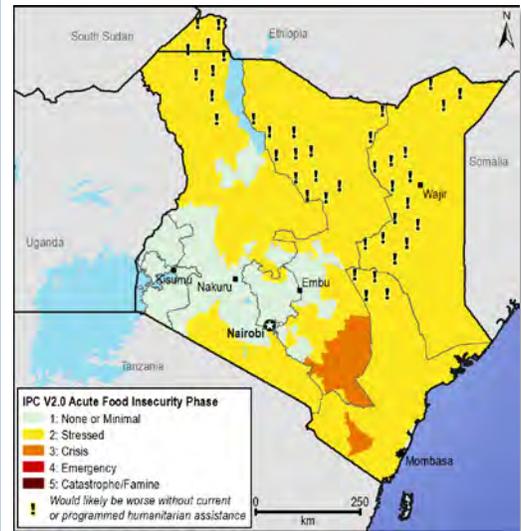


Resurgent rains in late December and January lead to slight crop recovery in the Southeast

KEY MESSAGES

- The food insecure population continues to be 2.1 million people, but this number is likely to increase following the poor performance of the October to December short rains in parts of the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming zones. The Short Rains Assessment (SRA) 2013 will establish the total population in need of humanitarian assistance by March.
- Resurgent rains in the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihood zones in late December and early January slightly improved water access and livestock conditions, and they led to the recovery of some crops. However, the food security situation is still fragile with many areas at a high risk of deteriorating into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or remaining in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through March. The chance of rains not continuing until crops reach maturity is relatively high.
- Maize prices are slowly declining as the long rains harvest reaches markets, but they remain above average. In the marginal agricultural and pastoral livelihood zones, maize prices are still increasing. Poor households have reduced access to food because of reduced income from casual labor and high maize prices.
- The March to May long rains are likely to be average to below average. The high chance of high temperatures in the meantime means that grazing conditions are likely to degrade quicker than usual during the January to March dry season. This would likely further increase food prices as demand for market purchases in pastoral areas rises.

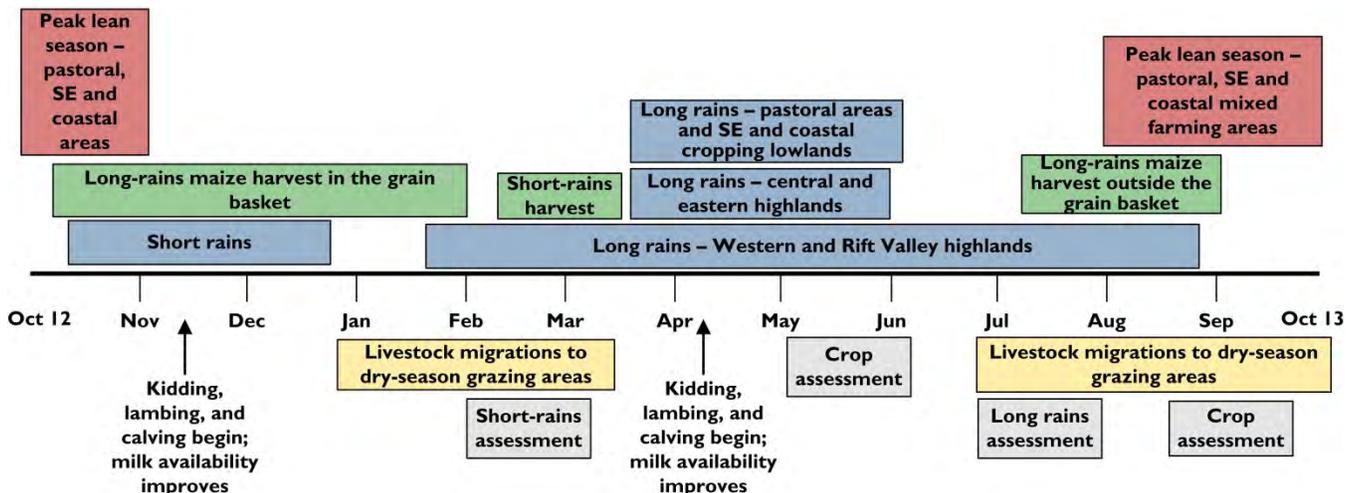
Figure 1. Current food security outcomes, January 2013



Source: FEWS NET Kenya

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale for more on this scale.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET Kenya

