

KENYA Food Security Outlook

April to September 2008

- Food security is deteriorating for households throughout Kenya. A poor October to December short-rains season in most pastoral and marginal agricultural areas has decreased pasture availability and reduced household access to food from on-farm production. Food security has decreased for normally food-secure households in Rift Valley, Nyanza, and central and western Kenya following the adverse effects of the post-election crisis since late December 2007, which disrupted production and trade and displaced farmers, business persons and casual laborers. About 830,000 people currently require emergency assistance.
- From July to September, calmness is expected to return to the conflict-affected areas of the country, allowing trade to increase and some displaced households to return home. However, food availability will be below normal due to disruptions in planting activities for the 2008 long-rains harvest. Additionally, the long rains are expected to be poor in northern and eastern pastoral and marginal agricultural areas of the country, further depleting pasture availability and limiting household production, causing an increase in the number of households that are highly food insecure.
- In the worst-case scenario, the poor performance of the long rains will extend to the northwest and southern pastoral areas, leading to localized extreme food insecurity. The political crisis may not be fully resolved, causing further reduction in the 2008 long-rains harvest and a significant increase in food prices in the third quarter. The food security of displaced households will decline further, as many would be unable to leave camps to access their livelihoods, and host families would no longer be able to continue housing IDPs due to the erosion in their own purchasing capacities. The number of people requiring emergency assistance could increase to 2.4 million.

Current food security situation

Households throughout Kenya currently face a precarious food security situation due to a poor 2007 short-rains season and disruptions in trade and production following post-election conflict since late December 2007. Although most households are currently only moderately food insecure (Figure 1), food access is rapidly

Figure 1. Current estimated food security conditions, April 2008

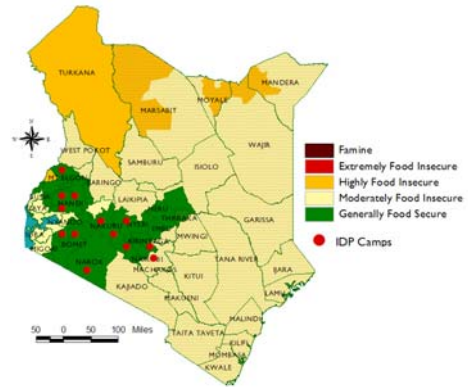


Figure 2. Projected food security conditions, most-likely scenario, July to September 2008

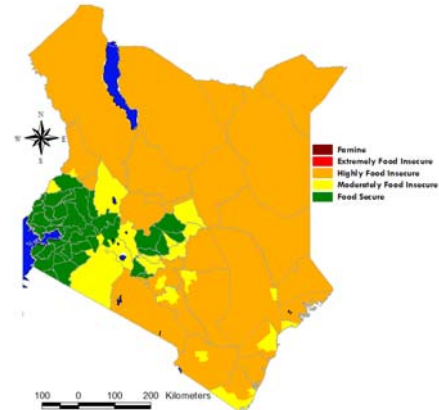
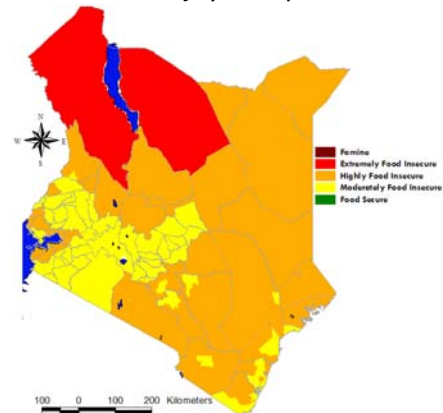


Figure 3. Projected food security conditions, worst-case scenario, July to September 2008



deteriorating for the many households that remain displaced from their homes.

The 2007 October to December short rains were mediocre in most of the drought-prone pastoral and marginal agricultural areas of the country. The poor season reversed gains that were made over the previous three seasons, which were fairly good in most of the drought-prone areas. Pastoralists in the northwest and northeast, in particular, face a significant decline in food security due to the extended dry season after the poor short rains. Results from short-rains assessments in February indicate that the pastoral Turkana District is worst affected (see highly food-insecure area in Figure 1), followed by Marsabit, Samburu, Moyale, and parts of Mandera and Wajir districts. Livestock body conditions declined after trekking long distances, and rates of child malnutrition, which have been on a consistent downward trend for most of the past two years, rose during 2008. Milk availability is lower than normal due to reduced livestock productivity during the short rains, and a timely onset to the long rains in April is needed for conditions to improve.

