

National Drought Management Authority
WEST POKOT COUNTY
DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR SEPTEMBER 2018



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



SEPTEMBER EW PHASE



Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- Inadequate rainfall was received with low intensity across livelihood zones in the first and second dekads of the month. The temporal and spatial distribution was poor. The rainfall situation performance is generally normal.
- The vegetation condition depicts a worsening trend across most parts as indicated by the drop in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation greenness despite decline. Forage condition remained good.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- The livestock body condition across the County is good with a deteriorating trend. Distance to water sources is stable.
- Milk production and consumption at household level is stable. The Terms of Trade were favourable in September.
- Majority of households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score, with the coping strategy index decreasing within the month.
- The proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition remained stable and within the normal range.

Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification

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

Biophysical Indicators	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	65	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot North)	63	>35
Forage Condition	Good	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Normal	Normal
Milk Production	1.9 Litres	>1.4 Litres
Livestock Migration Pattern	Usual	Normal
Livestock deaths (attributed to drought)	No deaths	Nodeaths

Access Indicators	Value	Normal range
Terms of Trade (ToT)	128	>76
Milk Consumption	1.7 Litres	>1.4 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	2.5 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

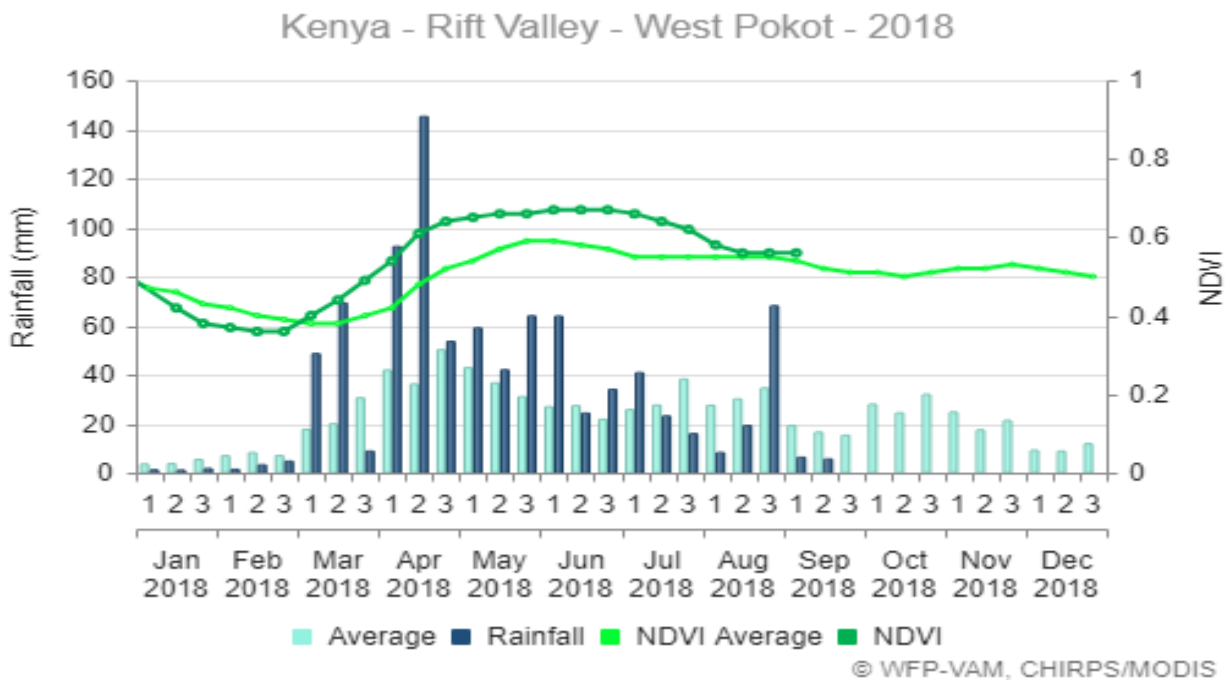
Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	4.6	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	3.0	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	45	>35

<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 of September, the County received insufficient rainfall, whose intensity declined in comparison to the previous month as seen in both first and second dekads. The onset of October-November-December(OND) season rains are expected early in October.
- The rainfall situation is normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall decreased from 8.1 mm to 6.2 mm and 19.2 mm to 5.5 mm in the first and second dekads respectively. Both first and second dekads amounts remained below normal.
- The NDVI values were slightly above the historical NDVI values attributed to good rains. The trend is stable with the diminishing rainfall intensity.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- The temporal and spatial rainfall distribution was poor in both lowlands and highland areas owing to decreased rainfall. Highlands recorded more rainfall, with higher intensity than the one received in the lowlands.
- The County remained fairly dry in September.

