

National Drought Management Authority
WEST POKOT COUNTY
DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR AUGUST 2019



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



AUGUST EW PHASE



Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- Adequate rainfall was received across all livelihood zones in the County. The temporal and spatial distribution remained good.
- Above normal vegetation index was recorded, with an improving trend across the livelihoods as depicted by the increase in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above vegetation conditions. Forage condition is good within the month.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- The livestock body condition is good with an upward trend across the County. Distance to water sources declined.
- The terms of trade is favourable with an upward trend.
- Milk production and consumption at household level improved and was comparable to long term average.
- Most of the households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index stabilized.
- Malnutrition status went down as the proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition fell within the normal range with a declining 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)	73	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot South)	68	>35
Forage Condition	Good	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Good	Normal
Milk Production	1.8 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)	58	>76
Milk Consumption	1.6 Litres	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	2.3 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

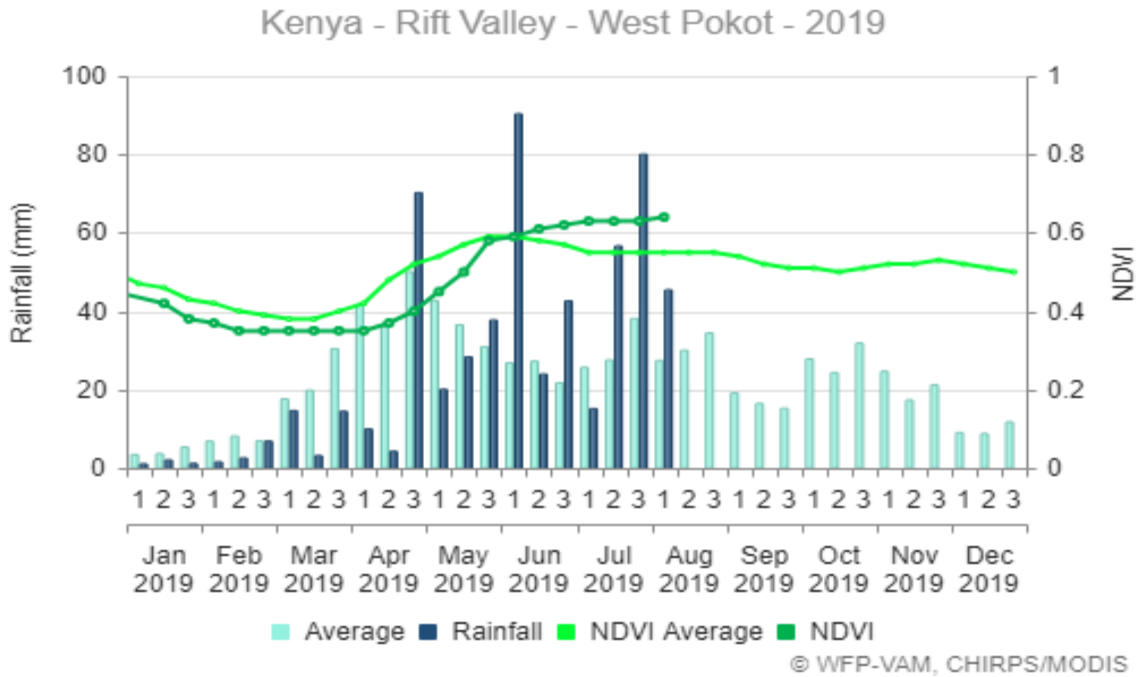
Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	5.0	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	2.3	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	46	>35

<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

- In August, the county received adequate rainfall in all dekads. Both the highlands and lowlands reported high rainfall intensity.
- The rainfall situation is normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall increased from 15.1 mm to 45.4 mm in the first dekad. The amount was above normal.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- Both the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution was good across the livelihoods. The intensity was good in all livelihood zones.

