



GIEWS Country Brief Kenya

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

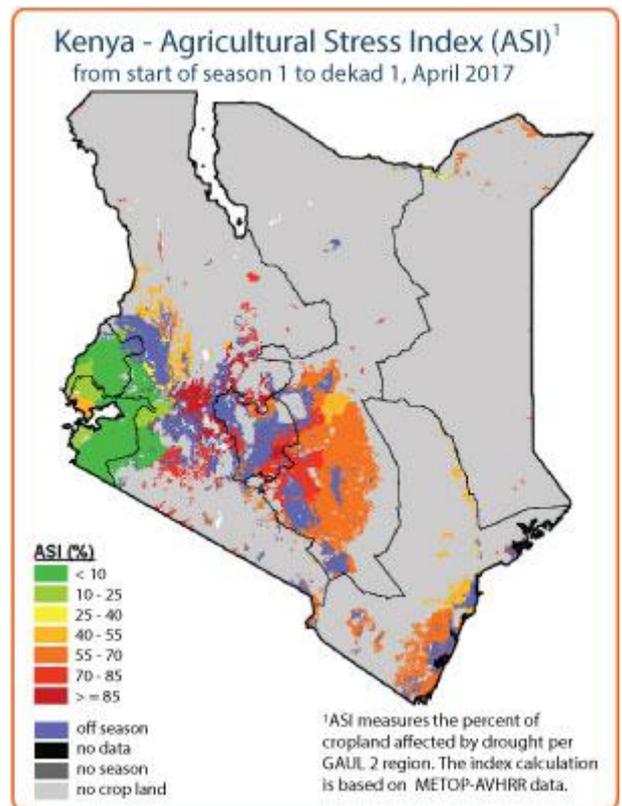
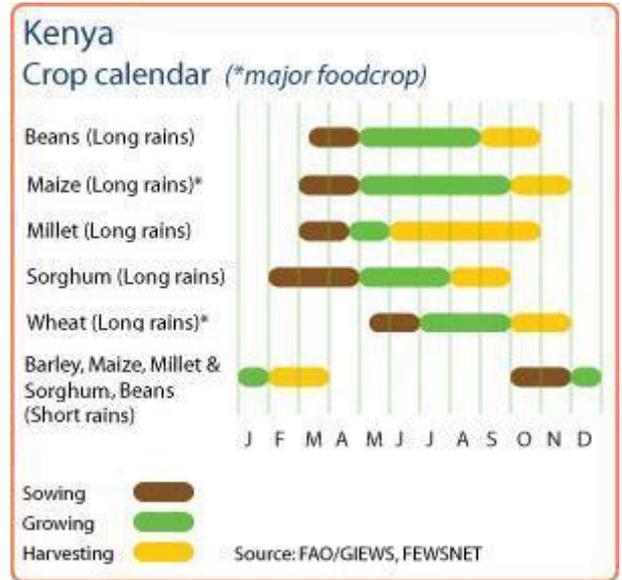
- Uncertain prospects for 2017 “long-rains” crops due to early season dryness and fall armyworm infestations in key-producing areas
- Reduced 2016 cereal output due to unfavourable weather conditions, particularly during the October-December “short-rains” season
- Prolonged and severe drought affecting livestock conditions and productivity in most agro-pastoral and pastoral areas
- Prices of maize surging to near-record to record levels in recent months
- Sharply deteriorating food security situation in most agro-pastoral and pastoral areas

Early-season dryness affecting planting and germination of 2017 “long-rains” crops

Planting of “long-rains” main season crops normally starts in March in major growing areas of Central, Rift Valley and Western provinces. Early season dryness prevailed over most cropping areas, thus delaying planting operations and affecting conditions of early, dry-planted crops (see ASI map). In high potential cropping areas of the southwestern “maize basket”, accumulated rainfall between February and the first dekad of April was 25-50 percent below-average in Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu and Nakuru counties. In central medium potential cropping areas and in southeastern agro-pastoral and marginal agricultural areas, rainfall deficits were more severe. For instance, in central Baringo, Laikipia, Nyandaragua, Muranga, Meru and Kiambu counties, seasonal rainfall was 55-85 percent below average, while in southeastern Kitui and in coastal Lamu counties some light showers were received only in the first dekad of April.

In westernmost Bungoma, Kericho and Nandi counties, accumulated rainfall between February and the first dekad of April was normal to above-normal.

