



National Drought Management Authority
WEST POKOT COUNTY
DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FEBRUARY 2020

FEBRUARY EW PHASE



Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- Substantial rainfall was received across livelihood zones in February. The temporal and spatial distribution was fair.
- The vegetation cover index recorded was above normal range, with an improving trend across the livelihoods as portrayed by the increase in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. Forage condition is still good.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- The livestock body condition remained good with stable trend across the County. Distance to water sources slightly decreased.
- Milk production and consumption at household level stabilized and is above the long term average.
- The terms of trade remained favourable with a stable trend.
- Majority of households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index decreased.
- Nutrition status improved as the proportion of children 'at risk' was within the normal range with a downward trend.

Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification

LIVELIHOOD ZONE	EW PHASE	TREND
AGRO PASTORAL	NORMAL	STABLE
PASTORAL	NORMAL	STABLE
COUNTY	NORMAL	STABLE

Biophysical Indicators	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	98	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot South)	88	>35
Forage Condition	Good	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Good	Normal
Milk Production	1.9 Litres	>1.6 Litres
Livestock Migration Pattern	Usual	Normal
Livestock deaths (attributed to drought)	No deaths	No deaths

Access Indicators	Value	Normal range
Terms of Trade (ToT)	108	>76
Milk Consumption	1.6 Litres	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	1.8 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

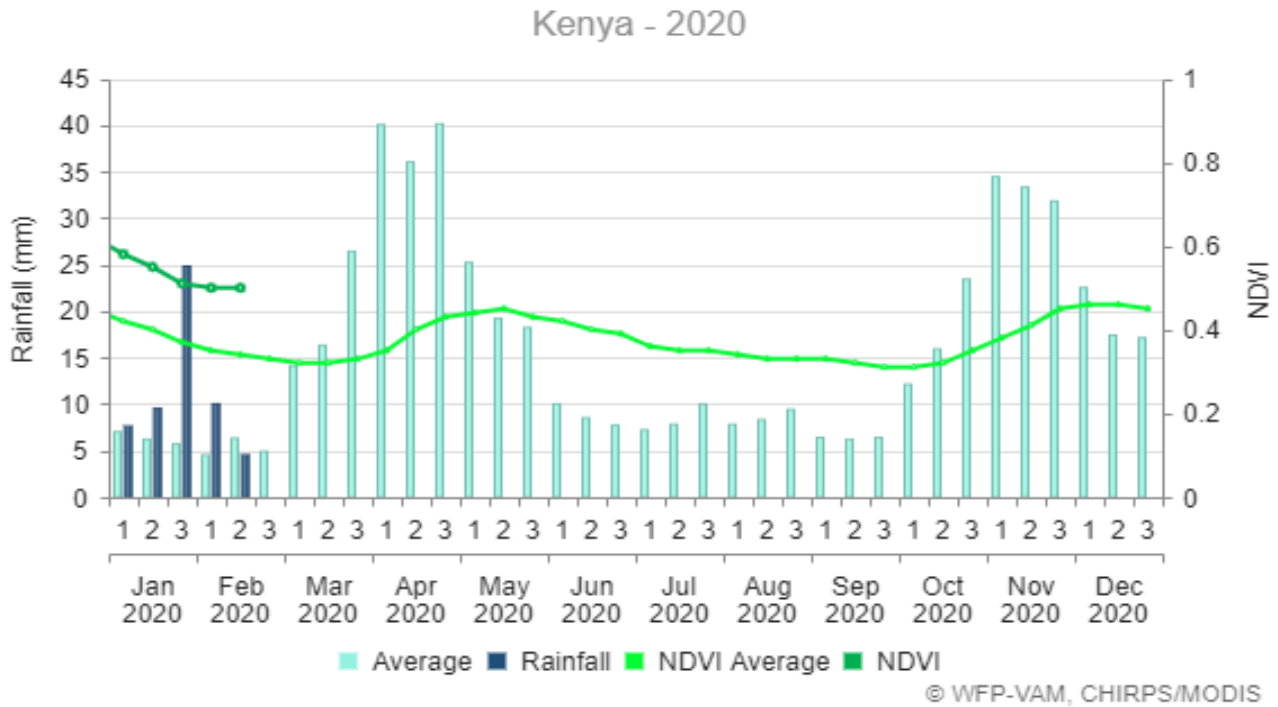
Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	2.6	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	1.3	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	51	>35

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short rains harvests ▪ Short dry spell ▪ Increased HH Food Stock ▪ Land preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planting/Weeding ▪ Long rains ▪ High Calving Rate ▪ Milk Yields Increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long rains harvests ▪ A long dry spell ▪ Land preparation ▪ Increased HH Food Stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short rains ▪ Planting/weeding ▪ (Irish potatoes, Cabbages and Onions) 								
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1.1 RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

- During the month, the county received substantial rainfall. The intensity was fair in both the lowlands and highlands.
- The rainfall situation is above normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- In February, the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution is still fair across the livelihoods.

