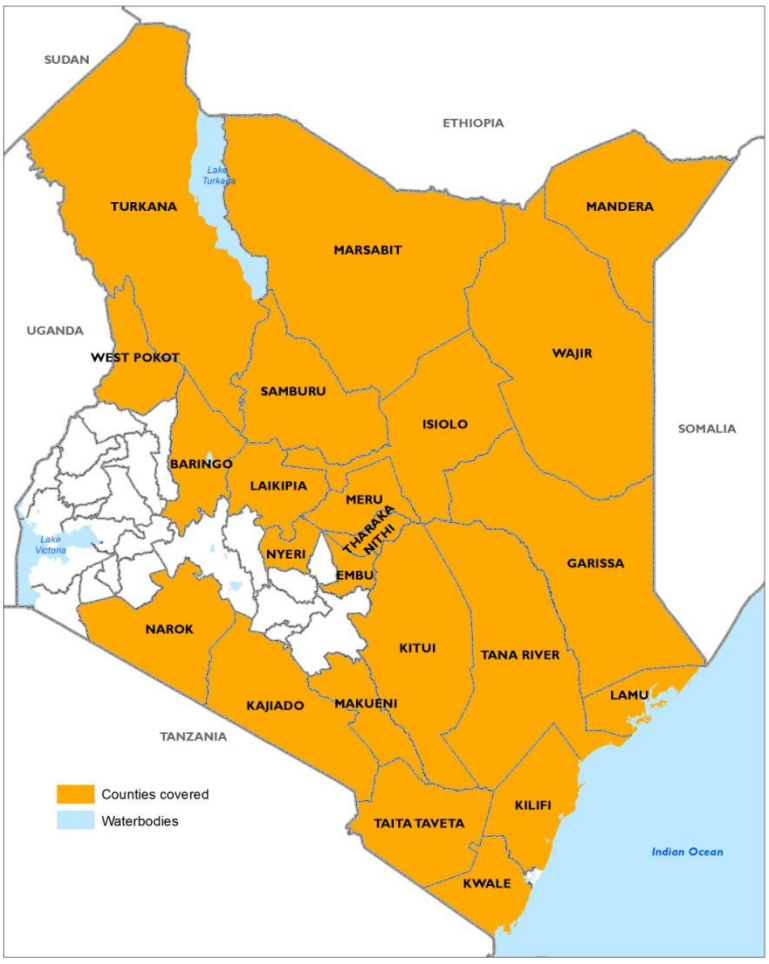
Government of Kenya

THE 2015 LONG RAINS SEASON ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG)



Collaborative report of the Kenya Food Security Steering Group: Ministries of Devolution and Planning, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Health, and Education, Science and Technology, National Drought Management Authority, WFP/VAM, FEWS NET, FAO, UNICEF, World Vision, ACF; with financial support from the Government of Kenya, FAO and WFP.

