

SUMMARY

- **The 2002/03 short-rains season has varied widely across the country's livelihoods – favorable in the eastern and northeastern pastoral areas as well as in the coastal and western arable districts, resulting in improved recovery prospects in these areas.**
- **In contrast, the season has been mediocre in the northwestern pastoral and in the southeastern short-rains dependent marginal agricultural areas, and if sustained, will likely lead to accentuated food insecurity.**
- **Domestic maize availability, although currently favorable is likely to tighten after the first quarter of 2003. The 2002 long-rains harvest was less than expected, while the 2002/03 short-rains harvest will likely be reduced by the adverse impact of erratic short rains in key growing areas.**
- **The World Food Program in collaboration with the GoK and implementing partners is in the process of finalizing the Disaster Preparedness Fund, which is aimed at enhancing the capacities of drought-prone households mitigate the impacts of poor seasons.**
- **Ongoing food security activities during November included flood contingency planning and national livelihood zoning.**

1. Food Security Conditions and Prospects

The preliminary prognosis of food security in the country is mixed across the country and will become clearer in the early months of 2003, after the 2002/03 short-rains season is evaluated.

Initial optimism for improved food security across the country has been moderated somewhat by the mediocre November rains in key short-rains dependent marginal agricultural areas and in the northwestern pastoral and agro-pastoral districts. The 2002 short rains have been particularly erratic in these areas. However, fairly heavy rainfall during the past few days, if sustained, may improve food security prospects. Food security assessments are planned for early 2003, to clarify better the impact of these less than average rains on the food security of households in these areas.

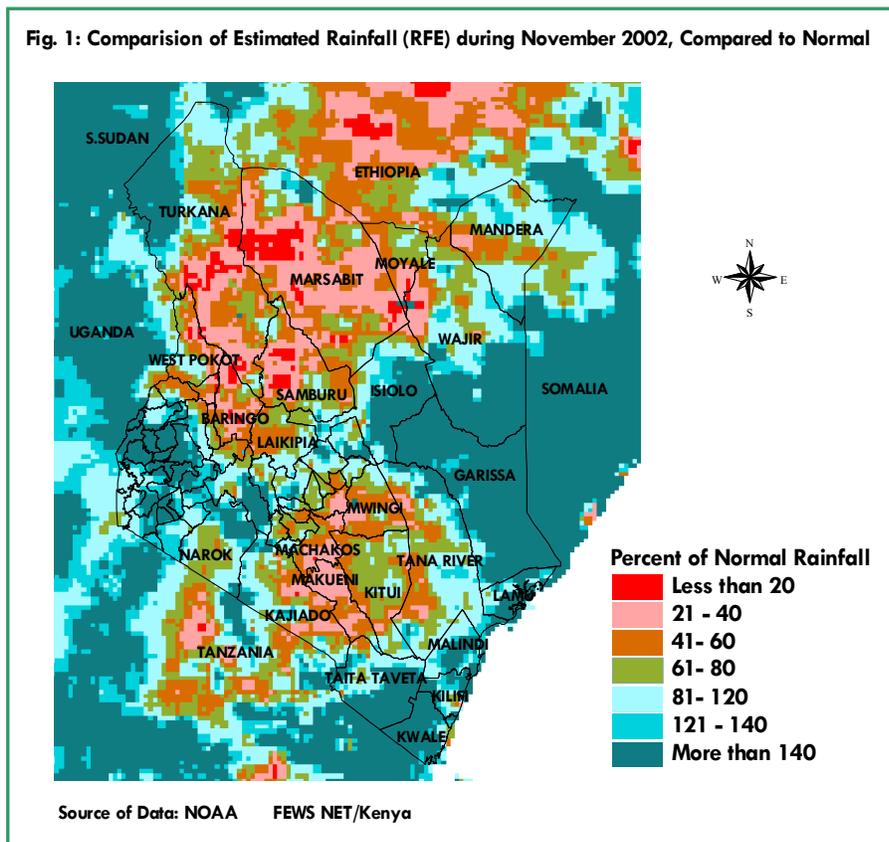
In contrast, pastoralists situated in the eastern and northeastern districts of the country and agricultural households in Nyanza, Western and the highland areas of Eastern and Central Provinces are experiencing much improved food security conditions following fairly good rains. However, because the season started late, a good harvest in the arable areas in particular, is contingent upon the uncharacteristic continuation of rains into January.