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current Situation

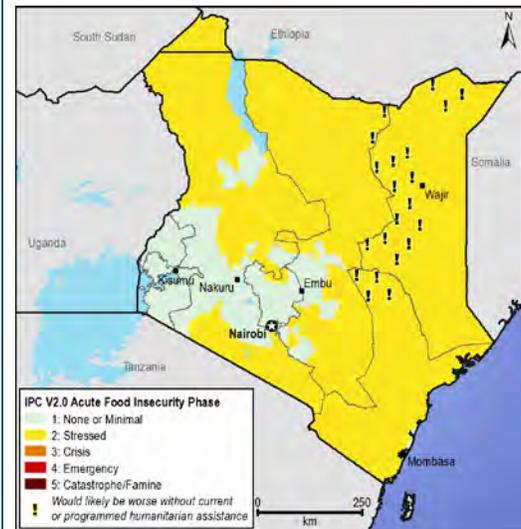
Stable exchange rates and a decline in the consumer inflation rate helped support economic growth in the last quarter of 2012. The Kenyan shilling (KES) traded between 85 and 86 to the U.S. dollar (USD), and inflation declined to a 3.2 percent annual rate in December according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). Even with positive economic indicators, at least 2.1 million people remain food insecure, and many are malnourished. An updated size of the food insecure population will be determined through the Kenya Food Security Steering Group's (KFSSG) Short Rains Assessment 2013 to be concluded by March.

Several factors, mainly the expectations for a below average long rains harvest and high fuel prices, continued to keep food prices above average. More than 95 percent of the March to May 2011 long rains harvesting has been done, and available total stocks are estimated to be almost 20 percent below the average maize production. Food price inflation was 25 percent at an annual rate in December 2011, but it gradually declined to 1.7 percent by December 2012, consistent with shrinking overall inflation and tight monetary policy. However, December food prices in major urban areas including Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, and Eldoret remained above average but lower than last year. The national average maize price was slightly lower than both the December 2011 and November 2012 national average. Current wholesale maize prices in major urban markets have declined slowly or remained constant against the faster declining general inflation.

National average prices of fuel prices increased gradually through 2012, but they remained stable between November and December 2012. However, these prices exhibit important regional variations. There is a high correlation between fuel prices and retail food prices. Fuel prices increase the cost of transportation, and these increased costs are passed on to consumers as increases in food prices. A significant proportion of the poor uses kerosene for lighting and cooking. Increases in the kerosene prices then significantly affect the amount of money available for food purchases.

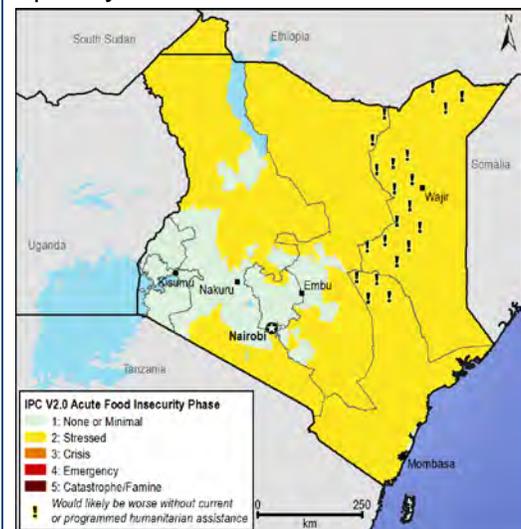
The October to December short rains performance has been below average and punctuated by dry spells in parts of the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihoods. As a result, agricultural activities including weeding and harvesting have been abnormally low resulting in scarcity of casual labor opportunities, which are a major income source during the short rains season. Due to the dry spells, a considerable proportion of the planted crop failed to germinate, and the rest wilted in the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones. Pasture and browse regeneration and water recharge has been below average in pastoral areas. In the meantime, maize prices remained considerably above average in marginal and pastoral areas and increasing gradually (Figure 3) despite near completion of harvesting in the high potential areas in western Kenya. High maize prices and limited casual labor opportunities limited market access to the households in pastoral and marginal agricultural livelihood zones who are highly dependent on the markets for their food requirements at this time of the season and year. Resurgent rains during the last third of December helped regenerate pasture and browse, and may increase the availability of short-cycle legumes in the southeastern and coastal livelihoods. In addition, the rains led to recovery of some of the wilted cereals and legumes. As a result, a considerable proportion of households are Stressed (IPC

Figure 2. Projected food security outcomes, January to March 2013



Source: FEWS NET Kenya

Figure 3. Projected food security outcomes, April to June 2013



Source: FEWS NET Kenya

These maps represent acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making, and do not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale for more on this scale.

