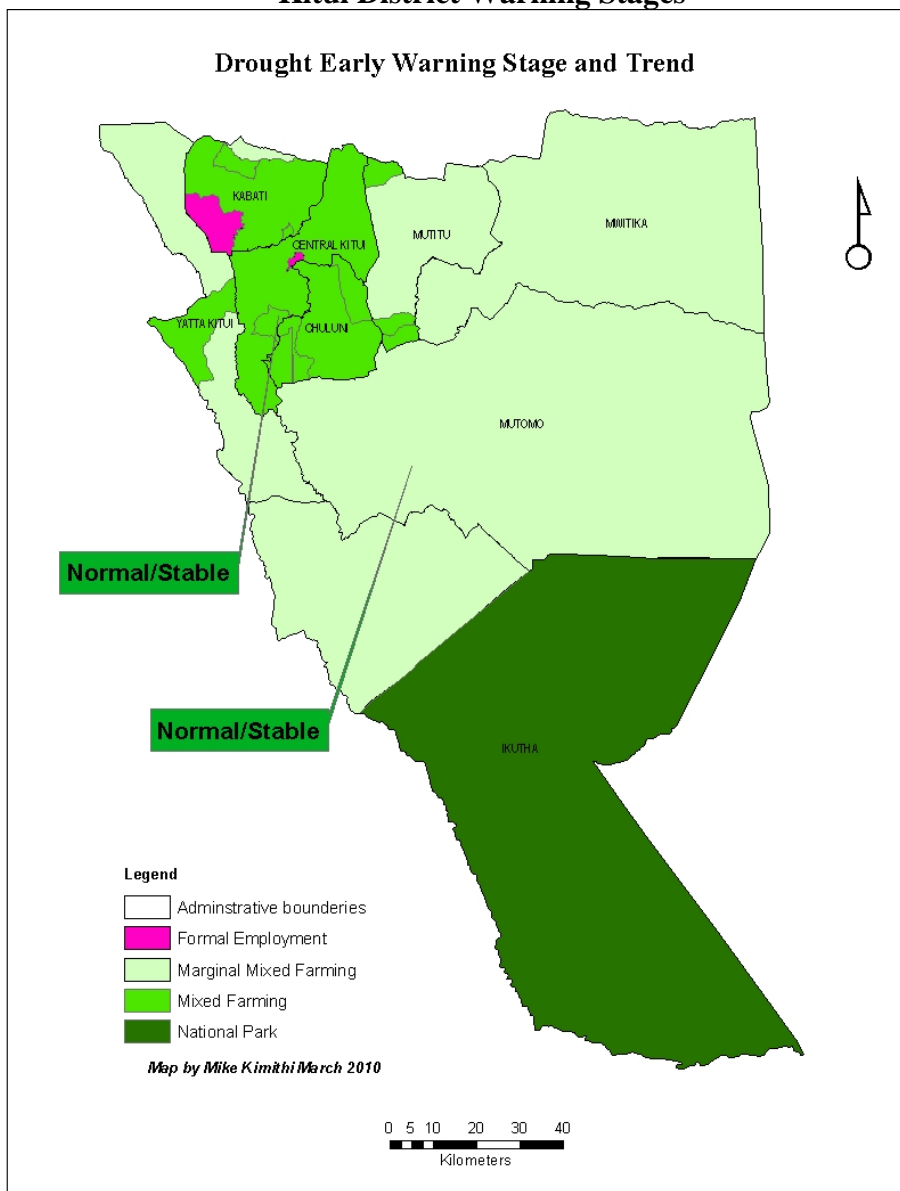




OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II
DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, JUNE 2010

Kitui District Warning Stages



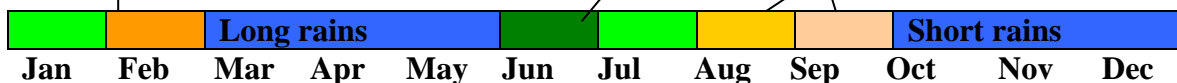
Seasonal Calendar

The hottest month

Short rains start (Short rains harvesting)