Fall armyworm infestations affecting maize crops, first reported in western Kenya by farmers in March 2017, have been confirmed by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service and Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization. The areas initially infested were Busia, Trans Nzoia, Bungoma, Uasin Gishu and Nandi counties in the southwest. Subsequently, the pest has spread to Kericho, Bomet, Narok, Nakuru and Baringo counties in



the centre and in the south. In response, the Government has formed a platform to coordinate the development of intervention strategies. However, budget constrains are severely limiting the implementation of appropriate control measures.

According to the latest Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF) weather forecast, the March-May rains are likely to be below average, except in southwestern areas, where they are forecast at normal to above normal levels.

Reduced 2016 cereal output due to unfavourable weather conditions

In southeastern and coastal bi-modal rainfall areas, harvesting of the 2016/17 “short-rains” season crops, where it accounts for about 70 percent of the total annual production, is normally concluded in March. However, the harvest was delayed by about one month and its output was sharply reduced due the failure of the October-December rainy season. In southeastern cropping areas (Kitui, Makueni, Tharaka Nithi, North Meru and Embu counties), the cumulative rainfall from October to December was 40-55 percent down from the long-term average; in coastal areas (Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu and Taita Taveta counties), the performance of the rainy season was even poorer, as seasonal rainfall was 55-90 percent below the long-term average. As a result, the 2016/17 “short-rains” maize production was 70 percent below the average of the previous five years, with a near-total failure reported in coastal areas.

Earlier in the year, the main “long-rains” rainy season, despite average to above-average rainfall amounts, had a late onset and an erratic distribution, and crop production was estimated at below-average levels.

As a result, aggregate cereal production in 2016 is estimated by FAO at a low 3.7 million tonnes, 12 percent down from the previous year and 15 percent below the average of the previous five years. Accordingly, cereal import requirements for the 2016/17 marketing year (July/June) are set at 3.3 million tonnes, about 25 percent more than previous year and 37 percent higher than the last five-year average.

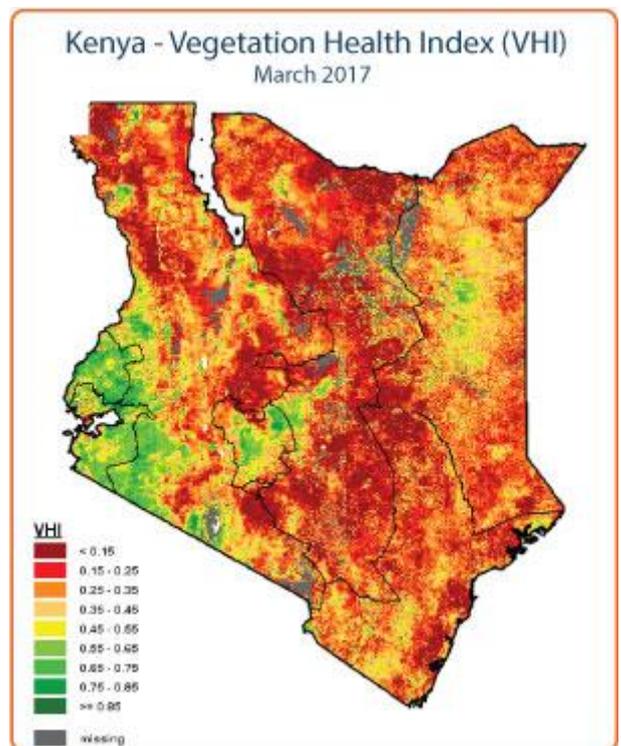
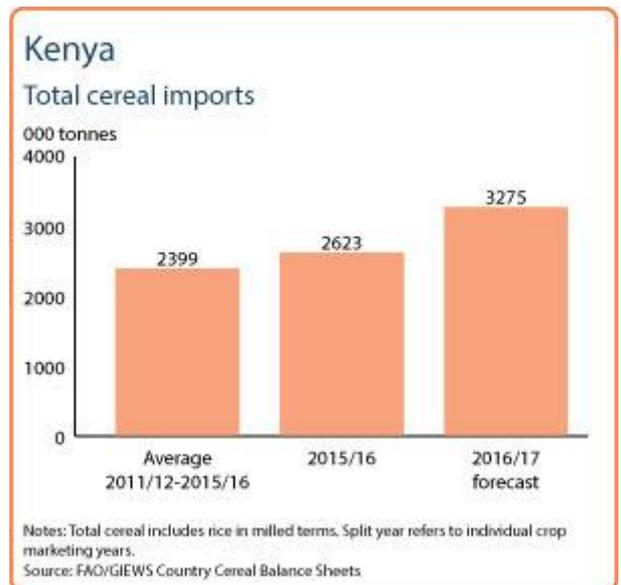
Prolonged drought severely affecting livestock conditions and productivity in pastoral areas

