

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



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



JANUARY EW PHASE

Drought Status: **NORMAL**

Shughuli za kawaida

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- County received trace rainfall across all livelihood zones in the first and second dekads, with poor spatial and temporal distribution. The ongoing dry spell is likely to worsen the precipitation conditions.
- The vegetation condition depicted a worsening trend across most parts as demonstrated by the significant decrease in the Vegetation Condition Index, although corresponding VCI values, all Sub-Counties recorded above normal vegetation greenness. Forage condition remained fair during the month.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- The body condition for cattle and sheep remained fair across the county with a worsening trend. Distance to water sources increased slightly but fell below the normal range. Milk production and consumption are at stable levels at household level. Terms of trade were favourable.
- Some pastoralists have started migrating outside the county, due to diminishing forage in their normal season grazing areas.
- Most households fell within the acceptable food consumption score. Coping strategy index was at increased slightly. Proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition increased though still remained within the normal range.

Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification

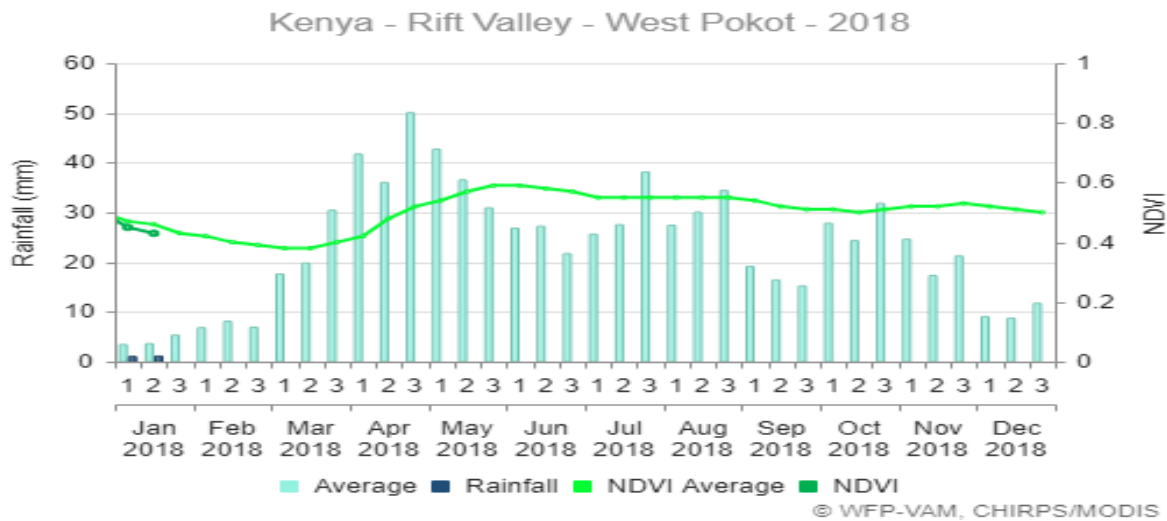
LIVELIHOOD ZONE	EW PHASE	TREND
AGRO PASTORAL	NORMAL	WORSENING
PASTORAL	NORMAL	WORSENING
COUNTY	NORMAL	WORSENING
Biophysical Indicators		
	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	60	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot Central)	66	>35
Forage Condition	Fair	Good
Production Indicators		
	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Normal	Normal
Milk Production	1.4 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)	83	>76
Milk Consumption	1.3 litres	>1.2 litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	3.5 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Ksh. 5	<Ksh. 5
Utilization Indicators		
	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	5.8	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	9.1	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	39.5	>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	July	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1.1 RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

- The County received trace rainfall amounts, less than the previous month that was recorded in the first and second dekads of the month. The period represents the start of the dry spell after the short rains season that ended during the previous month.
- Such low rains are expected for this time of the year as the dry spell gets pronounced.
- In lowlands, no rainfall was received, instead, only in highland areas where very light showers were received, characterised by poor temporal and spatial distribution.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall in January continued to decrease to almost zero amounts as compared to the previous month. The amounts were below the long term average in both the first and second dekads.
- The current NDVI values were below the historical NDVI values due to deficient precipitation during the month. The trend is declining with the decreased precipitation.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- In January, there was no rainfall recorded in the lowlands. Traces of precipitation were recorded in Koibos and Kabichbich rain gauge stations in the highlands.
- The county remained largely dry within the month.