Harvesting

Dry Spell



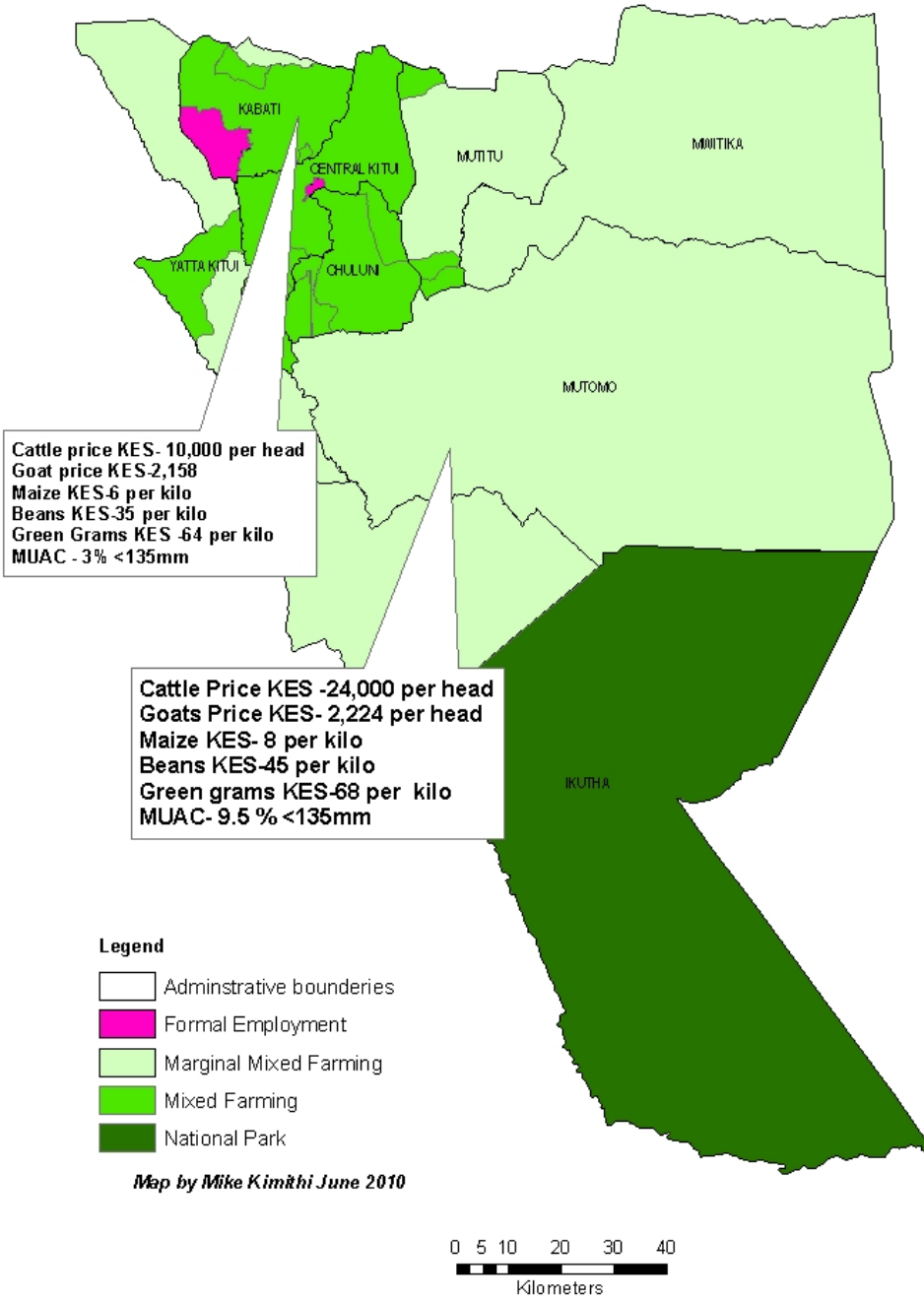
Situation overview

- The month of June was dry with intermittent cold days.
- Water situation in the district slightly declined and the water levels in rock catchments and dams went down, the levels in the shallow wells and boreholes is stable
- The condition of natural vegetation and pastures is declined. Vegetation has started shedding leaves and grass is drying and falling off
- Maize crop in the stores has been infested with aflatoxin and weevils. This situation is threatening to compromise the current food security situation in the district.
- The price of a kilo of maize declined. Since the reporting of aflatoxin infestation in the crop, traders have shied away from purchasing the commodity and the government's pledge to buy the same is yet to be effected.
- The main crops in the field are maize and pigeon peas whose performance ranges from poor to fair. Maize crop is mature and is being consumed green with the early planted crop being at harvesting stage.
- The price of both Cattle and goats improved and are expected to further improve. This trend is attributed to the prevailing good body conditions and availability of food stocks at the households.
- The nutrition status of children below the age of five years improved. This improvement is attributed to availability of food and dietary diversity.

Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

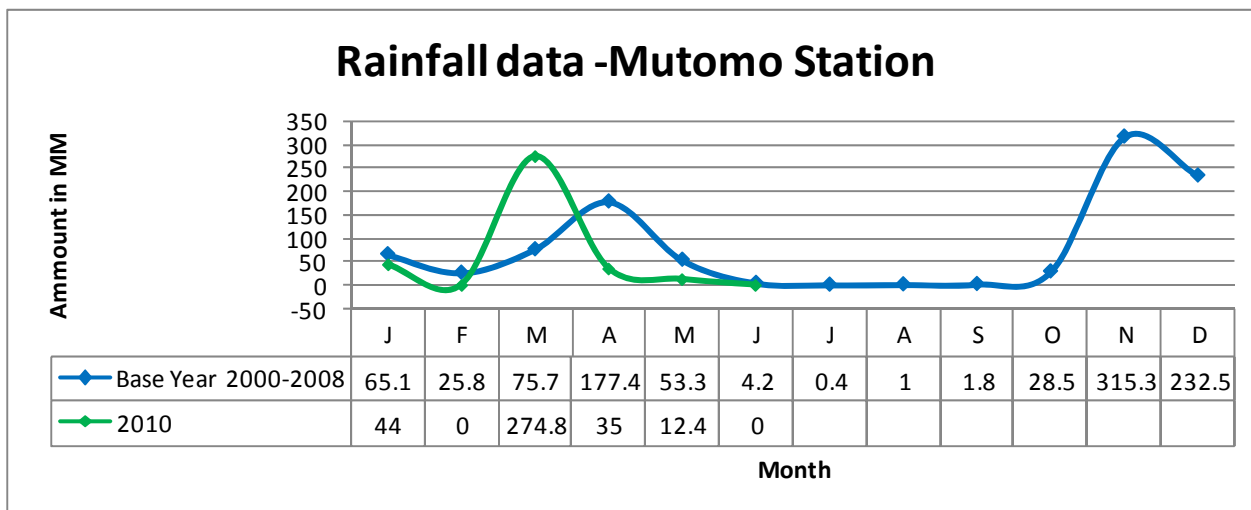
- Prepositioning of borehole spares.
- Capacity building communities on WASH
- Provide servicing Kits for running boreholes
- Capacity building of water users committees
- Intensify storage and post harvest management campaigns
- Intensify screening of maize crop offered for sale in the markets and that being consumed at home for aflatoxin food poisoning
- Promotion of irrigation agriculture along the rivers and streams
- To replace the contaminated maize with an equal amount of the commodity
- Undertake breed improvement and restocking campaigns
- Promotion of Feed preservation and conservation campaigns
- To expand the current ongoing vaccination and treatment to cover all the district in the region
- To intensify screening of maize crop and advise communities on the hazards of consuming infested maize