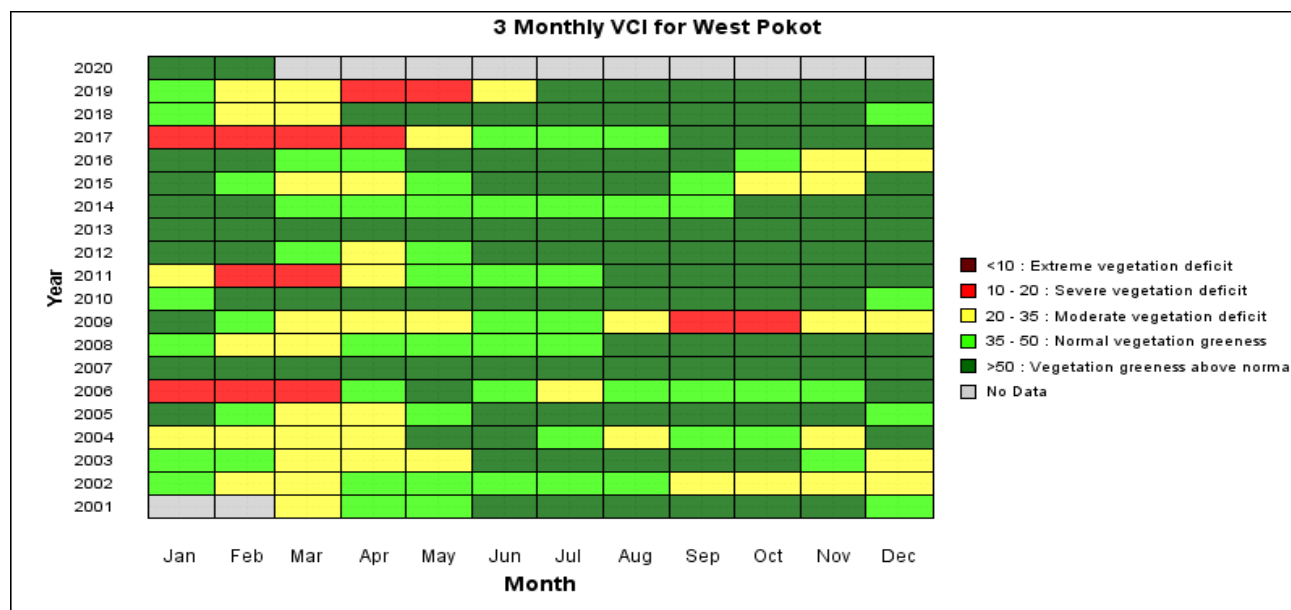
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- Resettlement of landslides victims in Parua, Nyarkulian and Muino efforts by multi agency team is ongoing.

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

- The VCI (VCI-3month) which portrays the vegetation status of the County was 98 in February, up from 93 recorded in the previous month. The current VCI depicts above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI is on upward trend across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. The increase in VCI is from 95 to 103, 91 to 92, 95 to 103 and 88 to 95 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The ascending trend in VCI is attributed to significant regeneration of vegetation cover as a result of substantial rains within the month.

2.1.2 Pasture

- The proportion of sampled community members which reported that the pasture was good is at 65 percent; being an increase from 35 percent in January.
- The pasture situation was good in all livelihood zones. The communities reported that the condition was normal for such time of the year. The trend is stable in comparison to that of January credited to good rainfall.
- The pasture condition is anticipated to remain steady with the expected onset of long rains.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity between livelihood zones.

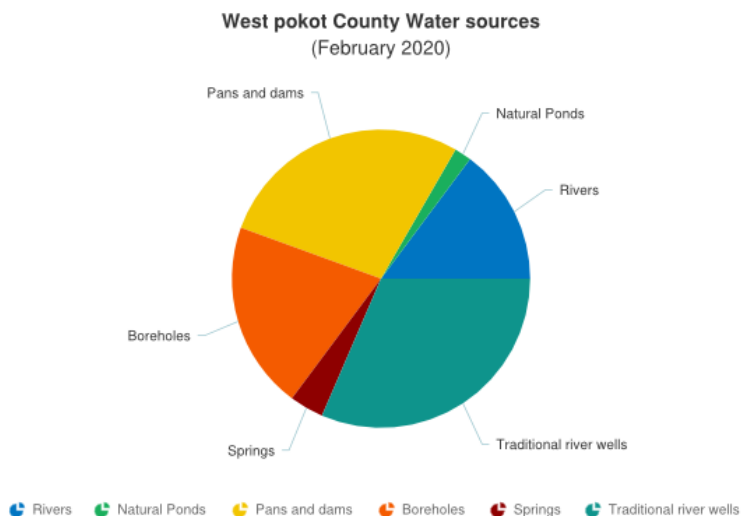
2.1.3 Browse

- In February, the proportion of sampled community members which reported that browse condition was fair is at 85 percent; an increase from 40 percent reported in the previous month.
- The browse condition is good across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition is remained good as compared to that of January.
- The quantity of browse is good across the livelihood zones and there was no significant variation between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The access to forage has been improved by deepened multi agency peace building efforts along conflict hotspots.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