Food prices have either remained stable or increased marginally during November in key reference markets, as harvesting continues in the 'grain-basket' districts of the Rift Valley Province. Although maize supply is favorable at present, supplies could tighten considerably after the first quarter of 2003. This is attributed to less than average production in the 2002 long-rains season as well as the expectation of a reduced short-rains harvest if mediocre rains persist in southeastern short-rains dependent and marginal agricultural districts.

2. National Trends

2.1. Agroclimatic Conditions

Figure 1 illustrates rainfall as a percent of normal during November. The short rains season effectively began in the beginning of November when it should have started in October. The quality of the 2002 October-February short-rains season so far has been characterized by its variability and poor spatial distribution across the country's diverse livelihood zones. The largely arable districts of Nyanza and the Western Provinces have reported favorable rains, and these are expected to have a beneficial impact on crop and livestock production. The marginal agricultural districts of the Coast and Nyanza Provinces have experienced



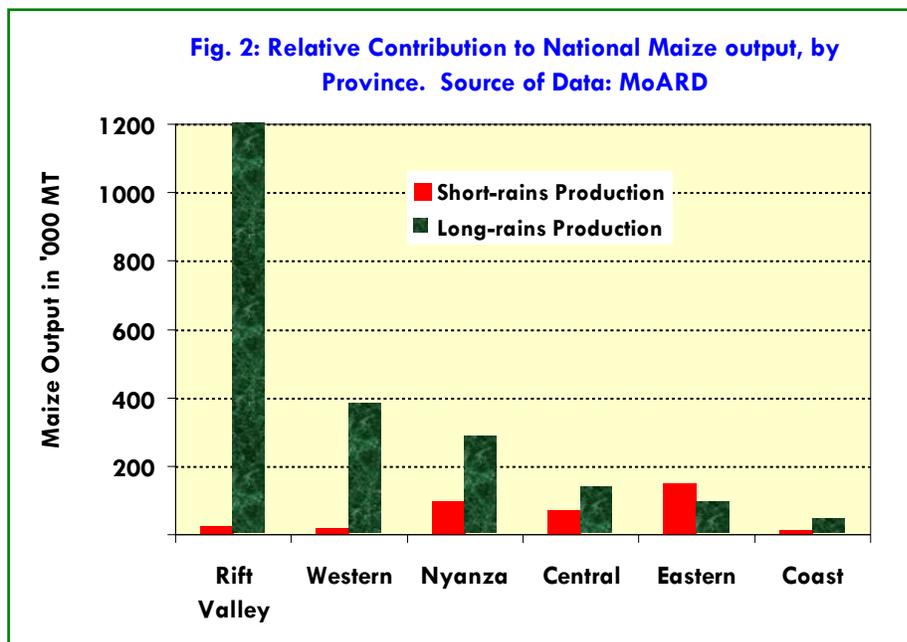
The largely arable districts of Nyanza and the Western Provinces have reported favorable rains, and these are expected to have a beneficial impact on crop and livestock production. The marginal agricultural districts of the Coast and Nyanza Provinces have experienced above normal rainfall through November, after a delayed onset. Although the late season onset has staggered crop planting

continued rainfall through December should significantly compensate for this delay. Eastern pastoral areas including Isiolo, Garissa and most of Wajir Districts have also reported heavier-than-usual rainfall. This is expected to consolidate the recovery process of pastoralists that began during the 2001/02 short-rains season.

However, below average cumulative rainfall during the 2002/03 short-rains season has been the key feature of the drought-prone marginal agricultural districts of Eastern Province. The impact of continued poor rains on food security will be felt more strongly in the Eastern Province, where people's livelihoods depend on the short rains more than the long rains. (See Figure 2). These few areas produce up to 70 percent of the national short rains maize crop. The pastoral districts of Marsabit Mandera, West Pokot and Baringo have also had mediocre rains so far. Enhanced rainfall in the coastal and lakeshore districts, depicted in Figure 1, has been attributed to the mild to moderate El Nino rains, expected to continue into early 2003.

2.2 Crop Production

The 2002 short-rains cropping season was delayed by two weeks to one month across most of the arable areas of the country, attributed to the late onset of rains. Planting has been completed in all short-rains cropping areas, which are found mainly in Eastern, Central and Nyanza Provinces, however, crop conditions are varied. The Coastal and Nyanza Province farm households anticipate a fairly good harvest, however, things look worse in the marginal agricultural districts of Eastern Province, where rains have been both poor and erratic after a promising start. Figure 2 illustrates the relative contribution of each season to national maize output, by Province.