The marginal agricultural lowlands in the southeast and coastal areas also received poor rains, which began one month late in mid-November and ended one month early in mid-December. Although the rains resumed uncharacteristically in January of 2008, substantial crop damage had already occurred. Households in the southeastern lowlands in particular are overwhelming dependant on the short-rains season, as up to 70 percent of their annual agricultural output is derived from the season. Their reserves from the harvest are significantly below normal as a result.

Post-election conflict that began at the end of December 2007 has resulted in a major deterioration in food security among households in Rift Valley, the Nyanza highlands and western Kenya, which are normally food secure. Many farmers and businessmen were displaced from their homes and lost most of their sources of livelihood and property. In addition, more than 1,500 lives were lost, further constraining productive capacities for households in which adult members were lost. An estimated 200,000 persons remain in camps while more than 400,000 are integrated with host families or started other livelihoods elsewhere. Some internally displaced persons (IDPs) are returning back to camps as host-family capacity to house IDPs begins to decrease. Other IDPs are returning to camps for registration in anticipation of resettlement by the government. A small proportion of the IDPs are accessing their farms, mostly under security, and returning to camps in the evening, and businesses are reopening in areas that are deemed safe, especially in Nyanza Province and a few areas of the south Rift. However, food security for the majority of the IDPs is precarious, and they need to be quickly resettled to their former livelihoods for their food security to improve (see Annex 2 for the location and numbers of the conflict-affected households).

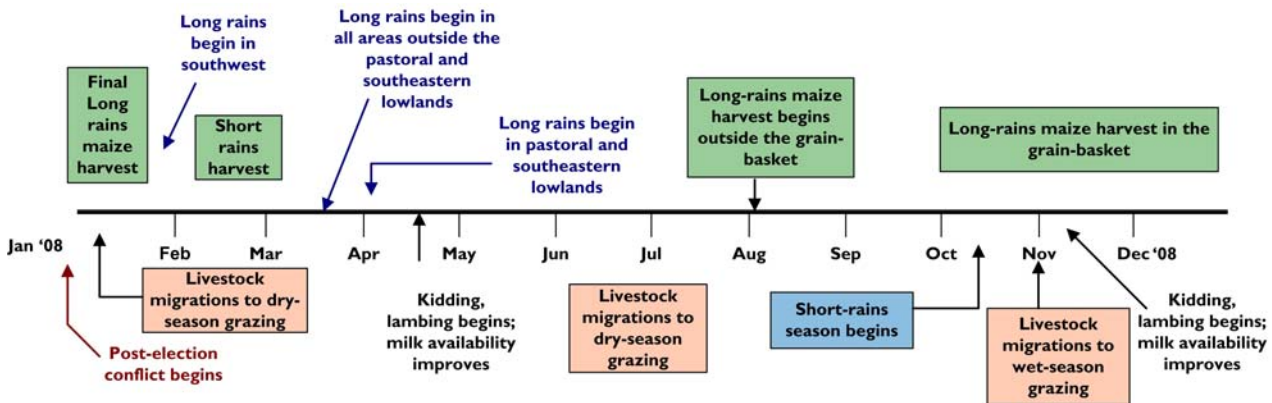
Food production was also disrupted in key producing areas of the Rift Valley in particular, as farmers were unable to harvest their crops from the 2007 long-rains season in a timely fashion after the outbreak of conflict. Heightened pre- and post-harvest losses also occurred as the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB), the main buyer of newly harvested grain, has not purchased any maize since the onset of the crisis. The production losses and limited purchasing activity have already had a significant impact on household food security. Households in the grain basket are receiving low producer prices and therefore earn decreased incomes, and households in deficit production areas and urban areas face reduced food access due to a 15 to 20 percent increase in prices from December to March. Although the country currently holds a six-month supply of maize, cumulative national output for the two 2007 agricultural seasons of about 2.6 million MT is 15 percent lower than initially anticipated due to the drought losses in the southeastern lowlands and pre- and post-harvest losses in the Rift Valley highlands.

