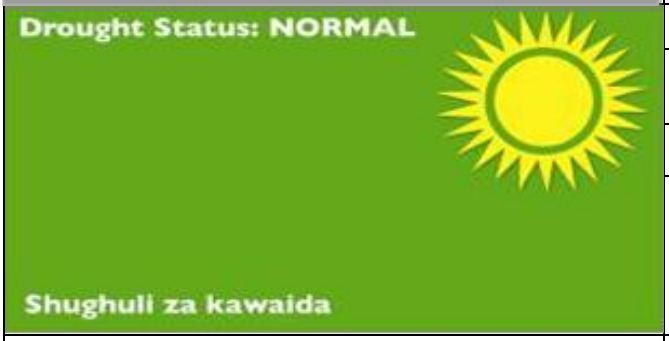
A Vision 2030 Flagship Project

National Drought Management Authority

KITUI COUNTY

DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR JUNE 2025

JUNE EW PHASE



Early Warning Phase Classification

LIVELIHOOD ZONE	EW PHASE	TREND
Marginal Mixed Farming	Normal	Worsening
Mixed Farming	Normal	Worsening
County	Normal	Worsening

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- The county experienced cold days/nights and dry weather conditions across the livelihood zones.
- The vegetation greenness was normal .
- Forage condition was good to fair across the county.

Socio-Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

Production Indicators

- Harvesting was the main agricultural activities across the livelihood zones.
- Livestock body condition was good to fair with no unusual cases of livestock immigrations and normal mortalities.
- Milk production was within the seasonal normal ranges but with a decreasing trend.

Access Indicators

- The terms of trade were above the Long-term Avarage(LTA)
- Milk consumption decreased but remained within the normal ranges.
- The return trekking distance to water sources increased and was slightly above LTA.
- Water retailed normally at 2-5 shillings from source and 30-40 shillings from vendors.

Utilization Indicators

- The percentage of children at risk of malnutrition was above the LTA.
- About 76.3 percent of households were categorized under acceptable food consumption score with a downward trend.
- Households employing stressed, crisis and emergency food-based coping mechanisms were at 23.9, 1.1 and 0.4 percent respectively.

Biophysical Indicators		Value	Normal ranges
Rainfall (% of normal)		78	80-120
VCI-3 month		63	35-50
Forage Condition		Good to Fair	Good to fair
Production indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Maize Stocks Held by Households (Kgs)		0	-21-79
Livestock Body Condition		Good to Fair	Good to Fair
Milk Production (in litres)		1.1	0.8-1
Livestock Migration Pattern		Normal	Normal
Livestock Deaths (from drought)		No deaths	No deaths
Access Indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Terms of Trade (ToT) in kgs		98.4	44-128
Milk Consumption (in litres)		0.8	0.7-0.9
Return Distance to Water Sources (Km)	Household	5.7	4-6.6
	Livestock	6.3	4.9-6.7
Cost of Water (20 litres Jerry can) in Kshs	At Source	3-5	≤ 5
	Vendor	20-30	20-30
Utilization indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Nutrition Status by MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)		6.6	3.6-9.5
Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)		6.2	2.1-13.3
Food Consumption Score (%)	Mean	44.5	≥ 45.2
	Acceptable	76.3	≥ 80
	Borderline	23.3	≤ 20
	Poor	0.4	0

Dry Season	Long Rains	Dry Cool Season	Short Rains Season
▪ Short rains harvests ▪ Short dry spell ▪ Reduced milk yields ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Land preparation	▪ Planting/Weeding ▪ Long rains ▪ High Calving Rate ▪ Milk Yields Increase	▪ Long rains harvests ▪ A long dry spell ▪ Land preparation ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Kidding (Sept)	▪ Short rains ▪ Planting/weeding

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1.1 RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

- The month of June was mainly characterized by cold days/nights and dry weather conditions with insignificant precipitation across the livelihood zones.
- Based on WFP-VAM, CHIRPS/MODIS data, the county recorded an average of 1.5 and 1.1 milimetres of rainfall compared to 1.9 and 1.0 milimetres normally in the first and second dekad of June respectively as shown in figure 1.
- The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) 102 percent of normal.

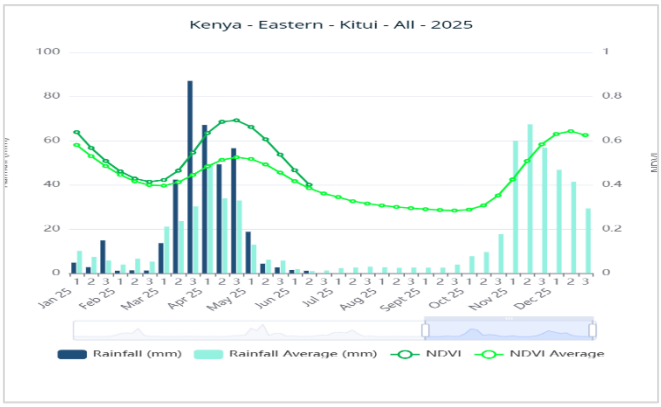


Figure 1:Rainfall and NDVI Distribution

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)

- The VCI for county indicated good conditions. The 3-month VCI was 63, having increased slightly from 57 that was recorded in in the previous month.
- Areas of Mwingi Central, parts of Mwingi North,Kitui East, and Parts of Kitui West Sub counties recorded normal vegetation greenness. The other Sub Counties recorded above normal vegetation greenness.