Situation Overview -Kitui District

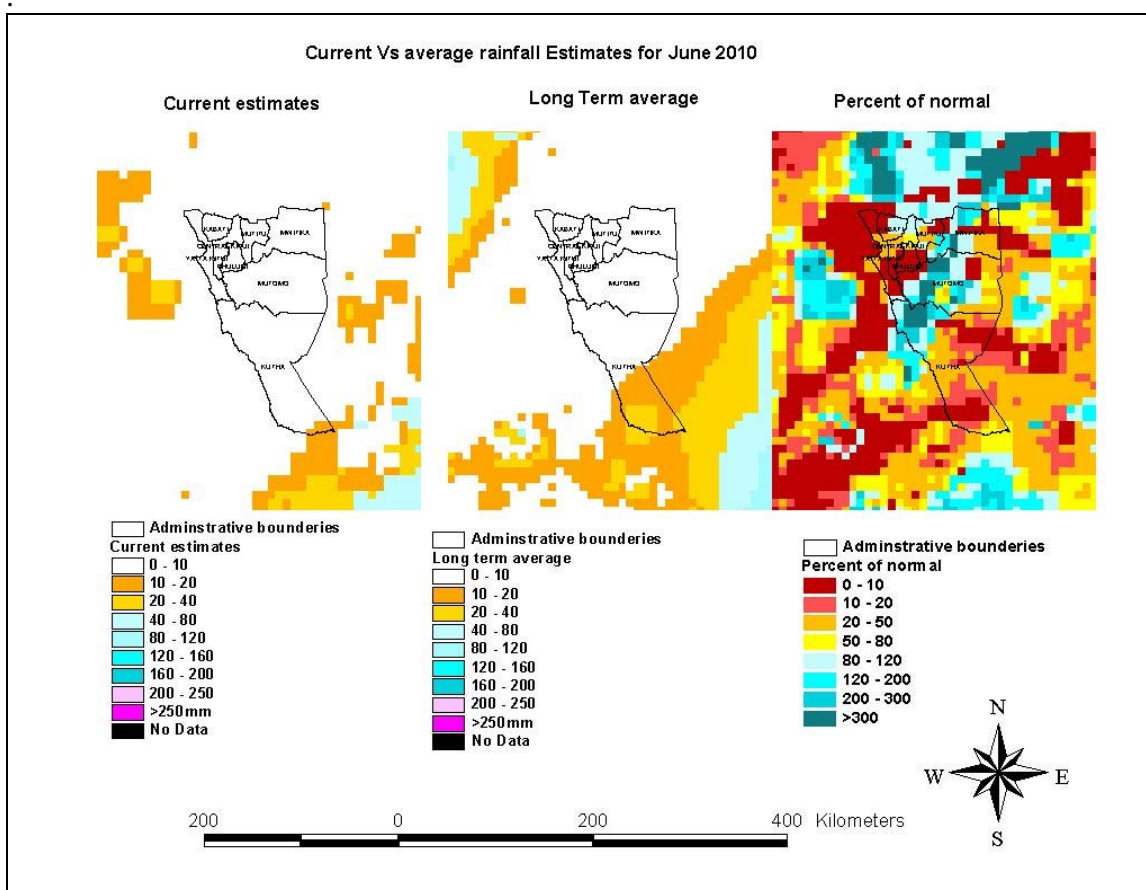


1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall



During the month of June the district experienced a dry spell with intermittent cold days as indicated in the graph above and the satellite images displayed below.



The above maps show the distribution of rainfall across the district with most of the areas receiving below normal rains.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

The pastures and natural vegetation slightly declined. This decline is attributed to the prevailing dry weather condition. Trees have started shedding leaves and grass is drying up

1.3 Water sources and availability

- The water situation in the district is declined compared to the previous month. The water levels in the dams started going down.
- The return distances to and from the water points range from 2-5 kilometers in the Mixed farming livelihood zone and 2-6 kilometers in the Marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.

1.4 Implications on food security

- The availability and access to forage and water by livestock improved their body conditions and thus guaranteeing farmers improved incomes from sales and milk productivity
- Water for domestic use is available and accessible at convenient distances. The intermittent dry spell during the month stalled the growth and development of maize crop in the field.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (Food availability)

2.1 Livestock body conditions

Generally the livestock body condition in the district was good. This situation was attributed to availability of forage and access to water at near distances. The livestock have also been vaccinated against notifiable diseases supported by Vet works EA.

2.1.2 Livestock diseases

Isolated cases of Foot and Mouth disease were reported in the district.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness and situation of crop production activities

- Different types of crops in the field are at various stages of growth.
- Beans- this crop is mature and harvesting is on going
- Maize – the late planted crop is mature and is being consumed green while the early planted crop is being harvested but the performance was poor.
- Pigeon peas-generally this crop is being consumed green and the performance ranges from poor to fair depending on the agronomic practices that a particular farmer employed.

