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## KENYA HUMANITARIAN UPDATE vol. 58

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Office of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Kenya

### HIGHLIGHTS

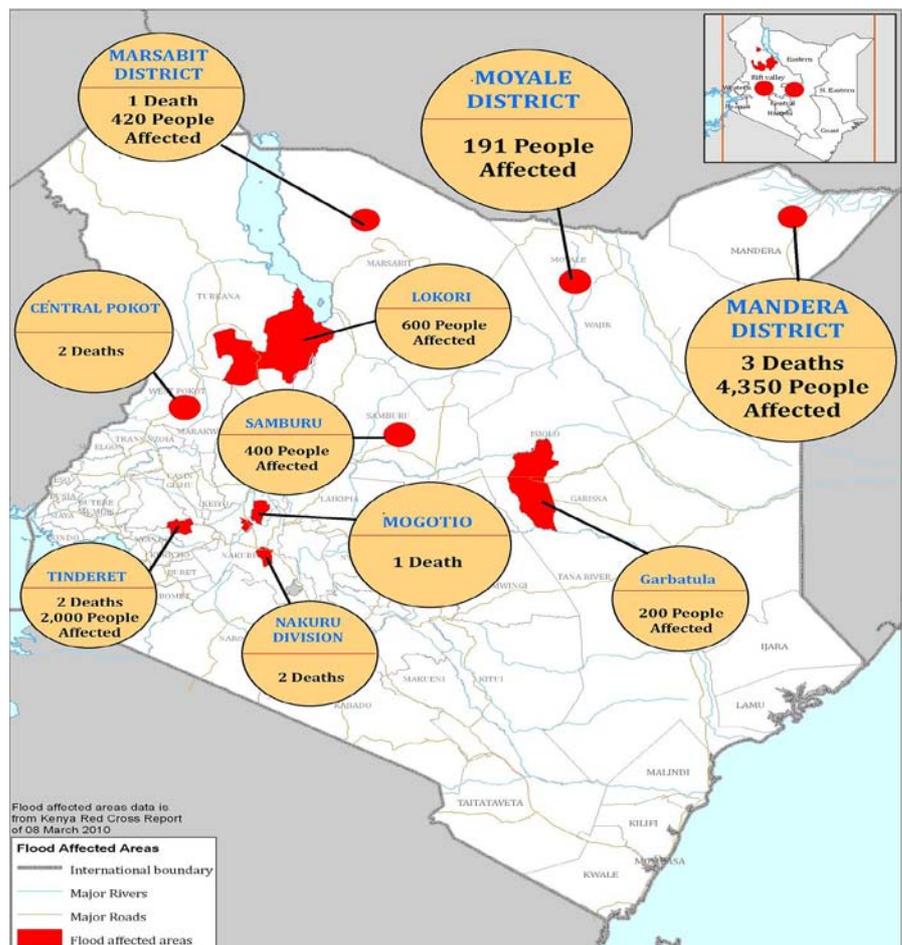
- Floods affect nine districts at the onset on the Long Rains Season
- Drought conditions improve across Kenya after the short rains season
- Food beneficiary numbers set to reduce as food security conditions improve
- Pokots and Turkanas sign Peace Agreement
- Inter-Agency mission to North-Eastern highlights deteriorating security and humanitarian conditions
- Cholera continues to affect hundreds of Kenyans

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### General Humanitarian Overview

#### Floods

Heavy rainfall at the onset of the Long Rains Season (March-June) has caused flooding in several locations in the country affecting an estimated<sup>1</sup> 8, 360 people. Flooding, between 1-8 March has been reported in at least nine districts in Northern, North-Eastern and Western parts of Kenya. An estimated 11 people are reported dead, infrastructure of unknown value is damaged and hundreds of livestock and farming areas have been washed away. Roads and bridges have been washed away, posing a logistical challenge for transportation of humanitarian aid. The districts affected include, Mandera, Moyale, Marsabit, Samburu, Turkana, Isiolo, Nandi Central, Homa Bay and Nakuru. For the consolidated report on floods, visit <http://ochaonline.un.org/kenya>.



