

## KENYA Food Security Outlook Update

August 2013

*Food security likely to deteriorate in the Southeast and coastal areas*

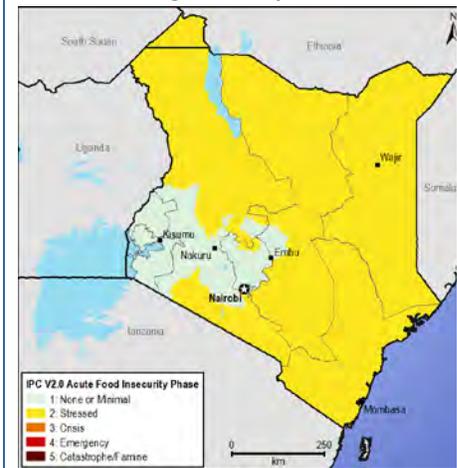
### KEY MESSAGES

- The maize harvesting in the high- and medium-potential areas started in August. A near average volume of harvest is expected due to a below average rainfall spell between mid-May to early July affected maize development. However, the harvest will replenish domestic stocks and support a stable price trend for maize, enhancing access.
- Food security in the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones is Stressed (IPC Phase 2). Consumption is supported by small household stocks of cereals other than maize along with legumes and market-purchased food. Maize prices in these areas remained stable between June and July partly due to cross-border imports from Tanzania.
- In the Northeastern Pastoral livelihood zone, available pasture, browse, and water which normally last through September, will last longer through October and will support livestock development and sustain livestock values. Income from livestock will sustain food purchases through the dry season and as a result outcomes will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

### CURRENT SITUATION

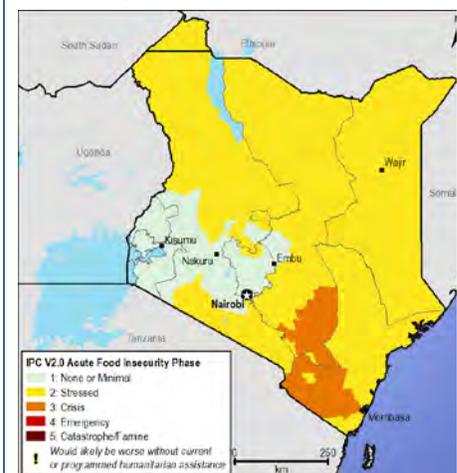
- In Southeastern Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone including in Kitui and Makueni Counties, harvesting of maize, sorghum, pigeon peas, cowpeas, and green grams from the long rains production has concluded. The total production of these five crops is considerably below the five-year average in Makueni, but sorghum and green grams are above the five-year average in Kitui County. Despite the below average local harvest of maize, cross-border imports from Tanzania partly maintained price stability in Kwale, Makueni, Taita Taveta, and Kilifi Counties, but in Kitui, maize prices increased 20 percent between June and July due to increasing depletion of local stocks.
- Households are able to consume three relatively well diversified meals a day in much of the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones except in localized parts of Makueni, Kitui, Taita Taveta, and Kwale Counties where households are consuming fewer meals than normal per day for this time of the year. However, food consumption gaps are not yet evident. Households are managing to access at least their minimum caloric requirements. The proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition, defined as mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) of less than 135 millimeters (mm) declined between June and July by almost 10 percent in Makueni and marginally in Kitui County, and the proportions remained below their five-year averages.
- Rangeland conditions range between fair and good, but they are deteriorating in much of Northeastern Pastoral livelihood zone including in Isiolo, Mandera, Garissa, Tana River, and Isiolo Counties due to the ongoing dry season. The deterioration has resulted in seasonal migration from Garissa and Wajir Counties to dry season grazing areas, including Merti and Garbatulla in Isiolo County. However, prices of goats, cattle, and sheep remained stable between June and

**Figure 1.** Projected food security outcomes, August to September 2013



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 2** Projected food security outcomes, October to December 2013



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making, and does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. For more information on this scale, please visit [www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale](http://www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale).

July, but the number of livestock sales declined marginally over the same period, translating to an overall slight decline in income from livestock. Meanwhile, prices of maize increased by more than 10 percent in Garissa and Isiolo and by 38 percent in Tana River between June and July due to low supply of maize on the market following below-average long rains production in the Southeastern Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone, curtailing supplies often shipped to pastoral livelihood zones.

- Decline in household milk access due to rangeland deterioration resulted in an increase in the proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition by about 10 percent in Isiolo and 13 percent in Garissa County. However, they remained more than 30 percent lower than their five-year averages in June and July.

## UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

Most of the assumptions made in the [Kenya Food Security Outlook for July to December 2013](#) remain unchanged. However, the following assumptions have been updated:

- In addition to the continued forecast for the total October to December short rains amount to be average with a tendency towards being below average, there is an increasing likelihood that the onset will be delayed, unlike the normally timed onset assumed in July.
- In southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones, the availability of casual labor opportunities is expected to be below normal, driven by an overall lower than usual level of agricultural activities and productivity from October through December. Consequently, casual labor incomes from land preparation in September and planting in October are likely to be below average. However, weeding activities initially assumed to take place in November and December are likely to not start until December, a month later, following the likely delayed onset of the short rains, further decreasing available labor opportunities between now and December.

## PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH DECEMBER 2013

In the **southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones**, household food stocks from the long rains legume harvest are likely to last through September, a month more than was expected during the [July to December Outlook](#). Some of this stock will be sold to purchase maize, the main staple cereal. The food security situation is likely to deteriorate from September through December as households deplete their long rains stocks and increasingly rely on market purchases at a time when food prices are likely to increase gradually due to rising demand and only a near average supply from the high- and medium-potential areas. Although income from increased remittances from semi-permanent urban migrants and increased employment of charcoal burning and petty trading is likely to increase and support household food purchasing capacity, it may not match the increase in demand and prices. The onset of the short rains is expected to trigger an increase in demand for planting labor and support food access, but this will likely be late. The likely late onset will also delay the weeding labor demand by almost a month, prolonging the period of low income for poor households and associated declines in food consumption. Through December, agricultural activities are expected to remain below average due to the delayed rains and average to below average total rainfall. Food security is expected to deteriorate gradually. Food security will most likely be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through December in most areas. However, in the marginal mixed farming areas in Kitui, Makueni, Taita Taveta, and Kwale Counties, food security would likely deteriorate into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between October and December as households exhaust their stocks and their coping capacity.

In the **Northeastern Pastoral livelihood zone**, pasture and browse is likely to last through September. However, a seasonal deterioration of the pasture and water availability is expected from September through the end of the dry season in October. Migration and concentration of livestock in dry season grazing areas will likely intensify accelerating deterioration of the rangeland conditions, especially in parts of Isiolo where livestock concentration has already begun. As a result, seasonal deterioration of livestock body conditions will lead to a decline in household incomes and a seasonal decline in milk availability and consumption. Although livestock prices are likely to remain fairly stable and above their five-year averages due to relatively constant demand for meat, increases in food prices will marginally erode household purchasing power. The onset of the short rains in October is expected to be somewhat late, but the amount is likely to be average to below average. However, the rains will improve rangeland conditions and enhance milk production seasonally. Food security will deteriorate but remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through December with households managing to access their minimum dietary requirements but not cover essential non-food expenditures.