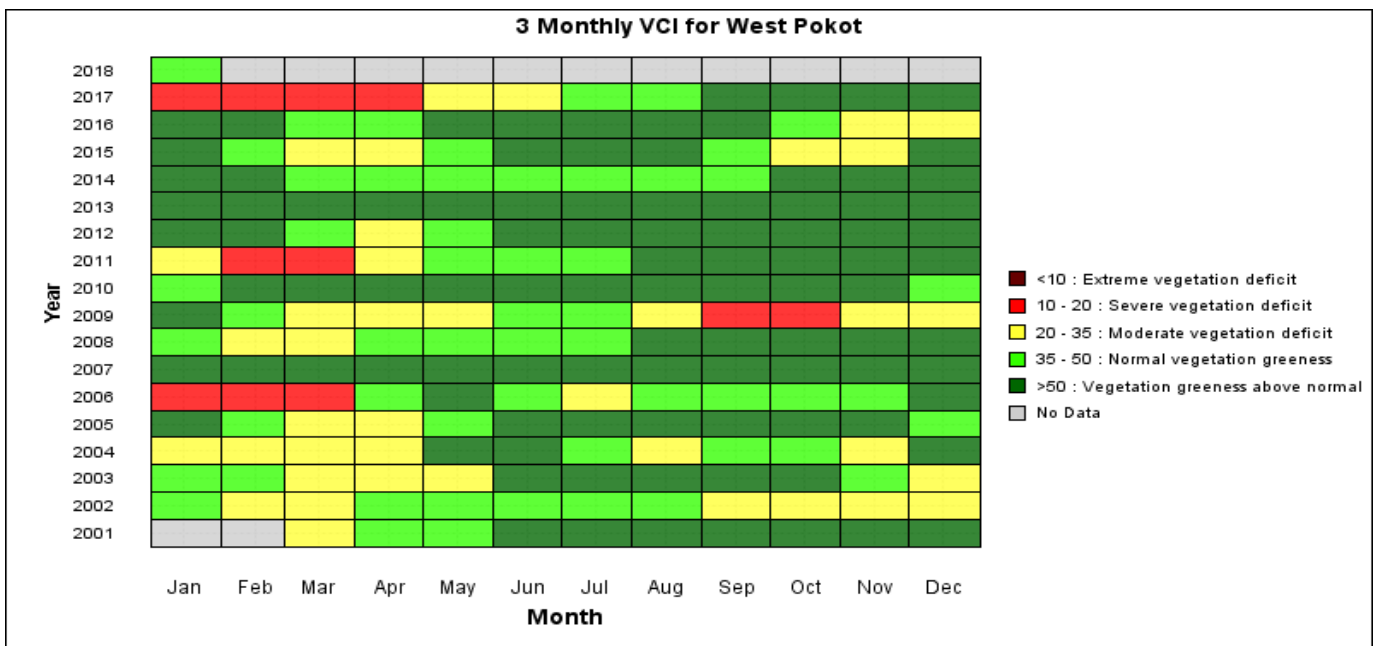
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable event such as floods, land/mud slides, lightning strikes nor hailstorms occurred during the month under review.

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 indicates the vegetation status of the County for January is 60, having decreased from 71 recorded during the previous month although remaining above normal (35). The current VCI depicts vegetation greenness above normal ranges.
- The VCI shows a declining trend across most parts of the county during the month under review. All sub-counties were categorized in the above normal vegetation greenness band. The VCI for all Sub-counties, Kacheliba, Kapenguria, Pokot South and Sigor dropped from 69 to 56, 66 to 57, 71 to 66 and 76 to 66 respectively. The downward trend in the VCI is attributed to poor regeneration of vegetation due to the ongoing dry spells in the county during the month.

2.1.2 Pasture

- The percent of sampled communities who reported that pasture was good, fair and poor is 13, 27 and 60 respectively, all of whom stated that this was normal for such a time of the year.
- Across all livelihoods the pasture condition is mostly still fair to poor. The condition however, is normal in comparison to the pasture situation during a normal year, although compared to the previous month, the trend is deteriorating and is attributed to poor rainfall during the month under review.

- The expected normal dry spell from this month is projected to worsen the pasture situation across all livelihoods.
- The perennial Pokot-Marakwet border conflict remains the major impediment to pasture access.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity in both livelihood zones.

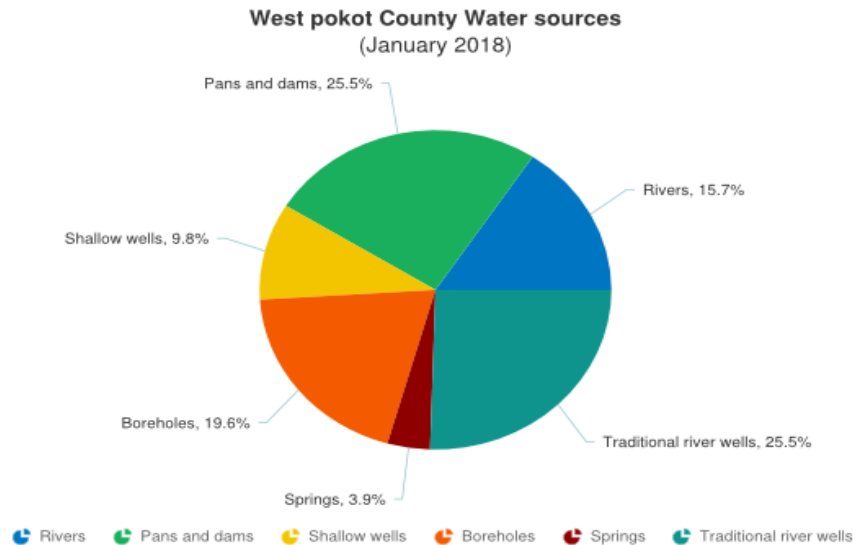
2.1.3 Browse

- The percent of community population sampled who confessed that browse was good, fair and poor is 30, 41 and 29 respectively.
- The browse condition in the two livelihood zones remained predominantly fair, where, in comparison to the browse situation during a normal year, the situation is normal. The quality of the browse condition dropped further in relation to that of the previous month due to poor rainfall during the month.
- The access to browse is still affected by the conflict along the Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders.
- Quality and quantity of browse is fair in both zones and there is no significant variation between the Pastoral and Agro Pastoral livelihood zones.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