Humanitarian operations have been focused on response to the devastating floods that affected thousands of households in early January 2010. Recovery efforts for damaged infrastructure and loss of

<sup>1</sup> KRCS

livelihoods are key areas that require attention. The Ministry of Education reports that 67 schools were affected by floods and require rehabilitation. UNDP and OCHA are working with the Ministry of State for Special Programmes (MoSSP) to plan an assessment in areas worst affected by floods.

The outbreak of cholera has cumulatively affected 11 districts nationwide with a total of 364 cases, 8 deaths and a CFR of 2.3% since January 2010. So far the outbreaks have been contained in 4 districts. For the Districts which have reported cases in February 2010, a total of 83 cases with 3 deaths and a CFR of 3.6% have been recorded. In the week ending 15<sup>th</sup> February 2010, seven (7) districts (Kajiado, Westlands, Siaya, Mbeere, Tharaka, Meru south and Pokot central) reported new cases. Deaths in remote areas like Pokot are attributed to lack of access to health facilities, which are in some cases located 70km walking distance from villages.

The political tensions over numerous suspensions of top government officials on 14/15 February 2010 have simmered down. The President and Prime Minister differed over the suspension of Ministers allegedly involved in maize and education scandals. The two Principals are reported to have met on 23<sup>rd</sup> February to discuss some of the contentious issues on government officials implicated in maize and education scandals.

Parliament resumed sitting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 with the Harmonized Draft Constitution topping the agenda. The harmonized draft constitution has undergone a laborious process since it was launched in November 2009.(See figure.1below). The general public, including civil society groups and interest groups had the opportunity to input their comments to the Draft. A political deadlock on issues of where the executive powers should lie was overcome through Parliamentary Select Committee negotiations. Other issues on the Parliamentary agenda include corruption, national unity, job creation and poverty reduction. Parliament will debate on the constitution for 30 days. The referendum for the constitution review is expected to take place in April 2010.

OCHA led the Inter-Agency Security Mobility Mission with International Office for Migration (IOM) and Institute for Security Studies (ISS) to the North-Eastern Province on 22-26 February 2010. The Mission highlighted the deteriorating security in the border areas linked to the situation in neighbouring Somalia. Humanitarian conditions in these marginalized areas are quite bad and the insecurity precludes access by aid agencies. Nevertheless, local communities and civil society actors have shown marked resilience and find ways to continue to operate despite the challenges. In the areas close to the Dadaab refugee camps, host community frustration at the growing numbers of refugees has bred hostility between the two groups. Environmental degradation is worsening in the settled areas and there is a competition for natural resources amongst local populations. Kenya hosts a total of 373, 889 refugees of which 263, 939, are hosted in overcrowded Dadaab camps in Garissa.

### **Weather Conditions and possible impacts**

The El Nino influenced Oct-Dec 2009 Short Rains Season, extended into 2010. The Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) states that parts of Western highlands, Central Rift Valley, Central highlands including Nairobi and a few areas in the Southeastern lowlands continued to record substantial amounts of rainfall in January and February 2010. However, the Northeastern and Northwestern Kenya as well as the entire Coastal strip remained generally dry throughout the period. The KMD predications for the Long rains Season (March-June) indicate that most of Kenya will receive slightly above normal rainfall between March-May 2010.