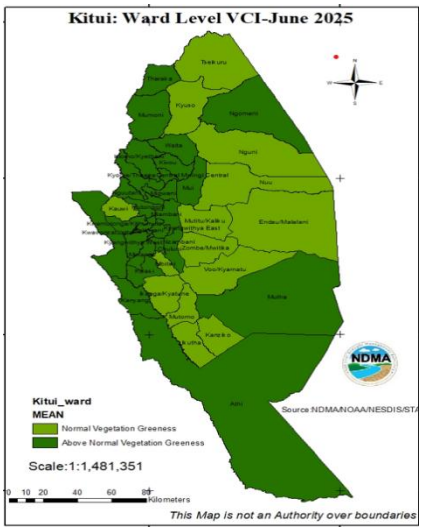


Figure 2:Kitui Ward 3month Vegetation Condition Index

2.1.2 Ward Level Vegetation Condition Index

The overall VCI for the county was good with only a few wards recording a decrease in VCI compared to the previous month. All wards experienced above normal vegetation greenness with VCI above 50, except Zombe Mwitika, Mutitu liku,Endau/Malalni,Mutomo,Kyuso,Mbitini,Kanziko,Ikanga,Nguni ,Tseikuru,Nuu,Ikutha,Voo/Kyamatu,Kauwi and Ngomeni (figure 3).

1.2 Pasture:

- Pasture condition varied from good to fair in the Marginal Livelihood zones and fair to poor in the Marginal Mixed livelihood zones.
- On average 33 percent of pasture was good,56 percent fair and 11 percent was poor. This indicates deterioration in pasture condition compared to the previous month which reported 52 percent good ,48 percent fair and no poor pasture conditions respectively (figure 3).
- The deterioration in pasture condition is attributed to the high depletion due to dry spell.
- Pasture was better in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone than in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- The available pasture is likely to last for two to three months normally.

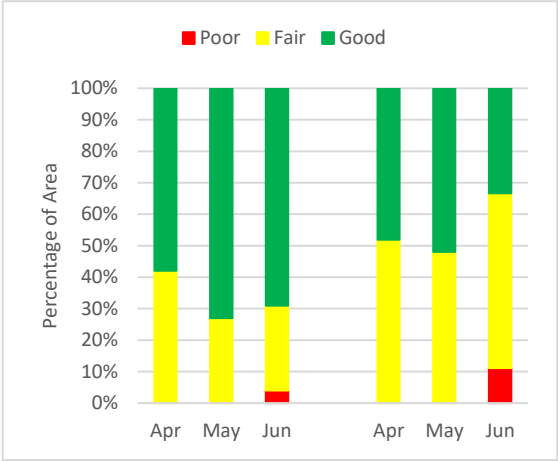


Figure 3: Pasture Condition

2.1.3 Browse

- Browse condition was good to fair during the month with a deteriorating trend.
- On average, 41 and 59 percent of browse was good and fair compared to 86 and 14 percent recorded previous month (figure 4).
- Browse condition decline is attributed to animals opting to feed on browse since the pasture condition was deteriorating too fast
- The available browse is estimated to last for 3-4 months normally.

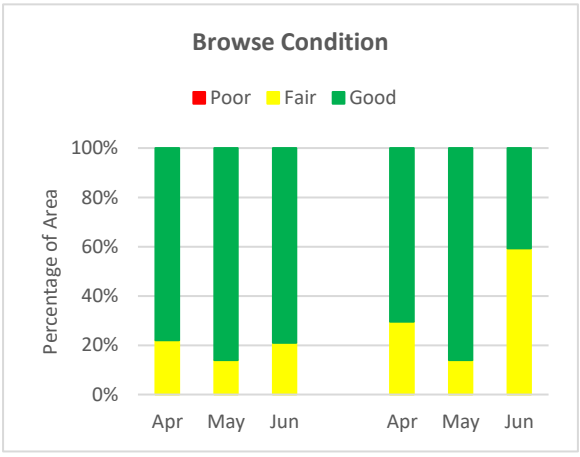


Figure 4:Browse Condition

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

2.2.1 Sources

- The main water sources for both domestic and livestock use were pans/dams, traditional river wells, and boreholes at 23 and 22 percent for both traditional rivers and boreholes respectively (Figure 5).
- Use of pans/dams has decreased following poor precipitation and increasing percentage of households to using boreholes and shallow wells
- Most open water sources were currently estimated at 20-30 percent of their holding capacity.