The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) will likely revise downward, expected national short-rains harvest. Initial MoARD estimates indicated that 450,000 MT of maize and 180,000 MT of beans would be harvested during the 2002 October-February short-rains. ¹A substantial reduction in the short-rains maize output

would have a significant negative impact on aggregate national output and in turn on food prices. This is largely due to the fact that the 2002 long-rains harvest was only 1.89 million MT, 13 percent also below the 1992-2000 average, and therefore national supply is already lower than expected. In addition, the MoARD is expecting a substantial reduction in beans output after a significant proportion was lost to a combination of excessive rainfall in Nyanza and Central Provinces and extended dry weather in the marginal agricultural districts of Eastern Province. Although domestic supply of beans rarely ever meets local demand, cross-border imports will likely bridge the short-fall, at a price.

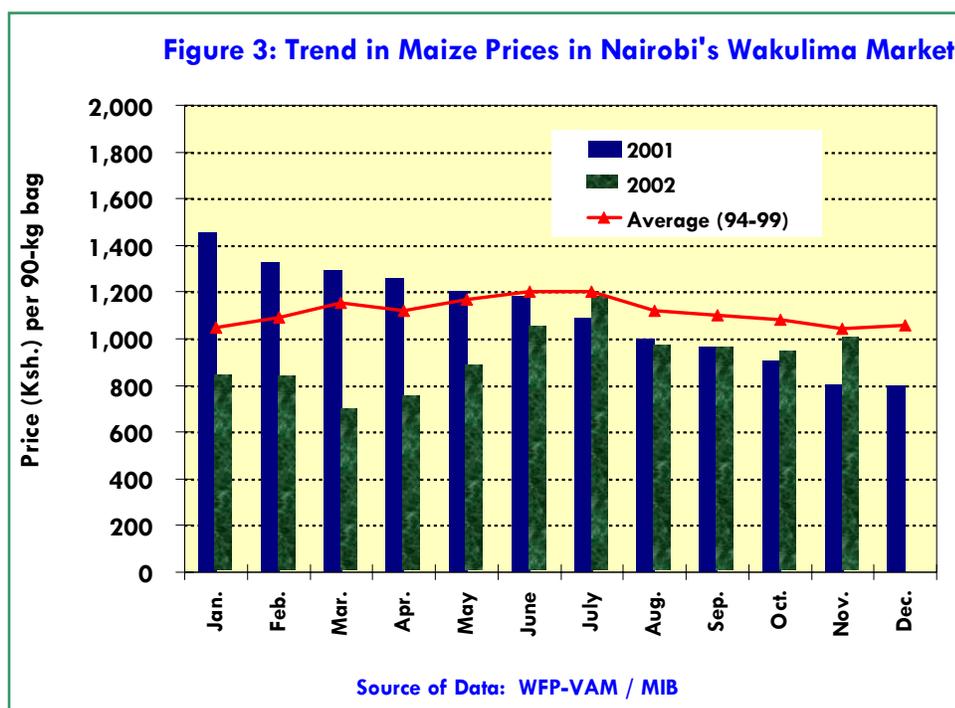
Nevertheless, domestic maize supply appears favorable through the first quarter of 2003. Harvesting in the ‘grain basket’ districts of the Rift Valley Province will continue through January which is when the short-rains harvest in arable areas of Eastern, Central, Nyanza and Coast Provinces will start. In addition, the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) is holding an estimated 219,000 MT of maize, of which 90,000 constitutes the strategic grain reserve stock, 107,000 MT the GoK’s relief maize stock and 22,000 MT commercial stock. On-going cross-border maize imports from Tanzania are expected to add to the domestic supply.

¹ The short-rains season normally accounts for an estimated 15 percent of annual national maize output. The annual national output is normally close to 2.7 million MT.

2.3. Commodity Prices

The upward pressure on maize prices has persisted during most of November. In the key reference markets of Nairobi, Mombasa, Eldoret and Kisumu, maize prices have increased by between 2 and 6 percent and have reached or slightly surpassed levels of Ksh. 1000 per 90-kg bag over the past month. In Eldoret however, prices remain below the Ksh. 1000 mark at Ksh. 840 per 90-kg bag. This range also reflects prices in surrounding markets of Kitale and Uasin Gishu situated in the surplus-producing Rift Valley Province.