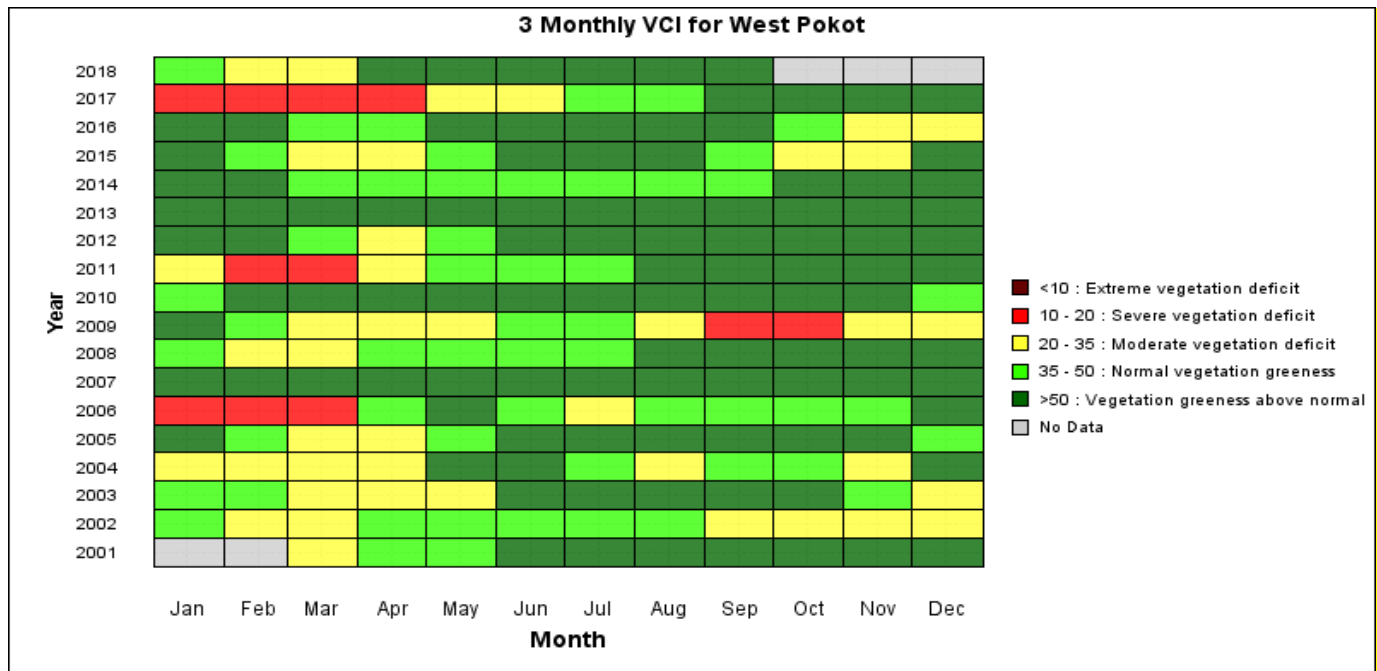
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- During the month, no notable events such as floods, land/mud slides, lightning strikes and hailstorms occurred.

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 is a representation of the vegetation status of the County is 65 during the month, a decrease from 74 recorded in August. However, the current VCI indicates above normal vegetation greenness condition.
- The VCI trend declined across the County. Despite the decrease, all sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation greenness band. The drop is from 75 to 63, 74 to 68, 71 to 69 and 74 to 64 in Pokot North, Pokot West, Pokot South and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The downward trend in the VCI is attributed to poor regeneration of vegetation cover due to reduced rainfall intensity in the month under review.

2.1.2 Pasture

- During the month, the proportion of sampled community which stated that the pasture was good is 70 percent, a decrease from 90 percent reported in the previous month.
- The pasture condition is good across livelihood zones. The communities reported that the condition was normal for the month. The trend is worsening when compared to the previous month owing to decreased rainfall during the month under review.
- The pasture situation is projected to be boosted by the OND rains in October.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity in both livelihood zones.

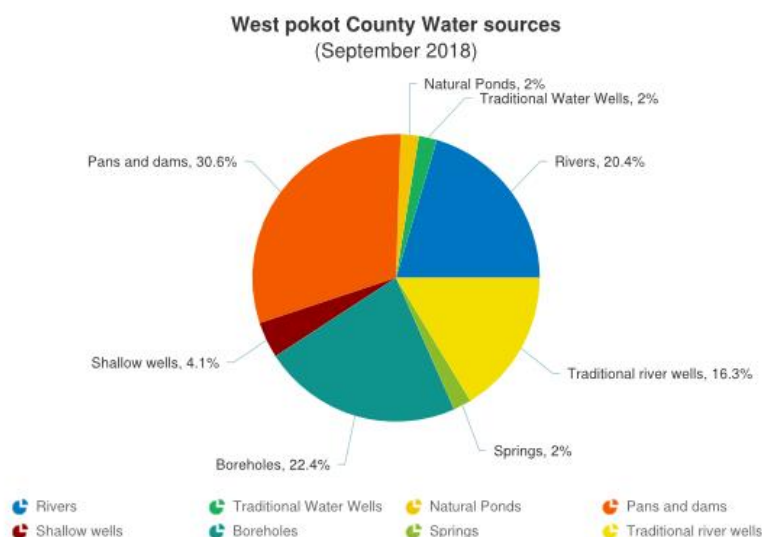
2.1.3 Browse

- The proportion of the sampled community which reported that the browse condition was good was 85 percent.
- Across livelihood zones, the browse condition is still good. The browse situation is normal in comparison to the situation for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition is fair in relation to that of the previous month and is due to decreased rainfall amounts received during the month.
- The access to browse along the Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders is still hindered by fears of insecurity at conflict hotspots.
- The quality and quantity of browse is fair across livelihood zones and there was no significant variation between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