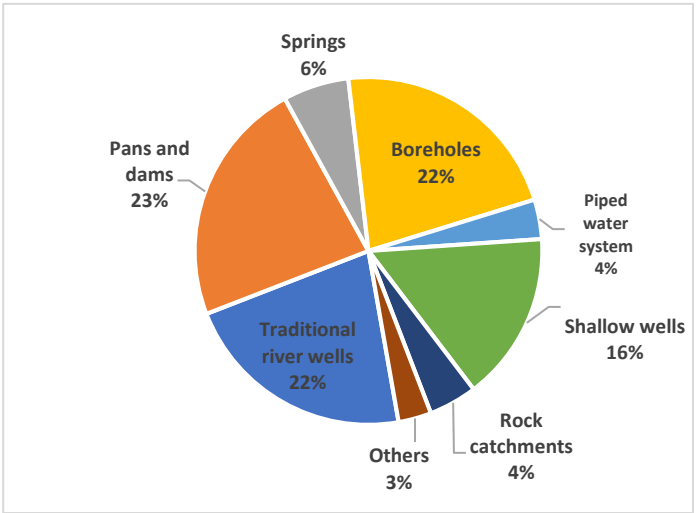


Figure 5 Major Water Sources

2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- The average return distance from households to water sources increased to 5.7 km in June compared with 4.8km in previous month.
- The increase in distance is attributed to the apparent shift in reliance from traditional river wells, pans/dams, which were drying up to other sources like boreholes, that are more distant.
- The current distance is above the LTA of 5.3 km and within the seasonal range of (4.0-6.6) km as shown in (figure 6).
- Households in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone trekked longer distances of 6.2 km compared to 5.4 kilometres in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- Water consumption per person per day was stable at 19 litres compared to previous month.

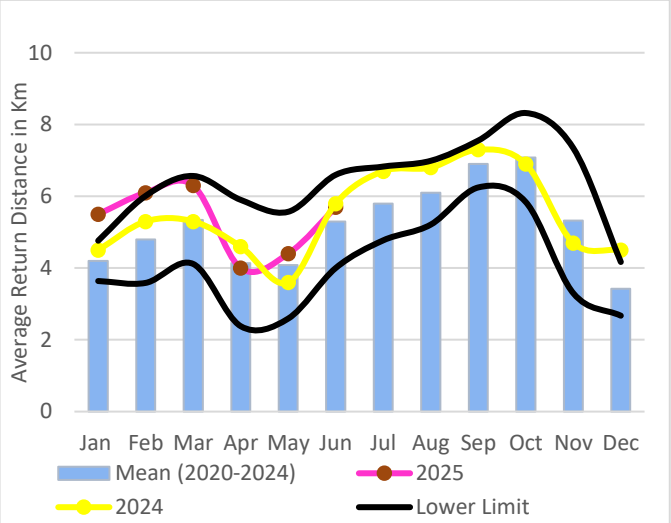


Figure 6: Household distance to water sources

- The proportion of households buying water significantly increased to 28 percent compared to 10 percent recorded the previous month. The proportion of households treating water slightly increased to 10 percent compared eight percent in the previous month. Water treatment chemicals was the most preferred treatment method across the livelihood zones.
- The price of water per 20-litre Jerrycan at the source was still normal at 3-5 shillings. Water retailed at 20-30 shillings (from vendors), as in the previous month, being similar to normal rates at such time of the year.

2.2.3 Livestock Access

- The average return distance from livestock grazing areas to main water sources significantly increased from 5.5 km in May to 6.3 km in June. The increase in distance is attributed to decrease in alternative water sources occasioned by depletion of water in most open water sources as well as depletion of pasture and browse that affected grazing distance from water.
- Livestock trekking distance in Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone was 7.2 km compared to 4.9 km in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- The current trekking distance is above the LTA of 5.6 kilometres, and within the seasonal range of (4.9-6.7) km as in figure 7.

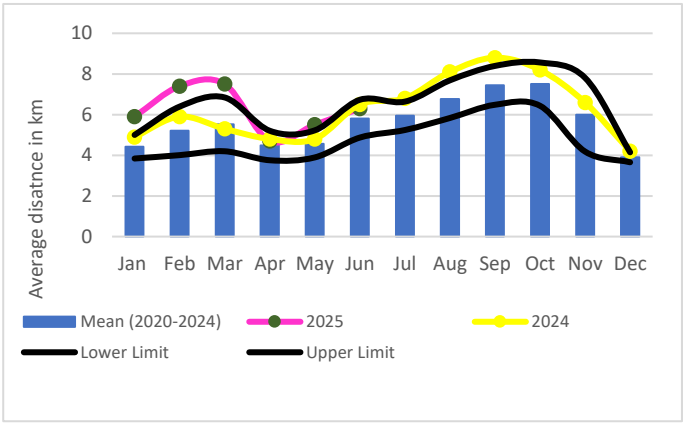


Figure 7:Livestock trekking distances to water sources

- Livestock watering frequency was daily across the livelihood zones.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

- Livestock body condition varied from predominantly good to fair condition for all species across the livelihood zones in the county.
- About 67 percent of cattle showed moderate (neither fat nor thin) body condition with 33 percent good (smooth appearance) as shown in figure 8
- The current body condition depicts some decline compared to the previous month, where 54 and 46 percent showed good and moderate body condition respectively. The decline is attributed to depletion of forage across the livelihood zones.