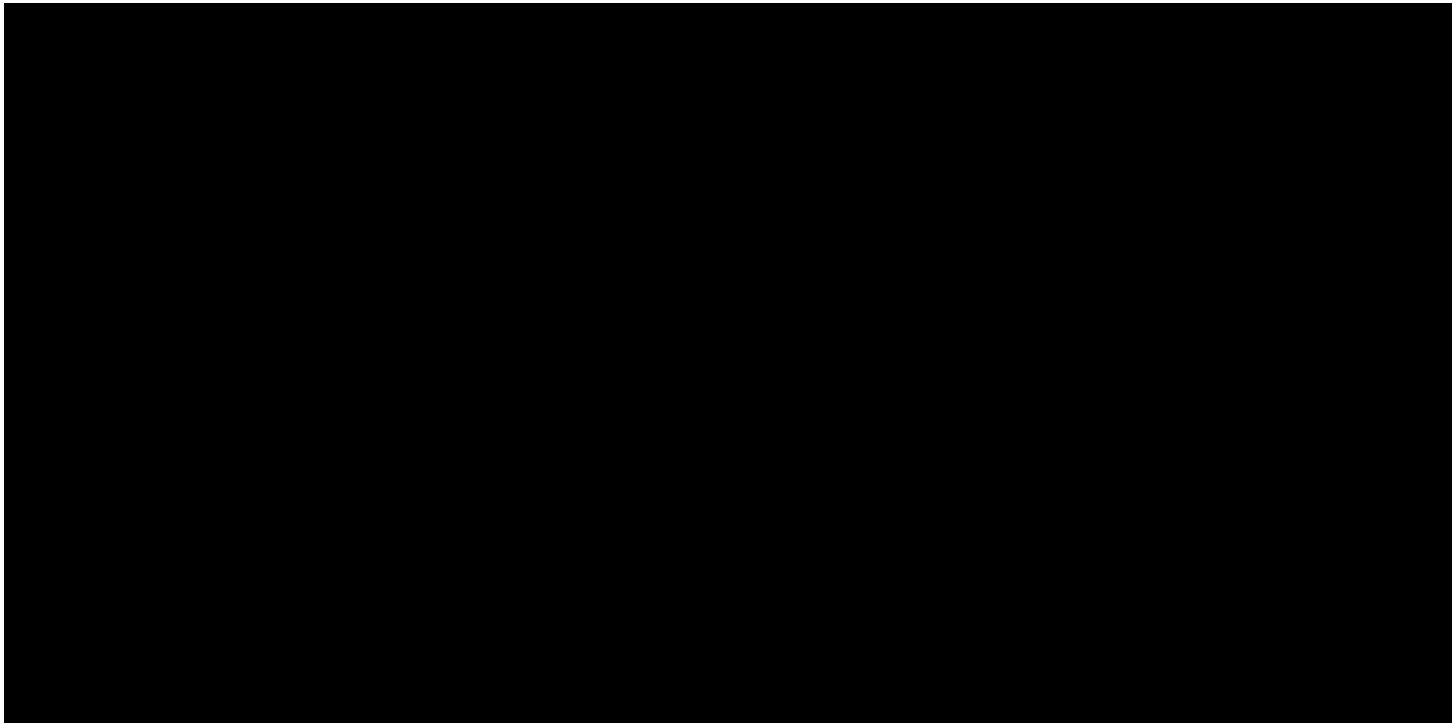
2.2.2 Crop pests and diseases

The maize crop in the stores was infested with aflatoxin food poisoning and cases of weevils infestation are emerging

