

# FAMINE— NATIONAL EMERGENCY



**KAJIADO NEEDS ASSESSMENT CARRIED OUT BY ACK— DOSS DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**



Kenya- The bread basket ran short

## FAMINE— NATIONAL EMERGENCY

### National Situation

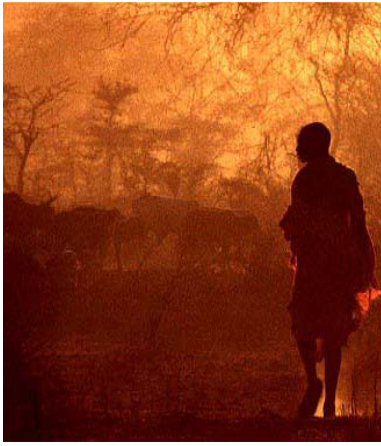
The Kenya Food security analysis stated that Kshs. 37 billion is required to meet all the needs for the food emergency in the country. While launching the international appeal, President Mwai Kibaki termed the situation as a national emergency.

The Government indicates that 10 million persons are highly food insecure. The increased rate in food insecurity is attributed to the post- election violence 2007/ 2008 that displaced farmers from their land.

Most of the internally displaced persons were farmers from some of the most productive areas in the country such as Laikipia, Uasin Gishu, Nandi and Trans – Nzoia.

The statistics estimate that 3.2 million drought affected are marginal farmers, agro– pastoralists and pastoralists.(Kenya Food Security Update)

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Pastoralists walk 30kms in search of water

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### Focus on Kajiado

The area is located approximately 60 kms from the Nairobi city and the lifestyles are evidently diverse.

The Maasai are a pastoralist community, communally owning land. Lately some have sold the land to other communities for settlement due to the pressure of urban development and the challenge of maintaining massive land without water.

From the very entrance to Kajiado town, patches of scorched grass reveal the reality of hunger and famine. Across the road, more pastoralists walk with herds of cattle to seek greener pastures in unknown places. Whichever trail of grass available becomes the next stopover for fodder as they ponder the next move. This mounts to many kilometers from one district to another.

Shallow wells are reportedly dry due to the prolonged dry seasons, and the distance to water points has increased greatly. The two conditions— lack of water and long distance trekking has famished the livestock making them susceptible to infections.

A team from the ACK- Directorate Of Social Services visited the area to assess the situation. The Disaster Management Officer, Rose Muthama, interacted with the people to understand the state of devastation.

The focus was on Oloosuyian district and its surroundings, which has only one watering point with a reservoir from the local well. Long periods of inadequate rainfall are threatening the availability of water to the community which is a basic necessity for them and their livestock.

KAJIADO- ABOUT  
60KMS FROM  
NAIROBI CITY



Kajiado- Experienced near complete crop failure (80– 90%)



The women are left with children

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### Impact of Famine in Oloosuyian– Kajiado

With the drought situation continuing to affect the country, the effects are intensifying. In Kajiado, the pastoralist Maasai are known for their massive livestock ownership. They move their herds throughout the year to optimize utilization of rangeland resources for maximum meat and milk production, but the pastures have dried up.

At Oloosuyian sub- location in Kajiado district, the livestock numbers have increased due to migration from other neighboring locations. The area has one well which serves as a water point thus an attraction for the pastoralists.

As early as 6am, herds start flocking in turns for water from the well. Approximately 100, 000 litres of water are consumed per day, catering for 1,000 cows and 1,700 goats. Kshs.20 is charged per cow while Kshs.5 is charged per goat to yield proceedings for managing the well, but the high costs of maintenance, electricity and security are still overwhelming. To meet the need, it necessitates longer pumping hours risking frequent pump breakdown.

As the men and the elder children re-locate with the livestock in search of pasture, the wives and younger children are left at home. “The motivating factor for the children to attend school is the school– feeding programme, it’s the only meal they have in a day,” says Mrs. Mutunkei a primary school teacher. The school enrolment rate has also dropped as some of the children walk for long distances to fetch water instead. Unfortunately, the same water point serves both human beings and livestock.

Lately, cases of Foot and Mouth disease have been reported in livestock as they share the water point with animals from other locations. The distance to reach the water points has increased from 10– 30 km; the shallow wells have dried up. Samuel Ole Koobai, 90, has constructed a water pan in his compound using stones. After the rains failed and the milk yield reduced, he opted farming; planting kales and onions on subsistence scale.

The men graze during the week and pass by the home on Friday to take food, after animal sales at the market. When they fail to make sales, the neighbors extend a hand of goodwill to share the limited portions available.

Due to the recurrent drought, livestock suffer from malnutrition and low weight, which has drastically lowered the market price. The goats previously selling between Kshs.2000- 3000 have dropped to Kshs.500, whereas the cattle prices have dropped from Kshs. 15 000 to Kshs. 5 000.

A few metres from the water point, women launder clothes before filling and loading 20 litre containers on their backs, to embark on the long journey home.

“THE  
MOTIVATING  
FACTOR FOR  
SCHOOL  
ATTENDANCE IS  
THE FEEDING  
PROGRAMME”



Inadequate water supplies

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Two brothers, Rempeiyan and Paul Olekashinko, trekked from Oloyiankalani (46 miles) with 70 cows and 80 goats. A well-wisher has offered them temporary shelter as they prepare to move to the next location for more pasture.

### Needs Assessment

Proximity to Nairobi that has led to high immigration in search of residential buildings which has also substantially reduced land that could be put to agricultural use, considering that the high potential areas are located towards the Nairobi border.

The locals have resorted to selling out land as a coping strategy, since the regular rain patterns have changed.

Land is becoming scarce as a result of rapid population growth, increased commercialization of agricultural activities, and privatization of tenure. A number of companies are purchasing the land for horticulture, sustained through irrigation. This has affected the local shallow wells water levels, more wells are needed to meet the growing demand for water.

Unemployment is a challenge too, with the locals unable to provide skilled labour to the upcoming industries, but only manage unskilled labour. As agriculture fails and livestock keeping turns costly, it has increased food insecurity for the vulnerable sections of the rural population increasing poverty levels in the area.

Ildamaat location records the highest number of needy households— 2 600.

Emergency responses are needed for cereals, maize flour and unimix for children. Long term needs include restocking the livestock and purchase of agricultural equipment to assist the farmers in labour and increase production.

EMERGENCY  
RESPONSES  
ARE NEEDED