AUGUST 2015

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1.0 Summary of key findings

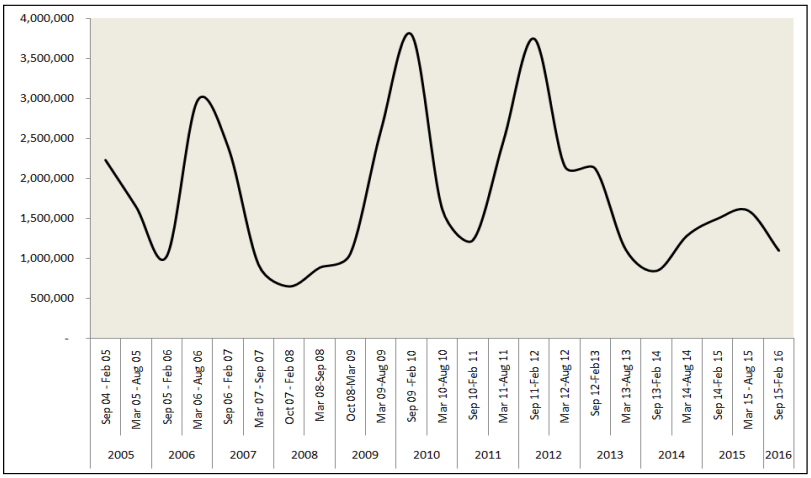

Figure 1.1: Trend of the food insecure population

Findings of the 2015 Long Rains Assessment (LRA) indicate that about 1.1 million people are acutely food insecure and cannot meet their basic dietary requirements, hence requiring immediate food assistance for the next six months (September 2015 – February 2016). This represents a 31 percent decline in the number of food insecure populations from the last short rains assessment in February, implying general improvements in households food security conditions (Figure 1.1). Improvement in the food security situation is attributed to the average to above average March – May cumulative rains across most parts of the high and medium potential areas, pastoral and marginal agricultural livelihood zones. In the pastoral and agropastoral areas, the rains resulted in improvements in rangeland conditions thereby boosting livestock production activities, after a poor 2014 short rains season. Increased availability of rangeland resources supported some kidding, lambing, and calving activities, albeit at below-normal rates, while milk production and consumption at household level also increased. Improvements in livestock body conditions supported favorable livestock prices across most markets resulting in some increase in household income from sale of livestock. Increased income supported food access further boosting household food consumption and improving nutritional status. The livestock-to-cereals terms of trade (ToT) were mostly above average in July, being five to 38 percent above their five-year averages (Figure 1.2). However, localized parts in northern Isiolo and western Wajir, where there were significant rainfall deficits, and worse conditions for livestock, low water availability, and low milk availability, improvements in food security conditions were not recorded. Poorer livestock body conditions meant that livestock-to-cereal TOT were below average in Isiolo County.

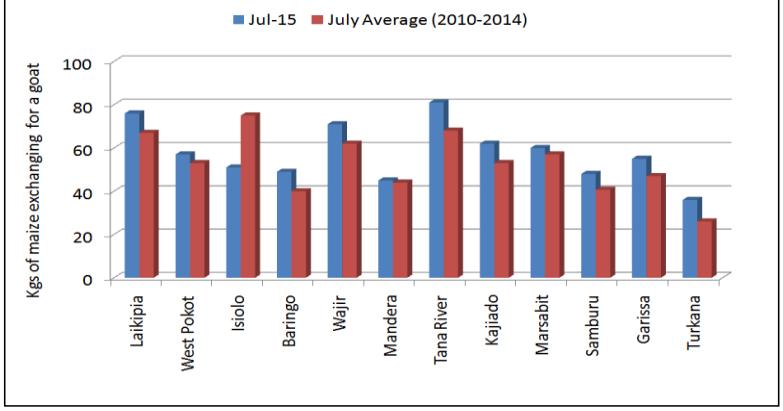

Figure 1.2: Cereals to livestock terms of trade

Nutrition situation has improved in most areas assessed due to improved food security situation. Though Turkana County still remains at very critical/ critical levels, the situation has notably improved. The prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) dropped from 17.4 to 16.7 percent in Turkana West, 28.7 to 20.9 percent in Turkana Central and, 27.2 to 22.9 percent in Turkana North. The situation has however remained unchanged in Turkana South and East at 24.5 percent. This might be attributed to the insecurity that has been experienced in the area. Nutrition situation has also remained very critical in Mandera County (GAM - 24.7 percent) but stable due to extremely high vulnerabilities in the County. Nutrition situation has also improved from very critical to critical in East Pokot (secondary data). The situation has however deteriorated in Wajir North from poor to critical with prevalence of GAM increasing from 8.8 percent to 14.3 percent. Isiolo County has also deteriorated from serious to critical. There is need for increased nutrition surveillance in Wajir, Isiolo County and areas neighboring Isiolo in Laikipia, Garissa and Samburu Counties. The total number of children less than five years requiring treatment (total caseloads) in the areas assessed has dropped to 239,446 in the LRA 2015 compared to 261,120 reported in the 2015 short rains assessment.