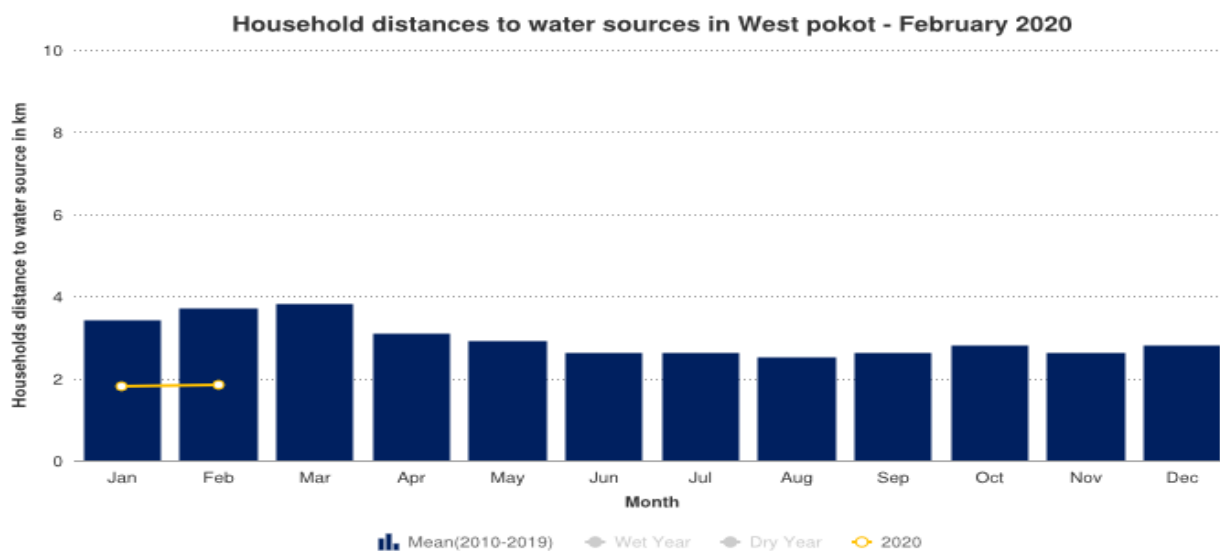
2.2.1 Sources

- The proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock in February are; 17 percent for traditional river wells, 15 percent for pans and dams, 11 percent for boreholes while those using rivers were at 8 percent.
- There was significant recharge to all surface water sources during the month in comparison to that of January. The situation is attribute to good rains within the month.
- The current main water sources in use are the normal ones used by households during such time of the year.



2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- During the month, the return distance to water source from the household remained at 1.8 km, same as that recorded in January. The current distance is 53 percent below the Long Term Average (LTA).
- As usual, the pastoral livelihood zones recorded longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The stability in distance is attributed to sustained water source recharge in February.

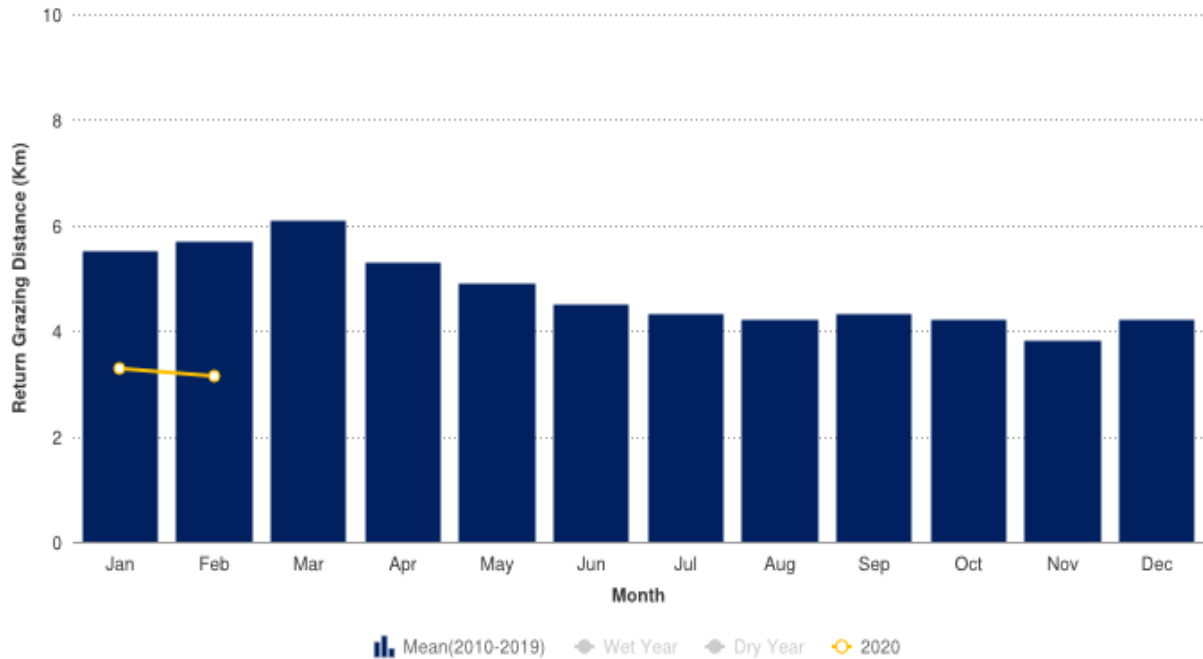


- The pastoral livelihood zones reported longer waiting time at water source than the agro-pastoral zones.
- The average household water consumption per person per day is still at 18-20 litres in the pastoral zones while that in the agro-pastoral zones was at 15-18 litres.
- During the month, the cost of accessing water at the source is still free in the rural areas and different in urban centres where a 20 litre Jerrican cost was within normal ranges for the period at Kshs 5.