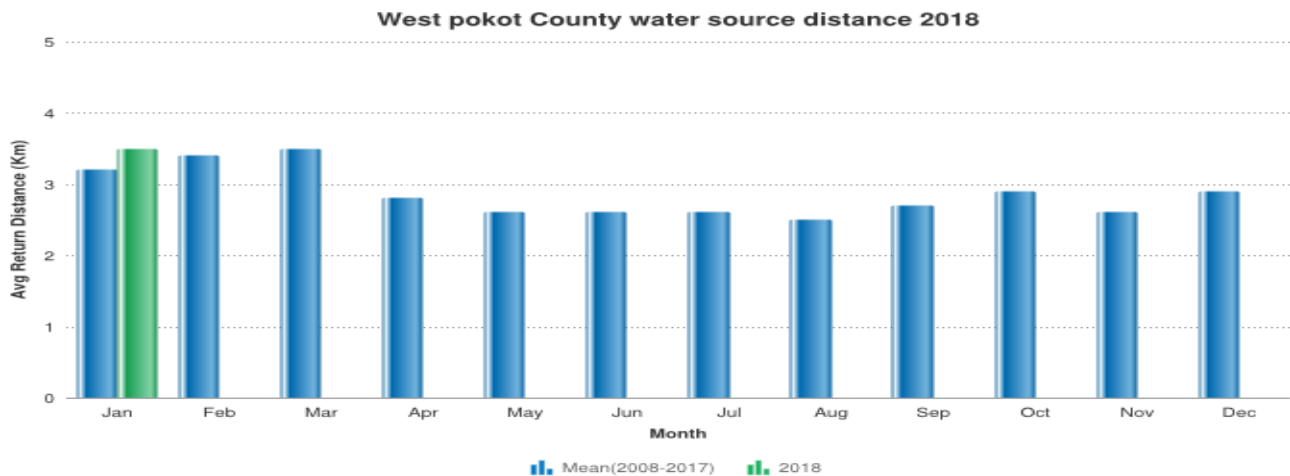
2.2.1 Sources

- The percent of the population using main water sources currently for households and livestock is 16, 20 and 26 for rivers, boreholes and both pans/dams including traditional river wells. Other water sources in use include shallow wells was at 9 percent.
- In comparison to the month of December 2017, the water recharge levels decreased due to lack of rainfall.
- The water levels for rivers and boreholes have dropped due to poor recharge
- The current main sources in use are the normal sources where households draw rely on during this time of the year.



2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- During the month, the household return distance to water source is 3.5 km, representing an increase from 2.6 Km recorded in the previous month, although still 9 percent above the long term average distance.
- Pastoral livelihood zone recorded longer trekking distances to water sources in comparison to the Agro-pastoral livelihood zone. Water distances notably increased due to the inadequate water sources recharge during the month.

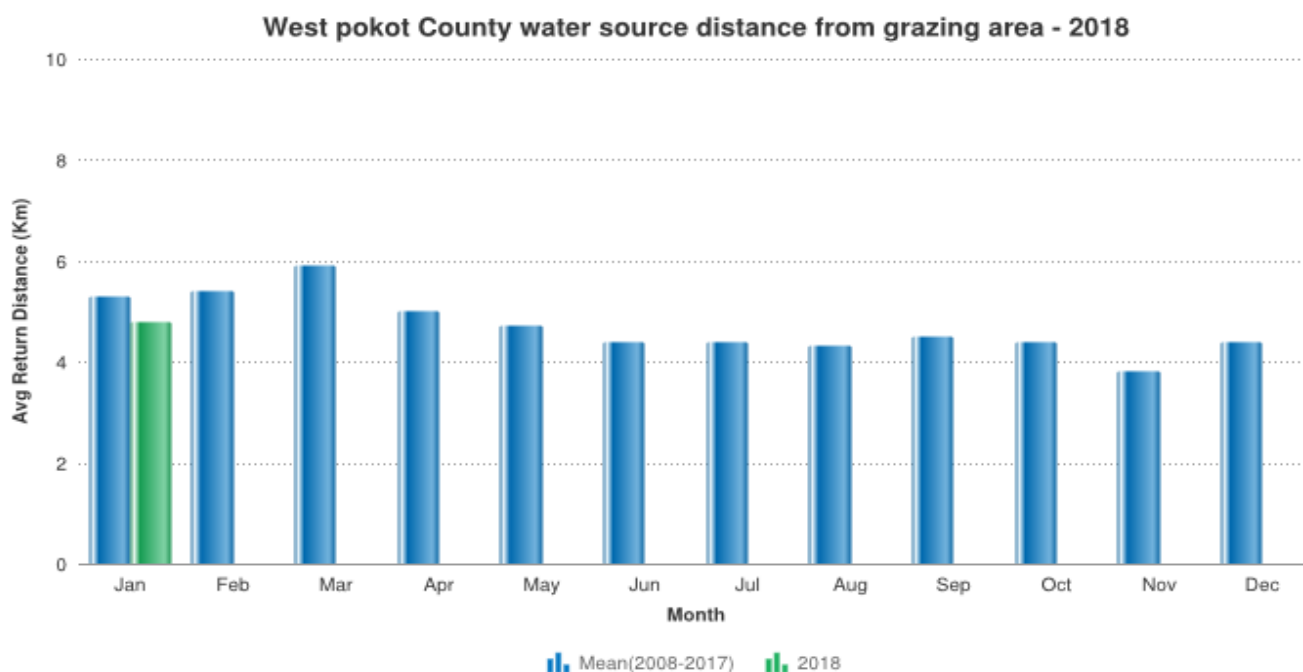


- Both the Agro-pastoral and Pastoral livelihood zones recorded increased waiting time at water source.
- The average household water consumption per person per day stands at 7-12 litres in the Pastoral zone while that in the Agro-pastoral zone is still 9-14 litres.

- The cost of accessing water at the source is still 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

- The livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources within January is 4.8Km, which is an increase from the 2.8 km recorded in December 2017. In comparison to the normal trekking distance of 5.3 Km, current trekking distance though decreasing lies below the normal range by 9 percent.
- The trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was longer in Pastoral livelihood zone compared to that in the Agro-pastoral livelihood zone.