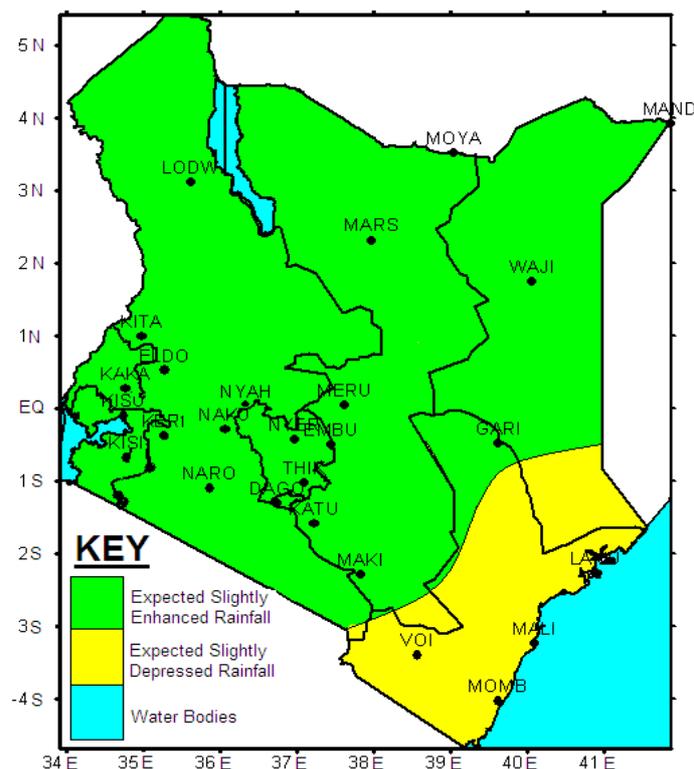
The March to May 2010 “Long-Rains” are likely to exhibit poor distribution both in space and time in some parts of the country, especially the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL). The KMD has outlined the distribution of the rains as follows:-

- **In north-western Kenya**, the rainfall performance is likely to be slightly enhance throughout the three-month period;
- **In the western highlands, Lake Basin, central Rift and central highlands including the Nairobi area**, the performance is expected to be near-normal in March and slightly enhanced in April and May;
- **The north-eastern districts** are likely to experience slightly enhanced rainfall in April but near-normal performance in March and May;

- **The south-eastern districts** are expected to receive enhanced rainfall in April but near-normal in March and May. However, the southern most areas of this region are likely to experience depressed rainfall both in April and May;
- The performance along the **Coastal Strip** is expected to be near normal in May but generally depressed in March and April 2010.

The onset of the Long Rains raises similar concerns and opportunities experienced during the just ended short rains season. Preparedness efforts are required to be place to ensure that mitigation risks associated with floods/mudslides are in place, and that opportunities for maximising rainfall are utilised. The Government of Kenya (GoK) and Humanitarian actors, in October 2009 developed Contingency Plans at National and Field levels in readiness for responding to floods in the Oct-Dec 2009 rains. The Plans were useful in effective response to floods and also minimised operational costs. The damage, especially to human life was also minimum following extensive public awareness campaigns conducted before floods occurred.

The KMD says that on average in this Long Rains Season, most areas in **Western, Nyanza, Central and Nairobi Provinces** receive normal (average) rainfall ranging from 400 to 680mm; **south Rift** receives average rainfall ranging from 250mm to 350mm while on average the **Central Rift** receives rainfall in the range of 180mm to 250mm; **North Rift** receives rainfall in the range 90mm to 220mm; **Northeastern Province** receives normal rainfall in the range 140 to 250mm; **Eastern Province** receives rainfall ranging from 190mm to 390mm while the Coastal Strip receives normal rainfall in the range 300mm to 520mm.



**Figure.2 March-May 2010 Rainfall Forecast**  
Source: KMD

The KMD has advised that notable dates for rainfall in the March-June season as follows:-