2.2.3 Livestock Access

- In February, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was at 3.2, a slight drop from that reported in January. The current trekking distance is 44 percent below the normal range.
- The pastoral livelihood zone reported longer trekking time from grazing areas to water source as compared to that in the agro-pastoral livelihood zones.

Distances from grazing areas to water points in West pokot County - February 2020



- The decrease in livestock trekking distance to water points is attributed to substantial rainfall received coupled with steady recharge to the water sources.
- Frequency of watering is still at 7 times in a week for cattle and shoats and 5-6 times in a week for camel.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

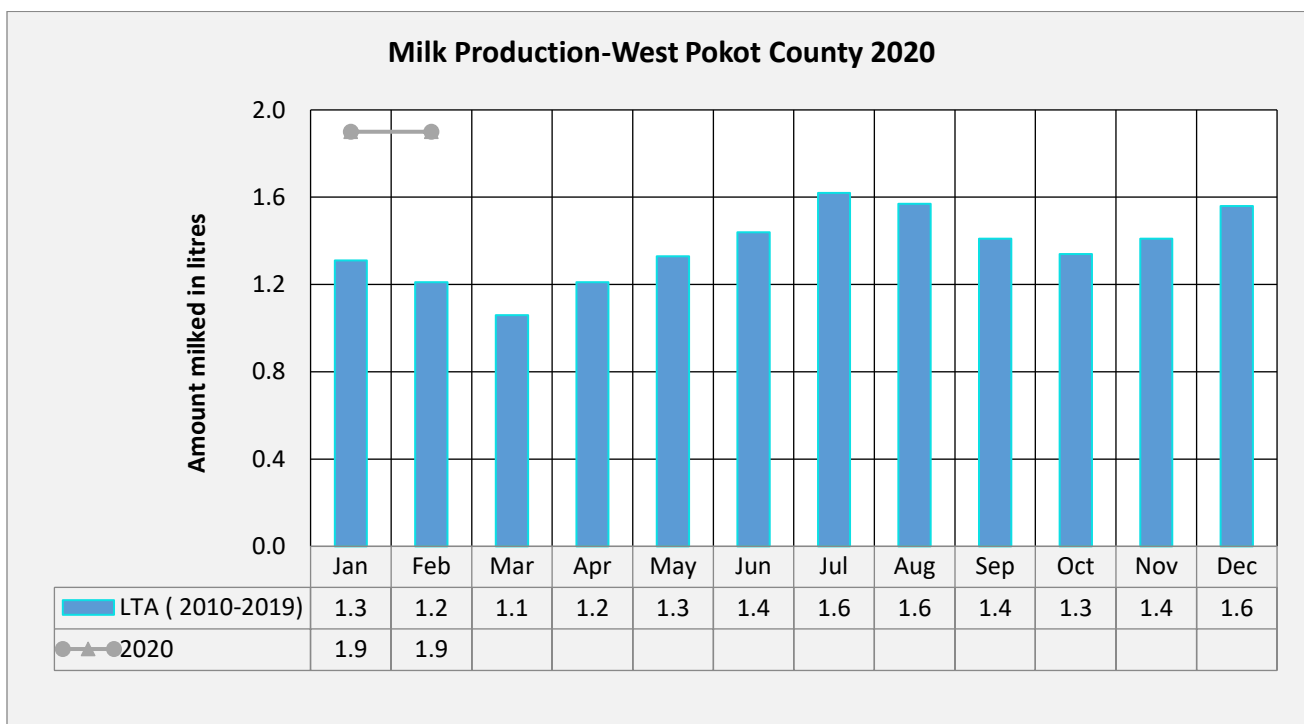
- The body condition for all livestock species remained good in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones in comparison to that reported in January the condition is still stable.
- The livestock body condition is projected to remain stable across the livelihood zones, with the expected onset of long rains.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to same period during a normal year. The trend is stable owing to good forage regeneration.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) was reported in Lomut and Masol Wards.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- During the month, the County reported an average production of 1.9 litres of milk per household per day, similar to that reported in January.
- Cattle was the main livestock producing milk at the households.
- The current household milk production is above the LTA by 58 percent.
- The household sustained stability in milk production is attributed to enhanced forage access in the traditional grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