In the marginal agricultural areas, improvements in food security conditions between May and July were a result of average-to-above average cumulative rains during March – May period. Though the long rains accounts for about 30 percent of total annual crop production in most marginal areas, average to above average cumulative amounts trigger increased agricultural activities, resulting in more casual wage labor demand and higher household incomes between May and July. However, poor temporal distribution of the long rains resulted in below average crop production, especially in the southeast marginal cluster. Maize crop across most areas withered away before maturity due to moisture stress. In the coastal marginal areas, conditions were more favorable, with maize and cassava production being above long term averages.

2.0 Scope of the 2015 Long Rains Assessment

The 2015 long rains assessment was conducted between 27th July to 7th August 2015 in 23 Arid and Semi-arid (ASAL) counties. The counties assessed include; Turkana, Samburu, Marsabit, West Pokot, Mandera, Wajir, Isiolo, Tana River, Garissa, Kitui, Makueni, Narok, Kajiado, Baringo, Laikipia, Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu, Taita Taveta and Kieni part of Nyeri county, Meru North part in Meru County, Mbeere region in Embu, and Tharaka part of Tharaka Nithi county. The areas covered are predominantly rainfall dependent with the major livelihood activities being crop production and livestock rearing. Drought, conflicts, crop and livestock diseases are among the common hazards that affect food security in these areas.

The main objective of the assessment was to determine the impact of the long rains season on various sectors including agriculture and livestock production, water for livestock and domestic use, health and nutrition, education, market operations and trade. All these are key in terms of food security either as outcome indictors or contributing factors. The assessment looked at impacts on these sectors and made recommendations on the type of interventions that various actors should take to improve the food security situation of the general populations. Interventions were in form of immediate measures to address acute food insecurity aspects or medium to long term approaches meant to reduce the vulnerability of the communities.

3.0 Categories of the food insecure population

3.1 Summary of food security phase classification

The 2015 long rains assessment has established that about 1.1 million people are acutely food insecure. Assessment findings notes that factors contributing to food insecurity currently include poor temporal and spatial distribution of the long rains, below average long rains in some areas, cumulative effects of the previous three consecutive poor rains seasons, elevated food prices, crop pests and diseases, livestock diseases, conflict incidences especially in the pastoral areas, and human-wildlife conflicts in areas bordering game reserves. The food insecure populations are mainly in the northwest and northeast pastoral clusters, and the southeast marginal agricultural areas.

To mitigate against the food insecure conditions, both the national and county governments together with development partners are implementing an array of activities which include, activation of drought contingency funds for all the affected ASAL counties, Hunger Safety Net Programme which implements a cash transfer programme in Turkana, Mandera, Marsabit and Wajir, food for assets/cash for assets programmes, general food distribution, provision of school meals under various programs including Home Grown School Meals Program, and Supplementary Feeding Programmes.

3.2 Population in Crisis (IPC Phase 3)

The current areas under Crisis (IPC Phase 3) include parts of Merti and Sericho in Isiolo County and western parts of Wajir County (parts of Hadado, Eldas and Griftu). Households in Crisis can marginally meet their minimum food needs only with accelerated depletion of livelihood assets, that exposes them to further food consumption gaps. These areas as shown in Figure 1.3 have received cumulative rainfall deficits for the past three consecutive seasons, and have worse conditions for livestock, low water availability, and low milk availability. After the 2015 long rains, owing to the poor rains in these areas, neither rangeland conditions nor food security improved as would be seasonally expected. Water, pasture, and browse are in poor condition, and depleted in some instances. The poor condition of rangeland resources resulted in unusual out-migration of livestock from these areas. Migration also occurred earlier than normal, in May as opposed to August. Figure 1.4 depicts the migration routes within and across Counties. The mass migration of livestock has affected operations of some livestock markets, with significantly lower livestock volumes being traded in these markets. The current return trekking distance from grazing to