Additionally, the post-election conflict has affected the initial planting for the 2008 long-rains harvest. Both input and output markets have not functioned normally during the first two months of 2008, largely because most roads remained inaccessible, blocked by gangs. However, the power-sharing agreement that was signed between the government and the opposition at the end of February has resulted in a marked reduction in violence and opened many of the input and output markets that were previously inaccessible. Still, less than 50 percent of the land that is normally put to maize had been prepared for the 2008 season at the onset of the long rains in mid-March, signaling a likely production downturn during the current year in a region that accounts for close to 60 percent of national long rains production.

About 830,000 pastoral, agropastoral, and marginal agricultural farming households and IDPs are included in the current emergency program. These households are expected to receive relief food through general distribution, food for work

(FFW) and food for assets (FFA) programs, following recommendations of the just-concluded short rains assessments. WFP has appealed for \$84 million for food aid and logistical support to meet these needs. Additionally, an estimated \$1.2 million is required for livestock interventions, \$1 million for crop production, \$3 million for health and nutrition, \$3.3 million for water and sanitation and \$500,000 for education.

Seasonal calendar and critical events timeline



Most-likely food security scenario, July to September 2008

Scenario description and main assumptions

In the most-likely scenario from July to September 2008, food security is generally expected to deteriorate as a result of likely poor rains and the impacts of previous political crisis. The climate outlook for the 2008 long-rains season indicates that a La Niña event coupled with concurrent lowering of sea surface temperatures (SSTs) over the Indian Ocean is likely. Should the weather forecast hold, all areas of the country outside the highly productive western ‘grain basket’ are likely to suffer a severe drought (see forecast in Annex 1). The eastern pastoral districts and the marginal agricultural southeastern areas would be worst-affected as the La Niña tends to have a stronger impact there; the outcome of the season will be clear by May, which is the decisive time for evaluating the prospects of the long-rains season in these areas.

Table I. Most-likely scenario assumptions and indicators

- Below-normal long rains in eastern areas; timely onset and normal performance of long rains in Kenya’s ‘grain basket’
- Reduction of political violence
- Some re-settlement or return of IDPs
- Implementation of emergency cross-sectoral interventions

The area planted to maize for the 2008 long-rains season is expected to decline significantly in this scenario, due to limited access to farmland and high production costs. The disruption of trade and markets following the post-election violence caused a substantial rise in the price of production inputs such as fertilizers and fuel of nearly 60 percent, while the prices of farm outputs such as maize and milk have declined by more than 20 percent.

The power-sharing agreement established at the end of February is expected to hold, resulting in a general reduction in political violence, enabling improved trade and movement of goods and services. Additionally, the government policy of resettling and encouraging the return of IDPs to their normal homes is expected to increase due to the general consensus that the restoration of livelihoods is central to ensuring that IDPs are again self-sufficient. However, the reality is that tensions are still high and a widespread return of IDPs is unlikely.

Both emergency and long-term interventions are expected to be implemented in this scenario in both the drought and conflict-affected areas. Many of the interventions are on-going in the conflict-affected areas and it is anticipated that interventions in drought-affected areas will also be implemented. However, non-food interventions are not expected to be as well resourced as food interventions.