3.0 Access to food

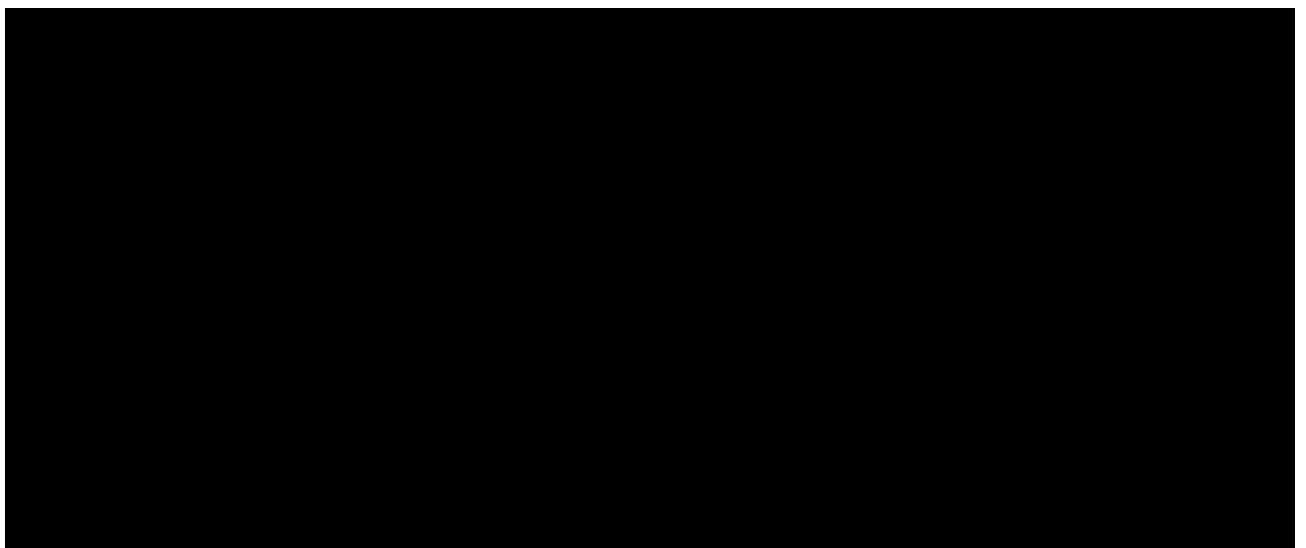
3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The price of cattle in the district remained within the previous months ranges. Comparatively higher prices were reported in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone of KES 24,000 while the mixed farming livelihood zone recorded an average price of KES 10,000
- The stability in price is attributed to the prevailing good livestock body conditions and availability of food stocks at the household levels. In addition, communities are currently restocking their lost herds during the drought period. The trend is not normal compared to the long term average

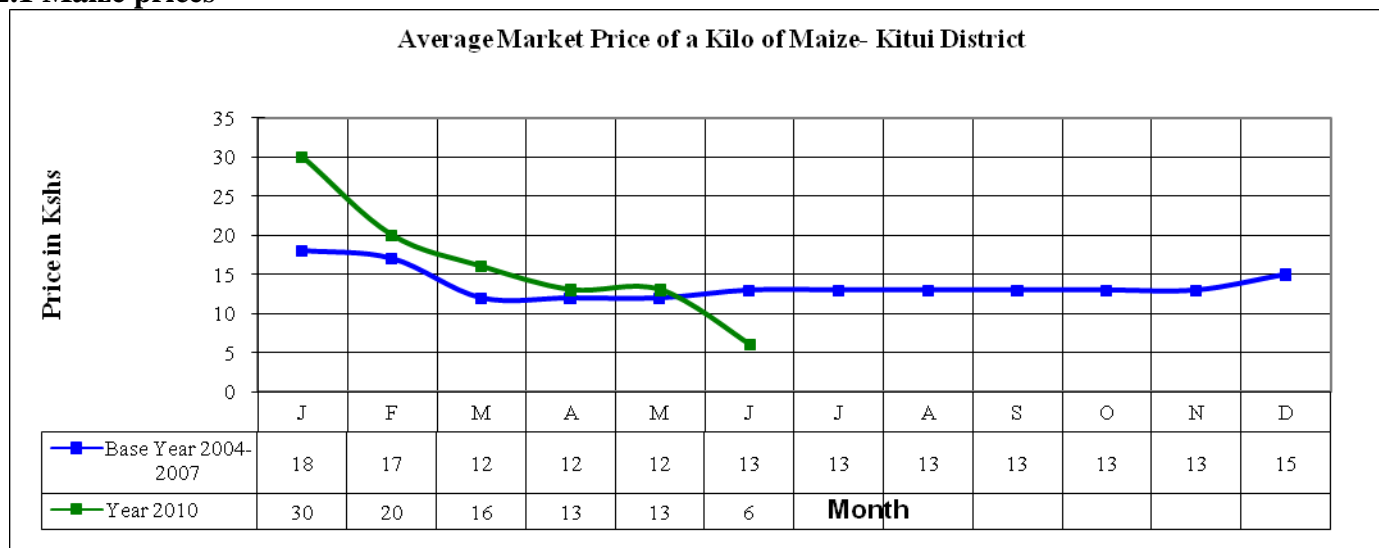
3.1.2 Goat prices



- The average household price of goats increased due to the prevailing good body conditions of goats and reduced volumes to the market since most of the basic household needs are being met through proceeds from the sale of food crops
- The prices were better in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone where goats traded at Ksh2,224 compared to the mixed farming livelihood zone, which reported a price of Ksh 2,158. The trend is not normal compared to the long term average

