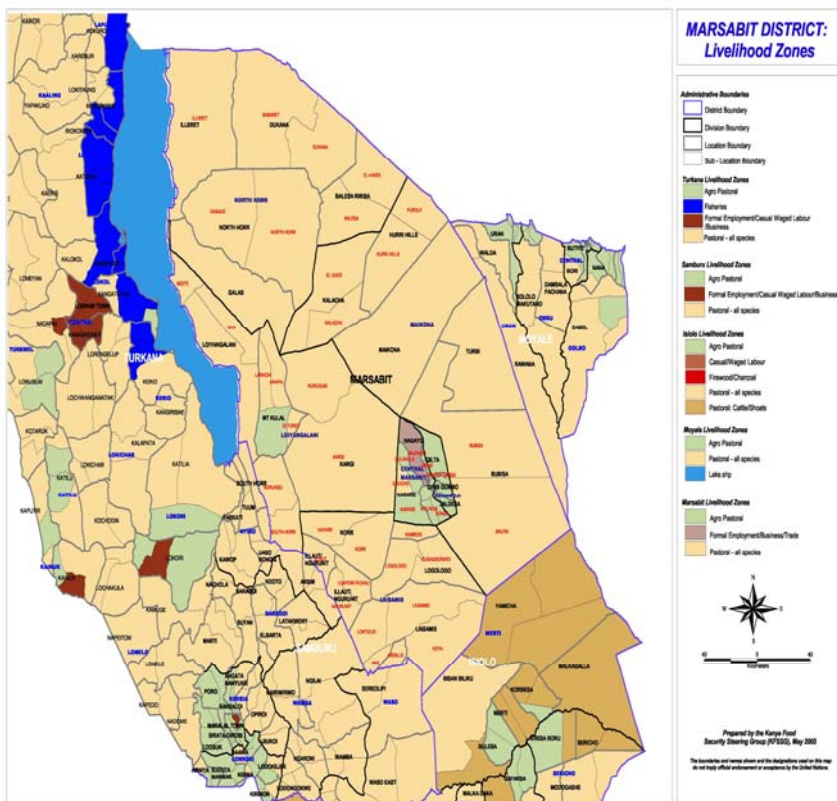




**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II
MARSABIT DISTRICT**

DROUGHT MONITORING BULLETIN: MAY 2007

WARNING STAGES



<u>Livelihood Zone</u>	<u>Warning Stage</u>	<u>Trend</u>
Agro Pastoral	Alert	Improving
Pastoral	Alert/Alarm	Improving

Time Line Activities



Situation Overview

- During the month under review, amounts of rainfall received declined compared to previous month and similar period in normal year. However, below normal rain amounts were recorded in all hilly parts of the district which include Mt Marsabit, Mathew ranges, Hurri hills and its environs while lowland parts recorded inadequate amounts.
- Livestock marketing has negatively decreased in terms of prices compared to previous month.
- Cereal prices (Maize) has currently increased from Kshs.12.00 on April to Kshs. 15.00. This is attributed by poor crop harvest from past season and poor rains for the current long rains season with anticipated crop failure.
- Pastoralist term of trade was unfavorable in terms of livestock price rates compared to previous month. However, Livestock sales rates have fairly increased by 11% compared to previous month.
- Relatively there is apparent improved Food stability in Central, Gadhamoji divisions and parts of Maikona division due to impact of harvest from short rains season crops and camels giving birth in the respective divisions. However in North Horr,Loiyangalani and Laisamis divisions and parts of Maikona divisions situation of food security not good.
- Availability of water for both domestic and livestock use slightly improved with in most lowland parts, while hilly parts of Marsabit and Hurri Hills reported water shortages as result of depleted dams. Overall water related stress reduced by the rains, but not sustainable if trend of poor rains persists.
- During the month, monthly relief distribution from EMOP/WFP continued to all parts of the district apart from Central and Gadhamoji divisions which was excluded from the EMOP. However the numbers of beneficiaries were reduced even for the target areas.
- At Risk Malnutrition (ARM) status of children below five years currently shows an improving trend from 21% in the previous month to 16.4%. High ARM are recorded at Loiyangalani division registering 27%, followed by North Horr division with 20.5% and Maikona division remained with the least of 10.9%. Existing at risk malnutrition is attributed by food scarcity in the areas. Generally malnutrition rates are expected to increase further with decreasing relief foods (supplementary feedings) from EMOP, GOK, other relief agencies and unavailability of milk in permanent settlements/sample sites.

