




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

**DECEMBER EW PHASE**

Drought Status: **NORMAL**



Shughuli za kawaida

**Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification**

**Biophysical Indicators**

- The County received substantial rainfall with moderate intensity mostly in the highlands during the first and second dekads of the month. The temporal and spatial distribution was poor. Generally, the seasonal October-November-December (OND) rainfall performance is below normal.
- During the month, vegetation condition remained normal, with a declining trend across most parts of the County. Most Sub-counties recorded normal vegetation greenness notwithstanding the sharp drop. Forage condition is fair.

**Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)**

- The Terms of Trade remained favourable, with milk production and consumption at household level decreasing slightly.
- The livestock body condition is fair with a worsening trend across the County. Distance to water sources slightly increased.
- Most households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score, whereby the Coping Strategy Index increased within the month.
- Nutrition status is declining, as the proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition increased but still within the normal range.

**Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification**

LIVELIHOOD ZONE	EW PHASE	TREND
AGRO PASTORAL	<b>NORMAL</b>	WORSENING
PASTORAL	<b>ALERT</b>	WORSENING
<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>NORMAL</b>	<b>WORSENING</b>

Biophysical Indicators	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	44	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot North)	35	>35
Forage Condition	Fair	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Normal	Normal
Milk Production	1.7 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)	158	>76
Milk Consumption	1.6 Litres	>1.4 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	3.0 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Kshs /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

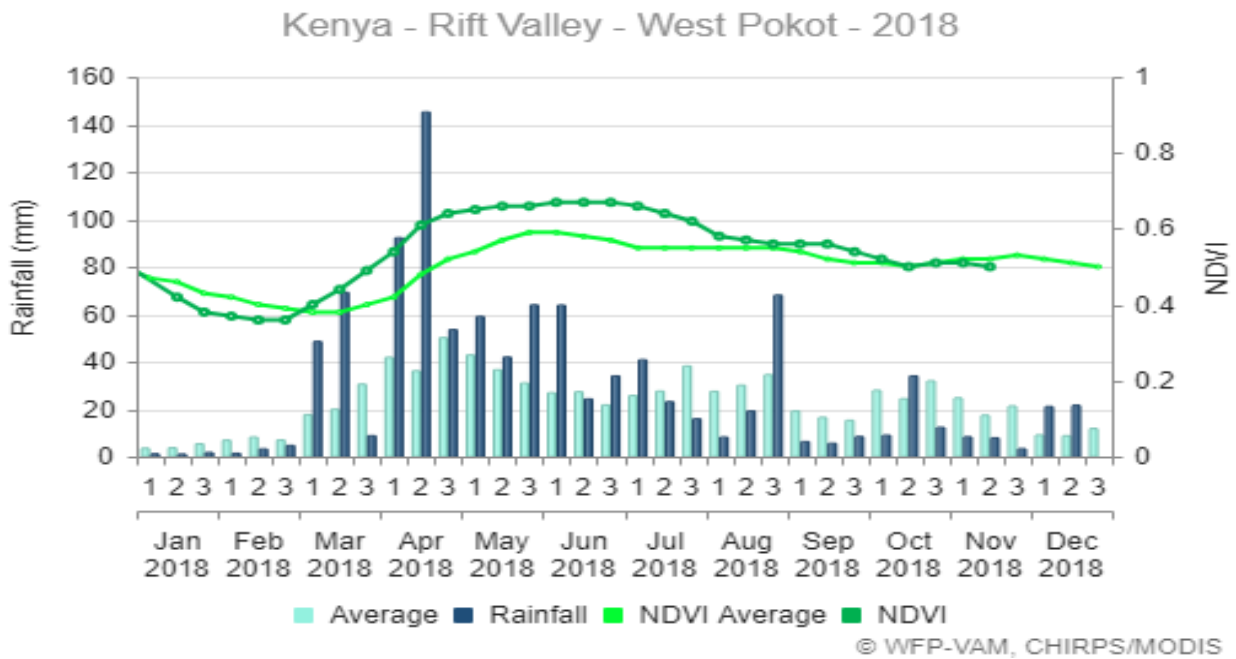
Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	4.6	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	1.8	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	44	>35

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

# 1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

## 1.1 RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

- The County received substantial rainfall especially in the highlands. The rainfall intensity increased in comparison to the previous month as recorded in both first and second dekads. The seasonal performance (October-November-December (OND) of the rainfall was below average.
- The rainfall situation is below normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall increased from 8.2 mm to 20 mm and 7.8 mm to 21 mm in the first and second dekads respectively, whereby both first and second dekads amounts were above normal.

## 1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- The spatial and temporal rainfall distribution was poor especially in the lowlands but was fair in highlands, as the later experienced enhanced precipitation. Significant rainfall was received in the highlands, with improved intensity than in the lowlands.
- The County remained fairly humid in December.