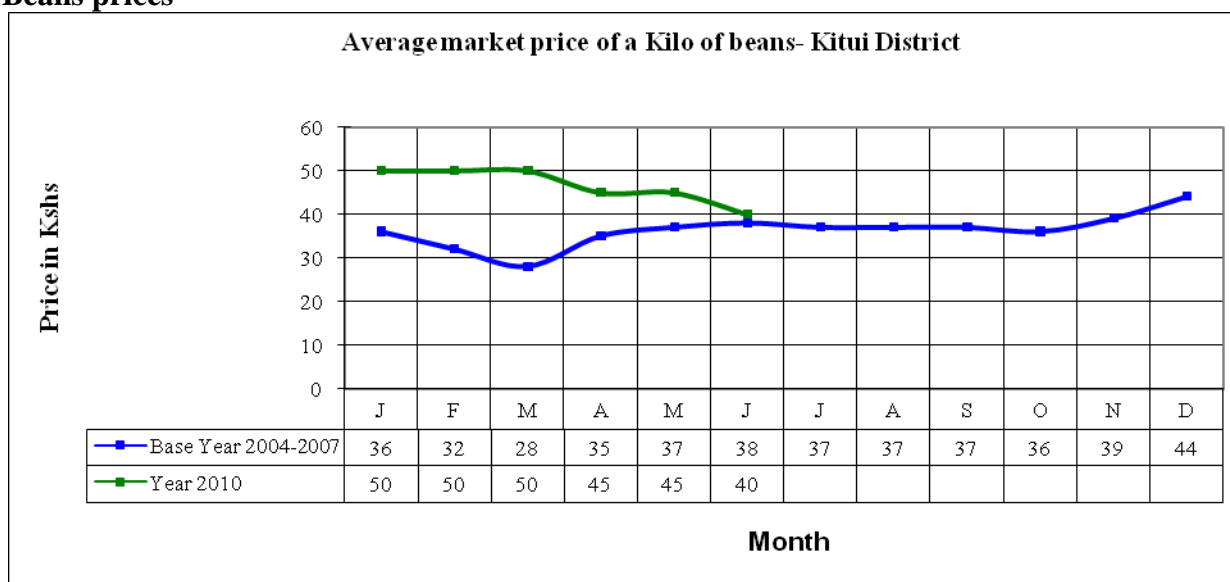
3.2 Food prices

3.2.1 Maize prices



- The price of a kilo of dry maize declined due to the aflatoxin reported in the district and a total ban on the movement of the crop within and outside the district
- The market for this crop has been paralyzed and most buyers have currently suspended trade on the same. The governments offer to purchase the commodity at Ksh 1,000 is yet to be effected. The trend is not normal compared to the long term average

