**Key Message:** The overall nutrition situation in the county has slightly deteriorated, however the deterioration currently seems to be within normal seasonal trend. There is a high likelihood of the situation deteriorating further and rapidly should the current Long Rains seasonal performance be below average, therefore intensive surveillance should continue and the appropriate contingency plans put in place for response.

**Background Information**

Turkana County is located in the North Western region of the country. It covers approximately 77,000 square kilometres and has an estimated population of 855,399 people with about 111,579 children under-five years of age. Turkana County is classified as Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). It has four main livelihood zones; pastoral-all species (60%), agro pastoral (20%), the riverine of Turkwel and Kerio, fishing (12%) and formal employment/casual waged labour/business (8%). It consists of six districts namely; Turkana North, Turkana West, Turkana South, Loima, Turkana Central and Turkana East.

**Food Security Situation**

The food security situation in the county in all livelihoods is: ‘Alert and improving’, apart from the agro-pastoral livelihood that is ‘Alert, and worsening’. The flagged areas are Lokichar (Kalapata, Loperot, Kangakipur, Napusmoru), Kaaleng division, Lomelo division (Napeitom, Lomelo, Kapedo), Loima division and Kibish Sub County. According to the Short rains assessment in February 2014, the food security situation was classified under ‘stressed’ (IPC Phase 2) across all the livelihood zones in Turkana County but with a notable deterioration compared to the long rains season of 2013. The total population in need of immediate food assistance is 142,000. This is an increase from 93,900 that was affected by acute food insecurity (Long rain assessment report, August 2013). Reports from the month of April indicate that the rainfall increased from 6.0 mm to 24.9 mm. The highest amount of rainfall was recorded in the fisheries (22.53 mm) livelihood zone while the least in the agro pastoral (13.84 mm) zone. The quality and quantity of pasture and browse in wet season grazing areas was good in many areas of the county. The pasture and browse was slightly above normal, the livestock body condition was generally good in many areas of the county. Cereal prices and milk consumption have an effect on the household food security and subsequently the nutrition situation of the population. An analysis of the milk availability and cereal prices as indicated from the NDMA bulletins for April 2014 has indicated slight decreases in cereal prices and milk availability. Again, this is in line with normal seasonal trends. There was a decrease in the household milk production from 12.4% in March 2014 to 11.3% in April 2014, goat prices increased marginally between March and April 2014. Milk consumption at household level in the month of April 2014 reached 8.2% which is a decrease from 10.3% in March 2014. The highest consumption was recorded in the agro pastoral zone (8.8%) while the least in the fisheries (0.0%). The consumption level by households is below normal compared to the reference year (See graph 1). The current livestock prices are 45% lower than the 5 year average, while maize prices have increased by 21.4% compared to the 5 year average.

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2. Turkana County- Drought Monitoring And Early Warning Bulletin –April 2014
3. Turkana County- Drought Monitoring And Early Warning Bulletin –April 2014
4. NDMA bulletin April 2014
Nutrition Situation

Nutrition SMART surveys conducted in July 2013 reported a significant reduction of acute malnutrition in Turkana west from 14.3% in June 2012 to 9.7%. This was an improvement from Serious to Poor nutrition situation according to WHO classification. A significant increase in acute malnutrition was reported in Turkana Central/Loima from 11.6% to 17.2% indicating a Critical situation, deterioration from the serious situation reported in June 2012. There was no significant change in the acute malnutrition rates reported in Turkana South/East; 17.1% in June 2012 and 16.5% in July 2013, indicating a stable but Critical nutrition situation in the area according to WHO classification. The graph above illustrates the trends in acute malnutrition in the county from April 2008 to July 2013. The trends generally indicate fluctuating acute malnutrition levels from December 2011.

According to regular MUAC surveillance data from the NDMA sentinel sites, the proportion of children below five years at risk of malnutrition (MUAC <135mm) was 20.4% in April 2014 and 26.2% in the previous month of March 2014. This was slightly above the five year average for April of 20.2%, and the overall mean five year average of 19.3%. The proportion of children at risk (MUAC <135mm) was 27.3% and 2.0% among the pure pastoral and agro pastoral livelihood zones respectively. Admissions data from Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) programme in the county indicate a stable trend in the past 3 months. During the period, mass screening for malnutrition was done in February resulting to increase in admissions. The number of admissions decreased in the month of March due to service delivery interruption by national supplementary immunization campaigns for Polio (see the graph).

According to morbidity data, most health centres recorded an increase in the cases of malaria, diarrhoea, and dysentery compared to the previous month.

In summary the current nutrition situation has slightly deteriorated, this is evidenced by NDMA MUAC surveillance data and routine health facility nutrition data. However the deterioration seems to be within normal season trends. There is a high likelihood of the situation worsening if the food security situation deteriorates further and if the current long rains season (March to May 2014) performance is below average, late or poorly distributed. A high number of children have been identified to be at risk of malnutrition. It is therefore highly

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5 Turkana SMART Nutrition survey-July 2013
6 Kenya District Health Information Systems (DHIS) IMAM Admission Data, December 2013
7 Kenya District Health Information System(DHIS).U5 Morbidity summary
recommended that there increased nutrition surveillance activities continue to monitor the impact of the current food security situation on the population while appropriate contingency plans for response are activated.

There is a Nutrition SMART Survey planned for May/June 2014. This survey results will provide a clear nutrition situation update and will highlight the need to scale up or down nutrition interventions

**Current Sector Response Plan**

- **Continuous support for delivery of High Impact Nutrition Interventions (HINI):** Currently the sector has three main nutrition partners (Save the children-Turkana North, South-Lokichar, Loima and central, IRC-Turkana West and World vision-Turkana Central, south and East). World Vision and IRC funding will be ending in 2015. Save the Children PCA Contract with UNICEF will end in June 2014.
- **Mapping and re-mapping of the outreach support:** currently there are 138 outreaches being supported by all the partners in the county and this can be increased/changed based on need. To address the human resource gaps in the outreach clinics, KRCS-with funding from UNICEF, will be supporting additional human resources for outreaches on Locum basis until the end of June 2014.
- **Continued active case funding:** Malnutrition active case finding is done routinely by Community Health Workers (CHWs) and health workers during nutrition service delivery.
- **Supplies:** MOH have adequate severe and moderate malnutrition management supplies in the county to cover at least May and June 2014.
- **Contingency plan:** The county nutrition technical forum has a contingency nutrition plan in place that will be activated in case of emergency.
- **Mapping of Human Resource support:** This is to ensure continued service delivery and referral at all health points.