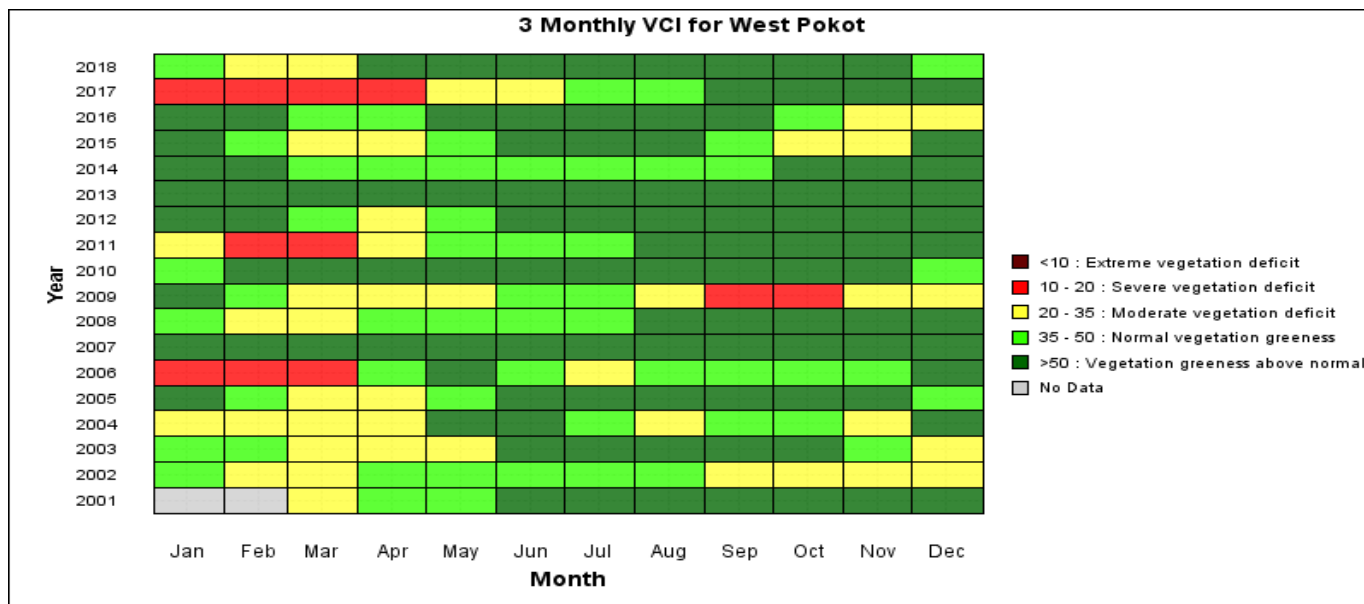
## 1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable occurrence of events such as floods, land/mud slides, lightning strikes and hailstorms in December.

# 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 defines the vegetation status of the County is 44 in December, indicating a decrease from 54 reported in the previous month. Despite the decrease, the current VCI indicates the normal vegetation greenness condition.
- The County VCI trend is generally declining across livelihoods and all sub-counties recorded normal vegetation greenness band apart from Pokot South which reported above normal vegetation. The decrease is from 46 to 35, 58 to 47, 60 to 57 and 57 to 49 in Pokot North, Pokot West, Pokot South and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The declining trend in the VCI is attributed to inadequate regeneration of vegetation cover due to erratic rainfall experienced mainly across lowlands during the short rains season.

### 2.1.2 Pasture

- The proportion of sampled community which reported that the pasture was poor is 60 percent during the month, an increase from 27 percent recorded in November.
- The pasture condition is still fair to poor across livelihood zones. The communities stated that the condition was normal for the month. The trend is downward in comparison to the previous month owing to erratic rainfall during the month.
- The pasture situation is projected to worsen with the depressed performance of OND rains season.
- There is significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity in livelihood zones, where the mixed farming and agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded fair pasture quality and quantity compared to pastoral livelihood zone.

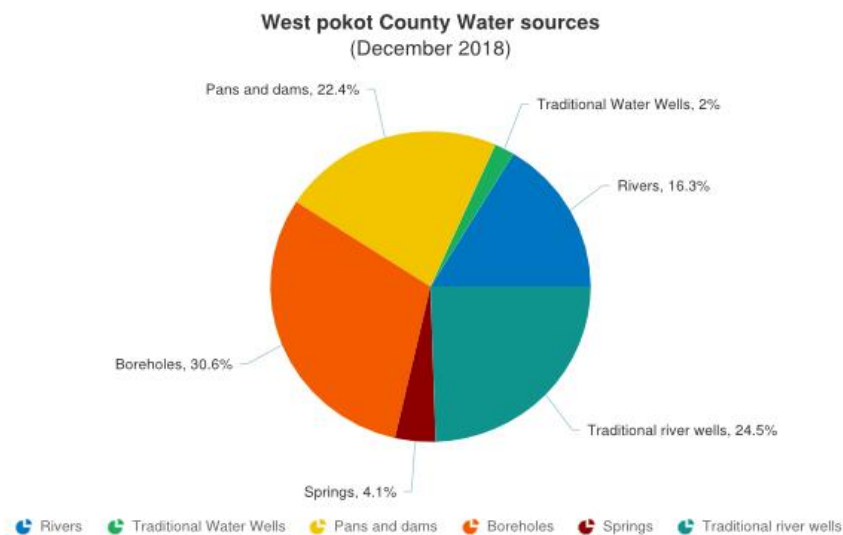
### 2.1.3 Browse

- The proportion of the sampled community which reported that the browse condition was fair is 85 percent, an increase from 55 percent recorded in the previous month.
- Across livelihood zones, the browse condition is still fair. The browse situation is normal in comparison to the situation for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition is relatively fair in comparison to that of November due to substantial precipitation received.
- 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.
- Access to browse along the Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders is still hindered by fears of insecurity along conflict hotspots.