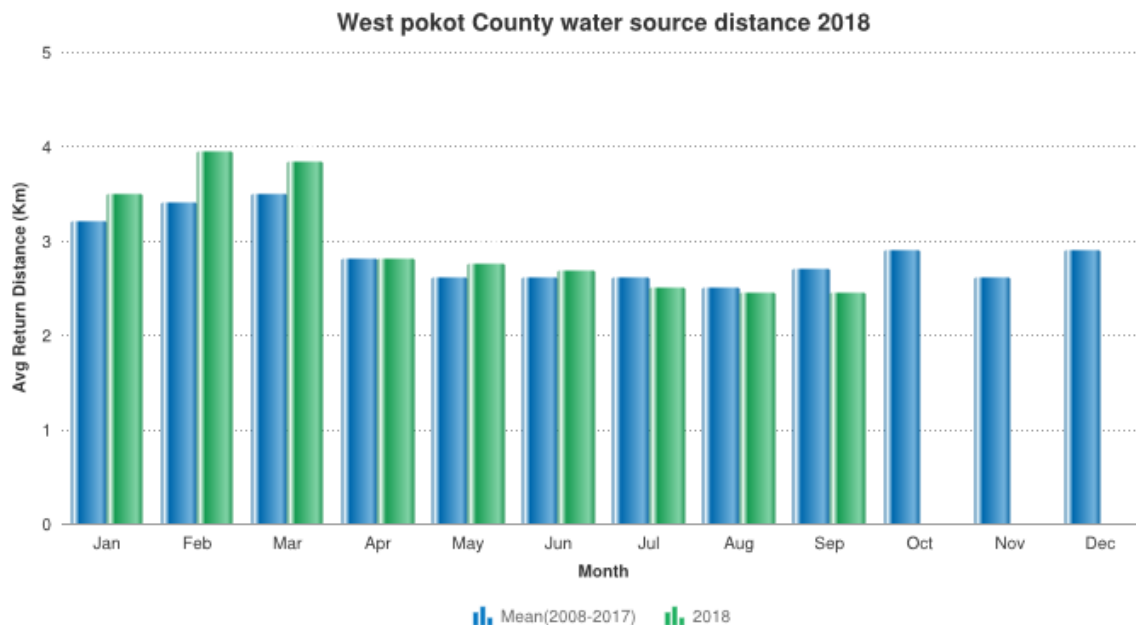
2.2.1 Sources

- In the month under review, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock is 30.6 for pan dams, 22.4 for boreholes, 20.4 for rivers and 16.3 for traditional river wells. Other water sources in use include wells and springs at 4 percent and 2 percent respectively.
- The water recharge levels decreased compared to the previous month, attributed to poor rains.
- Both boreholes and rivers water levels are fair due to the declining recharge levels.
- The current main sources in use are the normal sources where households draw water during such time of the year.



2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- Currently, the return distance to water source from the household is 2.5 km, same as for the month of August. The current distance is 7 percent below the Long Term Average (LTA) distance.
- The agro-pastoral livelihood zone recorded slightly longer trekking distance to water source in comparison to the pastoral livelihood zone. The stability in distance is due to the retained surface water sources during the month.

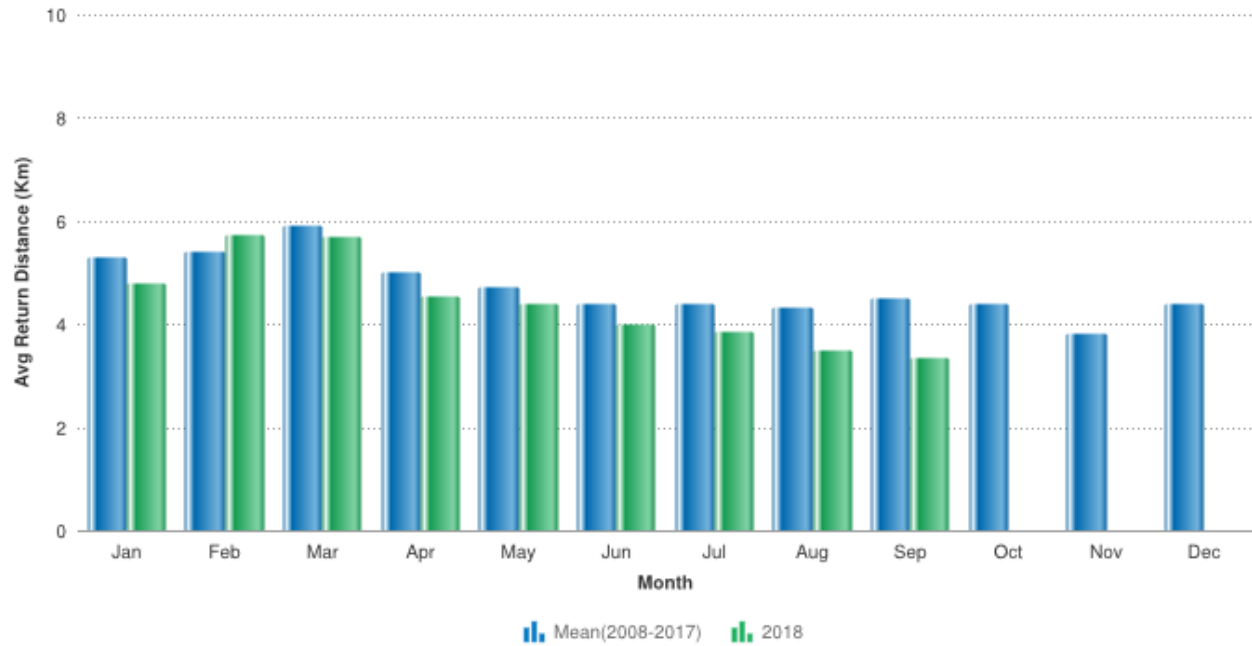


- Both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded stable waiting time at water source.
- The average household water consumption per person per day remained at 9-13 litres in the pastoral zone while that in the agro-pastoral zone is at 10-15 litres.
- The cost of accessing water at the source is free in the rural areas unlike in urban centres where a 20 litre Jerrican cost remained within normal ranges for the period.

2.2.3 Livestock Access

- In September, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources is at 3.4 km, portraying a slight decrease from 3.5 km recorded in the previous month. In comparison to the normal trekking distance of 4.6 km, the trekking distance lies below the normal range by 26 percent.
- The trekking time from grazing areas to water sources takes longer in the pastoral livelihood zone than in the agro-pastoral livelihood zone.