- Increased livestock trekking distance is mainly attributed to lack of rainfall within the month of January affecting some of the available water sources.
- Frequency for watering cattle and shoats reduced to 4-6 times in a week while for camel is 3-5 times in a week.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

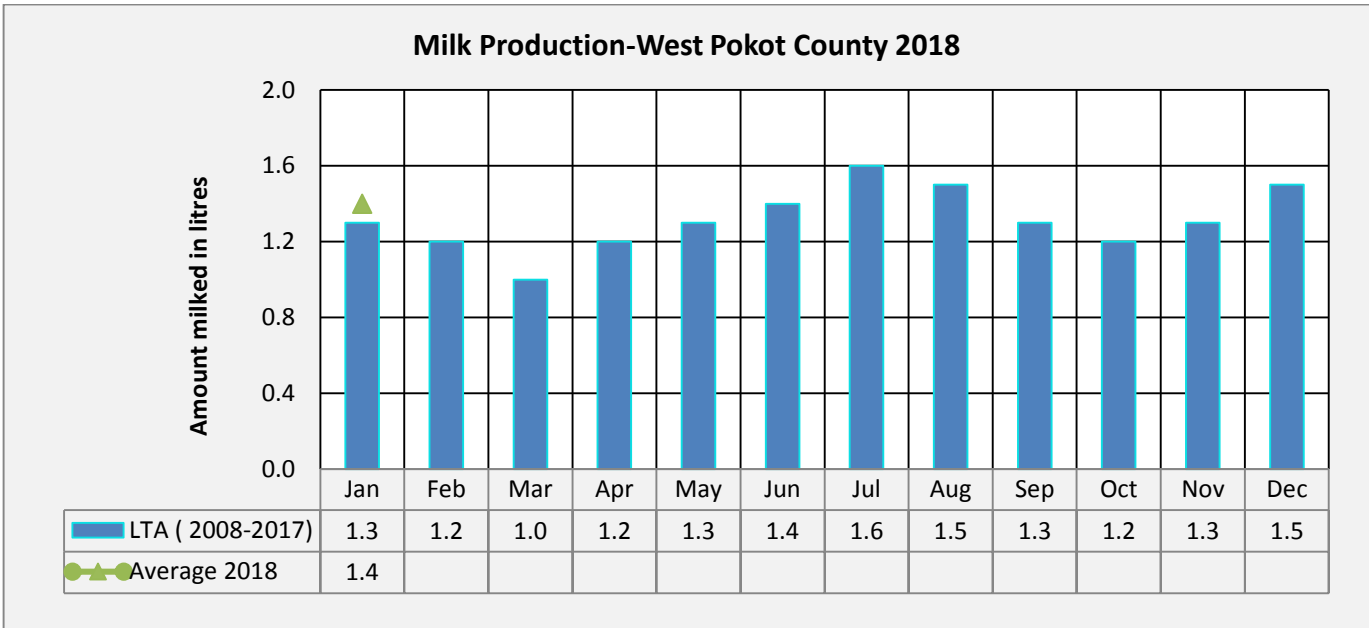
- The body condition for all livestock species in both Pastoral and Agro-pastoral livelihood zones is fair.
- The livestock body condition is notably expected to worsen over successive months across all the livelihood zones due to the ongoing dry spell.
- In comparison to similar periods during a normal year, the body condition of all species is normal and this is attributed to fair cumulative forage condition generated during the October-November-December (OND) short rains season. The trend is declining as a result of dry spell season that has started during the month.
- There exists no significant variation in livestock body condition across the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Incidences of Foot Mouth Disease and Lumpy Skin Disease were reported in Pokot North, Chepareria, Riwo, Sigor and Masol wards, with cases of abortion in goats being reported in Sigor ward. Diarrhoea cases in goats were reported in Kapchok and Masol wards.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- The County recorded an average of 1.4 litres of milk per household per day.
- The milk produced during the month dropped slightly from that recorded in the month of December 2017. Cattle produced most milk within the county.
- The current household milk production is slightly above the normal household milk production for the month by 8 percent.
- There was a decrease in the household milk production during the month due to the worsening forage condition in the normal grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

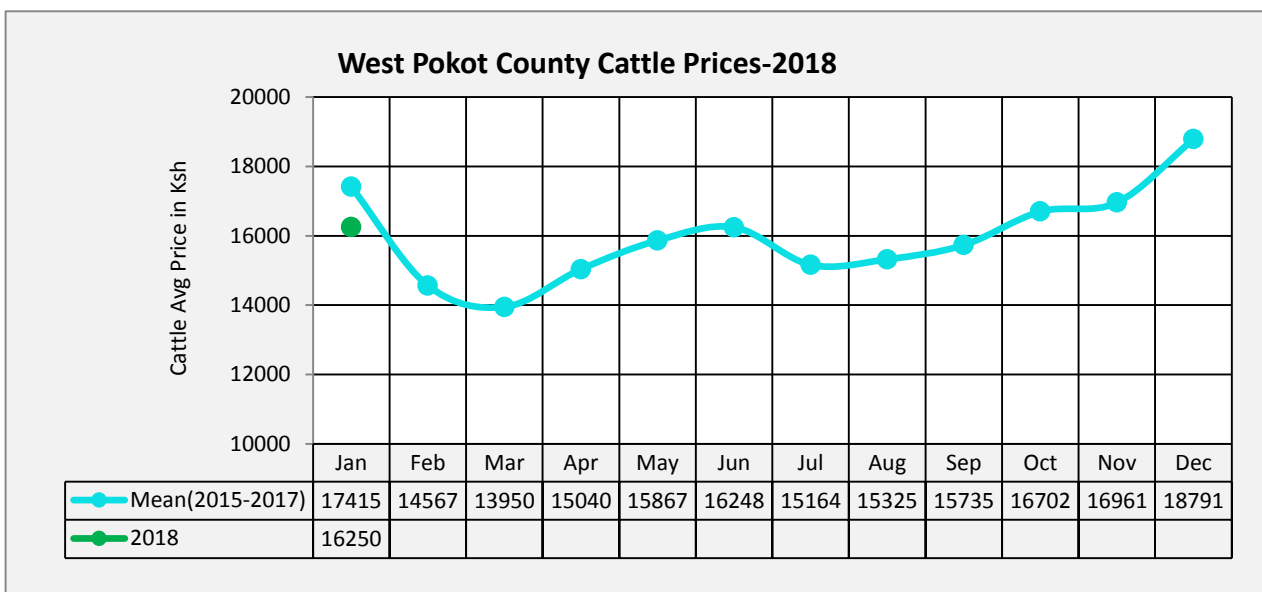
- The main crops grown are maize, beans and bulb onion, where most areas are currently under land preparation.
- Farmers in the lowland areas under Irrigation such as Ortum and Wei Wei that had planted beans at the onset of the short rains were engaged in weeding and some are harvesting the crop.
- Bulb onion harvesting is ongoing (in areas such as Kokwotendwo and Kerelwa) which supply to Ortum market for distribution to other centres within and outside the county.
- Horticultural production was booming with intensive market activity being witnessed more so along the production zones of Sebit, Wakorr, Wei Wei, and Lomut.
- The level of horticultural supplies such as mangoes, pawpaw and onions to major markets including Sigor, Ortum and Lomut has improved due to fair OND rain season performance.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