## 2.2 WATER RESOURCE

### 2.2.1 Sources

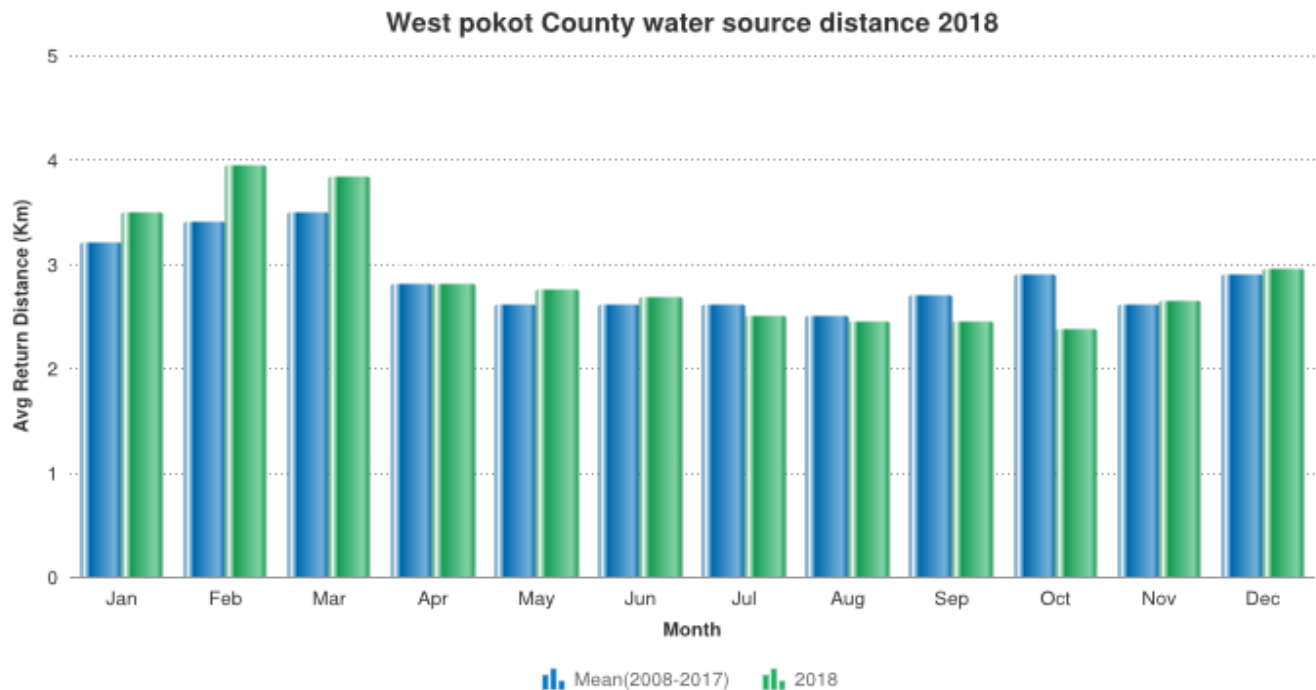
- During the month, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock is 30 for boreholes, 22 for pan/dams, 24 for traditional river wells and 16 for rivers. Other water sources in use include wells and springs, both at 4 percent.
- The water recharge levels decreased as compared to the previous month, following poor rains.
- The water levels for both boreholes and rivers dropped due to low recharge.
- The current main sources in use are the normal ones, where households draw water during such time of the year.



### 2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- The return distance to water source from the household is 3 km in December, having increased from 2.7 km recorded in November. The current distance is 3 percent above the Long Term Average (LTA) distance.

- The pastoral livelihood zone recorded slightly longer trekking distance to water source in comparison to the agropastoral livelihood zone. The pastoral areas experienced erratic and depressed rains than agro-pastoral zones. The increase in distance is attributed to the low surface water sources recharged during the month.

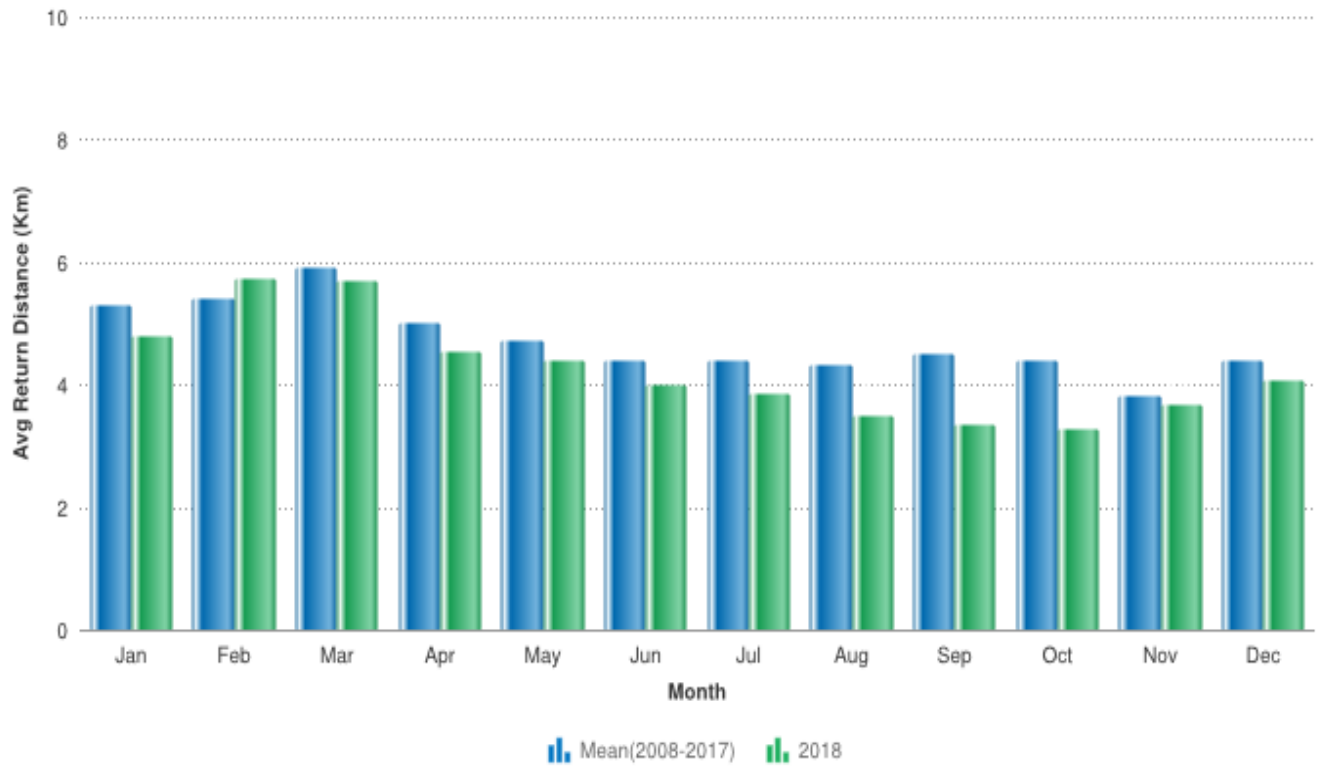


- The pastoral livelihood zones recorded increased waiting time at water source.
- The average household water consumption per person per day stood at 9-11 litres in the pastoral zone while that in the agro-pastoral zone as well remained at 10-12 litres.
- The cost of accessing water at the source remained 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