1. Stability

1.1 Rainfall

- The weather condition was characterized by sunny/ windless days and partial cloud covers. There was delayed on onset of Long rains for a period of one month thus resulting to out migration of livestock for search of greener pasture and water.
- The current long rains show Mt.Marsabit recorded the highest rain of 24.1mm, Mt. Kulal 18.0mm and Illeret have the least with 10.0mm and all other lowland parts received no rain at all. Generally, below normal rain amounts were recorded in all parts of the district despite the devastating weather pattern.
- There is evidence that, the season has totally failed as all site recorded that recorded below 10mm per day and few rainy days compared to this time of the year.

1.2 Natural vegetation and pasture condition.

- Forage quality is rated as dry in most parts of the district apart from hilly parts of Marsabit and Mt Kulal where recorded some showers in the cause of the month. However, forage quantity is sufficient for all livestock species.
- In addition to these, the previous dry pastures of the short rains period have been fairly recharged thus being within normal situation of the year, with an average of four months of forage sustainability.
- Distances to and from grazing areas remained at fair distances of 6kms. Generally, distance coverage's are expected to remain stable or worsening despite the poor rainfall distribution of the period.

- As a result of delayed and failure of the rainy season has alternatively attributed to livestock being away from their homesteads for search of both wet pastures and livestock water use at dry season grazing areas. All livestock are around their administrative areas.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- With poor rains recorded in the district no incident of significant floods was reported within the district.
- Domestic and livestock water availability are reported to have positively improved in most lowland parts of the district following the limited amounts of rains received.
- No significant water related diseases reported in most parts of the district, except cases of diarrhea and vomiting at Loiyangalani location among children and few adults.
- Generally, water availability and accessibility has improved apart from Mt. Marsabit where water shortage remain a chronic and/or most hindering problem. However, there is need to alert all the concerned ministries and institutions dealing water to support provision of water to the community and institutions to mitigate the adverse effect of the water scarcity.