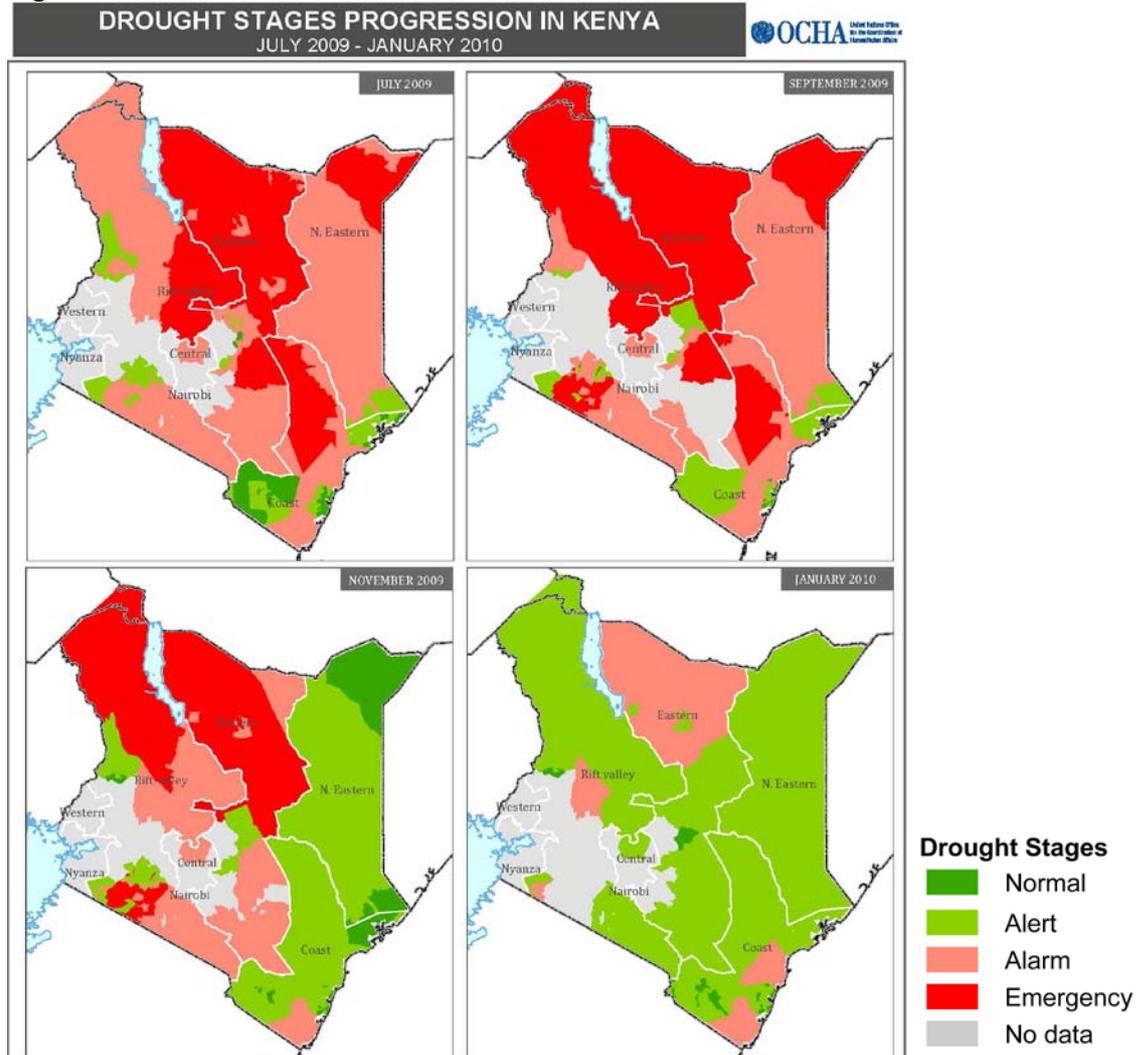
	Region	Onset Dates	Cessation Dates
1	Districts in the Lake Basin and in Highlands West of the Rift Valley	The rains will be enhanced from 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> week of March 2010	Continues into June
2	Southern parts of the Rift Valley	The rains will be enhanced from 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> week of March 2010	2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> week of May 2010
3	Central Rift Valley	3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> week of March 2010	Continues into June
4	Central highlands including Nairobi area	3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> week of March 2010	2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> week of May 2010
5	South eastern Districts	3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> week of March 2010	1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> week of May 2010
6	Coastal Districts	4 <sup>th</sup> week of March -1 <sup>st</sup> week of April 2010	Continues into June 2010
7	North-eastern and North-western districts	4 <sup>th</sup> week March -1 <sup>st</sup> week April 2010	1 <sup>st</sup> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> week May 2010

Source: KMD/February 2010

## Drought Analysis

OCHA's analysis of drought conditions shows improvement across the country between November 2009 and January 2010. Areas that suffered severe dry conditions in July 2009 in the north, north-eastern and southern parts of Kenya all show improvement from emergency to Alert levels over a three-month period. Pasture regenerated and contributed to improved livestock body conditions, milk production increased and water sources recharged reducing trekking distances for both livestock and household use. The improvement is attributed to the prolonged and enhanced short rains season, usually occurring in October-December; this time the rains were received up to mid-January 2010. The KMD weather predictions of fairly good rainfall in the March-June Long Rains Season will contribute further to relieving drought stresses brought about by the 2008/2009 consecutive deficient rain seasons.