Phase 2) currently as their food consumption improves to minimally adequate. However, for poor households who replanted very late or not at all, these areas remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in January (Figure 1).

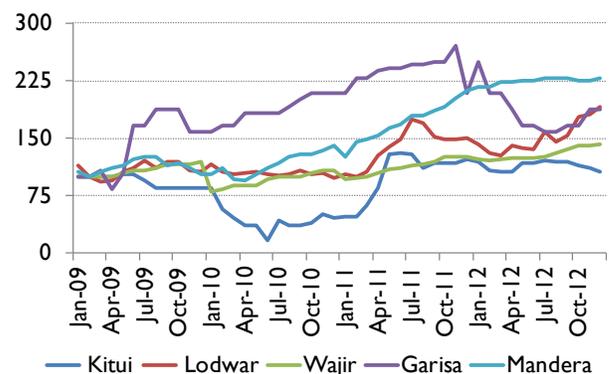
Assumptions

- Through February, there is an increased likelihood of late and off-season rains, especially in areas closer to the coast, due to warm sea surface temperatures (SSTs) encouraging tropical circulations in the Indian Ocean. The March to May long rains performance is likely to be normal to below normal due to the current near neutral El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions, supported, at least in part, by recent precipitation forecasts from the [European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecast \(ECMWF\)](#).
- The January to March temperatures are likely to be high above normal in much of the country according to [International Research Institute for Climate and Society \(IRI\) at Columbia University](#) and ECMFW. High above normal temperatures are likely to result in accelerated drying of seasonal water sources, pasture, and browse and in premature drying-out of crops.
- National maize prices are likely to decline slowly until April. A gradual increase in maize prices is expected from April through June as planting season begins in the high potential areas and household stocks start depleting.
- Regional trade is likely to improve, especially in areas near Somalia, due to the improved security situation in southern Somalia.
- Livestock prices are likely to increase through June driven by the increasing demand for meat, especially in urban areas, and as livestock farmers reduce their livestock sales to save animals for fattening and higher value sales later in the year.
- Fuel prices are likely to increase gradually through June driven by world fuel price trends and regulation by the Energy Regulation Commission of Kenya.
- Intensifying political activities and any associated violence in the run up to the March 4 national elections are likely to disrupt livelihood activities, the marketing of goods, and school operations in February and March 2013.
- Food price inflation is likely to increase gradually due to the expected below average long rains harvest, market disruptions by political activities, and the gradual increase and volatility of fuel prices.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Total annual food production is likely to be average to below average. The long rains are expected to be almost 15 percent below average according to official estimates while the short rains are expected to be more than 30 percent below average though this outcome will depend very much on continuation of rains and late, off-season rains into February. As a result, there is a high likelihood that food prices will slowly decline at national level but remain above average. The decline in food prices is expected to be slow and not as much as usual due to the expected below average short rains harvest in February and March. While food prices tend to decline between January and April normally, persistently high above average and stable food prices will continue to limit households' capacity to purchase food and consequently impact negatively on their food consumption levels. However, in the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones, prices may remain stable and considerably above average with no decrease following the completion of the long rains harvest in western Kenya. Levels of malnutrition across the country, or the number of children 'at risk' of malnutrition, is likely to fluctuate but remain below average through June owing to the ongoing interventions and the available food harvest supplying both households and markets.

Figure 4. Changes in maize price index in major urban centers in marginal agricultural and pastoral areas, 2009-2012, retail KES price for one kilogram of maize in February 2009 = 100



Data source: Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP)
Analysis and graphic: FEWS NET Kenya

Across much of the country, food security will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from January to June (Figures 1, 2, and 3). In the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones where casual labor has been constrained by a lower than usual level of agricultural activities leading to fewer labor opportunities and food prices are relatively high, food consumption is likely to depend heavily on increases in remittances from labor migrants through March. Although the food security is currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in most of these areas (Figure 1) and still in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in a few (Figure 1), there is a very high risk of households and possibly entire areas deteriorating again into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to below average food production from the short rains season. This risk of this will be very high in February and March, but most areas, with small improvements from the short rains harvest are expected to move to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) (Figure 2). The start of the March to May long rains often coincides with increasing in food prices, placing additional pressure on market dependent households' expenses. Food consumption from April through June is likely to be supported by below average household food stocks from the short rains, casual labor for planting long rains crops, and the availability of drought-resistant, early-maturing greens.