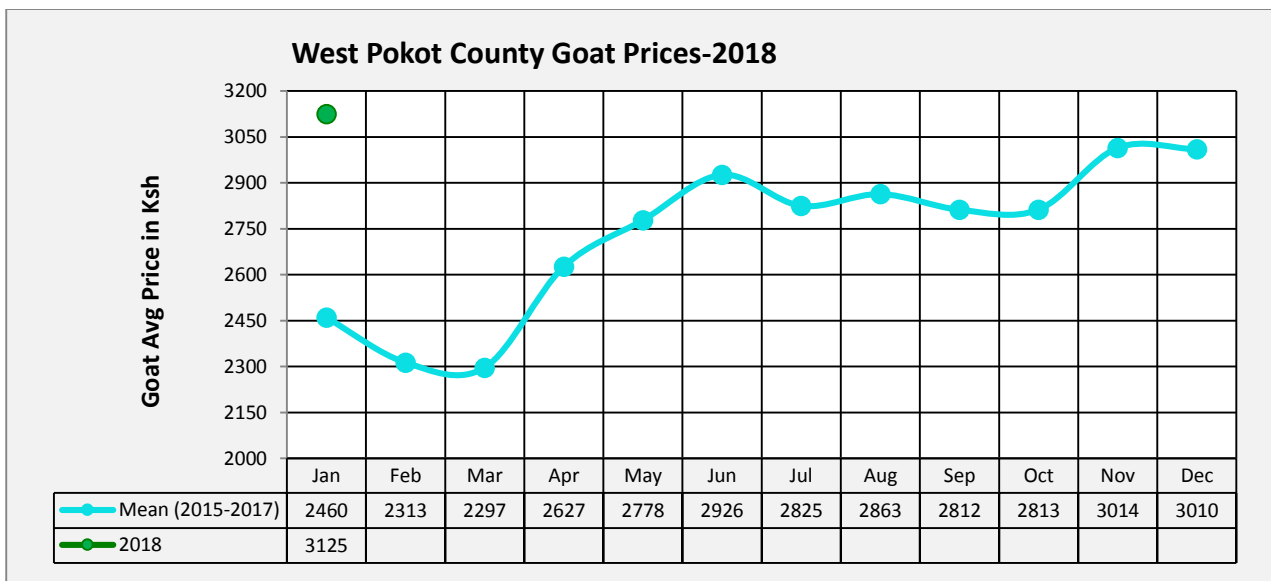
- The medium size 4-year bull in the county was sold at an average price of Ksh16,250 during the month, which represented a decrease from Ksh 17,392 that was recorded in the previous month.
- The price decrease is mainly attributed to the ongoing dry spell resulting in the instability of pasture condition and water availability, in turn leading to deterioration in the cattle body condition thus decimated prices.



- The current cattle price is below the Long Term Average (LTA) price (Ksh 17,415) for the month by 7 percent.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- The average price of a 2-year old medium size goat was Ksh.3,125 across all livelihood zones in the County during the month under review. The price decreased in price in comparison to that of the previous month (Ksh 3,800).

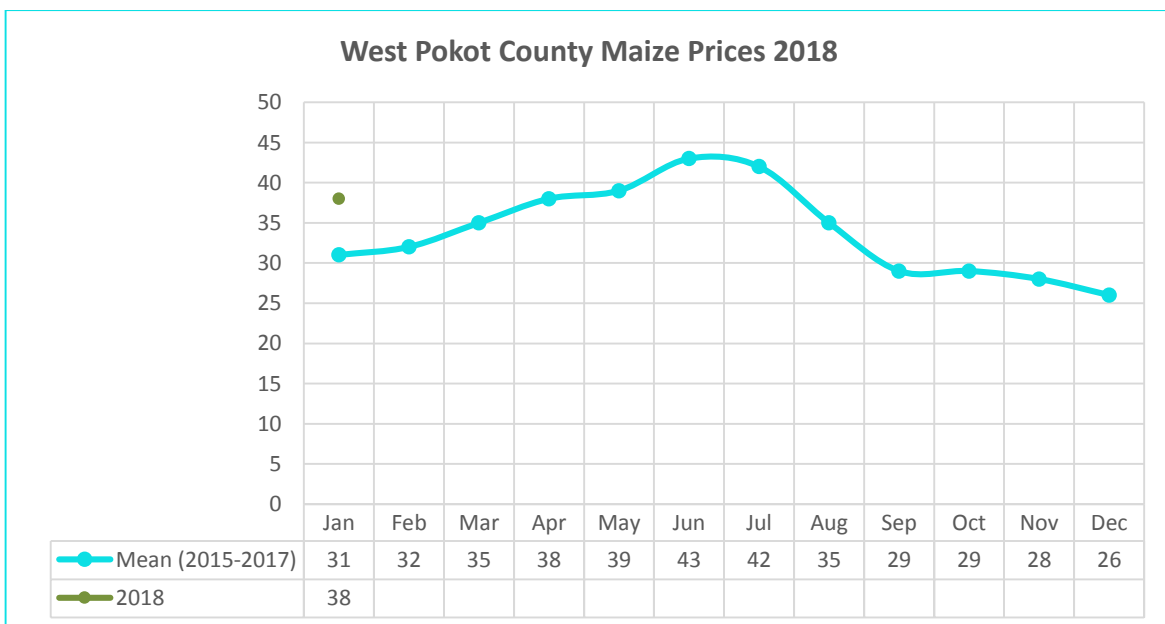


- The price decrease is mainly attributed to deminishing forage condition and poor recharge of water points resulting to deterioration in the body condition.
- The current price of goat is however 27 percent above the LTA price for the month.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