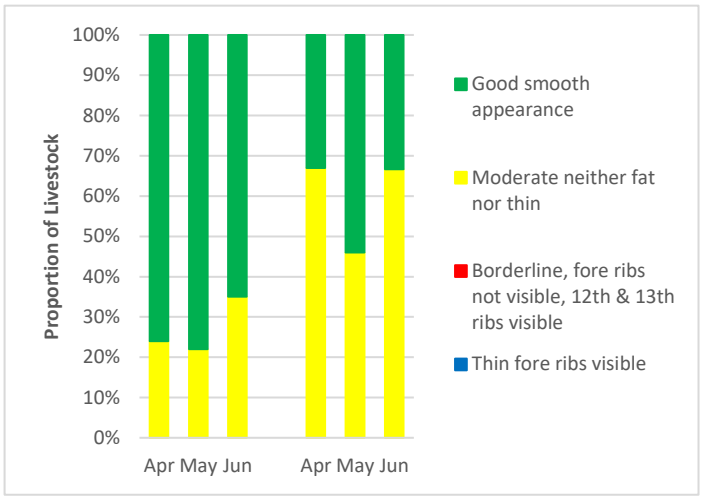


Figure 8:Cattle Body Condition

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases and Mortalities

- Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) was reported in Kitui West and Kitui Central Sub-counties.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- The average daily milk production per household in decreased to one litre compared to 1.1 litres recorded in the previous month. The current production is slightly above the LTA of 10.9 litres and within the seasonal range of (0.8-1.0) litres as shown in figure 9.
- The decrease is attributed to depletion of forage and increased distances to water sources during the period.
- Milk production was higher in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone at 1.2 litres compared to 0.8 litres in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- One litre of unprocessed milk was sold at an average price of Kshs. 60-70 normally.

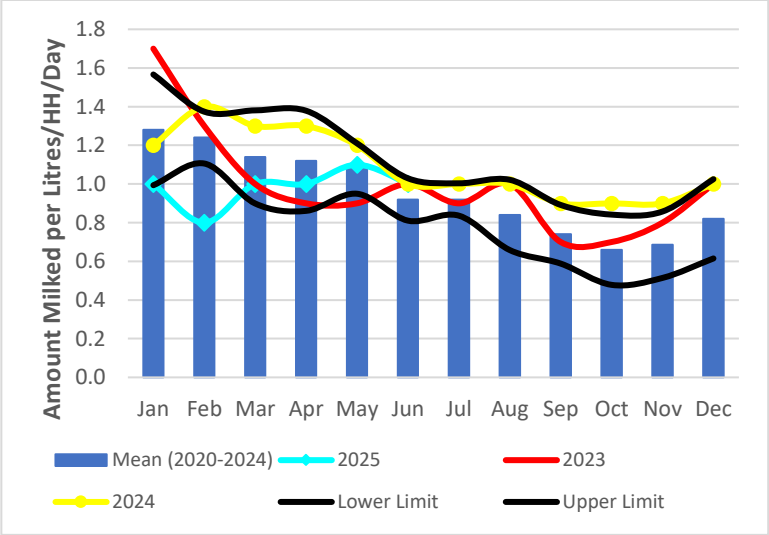


Figure 9:Household Milk Production

3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of Food Crops

- The major crops planted in Mixed Farming livelihood zone were maize, beans, pigeon peas, cowpeas and green grams while green grams, millet, sorghum, cowpeas and maize were planted in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- Majority of crops (legumes)were at harvesting stage.
- Maize was predominantly at maturity stage, and its performance was good to fair in the Mixed Farming zone while fair to poor in the Marginal Mixed Farming zone.
- In some areas, farmers were consuming cowpeas leaves; boosting the household nutritional value alongside other foods.
- Aphids were reported across the livelihood zones.

3.2.2 Cereal Stocks Held by Households

- Maize is yet to be harvested but farmers are enjoying green maize from the farms.
- Farmers have stock of the harvested legumes.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle Prices

- The average market price of a medium-size cattle slightly decreased to Kshs. 32,673 compared to Kshs. 33,111 recorded in the previous month.
- The slight decrease in cattle price is attributed to depletion of forage and high supply of cattle in the markets.
- The prices were higher in Mixed Farming livelihood zone at Kshs. 34,430 compared to Ksh. 29,830 in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- The current price was above LTA of Kshs. 328,446 and within the seasonal range of (24,984- 33962) as shown in figure 10.

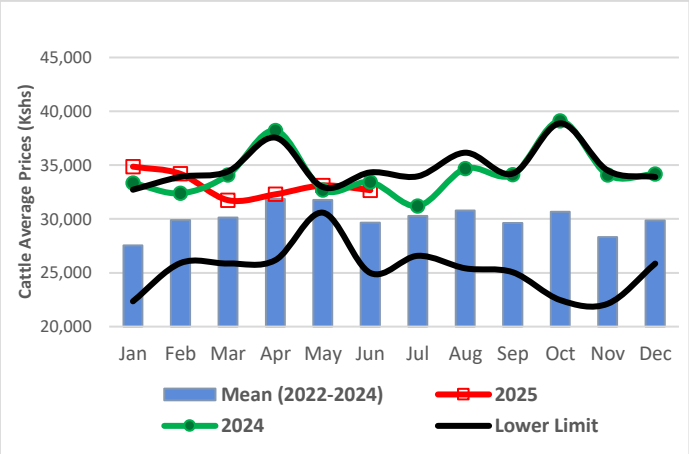


Figure 10:Cattle Prices

4.1.2 Small Ruminants Prices (Goat Price)

- The average market price of a medium-size goat remained stable at Kshs. 5,600, compared to Kshs. 5,575, recorded in the previous month.
- The stability in the price of goat is attributed to the good body condition of the goats and availability of browse and water.
- Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone recorded a higher price of Ksh.5,635 compared to Ksh.5,143 in Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- The current price is above the LTA of Kshs. 4,092 and beyond the seasonal range of Kshs. (4,566-4,865) as shown in figure 11.