Similarly, in the northeastern pastoral livelihood zone in Mandera, Wajir, and Isiolo Districts, during the January to March dry season, there is a likely more rapid than usual deterioration of rangeland conditions caused by atypically high temperatures. The possibility of a late and poorly distributed long rains season following the dry period would reduce milk production and consumption, thereby increasing malnutrition, especially among children. In the pastoral livelihood zones, the long rains will likely lead to the recovery of grazing conditions and improve both milk production and consumption. Despite modest seasonal improvements, poor households generally have limited market access and a limited number of saleable livestock, keeping them in Stressed (IPC Phase 3) from April to June (Figure 3).

AREAS OF CONCERN

Southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones

Current Situation

The better part of the October to December short rains performed poorly in the marginal mixed farming livelihoods zones in Kitui, Makueni, Mwingi, and Taita Taveta Districts. Some localized rains during the last part of December and off-season rains in January resulted in recovery of some food crops and the regeneration of pasture and browse. The rains also recharged water points moderately. The few households who replanted in mid-December are now starting to harvest the early maturing green vegetables. However, maize and other cereal crops are anomalously at vegetative stages while they should be at the maturity stage. Due to resurgent rains in late December, current livestock body conditions are almost normal in most areas, but the livestock are still weak in Mutomo and Ikutha in Kitui District and the lower elevation areas of Makueni because vegetation there is still unseasonably poor. Milk production improved in December compared to November, but milk consumption is still well below normal. For instance, in Mwingi, milk consumption improved from 0.3 liters to 0.75 liters per day in December. However, this is well below the 1.5 liters consumed in normal years.

Normally, casual labor is the largest income source during the short rains season. This season, casual labor opportunities have been scarce due to the reduced level of agricultural activities resulting from poor seasonal progress. Despite an increase in demand for meat during the festive season in December, livestock income in these areas did not increase significantly because of a low level of sales. While income has been constrained, households have exhausted their food stocks and have relied on the markets for food longer than normal. Normally, by end of January market purchased food would reduce due to the availability of early harvests of legumes and of green maize. Maize prices remained stable but high as demand is high and supply low following the poor performance of crops in November and December. In Mwingi, December maize prices in the low potential, lowland areas were KES 44 per kilogram while in the higher elevation, medium potential areas were KES 42 per kilogram. Similarly, in Kitui District, the maize prices were KES 36 per kilogram, and in the low potential, lowland areas, prices were KES 40 per kilogram. These maize prices have stabilized at more than 130 percent above their five-year averages in Mwingi, Kitui, and Taita Taveta Districts.

In December, malnutrition levels as measured by the number of children under the age of five 'at risk' for malnutrition, those with a middle-upper arm circumference (MUAC) of less than 135 millimeters (mm) remained stable and below the five-year average for much of the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihood zones, despite the poor performance of the short rains and below average availability of milk. In Mwingi, rates were only 77 percent of the five-year

average despite the observed, below-average milk consumption. In Kitui, increased interventions targeted to children less than five years of age and improved access to water may have been driving improvements in nutrition. However, the lowland, low potential areas recorded higher rates of children 'at risk' of malnutrition than the midland and highland, medium potential areas.

There are clear distinct food security outcomes between the primarily lowland, low potential areas and the midland and highland, medium potential areas. Compared to midland and highland, medium potential areas, the characteristically lowland, low potential areas generally have lower levels of food consumption, higher market dependence for food year-round, and lower nutrition levels. Those households who were experiencing extreme food gaps and were in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) by mid-December were almost entirely lowland, low potential areas including in Mwingi, Makueni, Kitui, and Taita Taveta Districts. They are starting to consume more as many households can now harvest early maturing green vegetables, which have been recovering following the resurgent rains in late December and early January. Compared to December, food consumption improved in January, but it is still at a seasonally low level due to high prices, poor livestock prices, and constrained income from casual labor across the lowland, low potential areas. Households are increasingly engaging in charcoal burning and petty trade to generate income. Unusually, at this time of the year and point in the season, households in Mwingi District are consuming two meals a day and borrowing food from relatives. In parts of Makueni and Kitui Districts, a considerable proportion of households are still experiencing food gaps, and have difficulties in meeting the minimum food requirement. As such, these households are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) as they are unable to meet their minimum food needs.