**Figure 3**



## Impacts of drought

### Access to water & pasture

In Turkana district (in north-western Kenya) which experienced protracted drought conditions from July to December 2009, analysis into January 2010 conditions shows only a slight improvement. Recovery from the drought is challenged by other factors (high food prices, conflict, and impact of floods). In Mandera, pasture quantities deteriorated in January 2010 because of dry conditions that began prevailing following the cessation of rains in late November 2009. Pasture was fair to poor in western part of the district and poor in eastern and central parts of Mandera district. Pasture is reported to have been fair to poor in western parts of the district and poor in eastern and central parts of the district. The average distance to grazing areas has increased to 8.5km from 6.2 km reported in December 2009, and 24 km in September 2009. Average trekking distances for households is 4.9km (from 4.2 km reported in December 2009). Mandera district hosted pastoralists from Ethiopia to in Khalalio, Malkamari and Hareri divisions in January 2010, as was the case in December 2009 too. The district reports that more than 30

water sources were under stress, with recommendations from the DSG that water trucking is commenced to water-stressed areas. In Turkana, the percentage of children under five rated at risk of malnutrition rose from 25.7 % in December 2009 to 26.4 % in January 2010.

### Market Prices of the staple Maize

Rainfall in Trans Mara district (in south-western Kenya) is reported to have been erratic towards to end of the short rains season, negatively impacting pasture regeneration. Maize production was affected by the poorly distributed rains and livestock body conditions reportedly started to deteriorate. Market prices for cattle reduced Ksh6, 500 in January 2010 compared to Ksh8, 000 in December 2009. The Government of Kenya (GoK) says the decrease was because of the flooded market as most households sold their livestock to raise fees for the school year, and livestock body conditions were also poor. Rates of malnutrition in children under-five was 5.25 % in January compared to 4.96 % in December 2009 due to a decline in milk production. The average price of maize increased from Ksh34 to Ksh36 per kilo. The increase was due to high demand, whereas the supply of maize was low following poor harvests during the year. In Makueni, maize prizes increased to Ksh35 per kilo in January 2010 from Ksh30 in December 2009 month. This was due to unavailability of the product at household level. The prices are however expected to drop after the harvests expected at the end of February and March. The price increase is a normal occurrence attributed to low supply in the local markets.

### Food Security

The short rains of Oct-Dec 2009 which extended into mid-January/early February in some areas are expected to improve household food security. The Government and WFP have already indicated that beneficiary figures of general food distribution will reduce from the 3.8 million people in coming months. The food pipeline, already operating at constrained levels, was able to reach only 1.1 million people out of the targeted 3.8 million in January 2010. Fews Net further states that "distributions during the January cycle are targeting provisions of food to the 3.8 million persons at 50 percent of the ration. The reduction in ration has been necessitated by continued food pipeline constraints, as a result of late overseas arrivals of food, coupled with under-funding. The situation resulted in missed distributions in some districts in October and November. WFP is mobilizing resources for local and regional purchase to bridge the gaps."

In central Kenya, the rains have led to increased crop production. Household food security is expected to improve. In Makueni, Mwingi, and Kitui, a bumper harvest of maize has been reported although there is concerns that poor storage or crop preservation practices will detract from food availability. The SRA conducted 8-26 February 2010 will determine the impact of the rains on food security and raise the profile of other issues (water & sanitation, health, local economies, etc).

### Nutrition & Health

In Makueni, the nutrition status of children under five years improved slightly during this month. The percentage of those at risk of malnutrition dropped to 15.9% from 16.1% in December 2009. The ongoing Short Rains Assessment (SRA) will determine the impact of rains on crop production throughout the country.