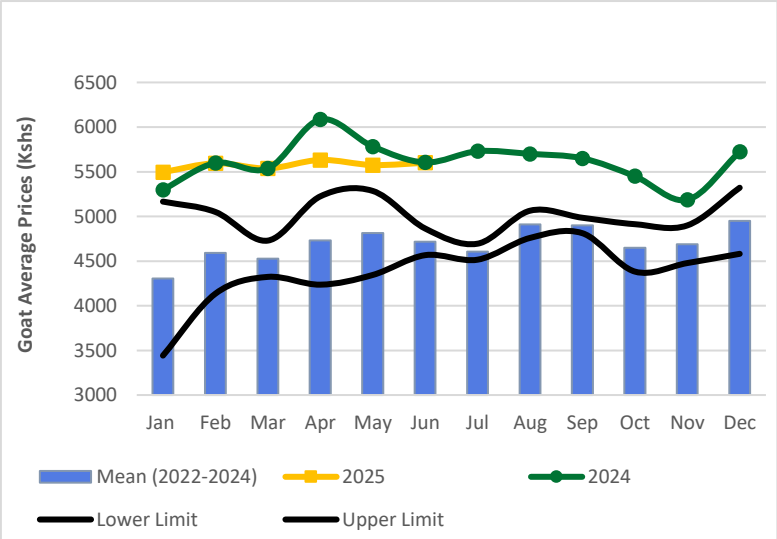


Figure 11:Goat Prices

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

- The average market price per kilogram of maize remained stable at Kshs. 57 compared to Kshs. 54 recorded in the previous months.
- The stability in the price of maize is attributed to the availability of maize in the county, and also some farmers have started consuming green maize at the farms.
- The current price is within the LTA of Kshs. 56 and within the seasonal range of Kshs. (22-108) as shown in figure 12.
- Maize price was highest in Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone at Kshs. 54 compared to Kshs. 56 in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone.

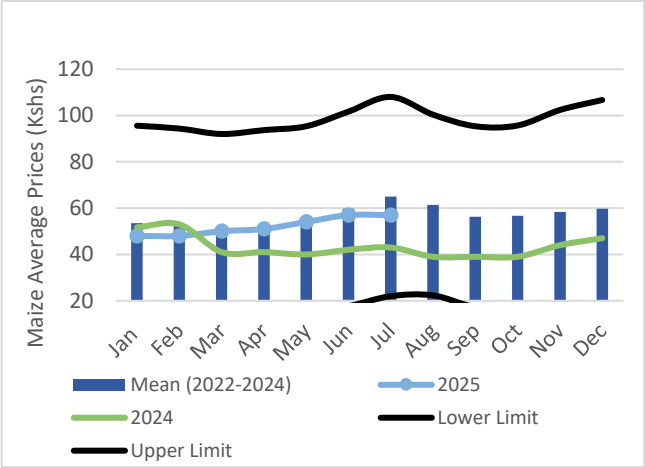


Figure 12:Maize Prices

4.2.2 Beans

- The average market price of beans per kilogram significantly decreased from Kshs. 146 in May to Kshs. 136 in June.
- The decrease is mainly attributed to replenished stocks from long term rains harvests and availability of the commodity in the market.
- The current beans price is higher than LTA of Kshs. 120 and within the seasonal range of (102-157) shillings (figure 13).
- Beans price was highest in Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone at Kshs. 153 compared to Kshs. 125 in the Mixed Farming livelihood zones.

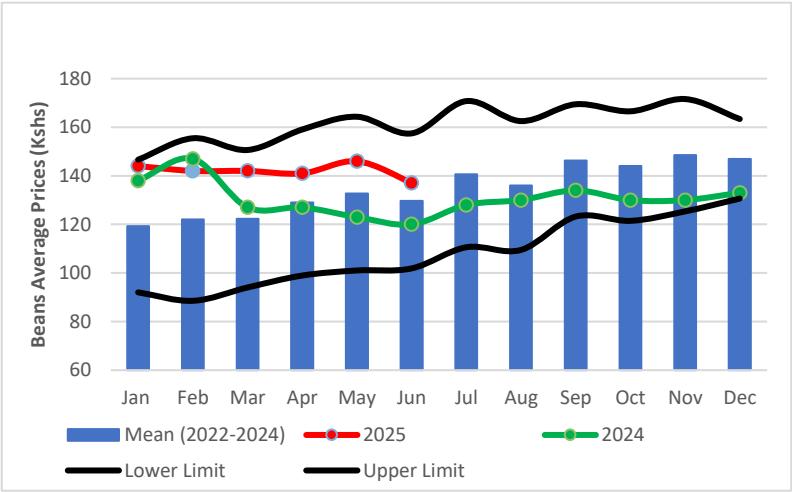


Figure 13:Beans Prices

4.3 Livestock Price Ratio/Terms of Trade

- The household purchasing power declined from 104.2 in May to 98.4 in the reporting month.
- The decrease in ToT is attributed to the increase in the price of maize along with the stability in goat price.
- The current terms of trade were within the seasonal range of (44-128) kg and higher than LTA of 80 kg (figure 14).
- Terms of trade were better in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone at 101 kg compared to 96 kg recorded in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone.