West pokot County water source distance from grazing area - 2018



- The stability in livestock trekking distance is generally attributed to fair rainfall received within the month of September that recharged the available water sources.
- Watering frequency in cattle and shoats is still stable at 5-7 times in a week while for camel is 4-5 times in a week.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

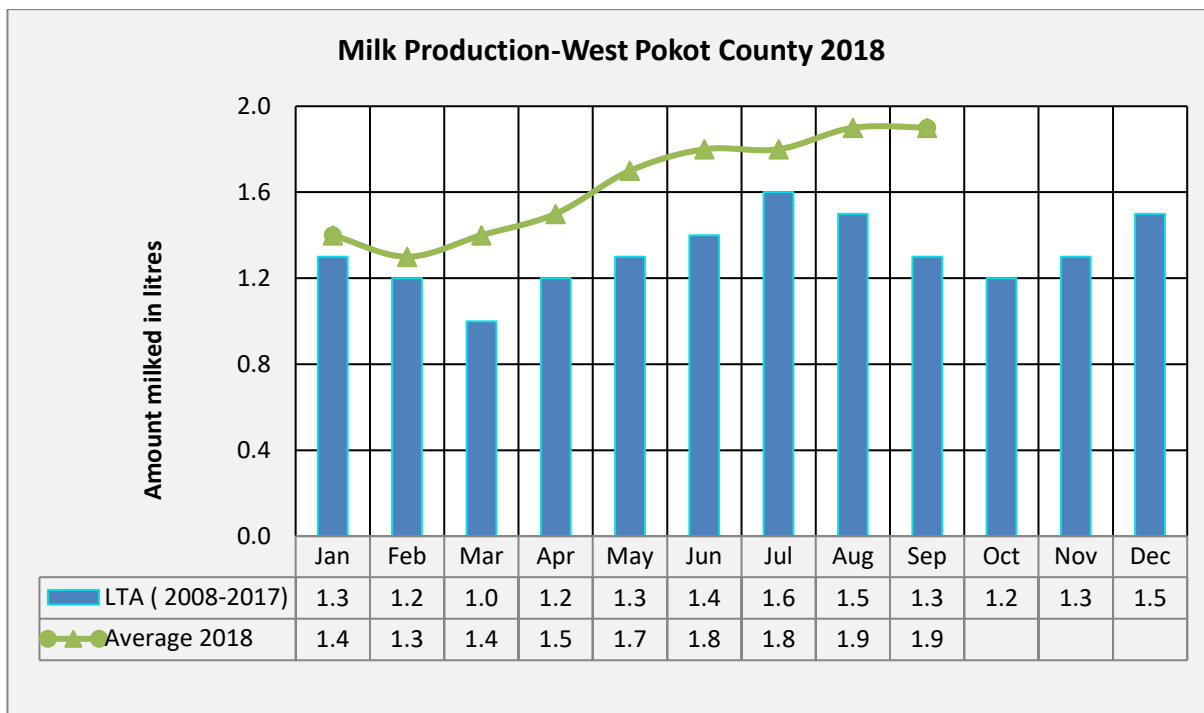
- The body condition for all livestock species is good in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The body condition is however anticipated to worsen across the livelihood zones, going by the poor performance of the rains.
- Body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to a similar period during a normal year, because of fair forage condition recorded during the month. The trend is declining as a result of poor rains received in the month.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition across the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Chepareria and Sook wards reported PPR disease in goats, whereas CCPP was reported in Pokot North Sub-County.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- In September, the County recorded an average of 1.9 litres of milk per household per day.
- The milk production remained stable as compared to that recorded in the previous month. Cattle produced most milk within the County.
- The current household milk production is 32 percent above the LTA for the month.
- The stability in the household milk production during the month is attributed to the good forage being accessed in the normal grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

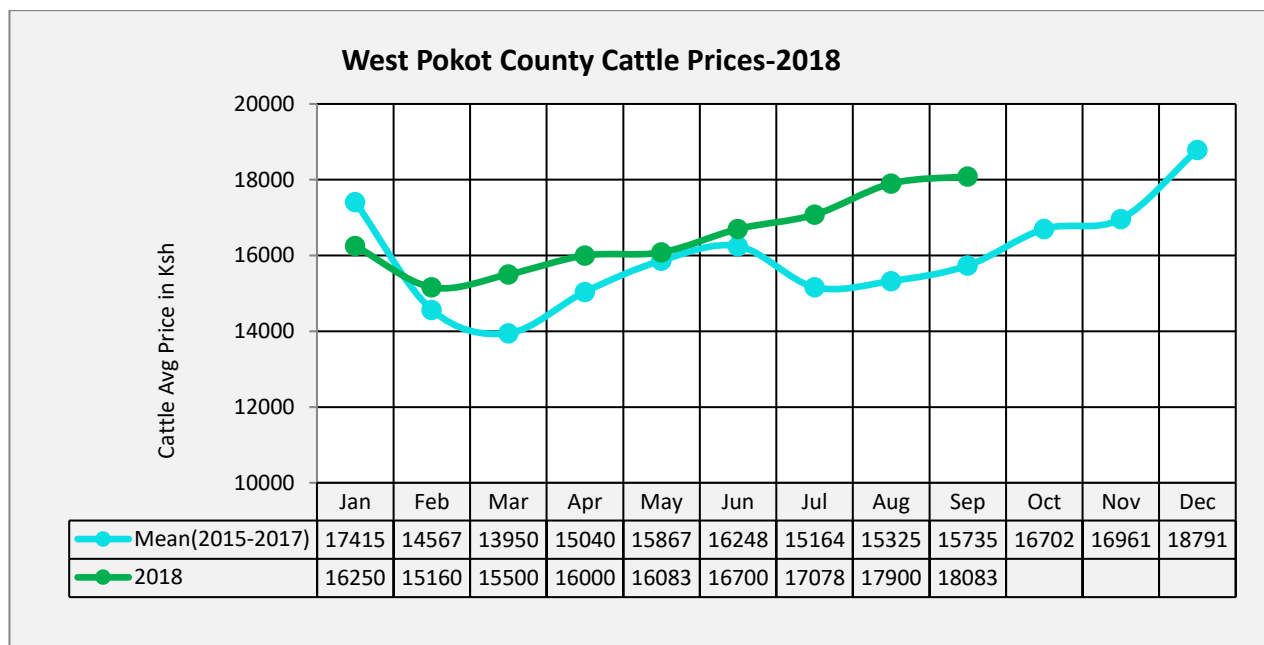
- The County’s main crops grown include maize, beans and bulb onions. Maize crop is at harvesting stage.
- The production and supply of horticultural crops such as mangoes and onions to major markets including Sigor, Ortum and Lomut is normal as compared to the seasonal performance.
- The harvesting of bulb onions is on-going in highland areas such as Wakor and Kokwatendwo, which supply to Ortum market for distribution to other centres within and outside the County.
- Horticultural farming level is low with diminished rains received along the production zones of Kabichbich, Sebit, Wakorr, Wei Wei, and Lomut.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