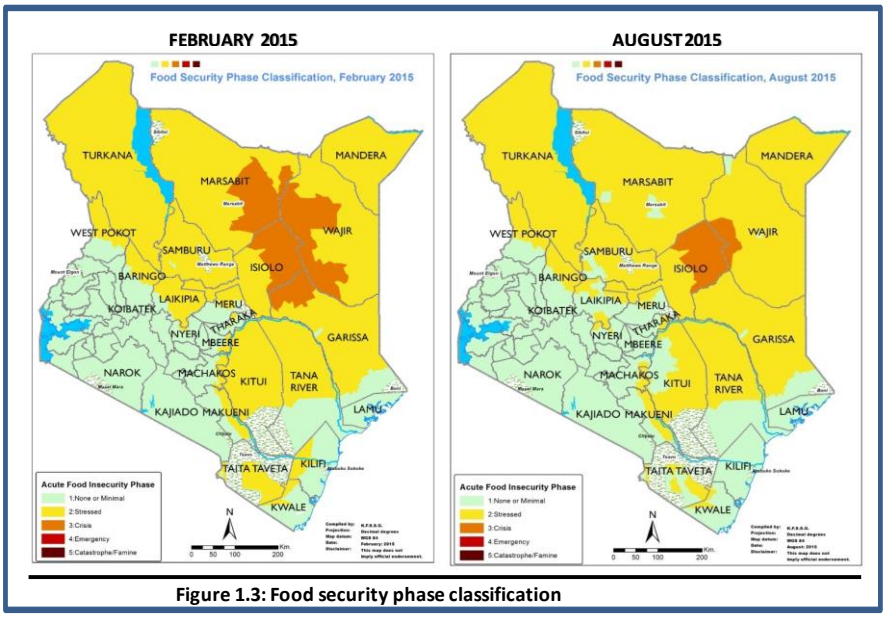

Figure 1.3: Food security phase classification

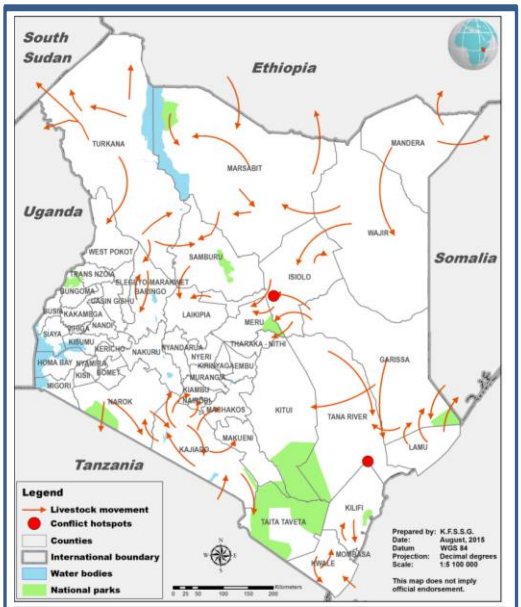

Figure 1.4: Livestock migration routes and conflict hotspots

watering areas for livestock range from 10 – 20 kilometres, and in some instances even more, against normal distances of 2 – 5 kilometres. Due to the migration levels witnessed and longer trekking distances to grazing and watering points, livestock productivity has reduced greatly, with milk production declining by up to 80 percent compared to the normal- milk production and consumption is less than one litre compared to normal of 3 – 4 litres per day. Consumption of milk from the markets has also been constrained by high milk prices, that had increased 50 – 80 percent due to scarcity, between May and July. The Coping Strategy Index (CSI) for Isiolo and Wajir were 19 and 31 compared to 5 and 11 respectively, for same time last year, implying an increase in frequency and severity of coping strategies applied to cope with food consumption gaps. While county-average livestock to cereal terms of trade remained favourable in Wajir, being 15 percent above long term averages (LTA), they were unfavourable in Isiolo, at 32 percent below the LTA. Due to low livestock holdings for the affected population, households are constrained from participating effectively in livestock markets sales, hence not enjoying the favourable ToTs in Wajir. Though nutrition situation in these areas has remained stable, due to the on-going nutrition interventions, GAM prevalence remains critical.