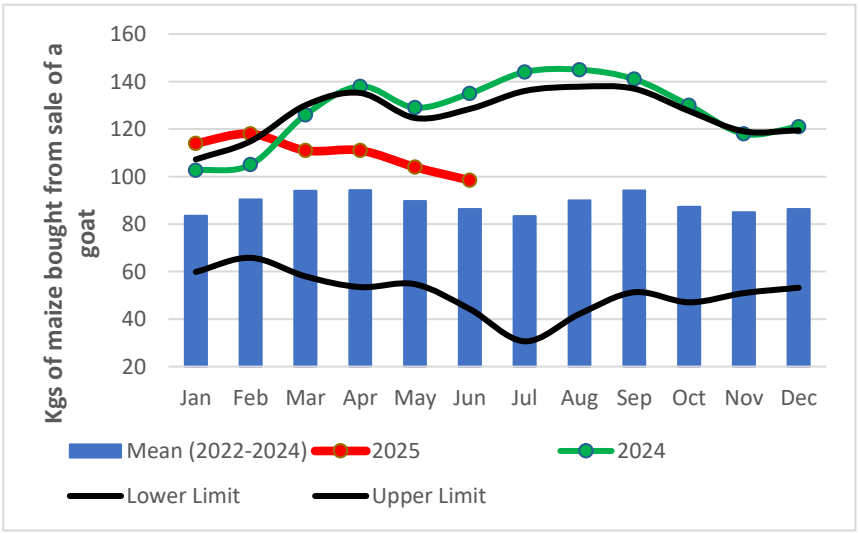


Figure 14:Terms of Trade

5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- The average daily milk consumption per household decreased to 0.8 litres from one litre in previous month of May. The decrease in milk consumption is attributed to decreased milk production at household level.
- The current milk consumption is within the LTA of 0.8 litres and within the normal range of (0.7-0.9) litres as in figure 15.
- Milk consumption was higher in Mixed Farming livelihood zone at one litre compared to 0.7 litres in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone.

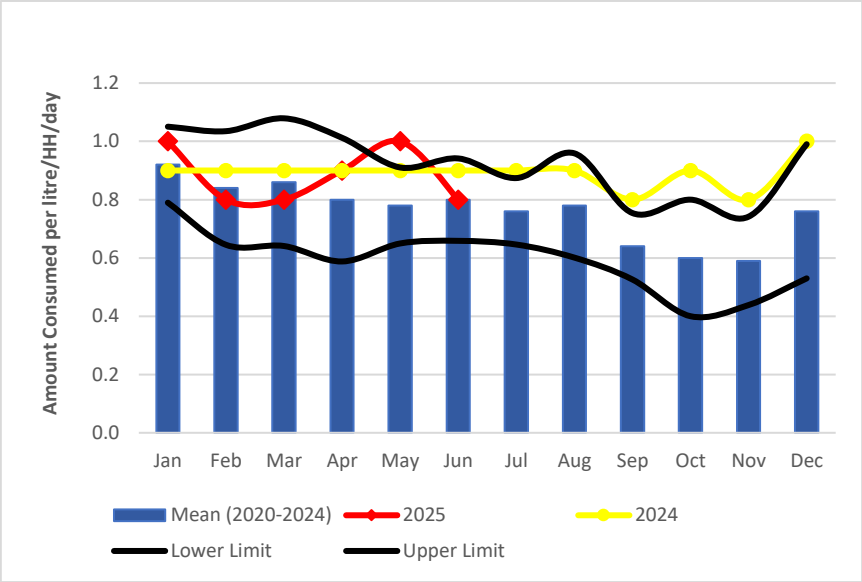


Figure 15:Household Milk Consumption

5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- The county mean food consumption score (FCS) increased remained stable at 44.5 percent in June compared to 44.5 percent in the previous month of May. The FCS mean was 43.5 percent in Marginal Mixed Farming and 52.5 percent in Mixed Farming livelihood zone.
- Households with acceptable food consumption score stood at 76.3 percent in June compared to 77 percent in previous month. The remaining 23.3and 0.4 percent of households had borderline and poor food consumption score respectively as shown in figure 16

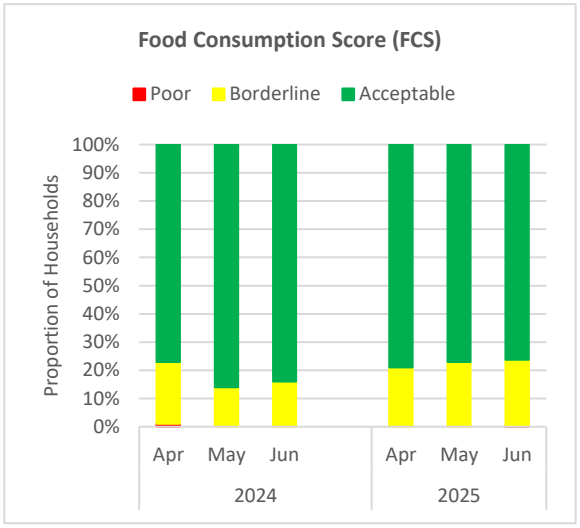


Figure 16:Food Consumption Score (FCS)

- The variations among livelihood zones indicate that Marginal Mixed Farming zone experienced a worse situation with 67.8, 31.5 and 0.4 percent of households categorized under acceptable, borderline and poor respectively compared to 87.2, 12.8 and zero percent in the Mixed Farming zone for the respective categories.
- On average, households consumed cereals six days per week; pulses five days per week; vegetables three days per week; oils five day per week; sugars/sugary products five times per week; milk, fruits and meat/eggs/fish once per week.