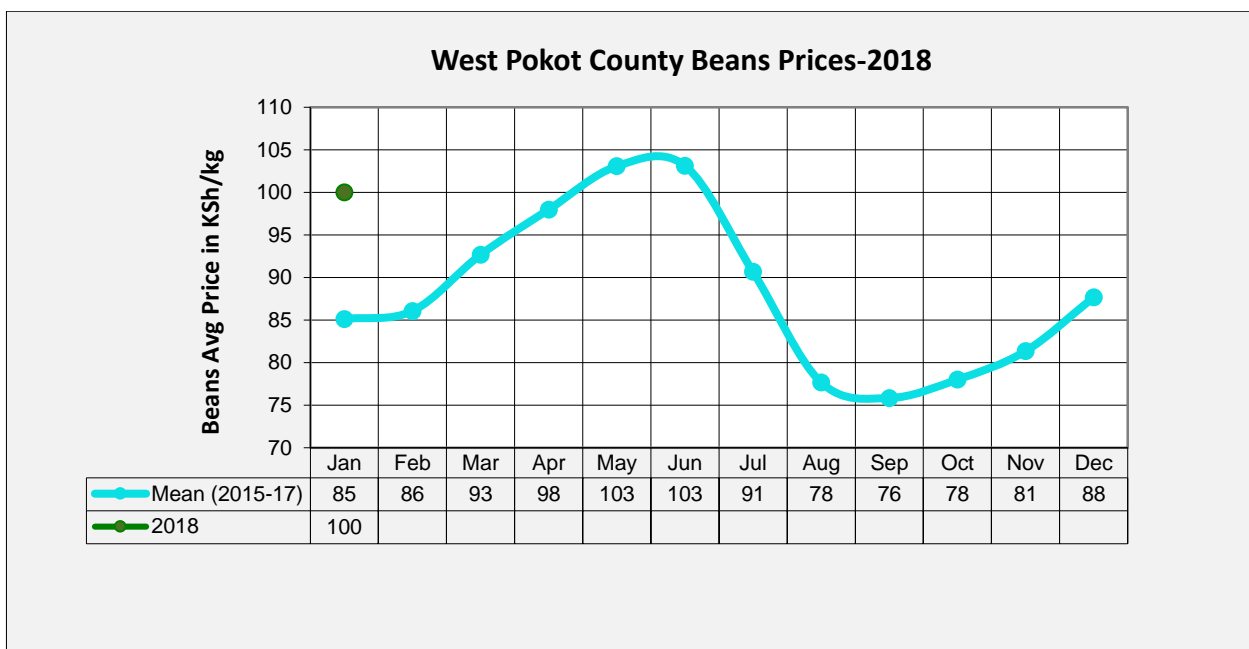
- During the month under review, maize traded at Ksh.38 per Kg, showing is an increase from the Kshs.36 recorded in December 2017.
- The current price is 23 percent above the LTA price (Ksh 31) for the month under review.



- The persistent Pokot-Marakwet border conflict and Pastoral zones in Pokot central resulted to a higher price in comparison to other areas as a result of the normal external supply sources (being affected. Generally, the increase is largely attributed to lack of local harvest and unsteady external supply of maize.
- Most households rely more on local markets to replenish their stocks, maize price is likely to remain unstable as its supply fluctuates from local and external sources (Uganda and Trans Nzoia County) which are suppliers to the county.

4.2.2 Beans

- In January 2018, beans traded at 100 per Kg representing a decrease from Ksh 103 recorded in December 2017.
- The decrease is attributed to fair local bean produce around the county along with steady prices at external supplies.
- There was no significant variation in price across the two livelihood zones since they both relied on the same external sources for supplies.
- The current market price of beans though decreasing remains significantly above the LTA price (Ksh 85) for a normal season during this time of the year; by 18 percent.