3.3 Population in Stressed (IPC Phase 2)

The number of households in the stressed (IPC Phase 2) reduced in most areas in August 2015 as a result the better performance of the long rains compared to the previous short rain season. However despite the improvement the stressed phase has been predominant in most areas mainly attributed to the fact that the season was not good enough to facilitate a good recovery of the livelihoods. Households in stress are able to afford minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford essential non-food expenditures without engaging in irreversible coping strategies. In the pastoral areas, households in Turkana, Marsabit, Samburu, Mandera, Wajir Isiolo, Garissa and Tana River are in stressed phase. There were however populations in these areas especially in Isiolo, Marsabit and Wajir who moved from crisis phase to stressed after the long rains. Other areas with population under stress include southeastern, marginal and agro pastoral livelihoods of Kitui, Tharaka, Meru North, Makueni, Laikipia Baringo and west Pokot. The number of households in stress phase in the coastal marginal areas significantly reduced, especially in Kilifi, Kwale and Taita Taveta counties, with areas that were previously in stress moving to Minimal (IPC Phase 1).

These areas received average-to-above average cumulative rainfall amounts, ranging between 90 – 200 percent of normal. The temporal distribution of the rains was however poor with most rains received in the month of April and first dekad of May. Water recharge levels in most areas ranged from 60 – 90 percent, though most water points have seasonally declined. In the pastoral areas, modest improvements in rangeland resources supported livestock productivity, with livestock body conditions ranging from good to fair. Livestock prices marginally were

favourable resulting in above-average livestock-to-cereals terms of trade across most areas. Though milk production seasonally declined in July, production and consumption levels remained within normal, with production being 1 – 2 litres compared to normal of 2 – 4 litres per day. Return trekking distances to watering points from grazing areas have seasonally increased to 5 – 10 kilometres. Seasonal decline in rangeland resources has resulted in normal livestock migration. In the marginal agricultural areas, the poor temporal distribution of rains and late planting in some areas affected crop production. In the southeastern marginal areas, maize, cowpeas and green grams production were 48, 59 and 65 percent respectively of the long term average. However, in the coastal marginal areas, production of maize and cassava increased by 38 and 48 percent of long term averages respectively.

4.0 Impacts of the 2015 Long Rains Season

4.1 Rainfall Performance

The long rains season of March to May 2015 was characterized by a late onset in most parts of the country, with most areas receiving rainfall in the third dekad of March as oppesed to the first to second dekad. Temporal distribution was poor in most parts, where most of the rains were received in the month of April and the first dekad of May. While this was good for recovery of the rangelands, crop production was affected by the late onset and the poor temporal distibution. Among areas where temporal distibution was poor included Turkana and Samburu in the pastoral northwest cluster, Taita Taveta, Lamu in the coast, Narok, West Pokot, Nyeri, Baringo and Kajiado counties in the agro pastoral zones.