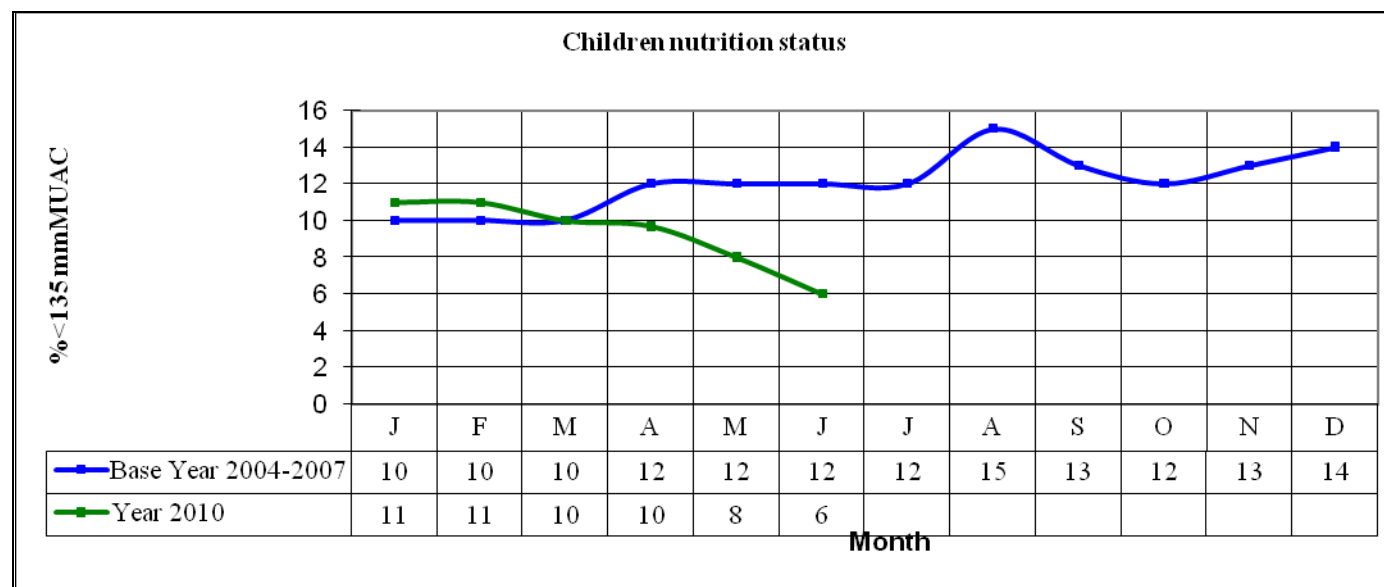
3.2.2 Beans prices



- The price of beans dropped during the month.. In the mixed farming livelihood zone, the price of a kilo of beans was retailing at between Ksh35 and 40 while in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone; a kilo was retailing at between Ksh40 and 45 per kilo.
- This trend is attributed to availability of the crop. Most communities are currently harvesting the long rains crop. The trend was not normal compared to the long term average.

4.0 Human welfare indicators (Utilization of food)

4.1 Nutrition status

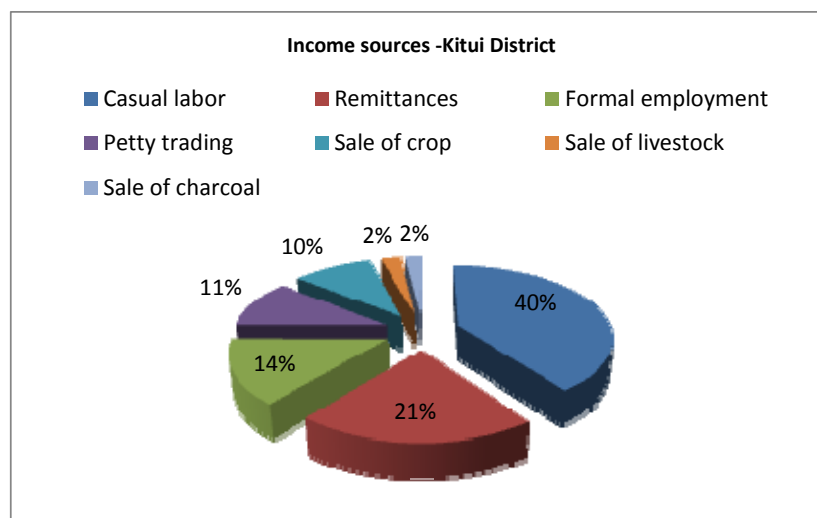


The nutrition status of children below the age of five years improved. The marginal mixed farming livelihood zone reported the highest rate of children below 135mm MUAC at 9.5% while the mixed farming reported 3 %. This improvement is attributed to availability of food stocks within the communities and increased dietary diversity. The trend is not normal compared to the long term average

4.2 Human health

The most common reported human disease was malaria. Cases of aflatoxin were reported in Mutomo District which affected 9 people but no deaths were reported.

5.0 Income sources



The main source of income in the district was Casual labor followed by remittances and formal employment. As indicated above sale of crop and sale of livestock are now emerging as sources of income as compared to the drought period.

5.0 Current interventions

5.1 Food aid

Food for assets German Agro Action in Ikutha

5.2 Non-food interventions

- Harvesting of crops from the field
- Aflatoxin food poisoning campaigns
- Promotion of green house technology
- Provision of micro-irrigation kits
- Excavation of earth dams and pans and sand dams
- Vaccinations, mass treatment and deworming
- Restocking by CDK¹ and vet works
- Capacity building of farmer groups
- Provision of bed nets
- Nutrition surveillance
- Homegrown school feeding program
- Construction of classrooms by CDF

5.3 Coping mechanisms

- Remittances
- Casual labor
- Petty trade

6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSM

- Prepositioning of borehole spares.
- Capacity building communities on WASH

¹ Catholic diocese of Kitui

- Provide servicing Kits for running boreholes
- Capacity building of water users committees
- Intensify storage and post harvest management campaigns
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