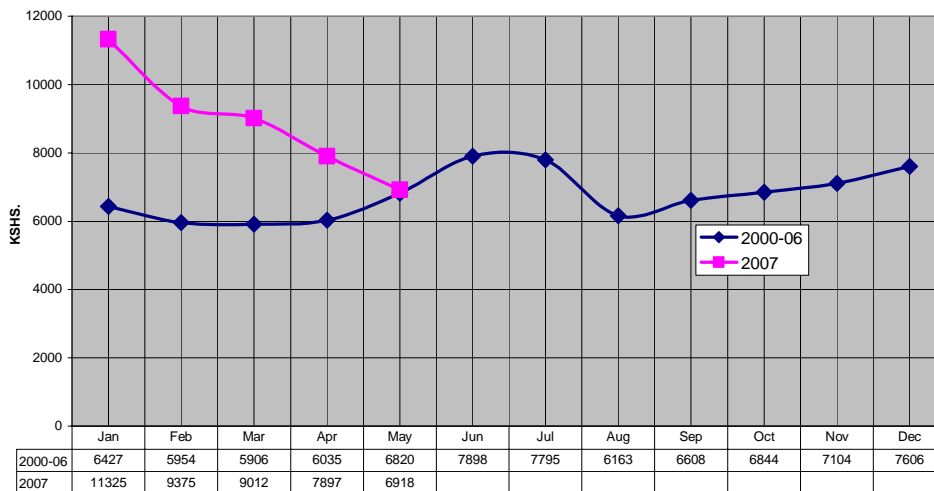
1.4 Emerging issues

- Depleting milk availabilities are reported in most parts of the district as result of livestock departure from their homesteads to wet season grazing areas. This factor has translated to food scarcity among pastoral community who totally depend on livestock and their products.
- Insecurity (raids and killing of human beings) situation is currently reported in Moite Sub Location of Loiyangalani division raided and 10 people were killed and slaughtered amongst them six children and 4 adults and another six injured. However, 800 shoats were recovered by security officers who are currently based in North Horr divisional Headquarters for search of the raided animals. It was believed that, one of the culprits was killed in the village.
- Coping mechanism shows engagement in casual labor has remained stable but average daily wage rate still standing at Kshs.150.00 per person per day. Currently, labour rates are mostly experienced in Central and Gadhamoji divisions where currently under going late crop planting and weeding activities.
- In North Horr location there is reported rough skin disease among children and in Loiyangalani location is reported bleaches among both adults and children as result of Nairobi fly steaches. These are abnormal for this time of the year.
- Food scarcity are evident in Loiyangalani location, North Horr Location and Maikona locations as a result of inadequate herd sizes due to impact of the previous drought years of 2004 to 2006 drought period.
- There is need to organize a Rapid Assessment Team to monitor and evaluate impact of long rains as it is expected to be poor in most parts of the district.

1.5 Implication on food security

- Food security situation has fairly improved in Central and Gadhamoji divisions (Agro/Pastoralist community) while in most pastoral livelihood zone is observed to be experiencing food scarcity.
- Food insecurity is experienced at lowland areas which include Loiyangalani, North Horr divisions and parts of Laisamis division as result of low herd sizes compared to this time of the year.
- ARM has fairly decreased from 21% on the previous month to 16%. This is attributed to unavailability of milk in permanent settlement or sample sites. Generally, higher ARM rates are recorded in Loiyangalani division registered 27%, seconded by North Horr division with 20.5 while Laisamis division has the least at 11.3%.
- Food scarcity is affected by poor rainfall distribution of the season that has caused livestock to be away from their homesteads.

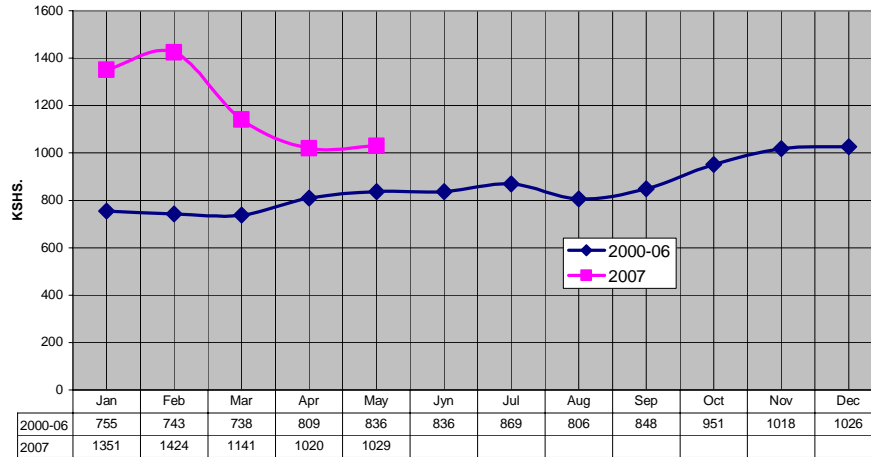
AVERAGE CATTLE PRICES FOR THE YEARS 2000 TO 2006 BY 2007



DISTRICT.

- Average cattle prices have currently increased from Kshs. 7,897.00 in the previous month to Kshs. 9,418.00. This is fairly sustained by healthy body condition and high demand.
- Cattle prices have currently increased by 50% compared to mean averages of this time of the year.
- Sales of cattle remained the 4th populated in the sale yard.
- Higher cattle price averages were registered in North horr division at Ksh. 11,500.00 and least at Laisamis division with Kshs. 8,214.00.

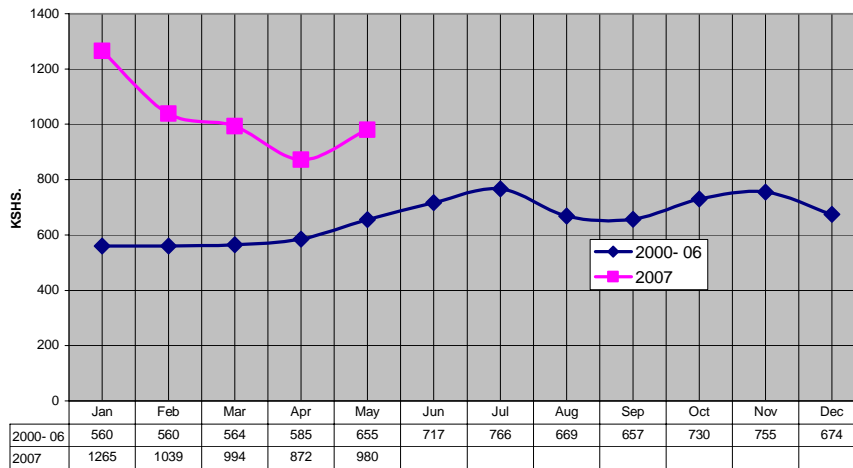
AVERAGE GOAT'S PRICES FOR THE YEARS 2000-2006 BY 2007



DISTRICT.