Food security implications

- As a result of anticipated poor long rains, many pastoral households will become highly food insecure, especially pastoralists in the north and east. Livestock body and health conditions are expected to continue to deteriorate more than normal following the poor 2007 short-rains season as they trek additional distances in search of key grazing resources. Migration options will also be limited by similarly poor conditions across pastoral areas in the country and beyond to the east and north. While environmental conditions in the west (such as Uganda) may be favorable, conflict often precludes access to those resources. The price of livestock is expected to decrease, causing pastoral terms of trade to deteriorate and limiting household income, thereby limiting household access to food. As a result, rates of child malnutrition will start to rise, especially in Turkana, Marsabit, Wajir, Mandera and Samburu, the likely worst-affected districts. Improvements in conditions for livestock are not expected to improve until the start of the 2008 short rains in October.
- The poor performance of the long rains in the southeastern and coastal lowlands will lead to a poor or failed long-rains harvest, which normally begins in August in these areas. While the long rains are not the principal season in these areas, given that the just-concluded short-rains season was poor, a second poor harvest would result in a severe deterioration in food security for these predominantly cropping households. Stocks from the poor 2007 short-rains harvest will be exhausted by the end of June, and the next meaningful harvest is not anticipated until February 2009, suggesting that the final quarter of 2008 could be very difficult for households who are already facing increasing food and commodity prices. The average number of livestock held by households is not nearly sufficient to compensate for crop losses.
- Despite the weather forecast for good rains in the most important growing areas of the country in the North Rift and western Kenya, the expected decline in area planted with maize in key growing areas coupled with poor production in the central highlands and southern lowlands will likely translate into lowered output starting in the third quarter of 2008. This will exacerbate the effects of the 15 percent reduction in the 2007 crop harvests to cause a significant rise in food prices. Timely regional imports could alleviate the impacts of the limited availability, but production may be poor in other areas and imports are not expected to be sufficient to prevent price rises. The full impact will be established by the amount of land planted to key crops by the end of May, coupled with the extent of adoption of recommended agronomic practices.
- Although civil security is expected to improve and some IDPs are expected to return to their homes, many of the IDPs lost most of their productive and other assets and are unlikely to recover their baseline food security in 2008, even with an agreeable political outcome. IDPs will need continued and expanded emergency interventions that encompass all sectors for as long as they remain in camps. The food security of families hosting IDPs is also expected to continue to decline through the third quarter of 2008. Little or no interventions are expected to be directed toward these families, and their own food security is worsening, resulting in accelerated return of IDPs to camps. The food security status of both IDPs and of host families may change rapidly through the third quarter and needs to be assessed continually, as the precarious nature of their food insecurity is not dependent on traceable climatic factors. Implementation of proposed government policy of returning or resettling IDPs needs close and regular monitoring.

Opportunities for response

Under this scenario, interventions would be both mitigative and emergency to respond to the impacts of the expected poor long-rains season on the drought-affected pastoral and marginal agricultural farm households. Emergency interventions would expand to more than the current 830,000 pastoralists and marginal agricultural farmers, while mitigation interventions are required among marginal agricultural farm households likely to face a poor long-rains season. In addition,

IDPs would require interventions that would restore lives and livelihoods including resettlement, reconstruction and asset-building. Recommendations for response include:

- Continue relief food programs including general food distribution, FFW and FFA programs for the pastoral, marginal agricultural households and IDPs, with continual revision of numbers according to the timeline or turn of events.
- Enhance selective feeding programs among children where nutrition is already poor or deteriorating, particularly among pastoral households and IDPs.
- Provide additional food allocations to schools where enrollment rates have markedly increased, to cater for displaced school-going children.
- Provide drought-tolerant seeds no later than the middle of May for marginal agricultural farm households and appropriate seeds for IDPs returning to their farms.
- Provide subsidized farm inputs no later than the middle of May to farm households hosting IDPs to ensure that they are able to carry out normal production during the upcoming long-rains season.
- Promote support to returning IDPs including provision of shelter; security; initial starting capital in the form of loans; and livelihood interventions such as livestock re-stocking.
- Enhance livestock disease control through mass vaccination against the *Peste des petits Ruminants* (PPR), lumpy skin disease (LSD) and pneumonia for pastoral livestock and among IDPs holding livestock in camps.
- Rehabilitate water sources prior to the upcoming long rains so as to enhance water harvesting, while improving coverage of water tankering in critical areas such as Mandera, Moyale, Samburu, Marsabit and Turkana.
- Improve sanitation particularly in IDP camps that are a potential source of a major disease outbreak, as the long rains have already started in most areas where camps are located.
- Enhance counseling, peace and reconciliation efforts that promote the return and resettlement of IDPs.

Worst-case food security scenario, July to September 2008

Basic description of the scenario and main assumptions

In the worst-case scenario, the forecast for the long rains remains the same in the eastern half of Kenya, but the northwestern and southern pastoral areas would also receive below-normal rainfall. Neighboring countries would receive equally poor rains, limiting alternatives for pastoral migration. Subsequently, resource-based conflict will heighten due to competition over rapidly declining environmental conditions across the pastoral rangeland. The key grain producing areas are expected to receive normal to above-normal rains even in the worst case.

Under this scenario, the control of livestock diseases would be difficult, as pastoralists' migration patterns would be disrupted by the combination of resource and clan-based conflict coupled with the degrading of dry-season grazing areas. An upsurge in livestock diseases would also occur in areas affected by political conflict due to haphazard livestock movement and inaccessibility to veterinary care, in addition to the spread of livestock diseases within IDP camps.