Assumptions

In addition to the national assumptions made above, the following assumptions are made for these zones:

- The February to March harvest from October to December 2012 short rains will be below average, but households will manage to have some food stocks which may be able to cover some food needs for between four and five months.
- Casual labor opportunities will remain below normal during the harvest in February and March since there is not as much crop to harvest as in a more typical year. Casual labor opportunities will continue to remain low since the long rains season is not the primary season and will result in limited land preparations, planting, weeding, and harvesting through June.
- Maize prices are likely to remain stable but above average through March because of the below average February to March harvests. They will not decline during this period like prices in other areas of Kenya. Starting in April, a gradual increase in maize prices is expected through June as supplies from the high potential areas start declining.
- Remittances from existing labor migrants are likely to increase through June as households increasingly depend on their relatives working elsewhere, mainly in urban areas within Kenya.
- There is likelihood of continued and expanded humanitarian interventions in these areas. For example, food for assets (FFA) is already programmed to continue in many areas through 2015, and it will likely be complimented by additional programs.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Following resurgent rains in the last part of December and early January, there has been some regeneration of pasture, recharge of water sources, and improvement in crop conditions. However, the food security situation is very fragile, and there is a very high risk of deterioration because of the likely persistence of above average maize prices and dwindling household incomes. Livestock body conditions, although still poor, are improving, and livestock prices are expected to remain above average as households continue to withhold livestock from the market for fattening and higher value sales later. Food consumption will improve following the below average harvest in February and March. In the areas where the crop is still at the vegetative stage, there is uncertainty if the rains will continue until crop maturity. In those areas, food consumption is likely to be supported by increasing dependence on remittances, which will sustain households' access to market purchases. With improved income from remittances and the arrival of some short rains crops, food security is likely to remain or improve to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from February through March. The March to May long rains, although not the primary season and likely to be normal to below normal, will still likely result in some regeneration of pasture and

browse. This should enhance livestock body conditions. Households will possibly continue building their livestock herds. From March to June, households' food stocks from the short rains harvest, drought resistant green vegetables, continued remittances, and perennial legumes such as pigeon peas that mature early during the March to May long rains will sustain minimally adequate food consumption through June. These areas will remain classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from April to June.

Pastoral and agropastoral livelihood zones

Current Situation

The October to December rains performed fairly well in pastoral zone in Mandera District and in the agropastoral livelihood zone in Isiolo District resulting in improvements in grazing and watering conditions. However, the rains were especially poor in terms of amount and distribution in the pastoral areas in Isiolo and the agropastoral livelihood zone in Mandera.

Conflicts in parts of Garissa, Isiolo, and Tana River Districts have resulted in the loss of life, displacements, and damaged livelihoods. In Tana River, more than 100,000 people have been displaced since conflict began in August 2012, damaging many households' livelihoods. The displaced have migrated to neighboring districts including Malindi and Ijara.

In parts of Isiolo District, earlier than normal migration in search of water and pasture to the southern areas of the district has been reported. In general, livestock are doing well. Livestock body conditions are improving in the pastoral livelihood zones in Mandera and Turkana District due to good pasture and browse availability, despite an unseasonal increase in distances to watering points. However, the occurrence of diseases, including dengue fever, *peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) also known as rinderpest, sheep and goat pox, and black quarter disease also known as blackleg in Mandera District may decrease livestock performance over time. In the pockets where the rains have performed poorly and grazing conditions are below normal, livestock body conditions are poor. Unusual early migration to better areas has already started. For instance, in northern Isiolo's pastoral area, rainfall has performed poorly. Water recharge and pasture and browse regeneration has been poor. Pasture has already been depleted, so livestock have migrated to the southern part of Isiolo.

December livestock prices were above their five-year averages, but there were different shorter term trends between November and December across markets and species. Cattle prices increased in Isiolo, Mandera, and Turkana, but they declined by around 50 percent in Marsabit from November to December due to poor body conditions. Concurrently, food prices either increased or remained stable with variation within the pastoral livelihood zones. The observed decline in general and food inflation has not yet translated to a decline in staple food prices in pastoral areas. Compared to November, December prices for maize, rice, sugar, and cooking oil all increased. For instance, in Mandera, the price for sugar and rice increased by five percent between November and December. In Isiolo District, food prices exhibited significant spatial variation within the district, probably due to variations in transportation and security costs. Whereas a kilogram of sugar was sold for KES 115 in Isiolo town, it sold at KES 140 in Merti in the same district. The price of a 20 liters container of cooking oil ranged between KES 1,500 and KES 1,800 in Isiolo District.