- During the month, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was 4.3 km, indicating an increase from 3.7 km recorded in the previous month. In comparison to the normal trekking distance of 4.4 km, the current trekking distance is below the normal range by 7 percent.
- The trekking time from grazing areas to water sources is still longer in the pastoral livelihood zones than in the agro-pastoral livelihood zones.

### West pokot County water source distance from grazing area - 2018



- The increase in livestock trekking distance to water is attributed to erratic rains received within pastoral areas occasioning low to no recharge of water sources.
- Watering frequency in cattle and shoats is still 5-6 times in a week while for camel is 3-4 times in a week.

## **3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS**

### **3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION**

#### **3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition**

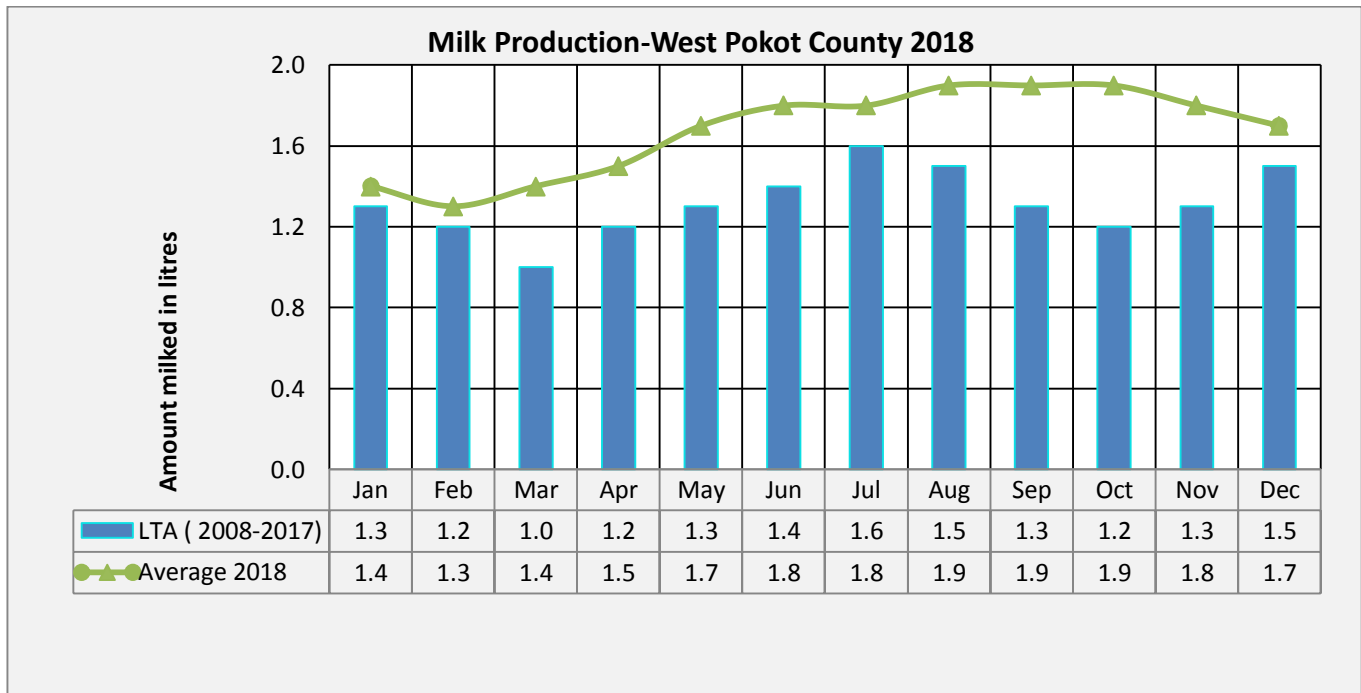
- In December, the body condition for all livestock species is still fair in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The body condition is anticipated to worsen across the livelihood zones, with the poor performance of the OND rainfall season.
- In comparison to a similar period during a normal year, the body condition is normal for all livestock species as there was substantial forage condition during the month. The trend is however declining as a result of depressed rains received in November.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition across the two livelihood zones.

#### **3.1.2 Livestock Diseases**

- Kapchok, ward reported cases of PPR disease in goats, while CCPP was reported in Chepareria and Riwo wards.

#### **3.1.3 Milk Production**

- The County recorded 1.7 litres of milk per household per day on average in December, a drop from 1.8 litres recorded in November.
- The County milk production dropped as compared to the previous month. The cattle produced most milk than other livestock species.
- The current household milk production is 13 percent above the LTA for the month.
- The household milk production decline is owed to dwindling forage access in the normal grazing areas.



## 3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

### 3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

- The main crops grown in the County include maize, beans and bulb onions. Maize crop harvesting is already over.
- The production and supply of horticultural crops such as onions and mangoes to major markets including Sigor, Ortum and Lomut is normal as compared to the seasonal performance.
- The harvesting of mangoes in lowlands, with bulb onions in highlands that are supplied to Ortum and Sigor markets for distribution to other centres within and outside the County is ongoing.
- The level of horticultural farming is good with substantial rains received along the production zones of Sebit, Wakorr, Kabichbich and Lomut.