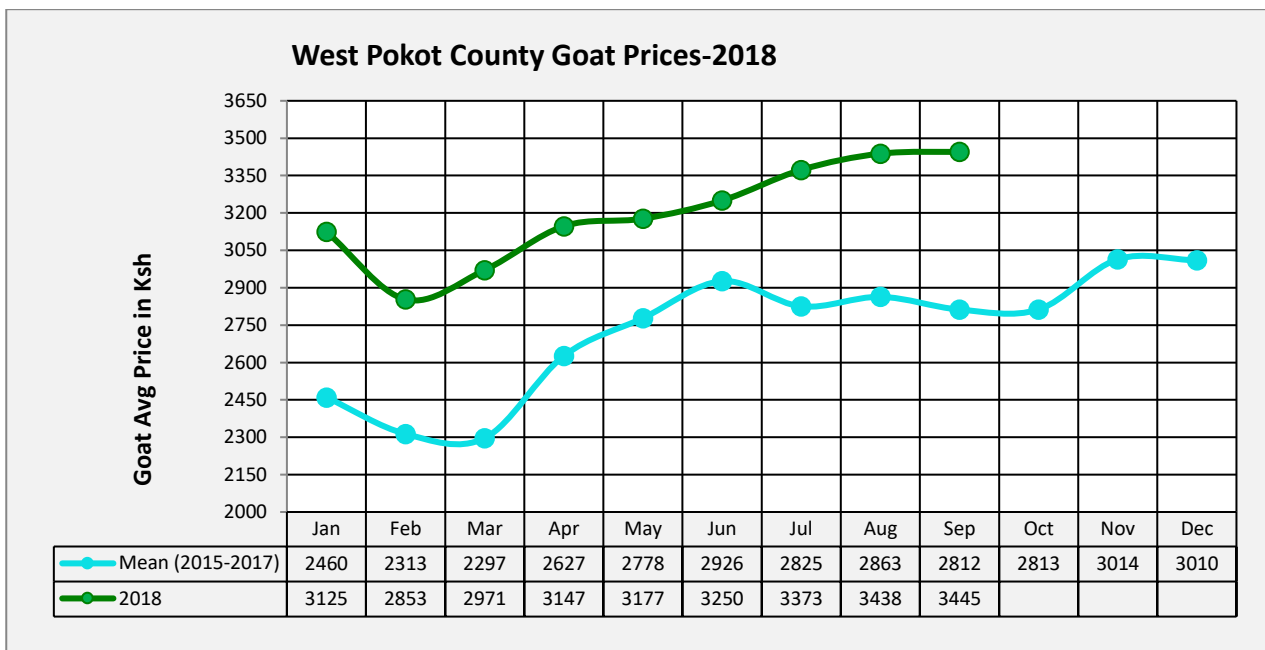
- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 18,083 during the month, which represented stability in price as compared to Kshs 17,900 recorded in the previous month.



- The stability in prices is attributed to fair forage condition sustaining cattle in a relatively desirable body condition thus farmers fetching fair prices in the market. Additionally, farmers still have low tendency to sell their stock, creating low supply of animals at markets, leaving the few supplied going at good prices due to high demand.
- The current cattle price is above the LTA price (Ksh 15,735) for the month by 13 percent.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- The County recorded an average price for a 2-year old medium size goat at Kshs 3, 445 across the livelihood zones in the month under review. Similar to the cattle price scenario, the goat price remained stable (Kshs. 3,438) in comparison to that of the previous month.

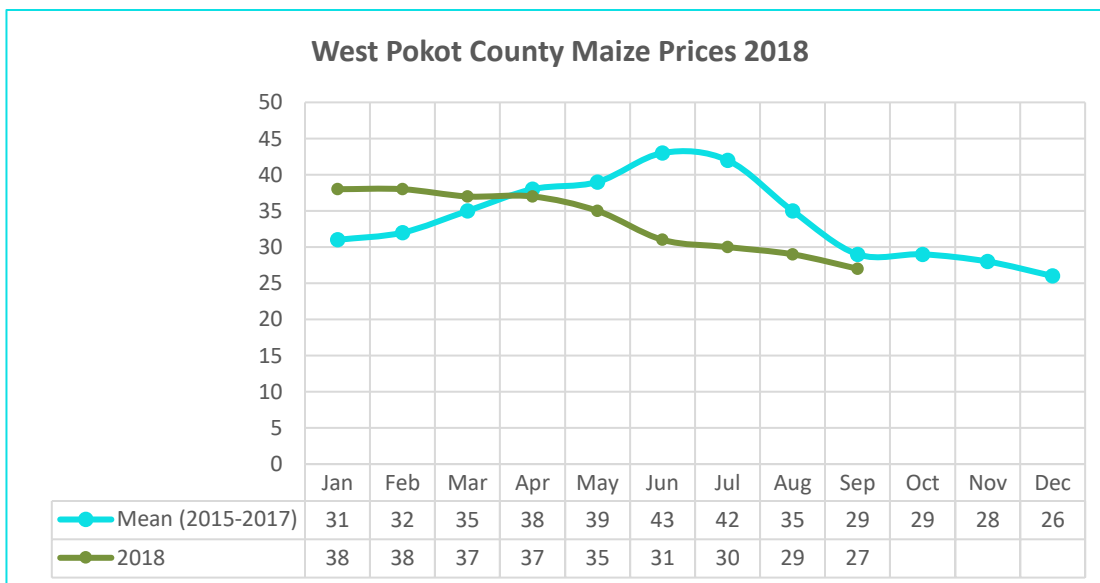


- The price stability is mainly due to good forage condition currently and fair recharge of water points enhancing good body condition.
- The current price of goat is however 24 percent above the LTA price for the month.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