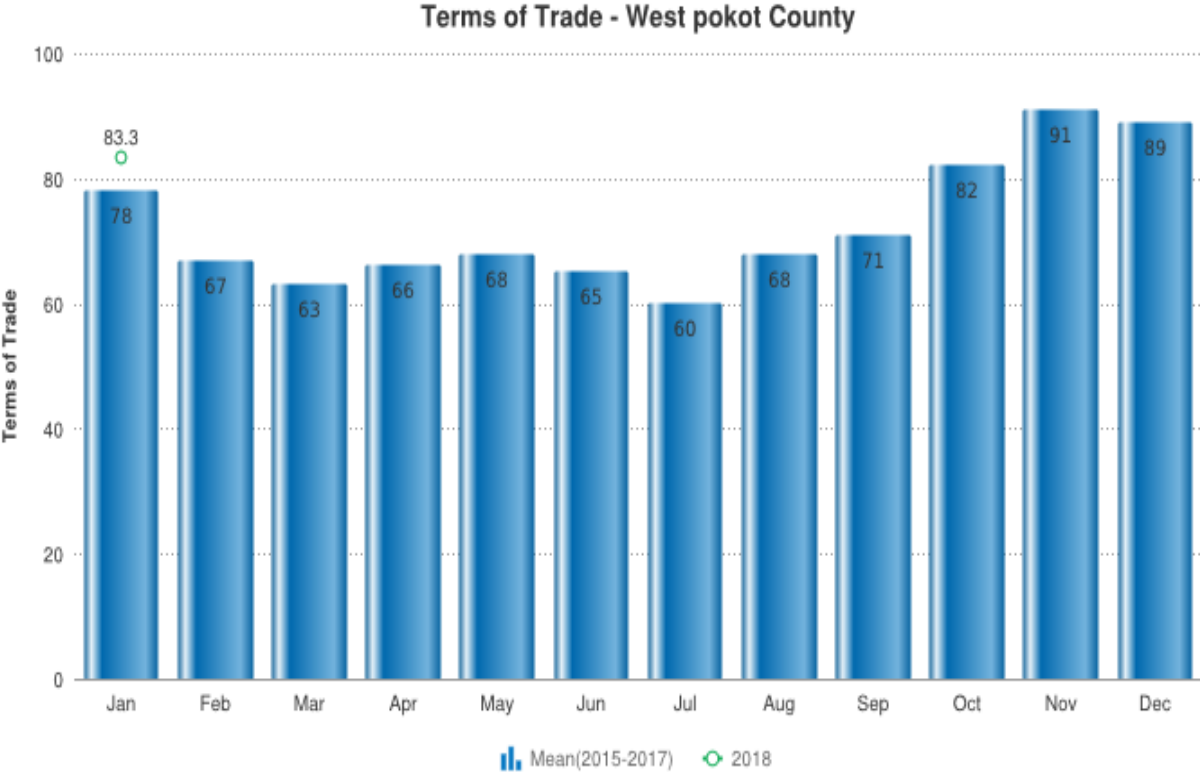


4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

- The Terms of Trade (TOT) is 83 in January 2018, having dropped from 103 recorded during the previous month. This indicates that pastoralists would obtain less maize for the sale of a goat

than they did during the previous month. The current ToT is however 5 percent above the LTA for the month.

- The decrease in ToT is mainly attributed to dropping goat prices and the increased maize prices.

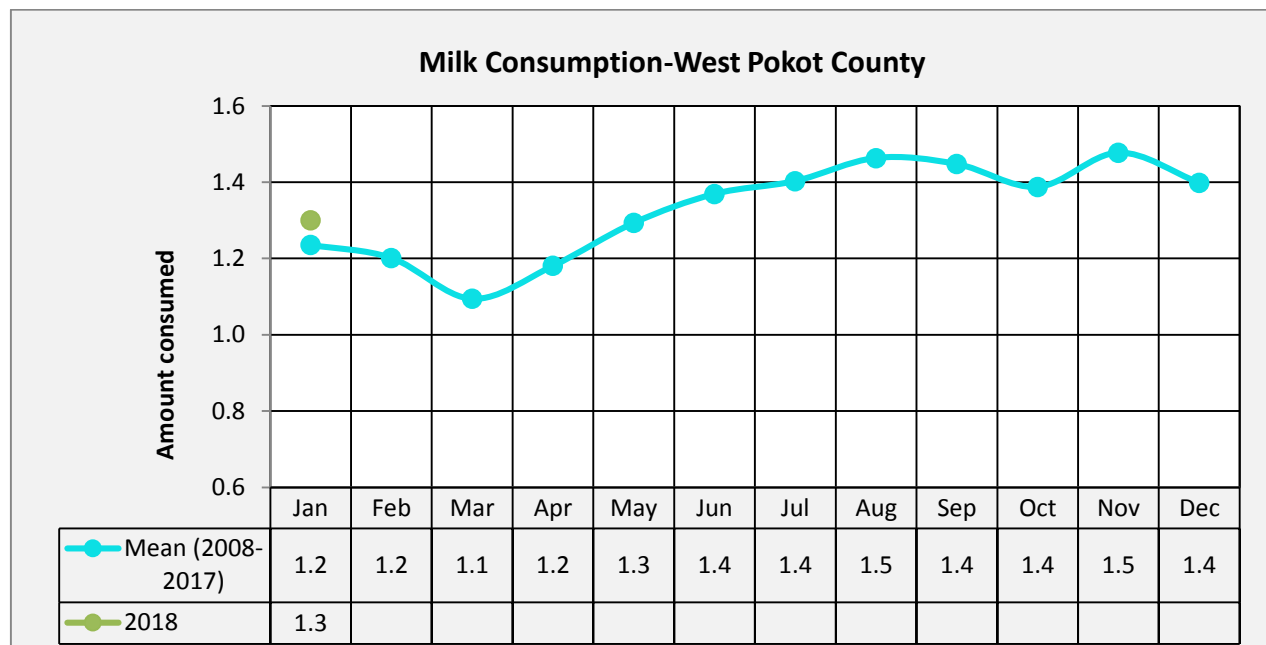


- Further variation is anticipated over the next three months as the price of goat is projected to fall with the ongoing dry spell coupled with soaring of maize price during the same period.

5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- The households across all livelihood zones consumed 1.3 litres of milk on average, mainly from cattle, indicating a decrease from the previous month (1.4 litres).



- The decrease in milk consumption level is attributed to the decline in production occasioned by dwindling pastoral resources especially forage as well as increasing livestock trekking distances to water points.
- The quantity of milk consumed is however 8% above the LTA for the same period of the year.