During this period, prices would have been expected to fall due to increased supply from harvests but this has not been the case because lower than anticipated harvests compared to other



years has reduced the supply into markets. Continued activity by millers and traders in the market and minimal trade with neighboring countries has also contributed to the rise in maize prices.

In most pastoral districts, the retail prices of cereals have depreciated and remained low during the month. In Baringo, cereal prices have

increased due to increased demand but the prices are still within the normal range this season.

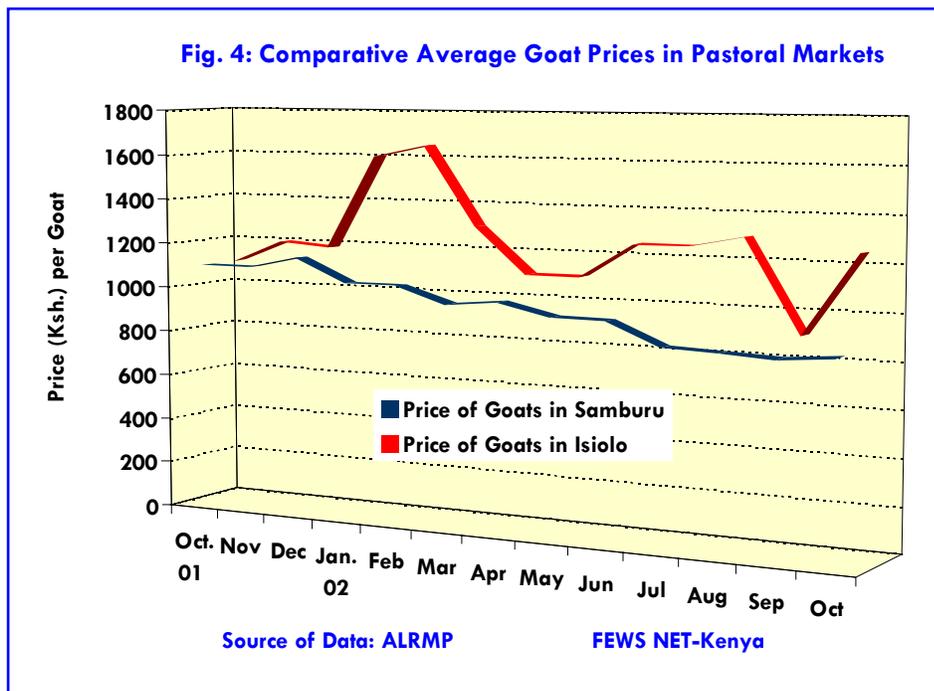
November maize prices are significantly higher than during the same period last year but in the coming months will likely reduce due to the harvests expected throughout the arable areas of the country. The impact of NCPB's entry into the market is yet to be seen following their indication that they would soon be purchasing maize from farmers at around Ksh. 900 per 90-kg bag to boost the strategic grain reserves. The strategic grain reserve was constituted three months ago and the GoK expects to enhance the reserve with newly harvested grain sourced from the Rift Valley Province— refer previous reports.

2.4. Pastoral Food Security

The eastern lying pastoral districts have had good to heavy rains so far this season, with some flooding in localized areas of Garissa and Tana River districts – refer to figure 1. In contrast, rains in the northwestern pastoral districts have been poorly distributed and accompanied by

occasional flash floods. Subsequently, recovery prospects remain on track in the eastern pastoral districts of Wajir, Isiolo, Garissa, Ijara and parts of Mandera and Tana River districts, while prospects are less favorable in the northwestern pastoral areas of Turkana, Marsabit, Samburu, West Pokot, Baringo, Laikipia and southern Kajiado District.

Pasture and browse have improved across most pastoral districts even in the northwestern districts where



where November rainfall has been lower than average. This is attributed to early though unseasonable rainfall in October, particularly in West Pokot, Baringo, Turkana and parts of the Mandera District situated in the northeast. Livestock body and health conditions have improved markedly across several eastern pastoral areas.

The same optimistic outlook will unlikely be the case in the northwestern districts, where signs of stress are already emerging – initial improvements will likely be reversed by subsequent poor rains already alluded to. Some pastoralists are migrating unseasonably early away from their traditional wet season grazing areas in search of grazing resources. Pastoralist recovery prospects in these areas have reduced considerably during November after an extended dry spell that followed early October rains. Inadequate water, grazing and browsing in the northwestern pastoral districts are expected to exacerbate already precarious food insecurity among pastoralist households. Worst affected are the pastoral households in West Pokot, Baringo, parts of Turkana, Marsabit and Samburu Districts, as well as in parts of the southern Tana River and Kajiado Districts.