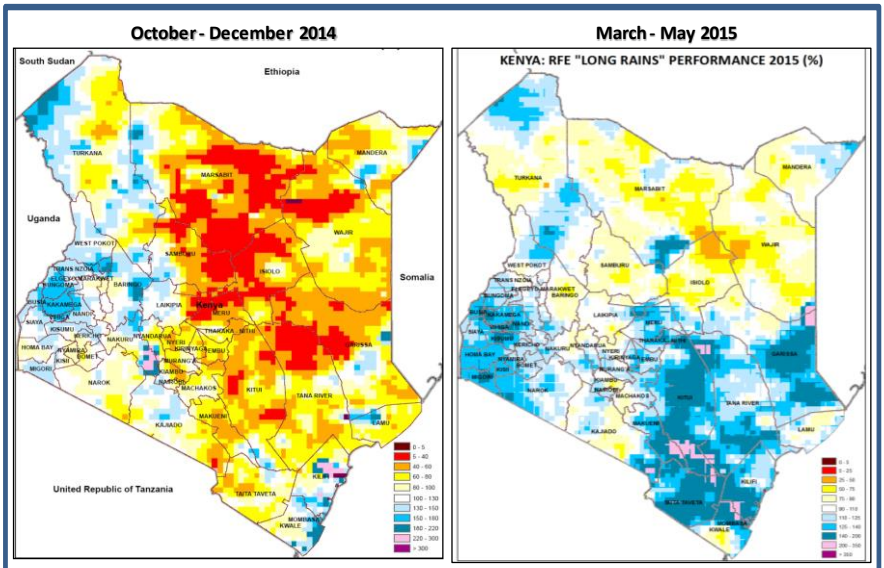

Figure 1.5: Short Rains season compared to Long Rains season Rainfall anomalies

Overall, performance of the season in terms of rainfall amounts was better than the short rains in October – December 2014, with most counties in southeastern and coastal marginal areas including southern part of Garissa receiving enhanced rainfall between 110 - 200 percent of normal rains (Figure 1.5). Most pars of Isiolo, Wajir and Marsabit had below average cumulative rainfall amounts of between 50 - 90 percent of the normal, while most of the other parts of the country had near normal to above normal cumulative rainfall amounts. Most of the rainfall was received for a short period over the season, mostly in the month of April and the first dekad of May. The season was also characterised by an early cessation in most parts.

4.2 National Maize Supply Situation and Prospects

Maize continues to be the dominant staple crop predominantly grown by majority of the smallholder farmers in Kenya. Due to the normal to above normal 2015 long rains, coupled with input subsidy support (by both national and county governments), projections by the State Department of Agriculture (SDA) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MoALF), points towards average to above average maize production from the high and medium rainfall areas, and parts of the marginal agricultural areas. Exceptions are in parts of the marginal agricultural areas which had poor spatial and temporal distribution of the rains. The national achieved area under maize was about 1.6 million hectares, representing about 96 percent of the targeted area. The long-rains season is the most important with respect to maize production, accounting for about 80 percent of the annual national maize output, with more than 70 percent of national output coming from the high and medium rainfall areas.

According to the Food Security Report for July 2015, national food availability, accessibility and affordability in Kenya remains stable, due to the on-going long rains crop harvest (especially maize, wheat, beans, potatoes, cowpeas, green grams and vegetables) and cross border inflow. Maize crop harvesting has progressed well in many parts of the country including western Kenya, southeastern and coastal marginal areas, and central Kenya. Harvesting of the long rains maize crop is yet to start in the north Rift. However, concerns have been raised that expectation of enhanced rains during the October – December period, which coincide with the harvesting time in these key growing areas, would result in increased pre-and post-harvest losses. Therefore, it would be important to monitor storage facilities and moisture content of the harvested grain, to avoid aflatoxin contamination and likely infection.

National maize stocks remain adequate, owing to the continued imports from across the borders and harvesting of the long rains maize crop. The East Africa Cross-Border Trade Bulletin for June 2015 reports that maize exports from Tanzania to Kenya and especially to Nairobi, eastern and coastal lowland markets increased seasonably by 16 percent between the first (January – March) and second (April – June) quarters of 2015. Indeed the volumes exported in the second quarter were three times higher than the 2011/2014 average volumes for the quarter. This was attributed to increased purchases of the surplus stocks in Tanzania at lower prices for the Kenyan market towards the start of the May-to-August crop in the main producing southern highlands. As a result, national maize stocks stood at 0.99 million metric tons (Table 1.1) by end of July 2015. Between August and December 2015, analysis of the available maize stocks (from long rains harvest and imports) against utilization by different actors (manufacturers, consumers) indicate that the country will have 1 million metric tons of maize as surplus after December. This implies sufficiency of maize throughout the year. The long rains maize crop production is projected to be approximately 2.8 million metric tons, which is about 12 percent above the long term average.