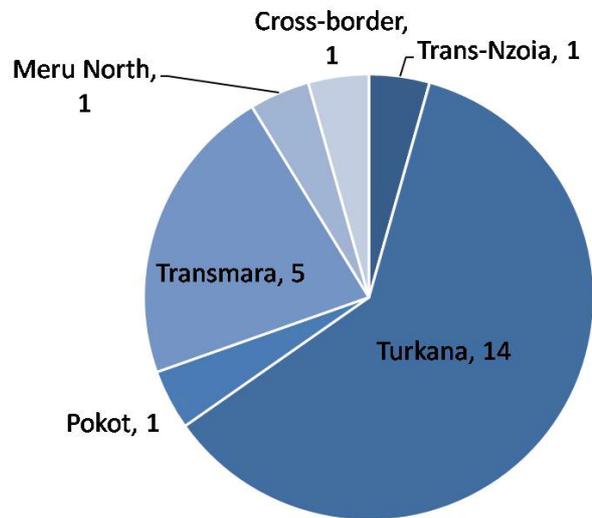
*"The food security prognosis for most of the drought-affected pastoralists and marginal agricultural farm households is favorable, in the event that long rains are normal. Improvements in livestock productivity, including an increase in milk output, favorable livestock prices, and a reduction in livestock diseases, are beginning to manifest in reduced rates of child malnutrition. Although incidents of conflict have reduced markedly, pastoralists will require a much longer time to recover from the impacts of drought combined with two years of sustained conflict. Improvements in pastoral food security are significant but will require a normal long-rains season to consolidate the beginning of the recovery process." FEWSNET*

In Wajir and Samburu, under five children at risk of Malnutrition slightly improved in January to 27.1 % and 21.4 % from 27.5 and 21.7 % in December 2009 respectively. Marsabit, Turkana and Mandera however continue to show deterioration in nutrition status.

### **Conflict in Pastoral areas**

Twenty three people were killed in conflict related incidents in January 2010. Turkana district accounted for more than half of those killed (14), followed by Transmara district that had five people. As the year began, communities residing in Turkana district continued to experience cross-boundary loss of lives and livelihoods, during raids and banditry attacks. Media reports indicated that the Turkana community is fearful that government may extend the community disarmament operation that was in Isiolo and Marsabit districts to Turkana districts. Security operations took place in Marsabit and Isiolo districts, which are conflict hotspots. Media reports indicated that 19 guns were surrendered in Marsabit district. In addition, more than 165 guns and 7,939 rounds of ammunition were surrendered in Isiolo district. During drought, conflict was rife over scarce resources, but the heavy rains received in the October-December 2009, led to regeneration of pasture. ARLMP reports that conflict within larger Turkana increased in January 2010, over abundant pasture. Communities clashed over water points which sometimes fall in administrative boundaries that neighbouring communities attempted to access. In Wajir, conflict was reported in January 2010 especially at Dela Dam over watering of animals.

**Figure 4**  
**NUMBER OF PEOPLE KILLED PER DISTRICT**  
**JANUARY 2010**



### **Peace Building**

The Pokots and Turkanas, traditionally rival pastoral communities in northern Kenya, signed a peace agreement on 13<sup>th</sup> February to end hostilities between the two communities. Three Members of Parliament from the two communities participated with their local Councilors; local elders instrumental in shaping community views also participated in the meeting with the Provincial Administration. The peace agreement entails among other things, 100 days of truce and a ceasefire during which time there will be no raids, no stealing of animals and free movement of people; the opening of livestock markets and free movement of members of both communities would permit unrestricted access to markets at Kapedo and Nginyang; formation of Pasture Management and Gracing Committees to harmonize pasture-related issues to avoid conflict. Frequent meetings between provincial administrators from both East Pokot and Turkana East Districts will be organized. Conflict in Turkana and Pokot has claimed 15 lives so far this year, and hundreds of livestock has been lost in cattle raids.

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