5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

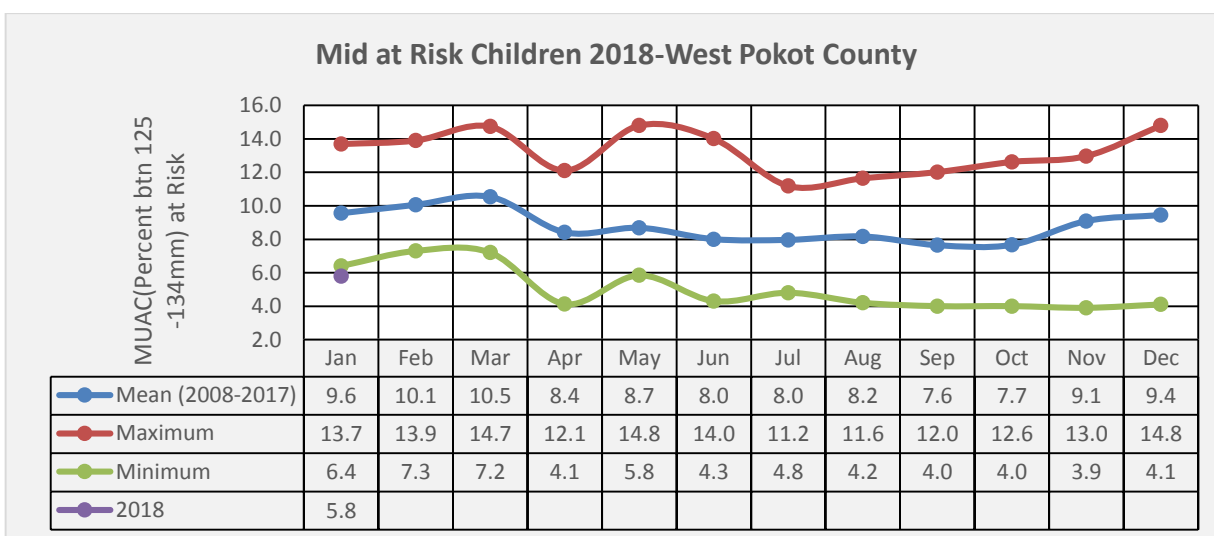
- The proportion of 53%, 40% and 7% of households had Food Consumption Score (FCS) within acceptable, borderline and poor categories respectively during the month under review. In comparison with the previous month, where the proportions were 53%, 44% and 3% for Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively, the FCS deteriorated as there were more households in the poor category for the current month (7%) than the previous month (3%). Although the proportion of households in the Acceptable category remained the same between the two months, a number of households in the borderline category dropped to the poor category between December 2017 and January 2018 indicating a worsening FCS for the month.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones during the month under review remained stable at 39.5 a slight drop from 40.6 that was recorded during the previous month.

- There was a significant variation across the two livelihood zones with for instance 38.9% of households in the Pastoral zone being categorized as having acceptable FCS in comparison with 73.3% households under the same category in the Agro-pastoral zone.

5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition Status

- The proportion of 54 and 46 percent of girls and boys respectively were sampled.
- During the month under review, the percent of children rated being as ‘at risk’ of malnutrition was at 5.8, being an increase from 4.1 recorded in December 2017.
- The current percent of children rated being ‘at risk’ of malnutrition though on increase, it remains below the LTA value of 9.6 for the period in a normal year.



- The increase in malnutrition among under-fives is attributed to continuous drop in consumption and accessibility to milk including other essential health and nutrition commodities in the County. These were considered main drivers whose increased number of children falling outside the normal range of children ‘at risk’ of malnutrition could be attributed to.

5.3.2 Health

- Cases of Malaria, Coughing and Typhoid were the most commonly reported ailments during the month among the sampled children.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- In January 2018, the CSI was 9.1, which represents an increase in comparison to 8.6 recorded during the previous month. The increase in CSI shows that households employed more

mechanisms to cope compared to the previous month, which could be attributed to dynamic food commodity availability and prices in the markets.

- Agro-pastoral livelihood zone recorded a CSI of 9 compared to the 9.2 in Pastoral livelihood zone, which is mainly attributed to stability in livestock productivity along the Pastoral zone.
- The notable 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

- Pests' des Petis disease (PPR) and Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) vaccination was undertaken by County Government in Pokot North Sub-County.
- ACF together with the Ministry of Health and Nutrition supported a series of mass screening and health outreaches targeting mainly Pokot Central and North Sub-Counties.
- World Vision/WFP and Red Cross are conducting cash transfers to vulnerable households in Turkwel belt and Pokot North areas.
- Peace meetings were conducted by SIKOM and County Government along county borders.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- Cattle rustling incidences were reported early in the month mainly in Pokot Central along Pokot-Marakwet border at Chesegon where around 10 people reportedly lost their lives, hundreds of livestock were stolen and over 50 households displaced in Cheptulel area.

7.2 MIGRATION

- Some pastoralists in Pokot North Sub County have started moving back to the dry season grazing zones mainly outside the county (Uganda) due to the fast diminishing pasture and browse conditions at traditional zones.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- Owing to the declining pasture and browse along with water resources, livestock productivity is expected to deteriorate further due to the ongoing dry spell. The body condition is likely to deteriorate and lead to continued decrease in livestock of prices.
- Nutritious food such as milk availability is expected to drop with the diminishing pastoral resources supporting livestock milk production. Malnutrition is in turn likely to increase.
- Maize prices are expected to rise with that of goat projected to drop, whence as a result the terms of trade likely to remain unfavourable over this period.
- Constant conflicts along county borders could remain the greatest constraint to food security due to limited market accessibility and dwindling stocks in the market.

- Distance to water sources for both human and livestock use is projected to increase due to ongoing dry spells necessitating over-evaporation on water points.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Enhance surveillance while monitoring and vaccinating animals that will be migrating back into the county against FMD, PPR, CBPP and CCPP.
- Upscale awareness on community driven strategic livestock destocking to avert losses in event of prolonged dry spells.

2. PEACE AND SECURITY

- Support 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.

3. HEALTH AND NUTRITION SECTOR

- Support integrated medical outreaches to all hotspots countywide 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

- Support farmers with modern smart water use technologies to enable maximum utilization of stored water.