Although livestock prices are above average, reduced sales have resulted in low income that has not offset rising expenditures due to increasing food prices. Following several poor seasons in some areas, households are restocking and holding livestock for fattening. Contracting livestock income means households are getting income instead from gifts, charcoal selling, and casual labor in Isiolo District. In Mandera District, households are engaged more in petty trading and are receiving remittances from relatives working in other parts of the country. In areas where the rains performed well such as Kinna, Oldonyiro, and Central Divisions in Isiolo District, food consumption and access are improving, except in Merti and Garbatulla Divisions where food access is considerably limited by low livestock prices and high food prices. However, households can meet the most basic food requirements. Nutrition levels remained stable and below average due to interventions and to the improved availability of milk in the areas where the October to December short rains were better. In Mandera, nutritional levels in December improved due to seasonally normal camel calving, which has resulted in improved camel milk availability. In these zones, households are currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2) (Figure 1).

Assumptions

In addition to the national assumptions made, the following additional assumptions are made for the pastoral and agropastoral livelihood zones:

- Earlier than normal depletion of pasture is likely in agropastoral and pastoral areas that did not receive average or above average short rains. This risk has been increased by the likely above average temperatures during the January to February dry season.
- Migrations are likely to increase earlier than normal from areas with poor pasture and browse to areas with better pasture, browse, and water availability.
- Incidences of conflicts likely to intensify in the months running up to the March 4 elections and as households migrate in search of pasture and water.
- Water shortages may intensify through March due to the expected high temperatures in January and February. Water sources are likely to recharge slightly during the March to May long rains, even if they are below normal, which will improve water availability through June.
- Gifts and remittances from labor migrants, mainly in urban areas, are likely to increase through March in much of the pastoral livelihood zones.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

High livestock prices and increasing availability of milk and meat in those areas which received good short rains will support minimally adequate food consumption. Available pasture and browse in the pastoral areas of Mandera and Garissa District is expected to sustain livestock through April. The normal to below normal March to May long rains will result in pasture regeneration and water recharge hence supporting grazing conditions through June. Food security is, however, likely to be affected by conflict for access to pasture, browse, and water that is likely to ensue in these areas due to migration from other areas. Conflict will result in limited physical access to food markets and inflated food prices and consequently limited household food access. In the areas which short rains were very poor, households will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through June. However, food security situation through March is likely to be moderated by the high temperatures expected between February and March. High above average temperatures will dry out the water bodies and elongate distances to water sources for both human consumption and livestock and likely result in declines in milk production and consumption. In the pastoral livelihood zones, food security is likely to remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through June (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

Table 1: Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
Southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones	High above average March to May long rains	Although this is not the primary season, above average rains would result in improved grazing conditions and consequently improve livestock body conditions and would improve food production to those who plant for the season or have perennial legumes such as pigeon peas.
Pastoral livelihood zones	High above average March to May long rains	Improved livestock body conditions, hence increased prices are likely. Higher livestock prices will increase households' income and enhance household access to food. However, heavy rains can impair road access and thus could reduce the supply of cereals to the pastoral markets.
Pastoral livelihood zones	Very low March to May long rains	Below normal regeneration of pasture and browse, water recharge, and poor livestock body conditions would be the likely results. Poor body conditions and lack of pasture would trigger excess market supply as households sought to sell livestock, lowering prices, and thus reducing income from livestock sales. A reduction in this key source of income reduces households' capacity to purchase food from the markets.
Southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones	Very low March to May long rains	Insignificant yields in perennial legumes and poor grazing conditions would compromise household food access.
Pastoral livelihood zones	Significant decline in livestock prices	A fall in demand for meat, especially in urban areas would lead to declines in household income and consequently food access as livestock to cereal terms of trade decreased,
Southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones	Significant decline in maize prices	Improved food access
Pastoral livelihood zones	Increased mortality of livestock at the onset of March May 2013 long rains	Loss of a key livelihood asset, which would reduce food access for households that lost livestock.

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes over a six-month period, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes those assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to develop scenarios estimating food security outcomes. Typically, FEWS NET reports the most likely scenario.