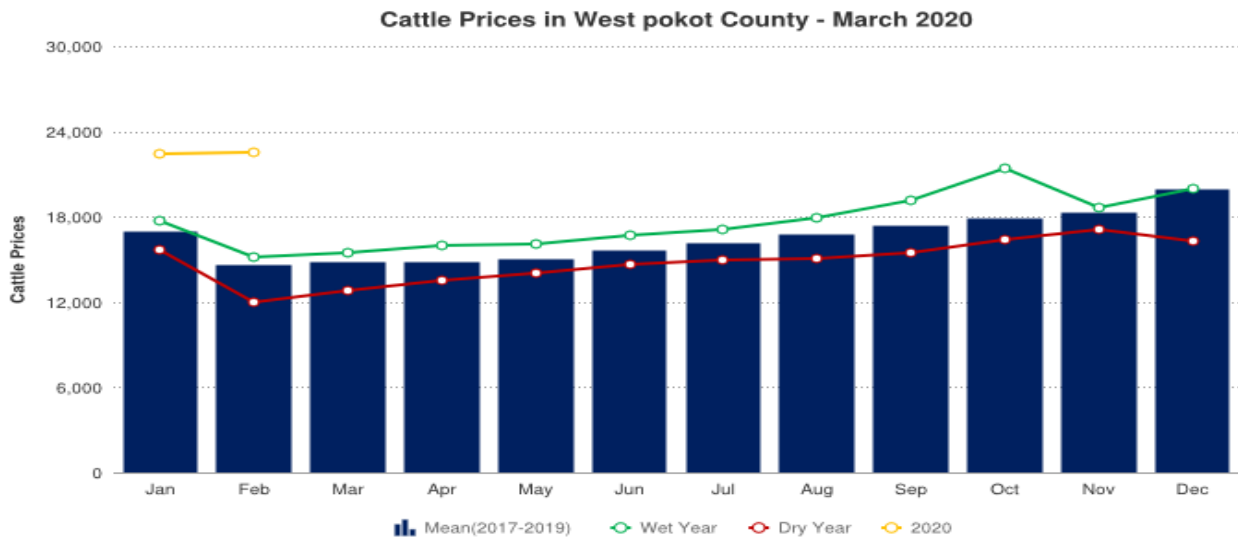
- Maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions are the major crops cultivated in the County. Land preparation in both mixed and agro pastoral zones is still ongoing in readiness for the planting season.
- During the month, the horticultural production and supply to major markets in Wakkor, Ortum and Lomut is still at normal levels in comparison to the seasonal performance.
- The level of farming is stable along the production zones of Lomut.
- The cultivation of bulb onions in highlands is ongoing. These are supplied to Ortum and Sigor markets for distribution to other centres within and outside the County.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

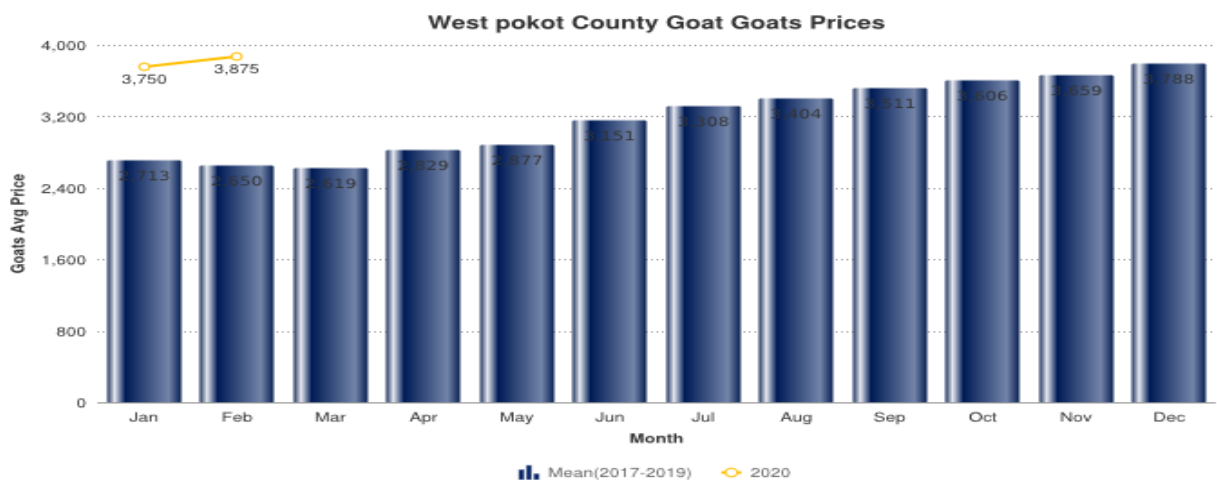
- In February, the medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 22,500 signifying a slight rise in price as compared to Kshs 22,429 reported in January.



- The cattle price continued stability is owed to good body condition linked to adequate forage access, along with steady recharge of water sources for livestock.
- The current cattle price is 35 percent above the LTA.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- In February, the County reported an average price of Kshs 3,875 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which portrayed an increase in comparison with Kshs 3,750 recorded in January.