Prolonged drought conditions are severely affecting pasture, browse and water availability in most pastoral and agro-pastoral areas. A below-average performance of the 2016 March-May “long-rains” was followed by a harsh and longer-than-normal June-October dry season. Subsequently, the failure of the “short-rains” rainy season, with cumulative seasonal rainfall being up to 80 percent below-average in northern areas, allowed only a minimal regeneration of forage and water resources. Despite some off-season precipitations received in February, higher-than-normal land surface temperatures and a late onset of the 2017 “long-rains” have caused a further deterioration of rangeland conditions to extremely poor levels (see Vegetation Health Index map). Several areas are experiencing exceptionally severe forage and water deficits, including parts of Marsabit, Turkana, West Pokot and Baringo counties, and most of Tana River, Mandera and Garissa counties. In Marsabit and Baringo counties, about 90 percent of the water points are currently reported to be dry. Due to the severe water and forage shortages, livestock trekking distances to watering points from

Kenya
Cereal production

	2011-2015 average	2015	2016 estimate	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	3 507	3 300	2 900	-12
Wheat	382	420	380	-10
Sorghum	169	170	140	-18
Others	323	359	309	-14
Total	4 381	4 249	3 729	-12

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



grazing fields have substantially increased. In Garissa, Marsabit, Isiolo and Tana River counties, they are 55-70 percent longer than average. Livestock body conditions are generally very poor, with livestock mortality rates are currently estimated at up to 15 percent compared to a normal rate of 2-3 percent. Milk production is at record low levels, in particular in Lamu, Tana River, Turkana, Mandera, Marsabit and Isiolo counties, where in February it was estimated at just 2-8 percent of the long-term average.

Maize prices surging to near-record to record levels in recent months

Wholesale maize prices, were mostly stable in the second semester of 2016, surged by 20-40 percent between January and March 2017 in all monitored markets due to the upward pressure exerted by the drought-driven failure of the secondary 2016 “short-rains” harvest and by concerns over the performance of the 2017 main “long-rains” harvest, due to a delayed onset of seasonal rains. Prices of maize in March were up to 66 percent higher than 12 months earlier and at near-record to record levels, on account of a reduced 2016 cereal production coupled with reduced and highly priced imports from neighbouring Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, where the supply situation is tight. In drought-affected southeastern marginal agricultural counties, mainly dependent on the “short-rains” season, sharper year-on-year price increases were recorded. In Tharaka Nithi, Meru, Kitui, Makueni and Embu counties, maize prices in February were up to more than twice their year-earlier levels. Prices of beans were also at high levels, up to 80 percent above their values in March last year. Prices of livestock declined in recent months to very low levels due to the severe drought in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas, as animal body conditions have substantially deteriorated and pastoralists were forced to reduce their herd sizes. In Marsabit, Garissa and Tana River counties, prices of goats in February were between 25 and 55 percent lower than a year earlier. As a result of declining livestock prices and increasing cereal prices, the terms of trade for pastoralists sharply deteriorated over the last 12 months. The equivalent in maize of a medium-sized goat in Garissa county declined by 60 percent on a yearly basis, from 71 kg in February 2016 to just 28 kg in February 2017.

Sharply deteriorating food security situation in most pastoral and agro-pastoral areas

According to the latest national food security assessment, the overall number of people in need of humanitarian assistance was estimated at 2.6 million in January 2017, more than twice the estimate of 1.25 million in August 2016 and more than four times the caseload of 640 000 estimated 12 months earlier. The areas most affected by food insecurity are parts of the pastoral areas of Turkana, Marsabit, West Pokot, Baringo, Wajir, Mandera, Tana River and Garissa counties, and parts of the coastal marginal agricultural areas of Kilifi and Lamu counties, where households are facing IPC Phase 3: “Crisis” food insecurity levels (IPC map January 2017). The sharp deterioration of the food security situation is due to the impact of the prolonged drought on livelihoods in most pastoral, agro-pastoral and marginal agricultural areas. In pastoral areas, the decline in terms of trade due to decreasing livestock prices and increasing cereal prices, coupled with severe shortages of livestock products (mainly milk) severely affected food availability and access. Pastoralist households are atypically and increasingly resorting to