- An average goat's price shows a fairly stable trend at Kshs. 1,029.00 compared to Kshs. 1,020.00 in the previous month.
- Goat's price averages have currently increased by 20% compared to this time of mean averages for the years 2000 to 2006. This increment is sustained by healthy body condition and demand.
- However, sales of goats remained the most in sale yards as out of 216 sold livestock goats were 102.
- Goat's price averages were higher in Loiyangalani division where registered Kshs 1,135.00, Laisamis 1,097.00 and Central division has the least of Kshs. 914.00.

AVERAGE SHEEP PRICES FOR THE YEARS 2000 -2006 BY 2007



DISTRICT.

- Average sheep prices have slightly increased from Kshs. 872.00 in April to Kshs. 980.00 for the month. These slight increments are favored by healthy body condition and demand with the ongoing restocking programme.
- Sales of sheep remained the second populated in sale yards.
- Higher sheep averages were fetched in Maikona division where (PISP) pastoralist support programme is currently buying shoats and camels for restocking programme.
- Generally, livestock sales have currently increased at 20% compared to previous month as a result of Secondary School Fees and common necessities.

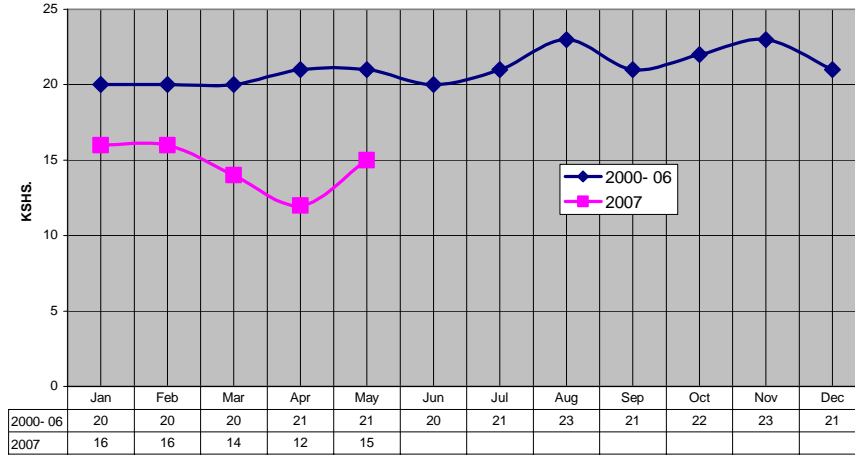
2. Milk productions

- Milk availability has slightly increased by 1.1% compared to previous month. This is sustained by increasing lambs, kids, cattle and camel calves. Milk availabilities are deprived by far flung concentration at dry season grazing areas at average distances of 10kms to 30kms.
- Milk availabilities for children are inadequately reported in most parts of the district. Loiyangalani division has the least milk availability and therefore ARM cases are observed.
- Milk yields have currently increased from 1.8litres in April to 2.9 litres per household per day. Generally, milk consumption has currently increased at fora camps while at permanent settlement are reporting inadequate for children.
- Average price of milk per bottle (0.75ml) is sold at Kshs. 26.00.