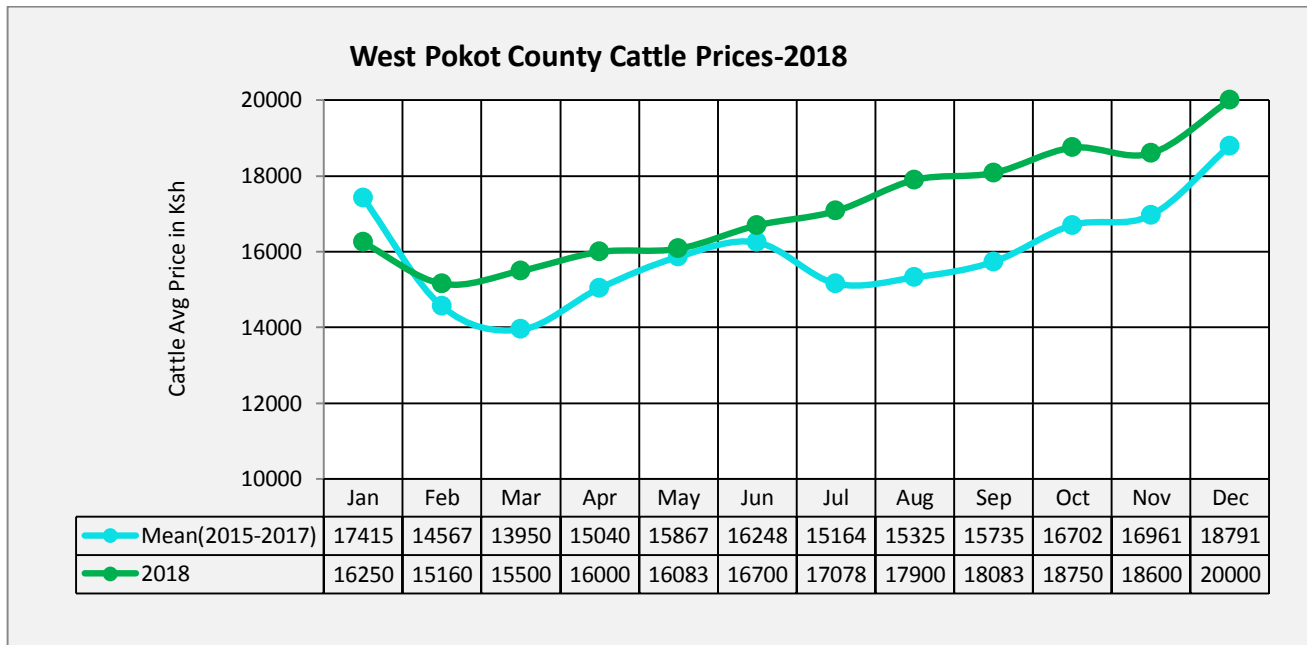


## 4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

#### 4.1.1 Cattle prices

- In December, the medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 20,000, which was an increase in price as compared to Kshs 18,600 recorded in November.

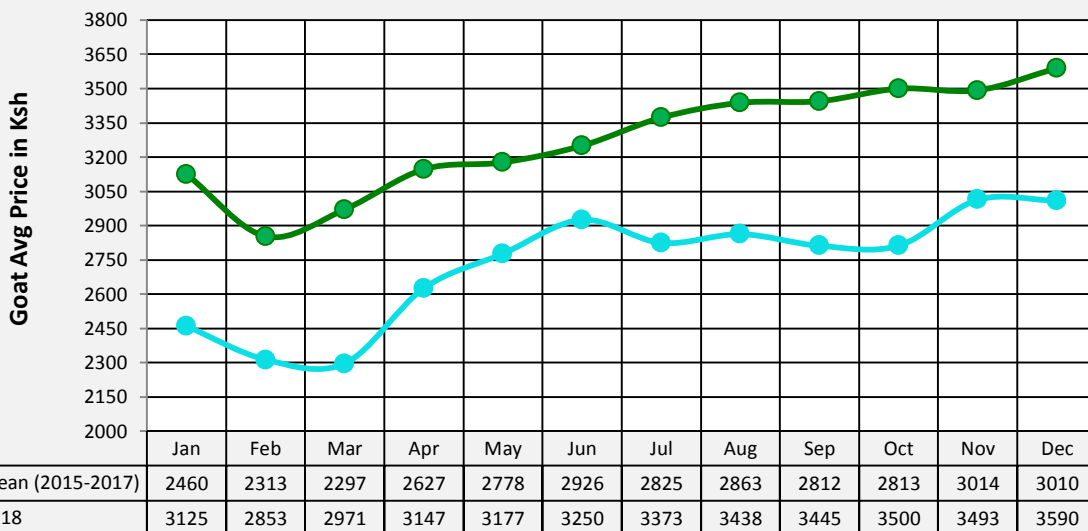


- The cattle prices increase is credited to fair forage condition coupled with Christmas festivities that led to high demand for beef resulting in enhanced prices in the market. Furthermore, pastoralists still have low tendency to sell their stock, creating low supply of animals at markets, leaving the few supplied going at increased prices due to high demand.
- The current cattle price is above the LTA price (Ksh 18,791) for the month by 6 percent.

#### 4.1.2 Goat Prices

- During the month, the County recorded an average price for a 2-year old medium size goat of Kshs 3,740 across the livelihood zones. The goat price increased from (Kshs3,493) recorded in the previous month.