Table 1.1: Maize balance sheet (1st August to 31st December 2015)

	90kg bags	**MT**
Stocks as at 31st July 2015	**11,074,196**	**996,678**
a) Total East Africa Imports* (cross border trade) expected between August 2015 to December 2015	850,000	76,500

b) Private sector/ Relief agencies estimated imports outside EAC between August 2015 to December 2015	400,000	36,000
Estimated harvest between August 2015 to December 2015		-
Estimated balance L.R harvest projections up to December 2015	21,000,000	1,890,000
Total available stocks by December 2015	**33,324,196**	**2,999,178**
Post –harvest storage losses estimated at 10%	3,332,420	299,918
Projected national availability as at 31st December 2015 (90kg Bags)	29,991,776	2,699,260
Amount used as animal feeds (3% of household stocks)	899,753	80,978
Amount retained as seed (1%)	299,918	26,993
Net available stocks by December 2015	**28,792,105**	**2,591,289**
CONSUMPTION @3.34 million bags/Month for 43 million people for 5 months	16,700,000	1,503,000
Balance as at 31st December 2015 (surplus)	**12,092,105**	**1,088,289**

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries

4.3 Food price trends

Food prices across most urban, pastoral and marginal agricultural markets have remained fairly stable, owing to availability of adequate supplies from imports and harvest from the long rains crops. Figure 1.6 depicts wholesale maize prices for representative urban markets. Evidently, wholesale maize prices have remained up to 10 percent below their 5-year averages between May and July in Nairobi, Kisumu and Eldoret, while being up to six percent above averages in Mombasa, due to supplies being drawn down. Between June and July, wholesale maize prices have remained atypically stable, as a result of increased inflows from across the borders, and availability of other substitute commodities. Maize prices have been fairly stable across the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural areas, attributable to increasing availability of other foods like millet and rice in the markets, and some reduction in demand as households consumed recently harvested short-cycle legumes like beans, cowpeas, green grams, and pigeon peas. Prices remained within normal ranges, and in some instances up to 10 percent below averages. In the pastoral markets, retail maize prices also remained atypically stable between June and July, due to availability of other substitute cereals and legumes resulting in reduced demand on maize. Normal market operations in pastoral areas have boosted availability of food commodities from various source markets.

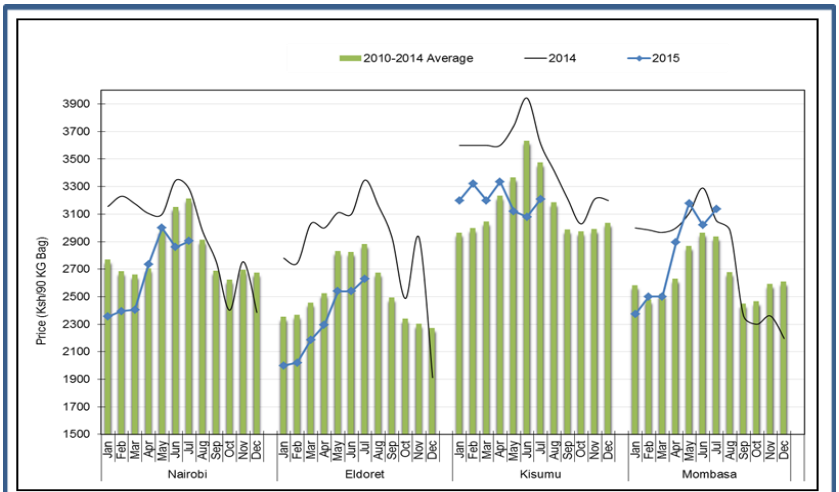

Figure 1.6: Maize price trends in major urban markets

5.0 Food Security Prognosis through December 2015

Household food security is expected to seasonally decline through October in both marginal agricultural areas and pastoral livelihood zones. Households will increasingly depend on markets for food access, at a time when household incomes are seasonally low, due to limited income earning opportunities, and staple prices gradually increasing. This is likely to lead to intensification of coping mechanisms and diversification of labor to other off-farm activities including petty trading, construction labor, and other forms of labor, to support food access from the markets. In the marginal agricultural areas, expected above averages short rains will trigger early preparation of land and planting, in September, especially in the mixed farming zones, resulting in availability of some agricultural labor opportunities. Though household food access and consumption are expected to be constrained up to October, majority of households would still be able to afford minimum dietary requirements and remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2). However, other areas of the marginal agricultural zones would remain in the minimal (IPC Phase 1). In the pastoral areas, seasonal decline in quality and quantity of rangeland resources will continue through October. Livestock productivity will track rangeland resources, declining through October. With less income from livestock sales and milk sales and rising staple food prices, livestock-to-cereal terms of trade will be eroded. Intensification of coping mechanisms including sell of charcoal and firewood, would ensure households sustain food access. Household malnutrition levels are expected to track food consumption, declining through October, but are not expected to reach emergency levels due to ongoing interventions and the use of coping strategies. Majority of pastoral households will remain in Stress(IPC Phase 2). Areas in Isiolo and Wajir, currently in crisis (IPC Phase 3), are expected to remain so through October.