The trend of livestock prices across key livestock markets is mixed – increasing in the eastern districts and declining in the northwestern districts. Figure 3 is an illustration of the contrasting livestock price trend in eastern lying Isiolo district and the northwestern Samburu District. Increasing livestock prices will likely lead to improved pastoralist terms of trade if current cereal prices remain seasonably stable.

Significant reductions in rates of child malnutrition even during the middle of the drought were attributed principally to supplementary feeding interventions undertaken by NGOs and the GoK under the co-ordination of UNICEF. The reduction in rates of child malnutrition will likely be

sustained in the eastern pastoral districts where the availability of milk and livestock products has improved.

In contrast, the Arid Lands and Resource Management Project (ALRMP) has reported increases in rates of child malnutrition in several pastoral divisions, during the past few months, after the scaling down and conclusion of interventions. The most significant increases ranging between 10 and 20 percent have been reported in North Horr, Maikona, Loiyangalani, Lokitaung, Kakuma, Central Mandera and Obbu Divisions. Sustained poor household food security in the northwestern districts will likely accentuate the increase in malnutrition rates. Planned food security assessments are expected to focus in these districts.

During November renewed livestock raiding continued to disrupt security in Turkana, Samburu, West Pokot, Marakwet and Isiolo Districts. Reciprocal raids among pastoral communities have increased significantly since the onset of the dry season and have continued through the short-rains. In these districts food security among predominately market-dependent pastoral households, has been adversely affected as grain prices abnormally increase while livestock market outlets become limited. In addition to food security losses, schools such as in Marakwet District have closed down, after the level of civil insecurity escalated.

The food security prognosis and recovery prospects for pastoral households is mixed – more optimistic in the eastern lying pastoral livelihoods and less so in the northwestern districts. In addition the recovery of pastoralist households as a whole will be tenuous as a result of the severely eroded asset base, following a succession of five poor seasons. However, worst-hit are the northwestern pastoral districts where comprehensive monitoring is recommended.

3. Ongoing Programmes and Activities

Disaster Preparedness Fund

Preparations for the implementation of the Fund for Disaster Preparedness, a joint WFP/Office of the President project which aims to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards through the creation of community assets, are underway and significant progress has been achieved so far. Implementing Partners (IP) have been identified in Isiolo, Mandera and Turkana districts and Tripartite Letters of Agreement and budgets have been signed by the GoK and IPs in the three districts. At the national level, the National Project Review Committee is formed.

The project has been launched in Isiolo, Turkana and Mandera districts and the District Project Review Committees (DPRC) formed in each district. To strengthen capacities of government staff, training for the DPRC has been conducted in the three districts. Utilizing experiences gained from the Food for Work (FfW) program implemented under the WFP emergency program, Isiolo district has made significant steps toward in project implementation. Development of project proposals is complete and Project monitors have been trained on FfW guidelines. Food commodities have also been received at the district headquarters and the implementation of the projects is ongoing. The main challenge envisaged during the implementation of the project is the timely availability of sufficient hand tools.

In Mandera and Turkana districts, training of the Project Monitors will be done in January. The training will focus on FfW guidelines and warehousing.

4. Other Food Security Activities

4.1 Livelihood Zones

Activities in support of the development of a detailed livelihood zone map are on going and digitization of up to date administrative boundaries to the lowest level (sub-location) is in progress. Collection of field and secondary data is in its final stages and the design of a livelihood database is scheduled to begin soon. The ultimate objective of this initiative is to provide analysts and decision makers with rapid access to livelihood information on rural households in Kenya. This information will be organized and accessible in a way that allows for rigorous analysis of the effects of different multiple shocks (e.g. drought, price shocks, floods, etc) on rural household access to food and income. The exercise is a joint one involving the MoARD, the ALRMP, FEWS NET/Food Economy Group, and WFP/VAM.

4.2 Flood Contingency Planning

In support of the flood contingency planning activity, reports on district disaster preparedness have been received from thirteen districts so far. These reports will be useful in identifying flood, mudslide and landslide prone areas and in developing a national flood contingency plan.

Collection of data needed for development of flood risk maps and scenarios is nearly complete and a questionnaire has been prepared by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) and presented to the Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM). The questionnaire aims to obtain information on the capacity of partners to respond to disasters. This information will be essential for contingency planning purposes and especially for preparedness for quick onset disasters such as floods or conflict.