3.1 Livestock sales

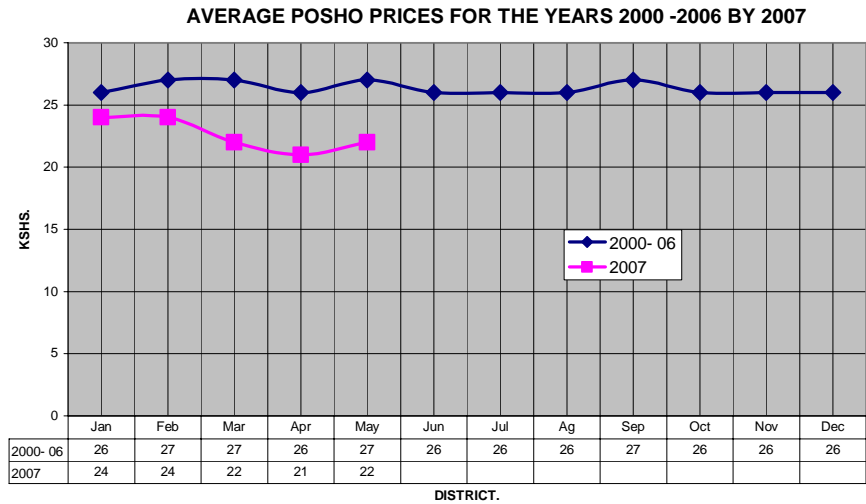
- Livestock trade has been substantially disrupted by minimal herd sizes owned compared to previous 2004 and 2005. However, sales of livestock have fairly increased from 57.2% in the previous month to 68% for the month.
- Generally, sales rates show goat species are leading with 75%, goats 73% and Cattle being the second from least with 11%. Sales rates currently increased among shoat's camels and few cattle and a donkey was sold. Livestock sales and productivities remained the leading income source of the month.

AVERAGE MAIZE PRICES FOR THE YEARS 2000 -2006 BY 2007



DISTRICT.

- Average maize prices have currently remained positively decreasing as from this year. However, maize averages have currently increased from Kshs. 12.00 in April to Kshs. 15.00. This is an indication that maize availability/harvest is below normal yet no significant pest/crop disease noted in the previous season
- Maize price average prices have currently resumed to its normal good year trend as a different of Kshs. 6.00 compared to this time of the mean averages of the years 2000 to 2006.
- Maize price averages are expected to remain stable for the next two months.



- Average posho prices are currently sold at slightly increasing trend from Kshs. 21 on April to Kshs. 22.00. The increasing rate is currently interfered by curtailed long rains.
- However, posho average prices are on its downswing trend compared to this time of mean averages.
- Posho averages are expected to remain fairly stable trend.
- Consumption of posho was the most diet of the month as an indication that it's the cheapest cereal commodity that most category of all class of households can afford at varying quantities.

3.5 Income

3.5.1 Crop

- Apart from Agro/ Pastoral community in Central, Gadhamoji divisions and Hurri hills of Maikona division reporting limited sales of maize and bean crops thus no other division reported sale of crops. Maize was sold at an average of Kshs.15.00 from 12.00. The current crop harvests are expected to sustain the community for 3-4 months period.

3.5.2 Livestock income

- Sale of livestock was the main source of income among the pastoral community at 59% of the total income with shoats being the highest traded species. Sales volumes are on increasing trend.
- Sales volumes have increased as result of Secondary School Fees and other common necessities.
- Most households in pastoral and agro pastoral livelihood zones rely on the followings as income sources:-

a) Sales of livestock/ products	-	82%
b) Casual labour	-	36%
c) Sale of crops	-	7%
d) Gifts and remittance	-	26%
e) Sale of wood products	-	7%
f) Other minor sources	-	1.2%

3.6 Cereal: Meat price ratio

The district term of trade has fairly improved as livestock prices are fairly stable rates whereas cereal price remained on fairly stable rates. However, Meat price ratio has improved compared to previous 2 quarters.