The resolution of the political crisis could stall, causing IDPs to remain in camps. For IDPs currently with host families, the extended needs of the IDPs would cause host families to no longer be able to support the food security of the displaced, which will also end up going to camps, swelling the already high numbers and causing a major logistical crisis. Incomplete resolution of the political crisis will also constrain production in Kenya's 'grain basket' even more than in the most-likely scenario, due to some input and output markets being completely inaccessible and others not functioning effectively. The poor terms-of-trade for key producers will result in even further below-average amount of hectares planted and long-rains production starting in August when the harvest begins.

Table 2. Worst-case scenario assumptions and indicators

- Long rains are poor in northwest and southwest pastoral and agropastoral areas in addition to northern and eastern areas.
- Mitigation interventions are not implemented
- Livestock diseases are not effectively controlled
- Limited resolution of political conflict
- Little or no resettlement or return of IDPs.
- Resource-based conflict escalates in pastoral areas

In the worst-case scenario, the recommended mitigation food and non-food interventions are not implemented due to a lack of funding and restricted access to areas due to the persistent conflict.

Food security implications

- As a result, a significant cereal deficit would occur starting with the first long-rains harvests in August, since an estimated 25 percent of area normally planted with maize would remain fallow in key producing areas. Since the grain basket is also the epicenter of the conflict, limited production and trade would result in exceptionally high prices starting in the third quarter of the year in all other areas of the country, where production is expected to be very poor. Up to 68 percent of the Kenyan population is net consumers of cereals, and the proportion could be much higher in the event that the season fails in other long rains producing areas including Central, Eastern and Coast provinces. Area planted with key crops and the extent of the usage of recommended farm inputs will be confirmed toward the beginning of May, giving a good indication of possible impacts of the 2008 long-rains harvest on local and national food security.
- A humanitarian and livelihood crisis would likely develop in pastoral areas. Livestock body conditions would decline substantially in this scenario, including their health and value. Livestock mortalities would occur in the worst-affected districts such as in Turkana, Marsabit, Mandera, Samburu, Wajir and Moyale. The upsurge in livestock diseases, particularly PPR, LSD and pneumonia, would exacerbate livestock mortalities because of the limited prevention and control measures. The reduced availability of milk coupled with eroded purchasing capacities would cause a severe deterioration in food security, especially in the northwest where extreme food insecurity would result, including unacceptably high child malnutrition. A humanitarian emergency may be avoided because some emergency food and non-food interventions are already on-going. It will be clear by mid-May whether the long rains are also poor in the northwestern and southern pastoral areas.
- The food security of farm households in the marginal agricultural areas would deteriorate in a manner similar to the most-likely scenario due to the poor long-rains harvest starting in August and the below-normal current food reserves. Limited harvests during the short-rains season in March could mitigate the slide into the extremely food insecure category until the last quarter of the year. However, food prices would begin to sharply rise after the short-rains food stocks are depleted in June through the next major harvest in February 2009, accentuating food insecurity.
- It is likely that a humanitarian emergency may occur among IDPs under the worst-case scenario, in which a substantial proportion of IDPs housed with host families return back to camps. Already the situation in the camps is becoming precarious with the onset of the long-rains season. Sanitation facilities would become overstretched, creating a conducive environment for an outbreak and spread of water and vector diseases. Most of the IDP camps are located in high rainfall areas where good long rains are anticipated. A simultaneous outbreak of disease or other crisis could render intervention and management a herculean task. Food distributions would also be inadequate to meet the growing numbers of IDPs.
- The food security of IDP host families may also decline precariously, as subsidized interventions to enhance their ability to support additional household members would not occur in this scenario. Some host families would end up selling productive assets such as livestock, so as to uphold their own food security. Many of these households could quickly move from the generally food secure category to the moderately food insecure category under this scenario as a result.