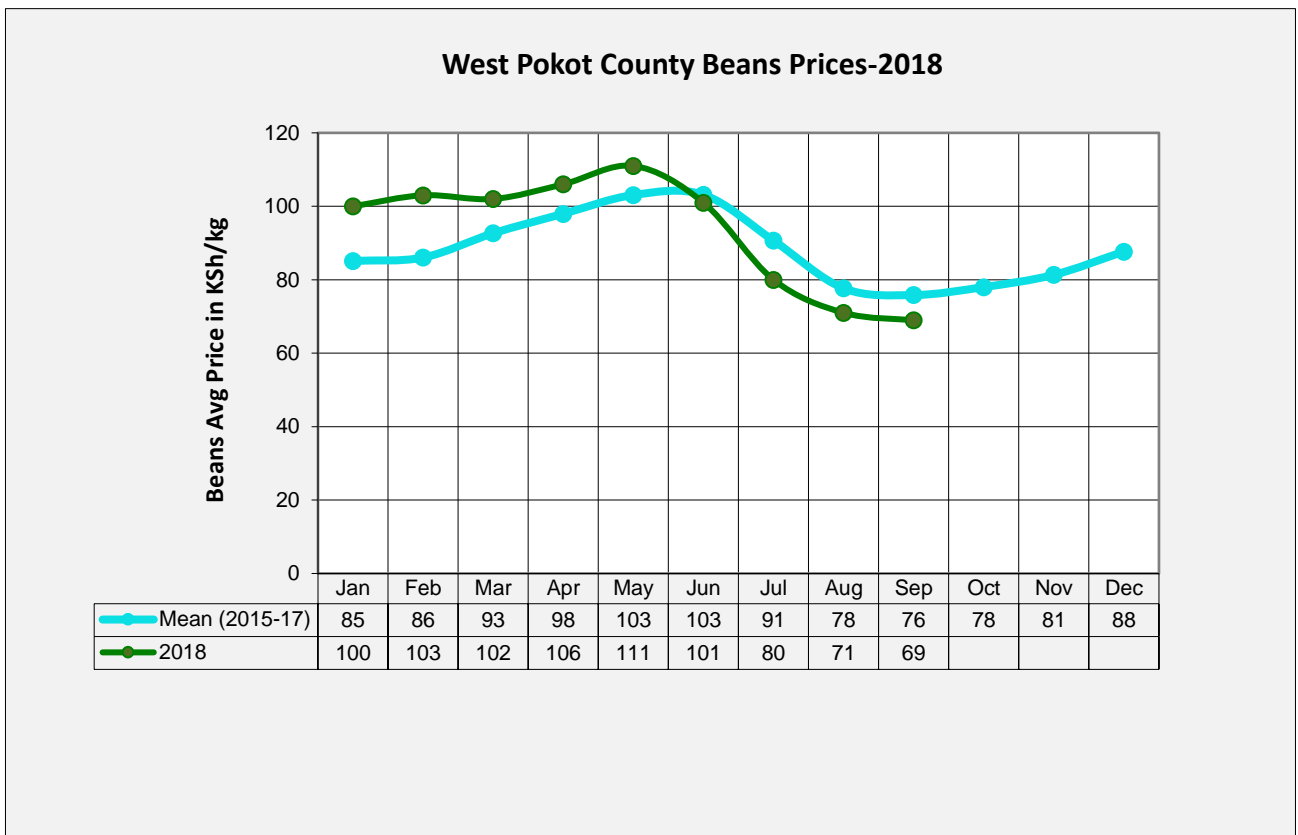
- The maize was sold at Kshs 27 per Kg in September. The price is still stable compared to that recorded in August.
- The current price is however 7 percent below the LTA price (Ksh29) for the month under review.



- The price stability is mainly due to local harvesting and steady external supply of cheaper maize available at local markets.
- Most households depend more on local markets to replenish their maize stocks. Maize price is projected to remain low as the external maize sources remain cheap (Uganda and Trans Nzoia County), which are suppliers to the County.