**West Pokot County Goat Prices-2018**



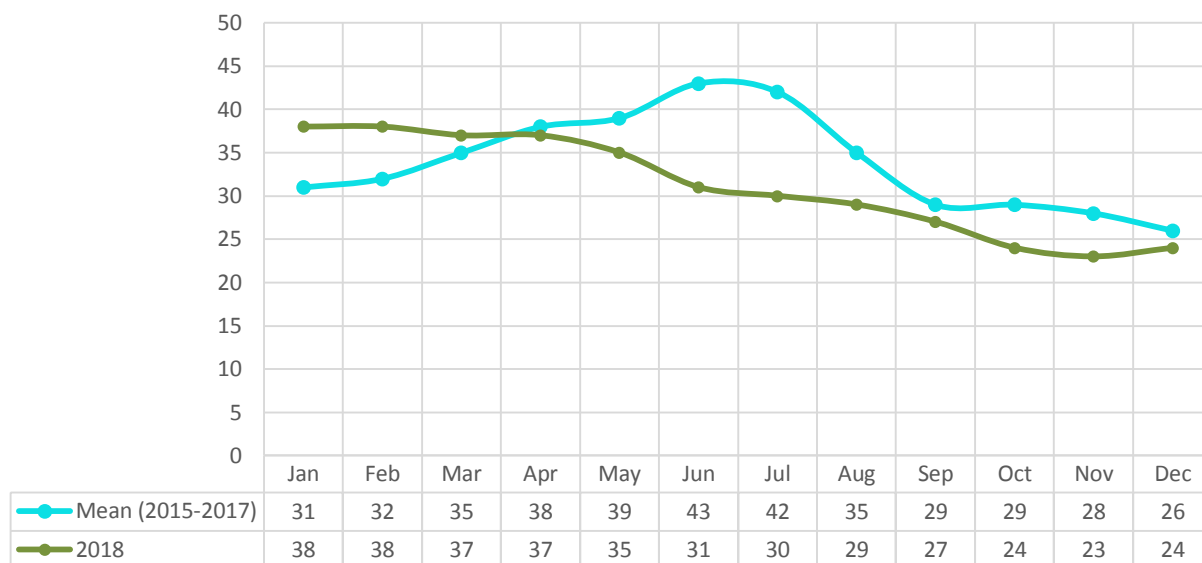
- The increase in price is attributed to Christmas festivities high demand for meat coupled with fair forage condition during the month and availability of water points sustaining good body condition.
- The current price of goat is in addition 19 percent above the LTA price for the month.

## 4.2 CROP PRICES

### 4.2.1 Maize

- In December, maize was sold at Kshs 24 per Kg, the price remained stable as compared to that recorded in November (Kshs 23).
- The current price is however 18 percent below the LTA price (Kshs 26).

**West Pokot County Maize Prices 2018**

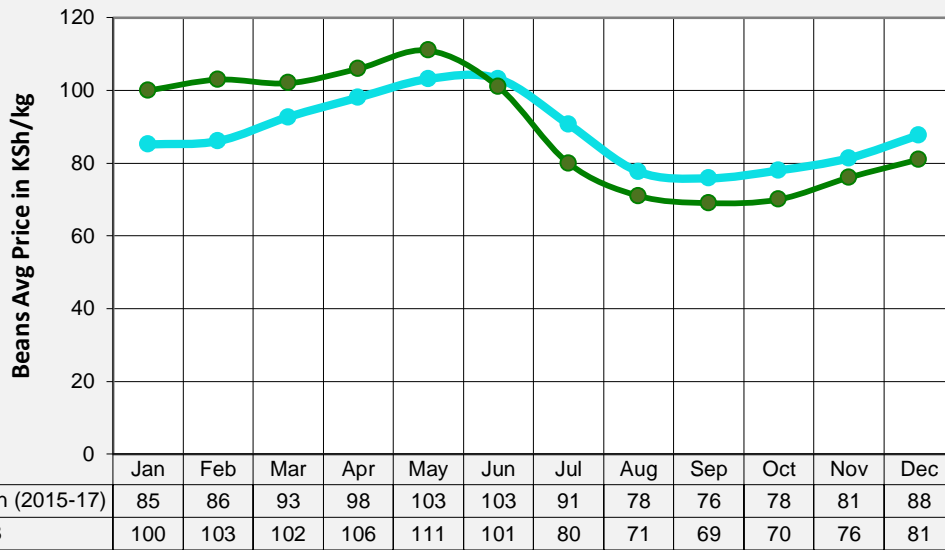


- The stability is credited to steady local harvesting and constant external supply of cheaper maize available at local markets.
- During the month, most households depended more on local markets to replenish their maize stocks. Maize price is expected to remain low due to good local maize harvests realized, along with cheap external sources (from Uganda and Trans Nzoia County), which are traditionally main suppliers to the County.

#### 4.2.2 Beans

- Beans traded at Kshs 81 per Kg in December; an increase from Kshs 76 recorded in November.
- The price increase is attributed to the low external supplies and local harvesting in the County.
- 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.88) for such time of the year by 8 percent.