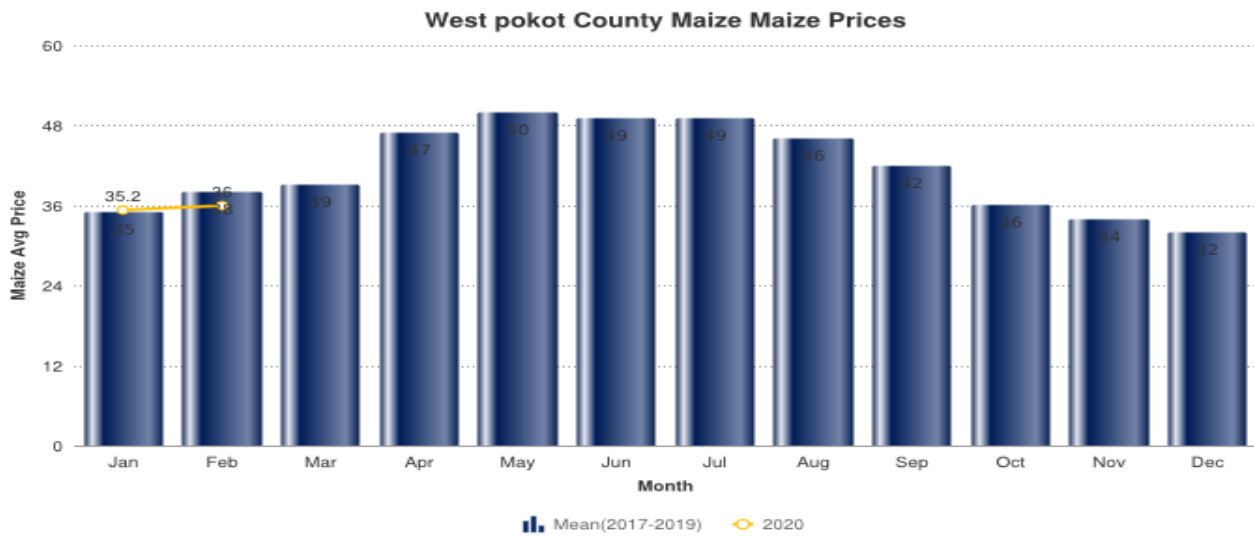


- The price increase is owed to the stable good body condition for goats in the livelihoods.
- The current goat price is 46 percent above LTA for February.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

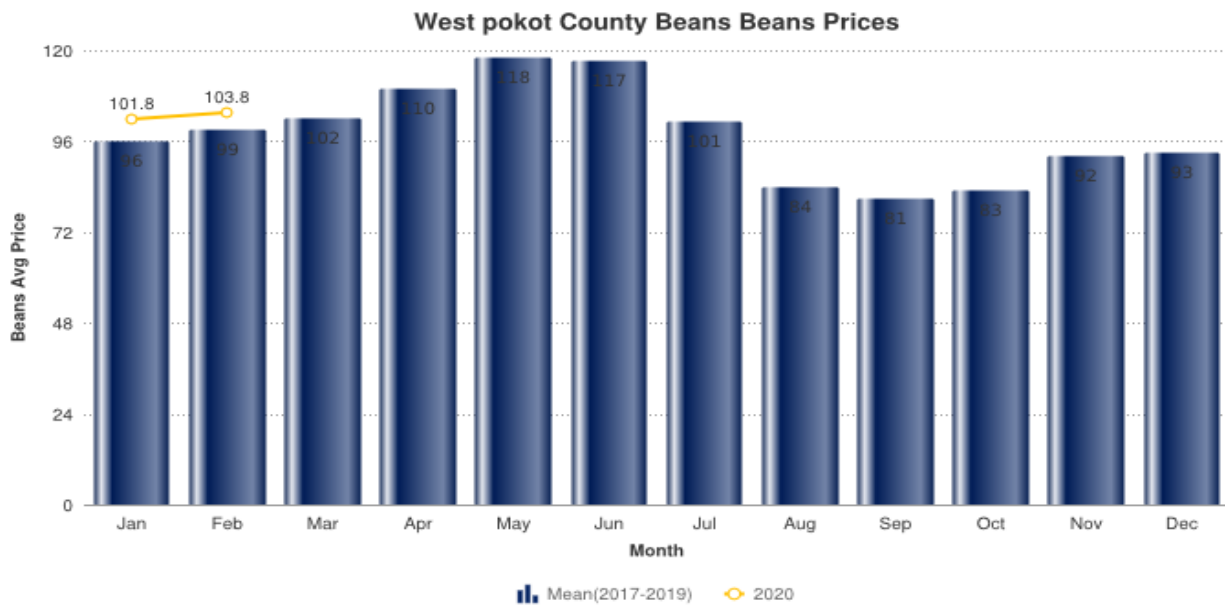
- During the month, the maize was sold at Kshs 36 per kg, a slight increase to that recorded in January.
- The current price is 5 percent below the LTA price.



- The price steadiness is credited to the stable supplies from Trans Nzoia and Republic of Uganda.
- Majority of the households depended more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is anticipated to go up due to the expected erratic external supplies.