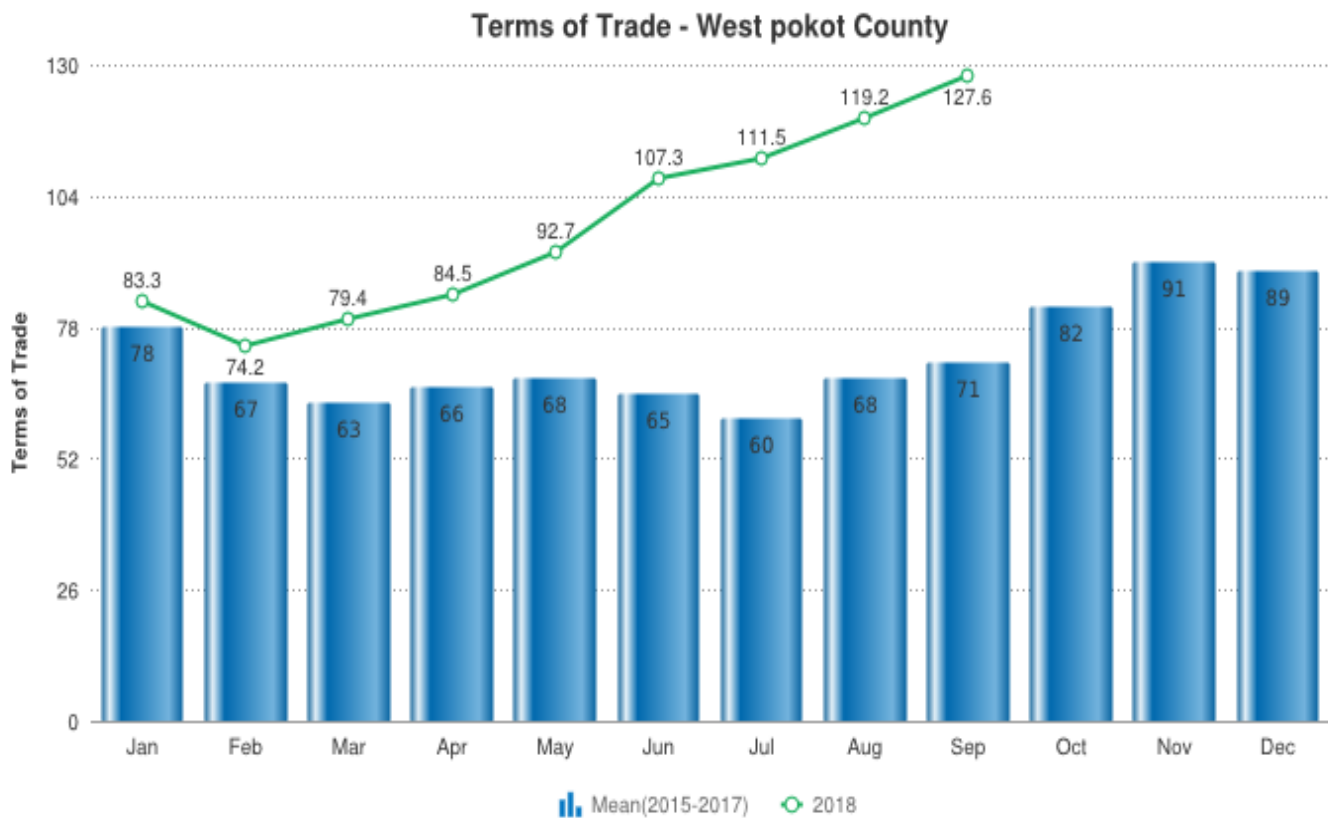
4.2.2 Beans

- Beans was traded at Kshs 69 per Kg; a slight decrease from Kshs 71 recorded in the previous month.
- The price stability is due to the local harvesting period along with cheap 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 market price of beans is below the LTA price (Ksh.76) for such time of the year by 9 percent.



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

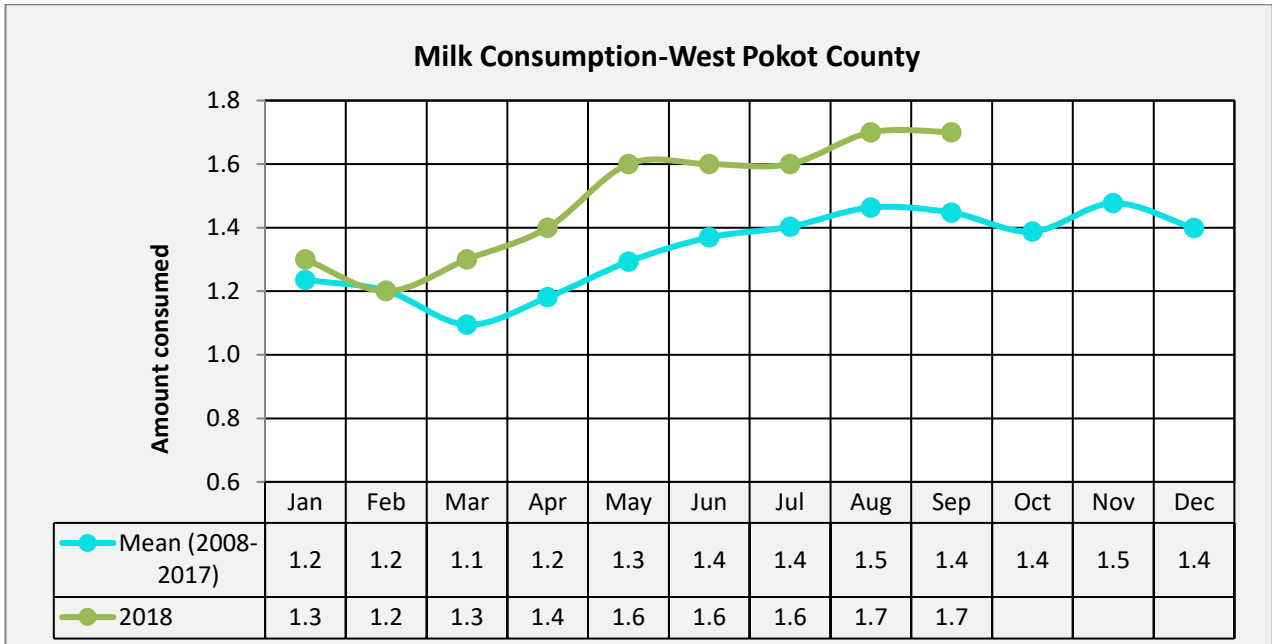
- The Terms of Trade (TOT) was 128, after increasing from 119 recorded in August. The increase demonstrates that pastoralists would obtain more maize for the sale of a goat currently than they did in the previous month.
- The increase in ToT is credited to stability in goat prices along with a decrease in maize prices.
- The variation in TOT is anticipated over the next three months as the price of goat is expected to remain stable with the forecasted good OND rains coupled with dropping maize prices during the same period.