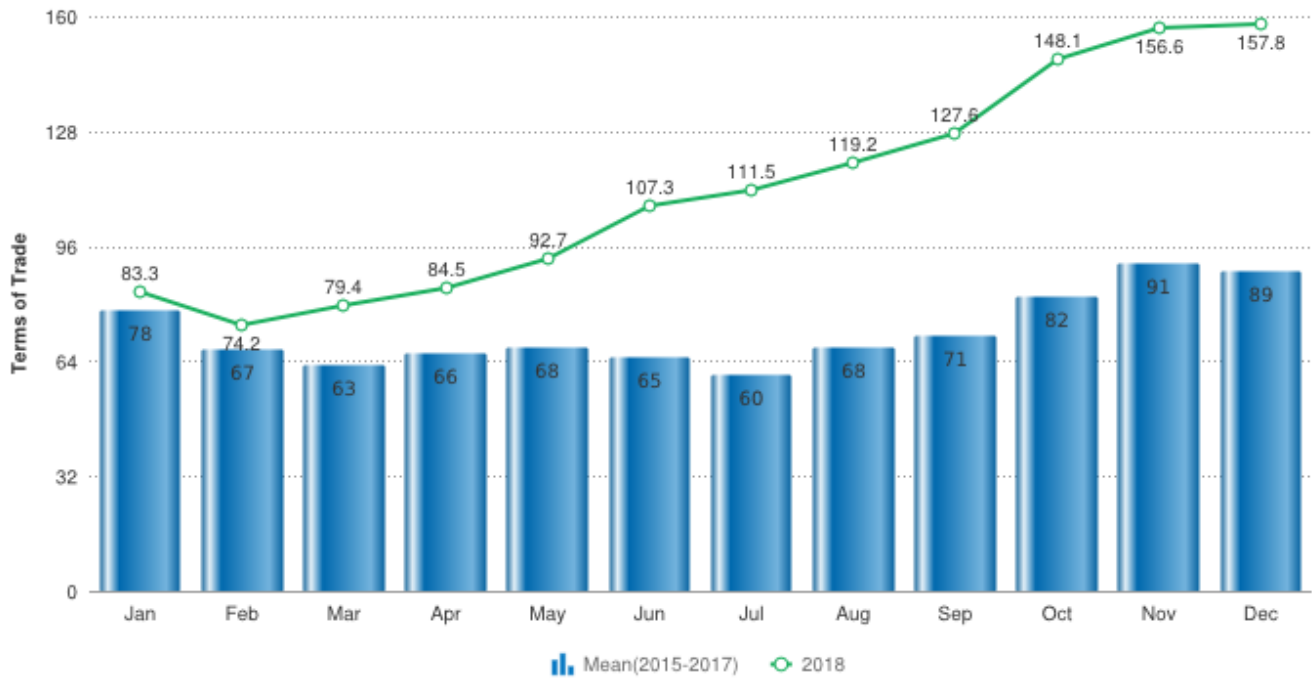
**West Pokot County Beans Prices-2018**



#### 4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

- The Terms of Trade (TOT) was 158 during the month, a slight increase from 157 recorded in November. The increase depicts that pastoralists would obtain slightly more maize for the sale of a goat than they did in November.
- The increase in ToT is owed to the rise in goat prices, along with stable maize prices.
- The variation in TOT is projected over the next three months as the price of goat is expected to drop with the inadequate OND rains accompanied with fluctuating 00maize prices during the same period.

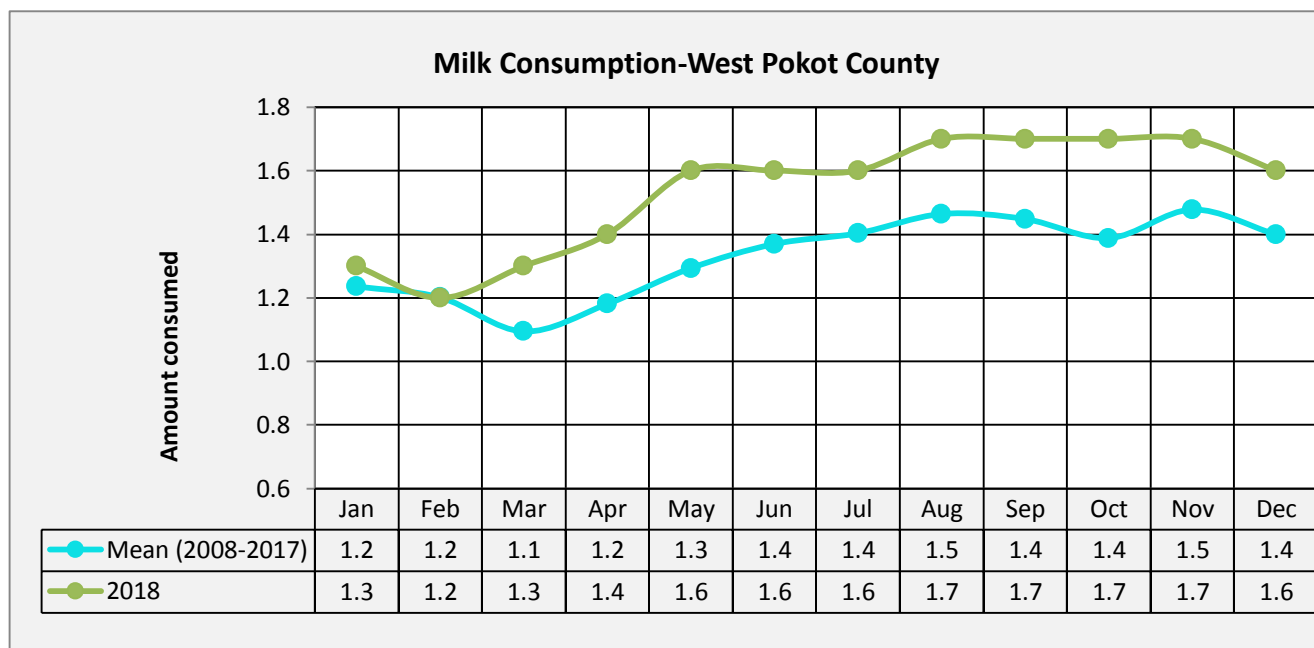
### Terms of Trade - West pokot County



## 5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

### 5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- In December, the households across livelihood zones consumed 1.6 litres of milk on average, the milk consumption is declining as compared to the one recorded in November.



- The drop in milk consumption attributed to the decreased milk production arising from poor rejuvenation of forage. Access to milk is fair.
- The amount of milk consumed is 8% above the LTA for the same period of the year.

