

*Food security likely to deteriorate as the short rains were delayed*

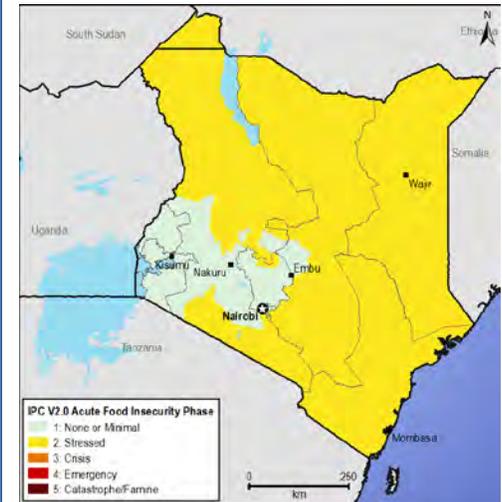
**KEY MESSAGES**

- The short rains season was delayed for more than two weeks in most of the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural and the pastoral livelihood zones. The seasonal recovery of rangeland conditions and planting of short rains crops has been delayed. Delays in agricultural and livestock production will worsen the already Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes through December.
- Food security is Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihood zones where market dependency is currently seasonally high. Between September and October, increases in food prices outweighed the relatively constant casual labor wage rates and marginal increases in remittances.
- In the pastoral livelihood zones, food consumption decreased and malnutrition increased as food access and diversity declined, driven by increases in food prices between September and October. Food security remains Stressed (IPC Phase 2) with a tendency to worsen if the already delayed short rains will be below average in performance.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

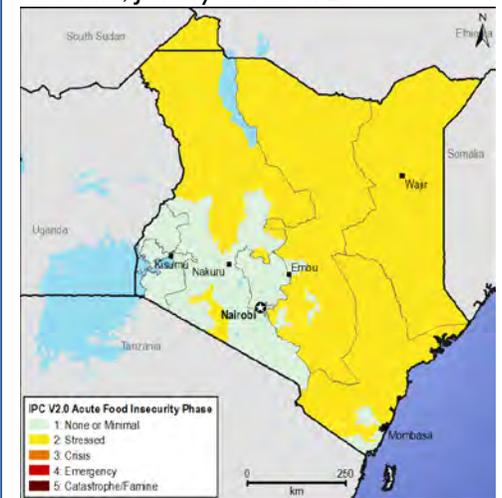
- In the **southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihood zones**, **food consumption** remained seasonally low in October. Most households have already exhausted their food stocks, and they are increasingly depending on markets for almost all their food requirements. In the meantime, maize prices increased by more than six percent in Tharaka Nithi, Kwale, and Kitui Counties driven by the increased household demand between September and October. Concurrently, casual labor wages, which are the main income source at this time of the year, marginally declined in Kitui and Makueni Counties between September and October due to reduced expenditure on land preparations as households hesitated to plant due to delayed rainfall. However, remittances increased marginally over the same time period.
- Households increasingly used brick making, charcoal burning, sand harvesting, and petty trading to increase their incomes. The income from casual labor combined with remittances and income from these more minor income-generating strategies sustained food consumption at a minimal level with food security remaining Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in the southeastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones.
- **The proportion of children ‘at risk’ of malnutrition** defined as those with a Mid-Upper Arm Circumference less than 135 millimeters (MUAC<135mm) remained stable. Compared to their five-year averages, the proportions were more than 40 percent lower across the southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihood zones.

**Figure 1.** Projected food security outcomes, November to December 2013



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 2.** Projected food security outcomes, January to March 2014



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).

- In the **Northeastern and Northwestern Pastoral livelihood zones**, the delayed onset of the short rains has prolonged the lean season. There was continued deterioration of rangeland conditions between September and October due to the delay in the start of the short rains. Milk availability has continued to decline since September. Goat prices increased by 12, 15, and 70 percent between September and October in Isiolo, Lodwar in Turkana, and Tana River County, respectively, increasing household incomes. The price increase was occasioned by increased demand for goats during Eid in October and reduced market supply as livestock had migrated to dry season grazing areas, which are far away from markets. Compared to September, maize prices increased by at least eight percent in October in many of the pastoral markets. Increases in goat and other livestock prices between September and October were offset by the increases in maize prices over the same period. Coupled with the decline in milk availability, high prices have resulted in a general decline in **food consumption** and dietary diversity.
- The **proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition increased** in Tana River, Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit, Turkana, and Moyale. This was largely due to increases in maize prices combined with marginal increases in livestock prices, which reduced household income between September and October. The continued decline in milk availability also likely contributed. Large proportions of children 'at risk' of malnutrition remain in parts of Turkana including 49 percent in Loima, 32 percent in Kerio, 33 percent in Lopur, and 34 percent in Kaemothia. However, the proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition remains below the five-year average except in Tana River County where the proportion is marginally above average. Food security remains Stressed (IPC Phase 2) with households only able to access their minimum food requirements. Households are increasing their use of strategies such as petty trade, charcoal selling, and intensified livestock migration to increase their income, but no irreversible coping strategies are being employed.

## UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

Most of the assumptions made in the [Kenya Food Security Outlook for October 2013 to March 2014](#) remain unchanged.

## PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH MARCH 2014

Due to delayed onset of the short rains in the **southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural livelihood zones**, the drought-resistant legumes which typically mature and support consumption between December and January, will likely be available in January prolonging the period of food shortage. Casual labor income is expected to be below its seasonal average levels, but it will likely increase marginally as the short rains continue through December, providing some income to the poor households. Food prices, especially maize prices, will continue to increase through December driven by increased market demand. Income from casual labor coupled with remittances, which are expected to increase through December, will strengthen households' purchasing power while food prices increase. Households will be able to acquire their minimum dietary requirements through December but will be constrained to afford non-food essentials such as medical services and thus will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2). Between January and March, a combination of early maturing and drought-resistant legumes will enhance food availability while a likely marginal decline in maize prices will enhance food access, maintaining households at Stressed (IPC Phase 2). In the event of significantly below average rainfall in November/December, households will lack the access to even early maturing legumes between January and March, in addition to below average production of other crops. As a result, poor households may not be able to obtain enough food and outcomes could be worse than originally estimated.

In the pastoral areas, rangeland conditions are expected to recover slowly through December, a month later than normal, slowing the seasonal recovery of livestock conditions. Kidding, calving, and lambing, which started in early November, will continue through December coinciding with inadequate water and pasture availability, reducing livestock productivity. An average recovery of pasture and browse is expected from December, and this will support livestock recovery through January. Milk production is likely to be below average through December, but it will likely increase in January after pasture and browse have regenerated and livestock have recovered normal body conditions. Maize prices are likely to increase gradually through December, but decline marginally between January and March unlike in normal years when maize prices decline considerably. Access to food will track the trend of maize prices, deteriorating through December and slightly improving from January through March. Food security will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through March, but the possibility remains of much further deterioration than expected as maize prices continue to increase and milk availability declines.