Opportunities for response

Interventions are geared toward avoidance of a humanitarian catastrophe, under this scenario. However, emergency interventions will be most effective and probably of a lesser scale if proposed mitigation activities will have been implemented prior to the outbreak of the crisis. Key emergency interventions would include:

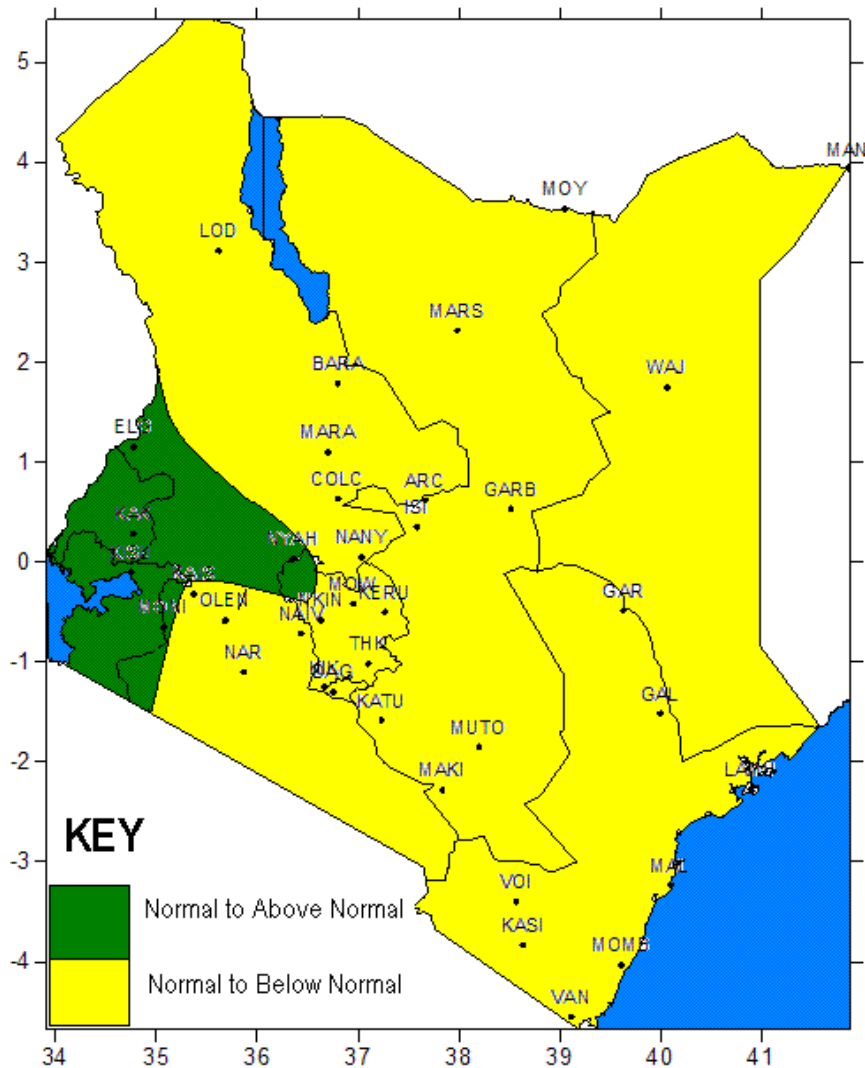
- Emergency food distributions for pastoralists and marginal agricultural farm households through the GFD; FFA; FFW and the ESFP, as appropriate. Targeted beneficiaries could reach 2.4 million, similar to the number of persons targeted during the debilitating drought in 2006.

- Highly targeted therapeutic and supplementary feeding programs for farm households hosting IDPs to mitigate a worrisome deterioration in nutrition.
- Emergency provision of water, including quality control as water often contaminates easily in times of scarcity.
- Enhanced mitigation and prevention of conflict to facilitate access to favorable but usually unsafe dry season grazing areas, so as to minimize livestock losses while improving access to markets for sale of livestock and purchase of cereals.
- Close monitoring of livestock and human disease outbreak – lowered levels of nutrition tend to increase susceptibility.
- Rapid verification assessments in areas where the scale and impacts of drought are unclear; including nutrition assessment.
- Maintain the government's (GoK's) strategic grain reserve, so as to intervene rapidly in worst-affected areas where markets often fail to function during a crisis. The GoK, through the National Cereals and Produce Board has a diffusive network of storage, even in the most vulnerable areas, where traders are unwilling to venture.
- A major expansion of food and non-food interventions among IDPs, in addition to concerted peace, reconciliation and resettlement efforts by the GoK.
- Subsidies for agricultural inputs to uphold livelihoods for farm households hosting displaced persons, to avoid a new category of food insecure.