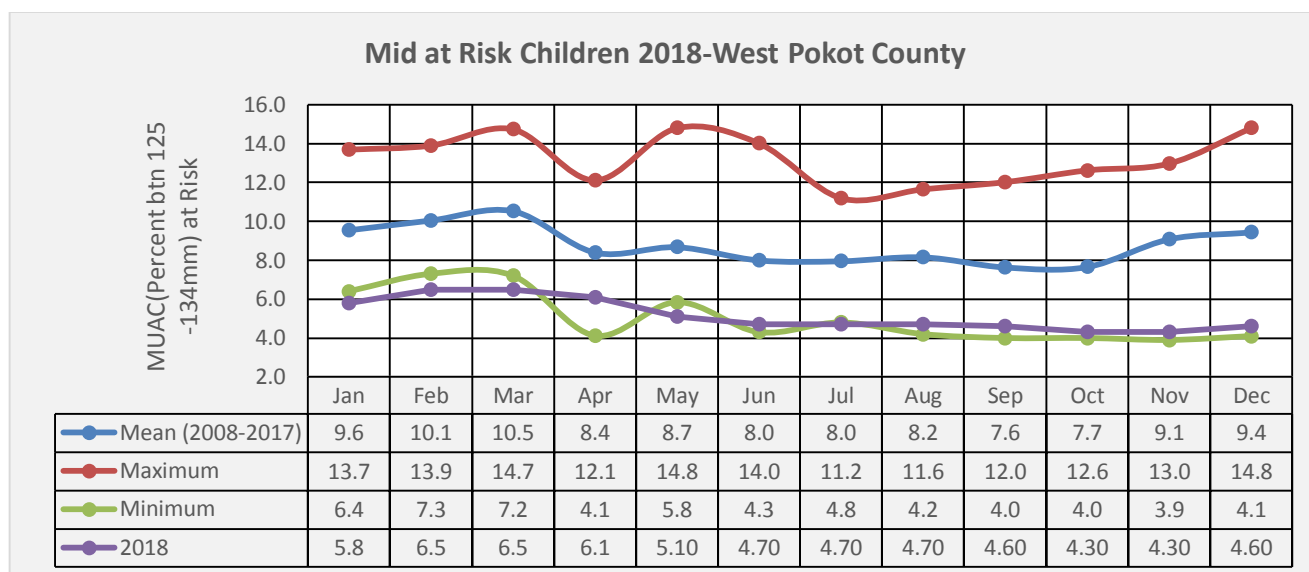
### 5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- The households' proportions of 71%, 25% and 4% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively in December. The score decreased for the Acceptable category with a slight decrease for Borderline and increase in poor categories in comparison to the previous month (73%, 26% and 1%). The FCS is generally acceptable within December.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones in December was at 44; a slight decrease from that recorded in November.
- There was significant variation across the two livelihood zones with for instance 53% of households in the Pastoral zone being categorized as having Acceptable FCS in comparison with 98% households under the same category in the agro-pastoral livelihood zone. There is more diversity of food sources in agro-pastoral livelihood zones as compared to pastoral livelihood zones.

## 5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

### 5.3.1 Nutrition Status

- The proportion of 47 and 53 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled in December, where children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition were at 4.6 percent; an increase from that recorded in the previous month.
- The current proportion of children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition lies below the LTA value of 9.4 percent for the such period of the year.



- The drop in the County nutrition status among the under-fives is attributed to decreased consumption and access to milk, including other essential health and nutrition commodities. It could also be attributed to recorded cases of Malaria among the under-fives. These were the key drivers of the increasing trend in number of children 'at risk' of malnutrition.

### 5.3.2 Health

- In December, Malaria cases were still commonly reported ailments among the sampled children.

## 5.4 COPING STRATEGY

### 5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The County's CSI remained at 1.8; same as that recorded in November. The stability shows that households employed fewer strategies to cope, which could be linked to stable food commodity availability for adults and affordable prices in the markets.
- The pastoral livelihood zones recorded a CSI of 2.3 compared to 1.0 in the agro-pastoral livelihood zone, which is mainly credited to stable livestock productivity.
- The common consumption based coping strategies employed 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**

- Ring vaccination against PPR disease facilitated by County Government in Pokot Central and Pokot South Sub-Counties.

## **7.0 EMERGING ISSUES**

### **7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT**

- The County is peaceful with no insecurity incidences reported.

### **7.2 MIGRATION**

- No abnormal migrations were reported in the County.

### **7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS**

- Maize prices are projected to remain stable while that of goat projected to fall. As such, the terms of trade are likely to worsen over this period.
- The livestock productivity is anticipated to decline, since the forage conditions are likely to deteriorate with the poor OND rains, causing poor livestock body condition hence low livestock prices and inhibited access to food owing to the projected low purchasing power.
- The distance to water sources for both human and livestock is expected to increase, with the depressed performance of OND rainfall.
- Milk availability is anticipated to decrease with the declining rejuvenation of pastoral resources sustaining livestock production. Malnutrition cases are therefore likely to increase over the period, as children would access less milk.



## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. LIVESTOCK SECTOR**

- Support and encourage stock management consistent with available pasture for optimal production and productivity due to land carrying capacity and livestock stocking rate.
- Enhance ring vaccination to curb escalating PPR cases reported in Pokot North and Pokot South Sub-Counties.
- Support accelerated livestock off-take to avert livelihood losses during drought episodes.

### **2. PEACE AND SECURITY**

- Promote and sustain peace building community projects at borders to bring both sides to work together, especially peace projects at conflict hotspots.

### **3. HEALTH AND NUTRITION SECTOR**

- Carry out 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.

### **4. WATER SECTOR**

- Conduct timely stock piling of fast moving spares to ensure critical water facilities remain operational.