5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition status

- The percentage of children at risk of malnutrition (MUAC<135) slightly increased to 6.6 percent in June compared to 5.5 percent previous month (figure 18).
- There were no proportion of children that were moderately malnourished (MUAC 115-124 mm) and severely malnourished children (MUAC <115 mm) within the reporting month.
- The slight increase in the proportion of malnourished children is attributed to reduced milk production and consumption.
- The current proportion is below the LTA of 6.3 percent, and within the seasonal range of (4.0-8.6) percent as shown in figure 17.

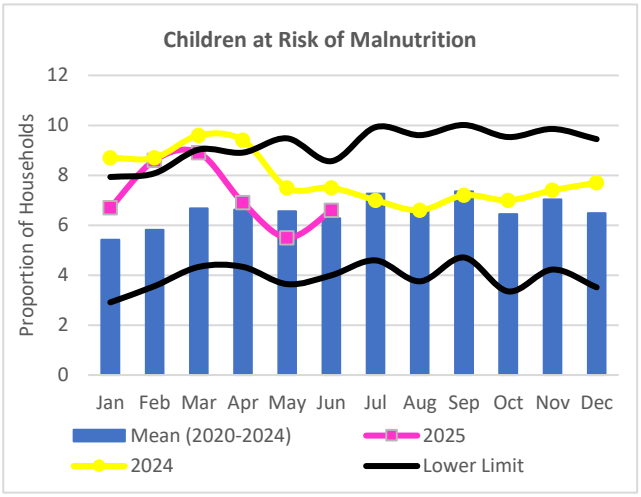


Figure 17:Proportion of children at risk of malnutrition

5.3.2 Health

- The proportion of children suspected to have fever with chills like malaria, fever with breathing difficulties and diarrhoea cases stood at 6.4, 0.4 and 0.7 percent in June compared to 1.3, 0.07 and 0.4 percent in previous month respectively.

5.4 COPING STRATEGIES

5.4.1 Food Based Coping

- The mean reduced coping strategy index (rCSI), indicates how households used different ways to address shortfalls in food; confirming whether household food security status is declining or improving. The rCSI significantly reduced by 56 percent to stand at 2,7 6.2 in June compared to6.2in previous month (figure 18).
- The decrease is attributed to long rains harvests and milk availability across the livelihood zones.
- However, there was reliance on less preferred or less expensive food, reduced portion size of meals and reduced number of meals consumed per day as frequent coping mechanisms among households across the livelihood zones.
- The current rCSI remained below the LTA value of 5.4 but within the seasonal range of (1.4-9.4).
- The proportion of households who employed stressed, crisis and emergency food-based coping mechanisms was 23.9, 1.1 and 0.4 percent respectively, depicting a slight improvement compared to 28.7, 8.1 and 3.2 for the respective coping levels in the previous month.
- In Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone, 29.5, 2.0 and 0.7 percent of households employed stressed, crisis and

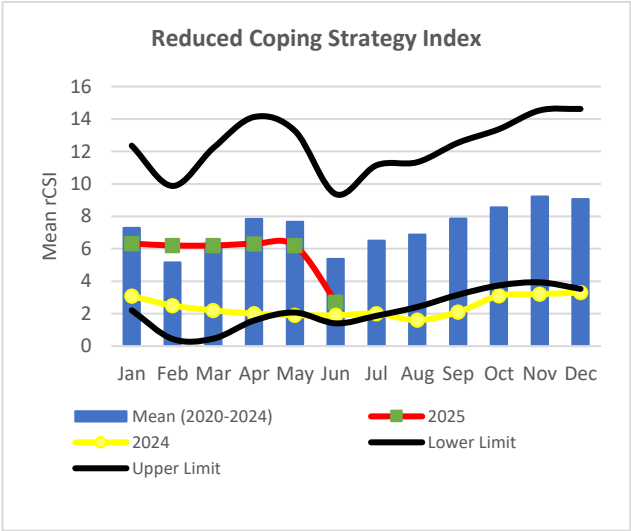


Figure 18:Reduced Coping Strategy Index(rCSI)

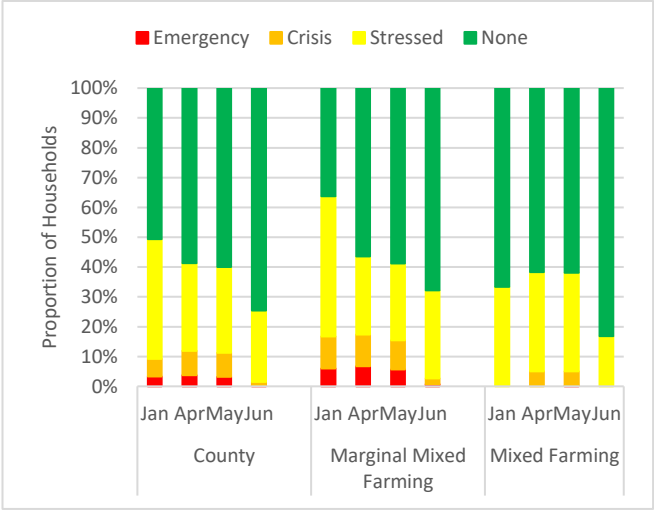


Figure 19:Households Employing Food Based Mechanisms

emergency food based coping mechanisms compared to 16.8 1.0 and zero percent in Mixed Farming livelihood zone respectively (figure 19).