Conclusion

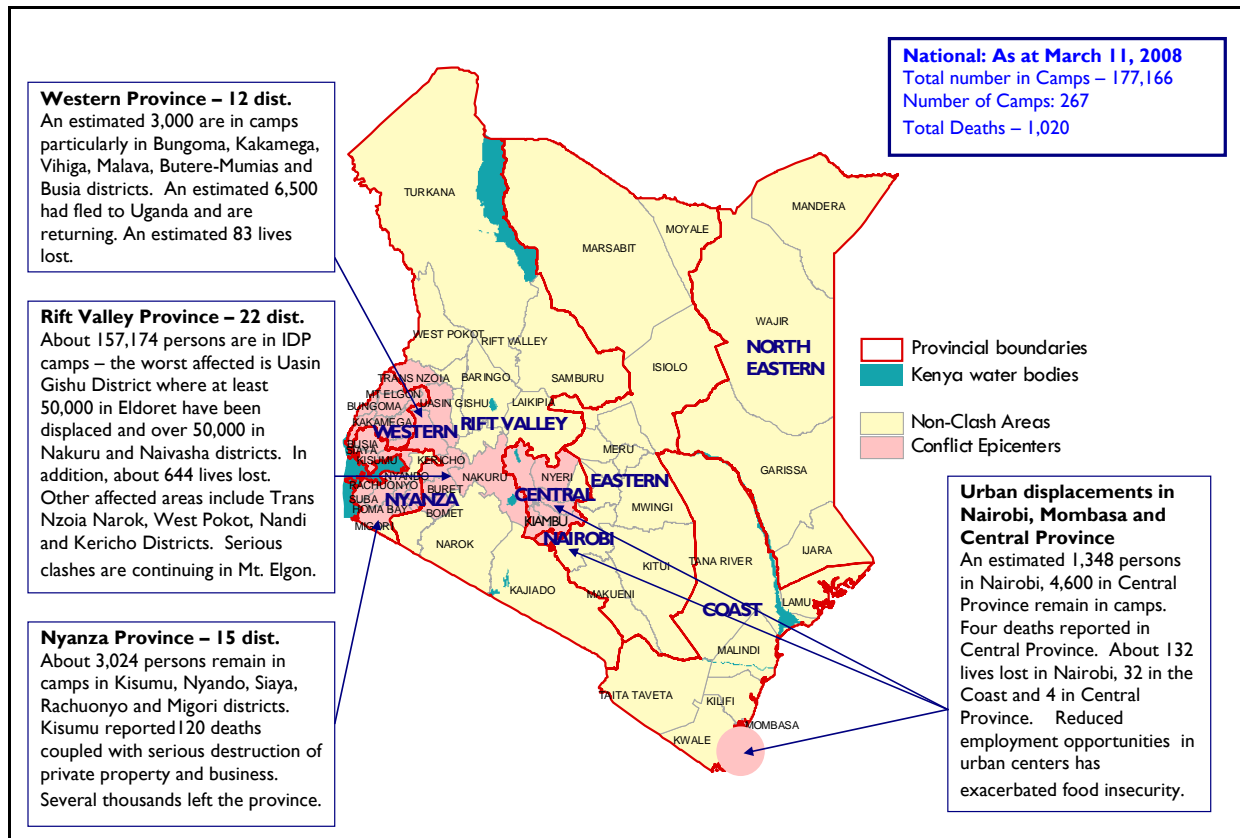
The food security prognosis for the outlook period is worrisome. The forecast for the eastern half of the country is consistent with the worst case scenario. However, rapid implementation of suggested food and non-food mitigation activities could enhance the capacities of livelihoods to cope with the upcoming poor season thus avoid a humanitarian catastrophe and severe livestock losses. The food security and health conditions of IDPs is also at risk of severe deterioration, since numbers are rising in camps and the onset of the long rains could predispose the displaced to disease outbreaks arising from inadequate shelter, nutrition and sanitation facilities. Rapid resolution of the IDPs' displacement is critical to averting a humanitarian crisis.

Annex I: Rainfall forecast for March to May, 2008



Source of map: Kenya Meteorological Department

Annex 2: Location and impacts of the political crisis in Kenya



Source of data: Kenya Red Cross; graphics: FEWS NET