Good performance of the 2015 short rains will significantly improve food security in the pastoral and marginal agricultural areas from November onwards. In the marginal agricultural areas, the rains are set to trigger higher-than-normal demand for agricultural labor, resulting in increased labor demand, wage and household incomes. Timely onset of rains would result in timely planting and availability of early-maturing leguminous crops by late November. Coupled with availability of long rains harvested crop from the north Rift, adequate availability of food in the markets is expected by December. As early-maturing short rains crops are harvested, demand on markets for staple foods will start to slowly, marginally decline towards December. As a result of rising supply and gradually falling demand, staple food prices will likely stabilize or marginally decline. Improvement in household food consumption is expected by December, with most households expected to move to Non e (IPC Phase 1). In the pastoral areas, above average short rains will result in substantial improvements in rangeland resources, improving livestock productivity by December. Livestock productivity is set to improve resulting in increase in milk production and consumption, and income from milk sales. Improvements in livestock health and body conditions will result in seasonal increase in livestock prices, further boosting household income. With stable or marginally declining staple prices, livestock-to-cereal terms of trade (ToT) will improve, resulting in improved food consumption and nutrition status. Majority of households will remain in stressed (IPC Phase 2) by December, including areas that were earlier in crisis (IPC Phase 3). However, some pastoral areas are likely to move into minimal (IPC Phase 1) by December 2015.

6.0 Priority Interventions and Options for response

Table 1.2 provides a summary of various response options for the various sectors. More detailed analysis of the sector specific interventions are represented in section 4 of the main report.

Table 1.2: Summary of priority interventions by sector for September 2015 – February 2016

SECTOR	PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS	COST Ksh.(M)	COST IN U.S. DOLLAR (M)
AGRICULTURE	Provision of subsidized farm inputs, promotion of drought tolerant crops, water harvesting through construction of pans and irrigation, promotion of post-harvest management and marketing, conservation agriculture and good agricultural practices, establishment of green houses and Mother orchards	**1,879M**	**18.79 M**
LIVESTOCK	Promotion of market based destocking, Livestock vaccination, disease treatment, control and surveillance; Maintenance of boreholes for livestock, Up scaling of livestock Insurance, Livestock breeding improvement schemes, Range land rehabilitation and re-seeding, Pasture & fodder establishment & conservation,	**855M**	**8.55M**
WATER	Water Trucking, Fuel subsidy for community boreholes, Water treatment, Provision of water Tanks and storage facilities, Water Infrastructure development for emergency supply, repair of strategic boreholes in grazing areas, roof water harvesting, water pans repair and purchase generators and fencing of water points.	**2,441M**	**24.41M**
HEALTH AND NUTRITION	Scaling up High Impact Nutrition Interventions (HINI) including integrated management of Acute Malnutrition, Conduct Nutrition surveys/Rapid Assessment/Mass Screening, Provision of water treatment chemicals, Train field monitors and community health workers, Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)	**947M**	**9.5M**
EDUCATION	Up scaling of SMP, sustainability projects, Provision of water to schools- water trucking and storage, Construction of boreholes, toilets and Building of boarding schools	**810M**	**8.1 M**
FOOD ASSISTANCE	Building resilience to future shocks through food assistance programmes. Food commodities and cash for 1.1 million food insecure people in need of assistance for the next six months (September 2015 - February 2016).	**5,712M**	**57.12M**
Total		**12,644M**	**126M**