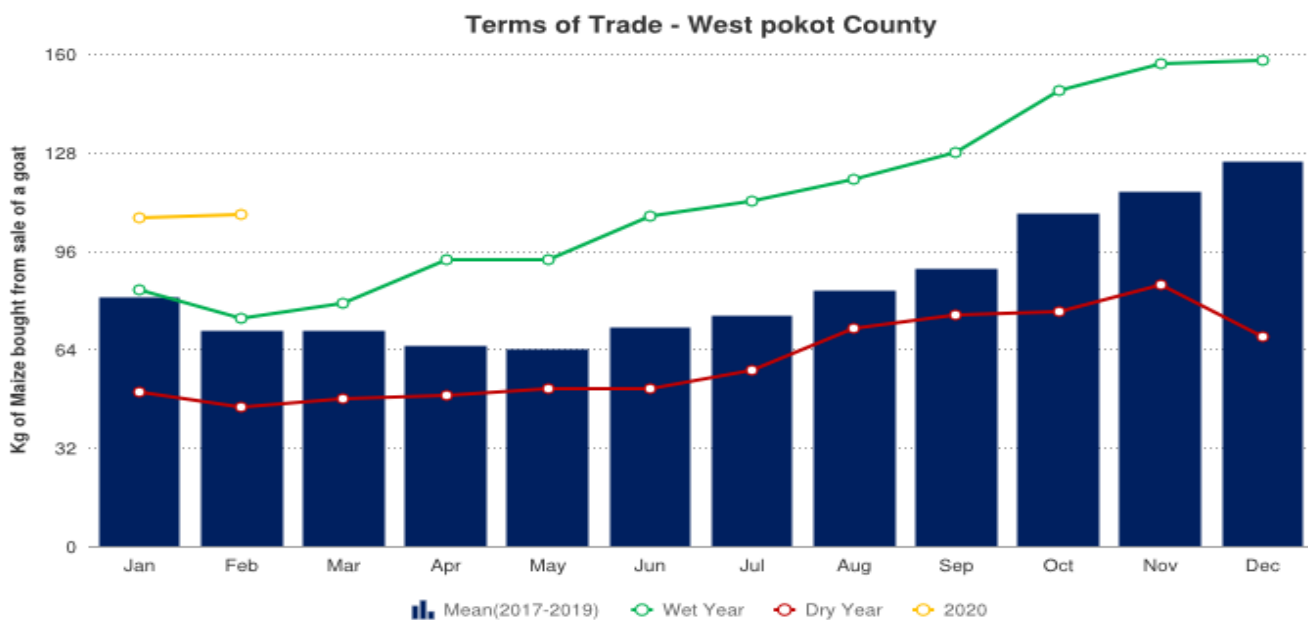
4.2.2 Beans

- The beans traded at Kshs 104 per kg in February, demonstrating a price rise in comparison to Kshs 102 reported in January.
- The price increase is attributed to fluctuating external supplies.
- There was no significant variation in price across the two livelihood zones since they both relied on the same external sources for supply.
- The current price of beans is 5 percent above the LTA price (Ksh.99) for same period of the year.



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

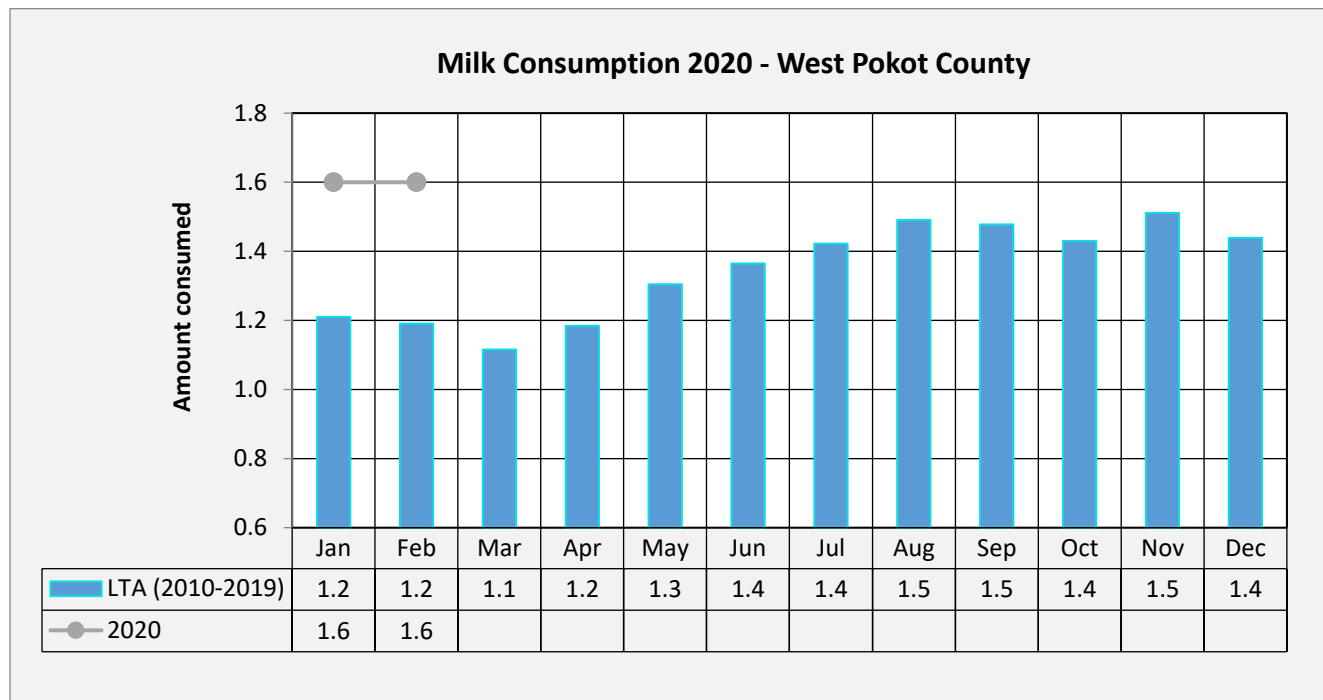
- In February, the Terms of Trade (TOT) was at 108, compared to 107 reported in the previous month, indicating that households could obtain slightly more maize for sale of a goat currently than they did in January.
- The steady trend in ToT is credited to stability in both goat and maize prices during the month.
- The TOT variation is projected over the next three months as the price of goat is anticipated to increase with the predicted reliable long rains within the period.