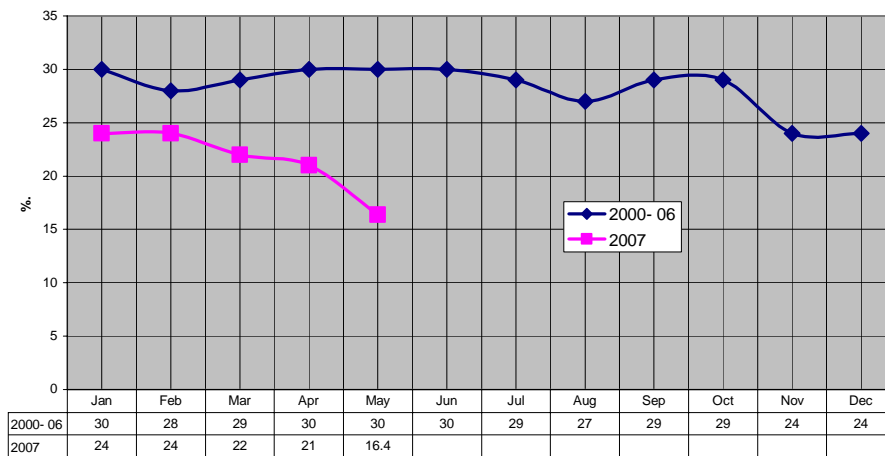
3.6.1 Implication on food security

Food insecurity are variedly observed with Central and Gadhamoji divisions reporting improving situation and increase food insecurity felt in North horr division, Maikona division and parts of Laisamis division. But, Loiyangalani division is experiencing serious food scarcity. This is attributed by poor labour rates, inadequate herd sizes, and significantly decreased fish statistic among other factors as pastoral/fishermen community.

Insecurity

- Insecurity (raids and killing of human beings) situation is currently reported in Moite Sub Location of Loiyangalani division raided and 10 people were killed and slaughtered amongst them six children and 4 adults and another six injured. However, 800 shoats were recovered by security officers who are currently based in North Horr divisional Headquarters for search of the raided animals. It was believed that, one of the culprits was killed in the village.

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF CHILDREN (<135MM -MUAC) FOR THE YEARS 2000 -2006 BY 2007



DISTRICT.

- The current ARM average has been improving as from October 2006 to date. Moreover, malnutrition status has substantially reduced from 21% on April to 16% and a drop at 14% compared to mean averages at this time of the year. This significant decrease is sustained by previous supplementary feedings from GoK, WFP, Catholic Mission and milk availability for children.
- At risk malnutrition is expected to increase as a result of declining availability of milk in the areas and increasing poor feeding habit.
- Loiyangalani division is currently leading with high ARM of 16% followed by Central division 12.5% and Maikona division with the least at 8.5%. However, at risk Malnutrition has improved compared to this period of the year.

- Generally, there was no supplementary feeding for children apart from Tear Fund Project covering Korr division and Olturot Sub Location of Loiyangalani division.

4.2 Health

- During the month, there were reported common coughs, RTI and malaria cases among both adults and children. In North Horr location there is reported rough skin disease among children and in Loiyangalani location is reporting vomiting and diarrhea cases among few adults and children. This situation was locally curbed by the Catholic dispensary. Generally, the situation negatively attributed to prevailing ARM cases in the area.

5. Current intervention measures

The following interventions are currently ongoing and are likely to have effects on food security situation.

- Ministry of livestock is undertaking both de-worming, and vaccinating livestock on CCPP.
- A Project by name **Solidarity** was initiated at North Horr Location whose objective is to provide both capacity building, provide human drugs and other social services.
- Monthly field visit was conducted to facilitate the field Monitors and other strategic filed work

5.2 Food aid

- During the month under review, normal monthly food relief food distribution to most divisions apart from Central and Gadhamoji divisions was reported. The recently received relief foods from EMOP have decreased by 30% in terms of beneficiaries as compared to previous months. This has negatively attributed to food scarcity especially among pastoral/ fishermen communities.

5.3 Coping strategies

Households are currently employing the following coping mechanisms to substitute their income.

- Dependency
- Small scale business/ petty job
- Remittance and gifts
- Purchase food on credit
- Swapped to less preferred foods
- Borrow food from relatives.
- Reduction in the sizes of meals
- However, coping strategies index at Household level shows No. of better off H/H have 4.6%, Mid Class 26.6% Poor 14% and Poorest households have 18.3%. This is positive indication as the poorest HH declined by 3.2% compared to April 2006.

6.0 Recommendations

- EMOP and supplementary feeding should be continued to target the neediest population of 60,000 beneficiary's district wide. Supplementary feedings for children below 5 years should be targeted as for the neediest.
- Conflict resolution mechanism should be enhanced within and without district boundaries.
- Food for work activities should be initiated beside free relief as Alert/Alarm stage of the drought cycle activity especially to water and other community developmental requests.
- Restocking of households with livestock should be continued so that, the households which lost their herds to drought can reclaim their livelihood.
- Water tankering should be continued to institutions and water shortages prone areas of the district.
- There is need to organize a Rapid Assessment Team to monitor and evaluate the devastating weather condition.
- Contingency planning and financial status should be availed drought situation in the next 40 days.