5.4.2 Livelihood Coping

- How households employ negative coping options to obtain food during scarce periods, indicating their coping capacity and the severity of the situation. During the month, the proportion of households engaging in Livelihood Based Coping Mechanisms (LBCMs) in order to access food went down. There were no households employing crisis and emergency mechanisms. Households who employed stressed LBCM stood at 4.1 percent.
- In the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zone, households who employed stressed coping mechanisms respectively were at 3.4 percent, compared to 5 percent in the Mixed Farming livelihood zone (figure 20). The common Mechanisms employed include reducing non-food expenses, selling productive assets and selling the last female animals in order to buy food.

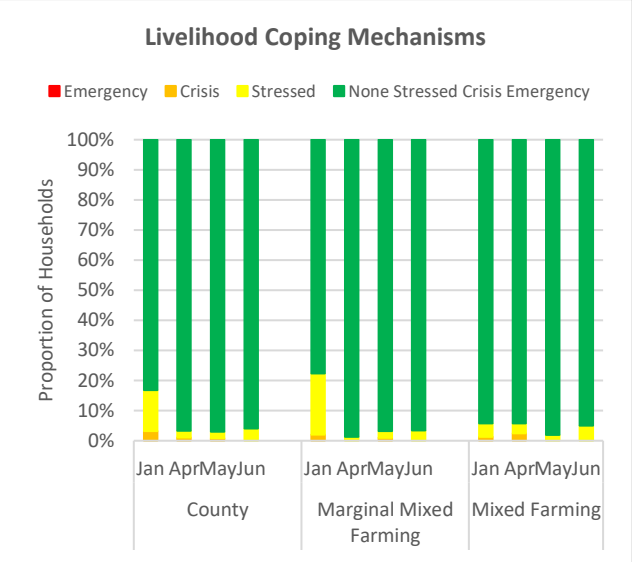


Figure 20:Household Employing Livelihood Coping Mechanisms

6.0 EMERGING ISSUES

6.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

There were incidences of human-wildlife conflict at areas bordering Tsavo East National Park, in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zones. There were reported cases of wildlife invasion on livestock and destruction of crops, especially in Endau/Malalani Ward in Kitui East Sub-county.

7.0 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- According July 2025 climate outlook issued by Kenya Meteorological Department on 29th June 2025, most parts of the county are likely to remain generally sunny and dry with occasional cool and cloudy conditions
- Based on the above forecast, forage condition is expected to deteriorate due to high depletion. However, availability of crop residues will supplement livestock feeds.
- Long rains harvesting will boost household food stocks, purchasing power and access to diversified foods.
- However, the expected below average crop production will provide short-lived improvements in household food availability. Household food stocks are likely to last for <1-2 months compared to 3-4 months normally.
- Malnutrition cases and households employing severe coping mechanisms to access food or money to buy food are likely to continue increasing following below average harvests for the long rains.

8.0 CURRENT INTERVENTION MEASURES

8.1 NON-FOOD INTERVENTIONS

Dev Partner	Sector	Intervention	Quantity & Type (Cumulative)	Beneficiaries reached (Cumulative)	Geographical coverage
GoK/CGoKTI	Socio-Protection (Food Aid)	Inua Jamii Tier 2 Cash Transfers for Vulnerable Groups	Cash transfer at a rate of KShs. 2,000 per beneficiary per month	59,910 beneficiaries (Older Persons 45775, OVC 12,817 and PWDs 1318) for March 2025 Cycle	Countywide
	Health & Nutrition	NICHE	Top up of Inua Jamii HHs with children at a rate of Kshs 500	7,679 (6,475HHs)	Countywide

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate/Short Term

National Government, County Government and Development partners to collaborate on:

Sector	Intervention	Target Area
Social protection (Food & Safety Nets)	Support to food aid/cash transfer to severely affected households	30,000 households in all eight sub-counties
Livestock	Continued livestock disease surveillance	All 8 sub-counties
	Promotion of pasture production and conservation	All 8 sub-counties
	Scale-up support to improved Galla dairy goats rearing for diversification of livelihoods	Marginal Mixed Farming Zones (Priority)
	Promotion of modernized apiculture for income generation and diversification	Across the livelihood zones
Water	Rehabilitation of Earth Dams and installation of solar pumping system (Water infrastructure development & maintenance)	All eight sub-counties
	Promotion of water harvesting and storage practices	All eight sub-counties
	Capacity building of water management committees and pump attendants	All eight sub-counties
Agriculture	Introduction of water saving irrigation technologies like drip irrigation and kitchen gardens	All 8 sub-counties
Health and Nutrition	Continuous mass screening with integrated outreaches in far flung and hot-spot areas	Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zones
	Support hygiene and sanitation promotions	All 8 sub-counties
	Promoting home-based water treatment and conservation measures	All 8 sub-counties
	NICHE Top up of Inua Jamii HHs with children at a rate of Kshs 500)	All 8 sub-counties
	Refresher Training on Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition	All 8 sub-counties