5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- The households across livelihood zones consumed 1.7 litres of milk on average, similar to that recorded in August.



- The stability in milk consumption level is due to the sustained milk production resulting from fair rejuvenation of forage as well as significant decrease in livestock trekking distances to water points. Access to milk remained good.
- The amount of milk consumed is 21% above the LTA for the same period of the year.

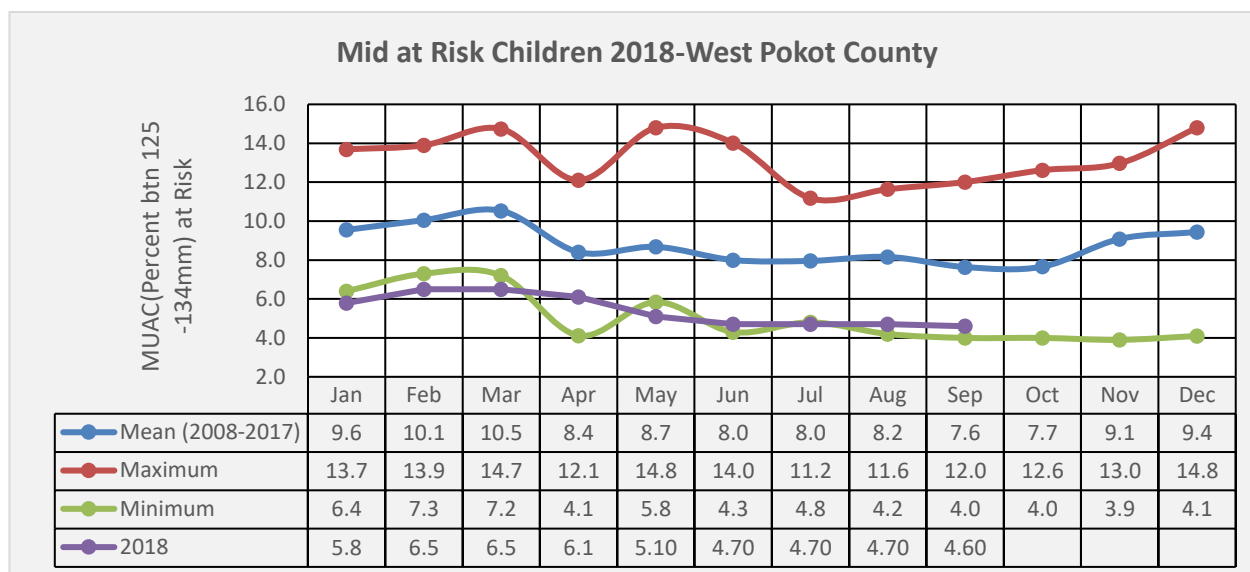
5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- During the month under review, the households' proportions of 71%, 27% and 2% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score dropped slightly for the Acceptable category while increased in the Borderline one in comparison to the previous month (73%, 25% and 2%). The FCS is generally Acceptable within the month.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones during the month remained 45; same as the one recorded in the previous month.
- There was a significant variation across the two livelihood zones with for instance 52% of households in the Pastoral zone being categorized as having Acceptable FCS in comparison with 100% households under the same category in the agro-pastoral livelihood zone.

5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition Status

- During the month, the proportion of 46 and 54 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled, where children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition were at 4.6 percent, a slight decrease compared to the previous month (4.7).
- The current proportion of children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition lies below the LTA value of 7.6 for the such period of the year.



- The generally consistent stability in nutrition status among the under-fives is due to improved consumption and access to milk, including other essential health and nutrition commodities within the County. These were the major contributors to the downward trend in number of children 'at risk' of malnutrition.

5.3.2 Health

- Malaria cases remained commonly reported ailments during the month among the sampled children.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The CSI was at 3.0 in September, having dropped from the 3.5 recorded in August. The drop in CSI shows that households employed fewer strategies to cope, which could be linked to stable food commodity availability and favourable prices in the markets.
- The Pastoral livelihood zone recorded a CSI of 3.3 compared to 2.6 in the agro-pastoral livelihood zone, which is mainly due to stable livestock productivity.

- The common consumption based coping strategies employed by majority of the households during the month included reliance on less preferred/less expensive foods.

6.0 CURRENT INTERVENTION MEASURES (ACTION)

6.1 NON-FOOD

- County Government conducted ring vaccination against PPR disease in Pokot North Sub-County.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- No insecurity incidences were reported across the County

7.2 MIGRATION

- No abnormal migrations were reported during the month.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- Cereal prices are anticipated to continue decreasing while that of goat expected to stabilize. As such, the terms of trade are likely to improve over this period.
- The livestock productivity is projected to stabilize, since the forage conditions are likely to continue being sufficient with projected OND rains in October, resulting to good livestock body condition hence likely improved livestock prices and heightened access to food attributed to the expected better income.
- Milk availability is anticipated to remain stable with the significant rejuvenation of pastoral resources supporting livestock production. In the event, malnutrition cases are likely to remain low over the period, as children would have enough milk.
- The distance to water sources for both human and livestock is expected to remain stable with the expected OND rains.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. HEALTH AND NUTRITION SECTOR

- Conduct health preventive and promotion campaigns while providing health education on sanitation and proper utilization of water treatment chemicals so as to minimize the risk of water borne diseases outbreak.

2. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Upscale ring vaccination to curb PPR cases reported in Pokot North and Pokot South Sub Counties.
- Encourage stock management consistent with available pasture for optimal production and productivity due to land carrying capacity and livestock stocking rate.

3. PEACE AND SECURITY

- Sustain peace building efforts along the Turkana and Marakwet borders so as to facilitate smooth market accessibility for majority of Pastoral communities in conflict prone zones.
- Initiate peace building community projects at borders to bring both sides to work together, especially peace projects at conflict hotspots.