

Illnesses and other calamities lead to livelihood decline (Household 9)

The livelihoods of this household had declined tremendously when the research started due to illness and non-illness factors. Within a span of three years household had lost three children to a 'strange' illness. The death that had a major impact on this household occurred in 2002. The child reportedly suffered from severe stomach problems and was admitted at the Kilifi district hospital for one week. A few days after leaving hospital the illness recurred. The child was hospitalized at the district hospital a second time.

The condition of the child continued to deteriorate and the household transferred her to a large private hospital (Aga Khan Hospital) for specialized treatment where she was again hospitalized two times within a period of one month. Unfortunately the child succumbed to the illness. They paid KES 50,000 at the Aga Khan Hospital and spent a similar amount on the funeral. To meet these costs, the household sold seven cows and cancelled his plans for investment in a shop and hotel business. In the same year, twenty cows belonging to this household died of illness and they were left without any reliable sources of income (main source of income was from milk sales). The high spending on treatment and funerals made this household vulnerable to other contingencies.