5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- Households across livelihood zones had milk consumption of 1.6 litres of milk on average, same as that consumed in January. The consumption is above that of the LTA (1.2) by 33 percent.



- The stability in milk consumption is credited to the steady milk production coupled with good livestock body condition and sufficient forage. Availability of milk is still good in January.

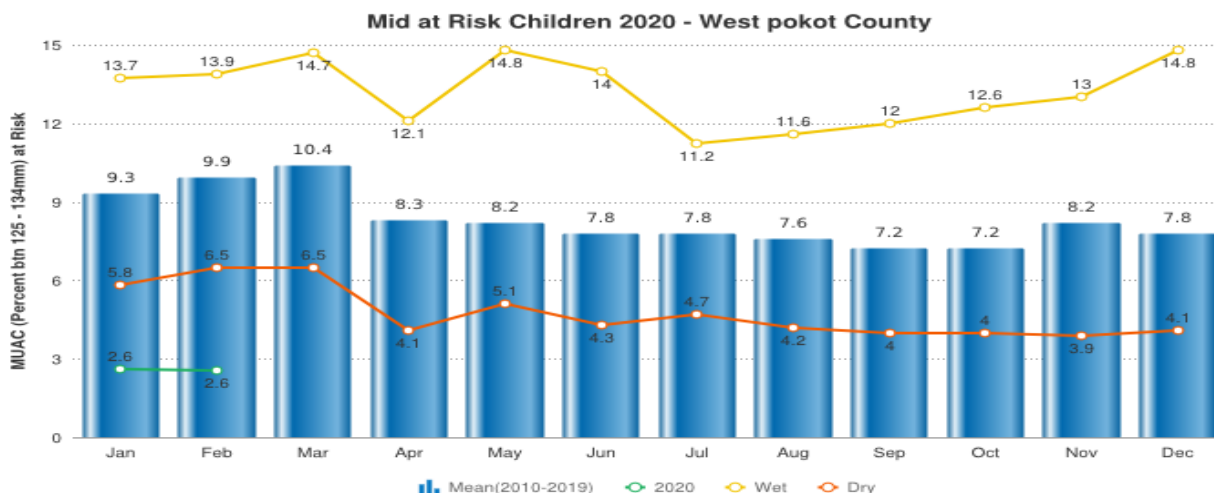
5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- During the month, the households' proportions of 75%, 25% and 0% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score improved for both the borderline and poor categories, while acceptable category decreased. The FCS is generally acceptable within the month.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones was at 51; an increase from 50 recorded in January.
- There was significant variation between the two livelihood zones with for instance 100 percent of households in the agro-pastoral zone being categorized as having acceptable FCS compared to 67% households under the same category in the pastoral livelihood zone. There are more food sources diversity in agro-pastoral livelihood zones as compared to pastoral livelihoods.

5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition Status

- In February, the proportion of 45 and 55 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled, where the children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition were at 2.6 percent, same as that reported in the previous month.
- The current proportion is below the LTA (6.5) for the such time of the year.



- The nutrition status of under-fives improved and is associated to adequate milk consumption coupled with other essential health and nutrition commodities. These were the key drivers for the dropping number of children 'at risk' of malnutrition.

5.3.2 Health

- During the month, Malaria is still a commonly reported ailment among the sampled households.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The County's CSI was at 1.3 in February, a decrease from 1.4 recorded in the previous month. The decrease demonstrates that households continue to employ few of strategies to cope, which could be owed to favourable food commodity availability and access at households and markets respectively.
- The pastoral zones recorded a CSI of 1.6 while agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded 1.0.
- The commonly employed consumption coping strategies by a few of the households during the month included reliance on less preferred/less expensive foods.

6.0 CURRENT INTERVENTION MEASURES (ACTION)

6.1 NON-FOOD

- Multi-agency resettlement interventions are going on in Parua, Tamkal and Tapach areas targeting landslides/floods displaced victims living in camps. Blankets and other non-food items were also distributed.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- In February, no livestock theft incidences were reported along West Pokot/Turkana border during the month.

7.2 MIGRATION

- Normal livestock movements were reported in February.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- Early onset of long rains season is expected, as such, the distance to water sources for both human and livestock is likely stabilize.
- Maize prices are likely to rise while goat price is likely to stabilize. Therefore, the terms of trade would be unfavourable within the period.
- The livestock productivity is projected to increase, as the forage conditions improves with the onset of long rains resulting to good livestock body condition leading to fair livestock prices and good access to food due to the favourable purchasing power.
- Milk availability is expected to stabilize with the good pasture and water improving livestock production as the onset of long rains season (MAM) is likely to start early. Nutrition cases are projected to improve over the period, as children would access less milk.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. WATER SECTOR

- Capacity build households on water storage technologies to ensure maximum use of the rain waters.

2. PEACE AND SECURITY

- Sustain peace building community projects at borders to bring both sides to work together, especially peace projects at conflict hotspots of Turkana-West Pokot border.

3. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Settlers around flood/landslide risk areas are advised to move to safer places to avoid loss of lives and destruction of property during upcoming long rains season. They need to be mobilized to move.

4. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Intensify livestock vaccination along migration corridors, particularly in wards with reported cases of FMD and LSD.