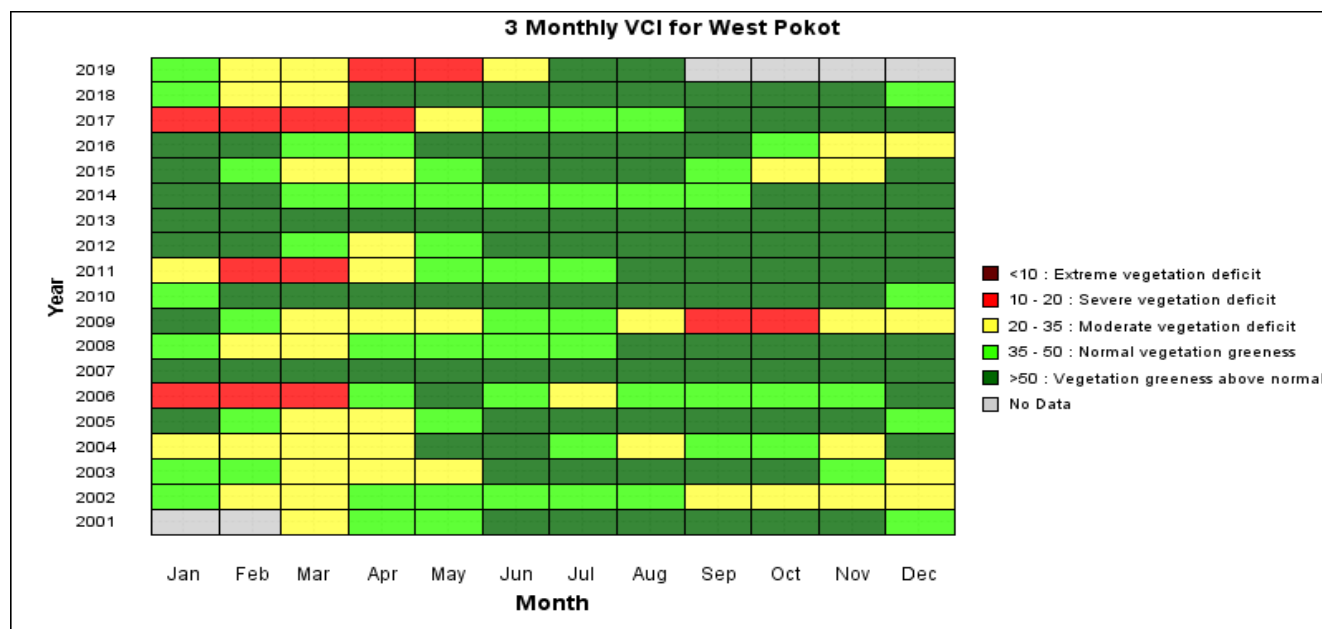
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable event was reported during the month.

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

- During the month, VCI (VCI-3month) which represents the vegetation status of the County was 73, an increase from 55 reported in the previous month. The current VCI shows above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI trend improved across all livelihood zones, with all sub-counties reporting above normal vegetation conditions. The rise in VCI is from 57.5 to 75, 50.5 to 69, 54.4 to 74 and 51.6 to 74 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The increasing trend in VCI is credited to sufficient regeneration of vegetation cover due to abundant rainfall received in the County within the month.

2.1.2 Pasture

- In August, the proportion of sampled community members which described that the pasture was good increased from 90 percent in July to 100 percent in August.
- Pasture situation is still good across the livelihood zones. The communities stated that the condition was normal for such time of the year. The trend is increasing in comparison to that of July and is linked to adequate rains during the month.
- The pasture condition is expected to improve with the ongoing good rains.
- There is no significant variation in pasture quality and quantity between livelihood zones.

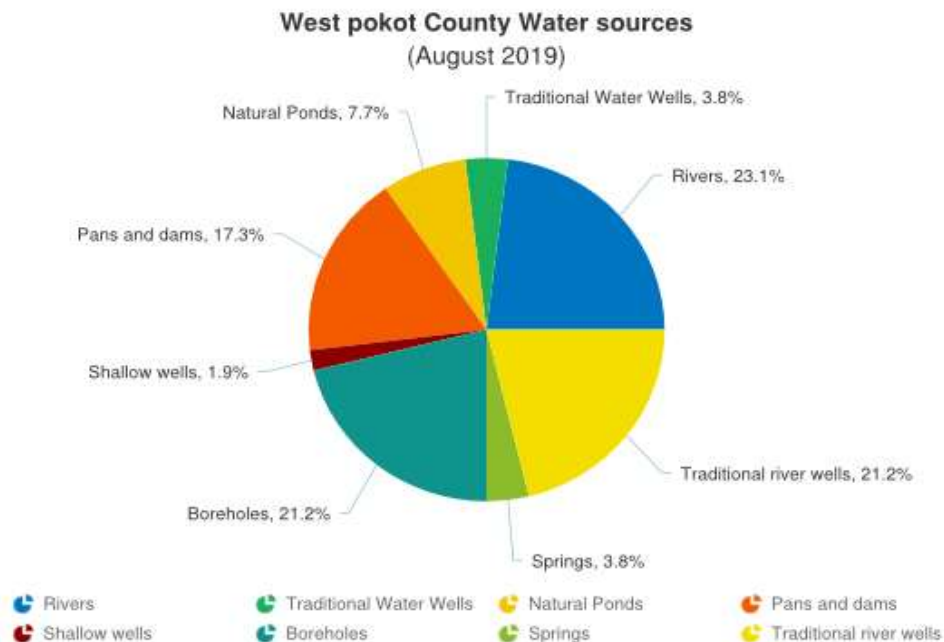
2.1.3 Browse

- The proportion of sampled community members which stated that browse condition was good remained at 100 percent, same as the one reported in July.
- The browse condition is still good across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition remained good in comparison to that of July as a result of adequate rainfall.
- 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 peaceful situation along Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders enhanced access to forage.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

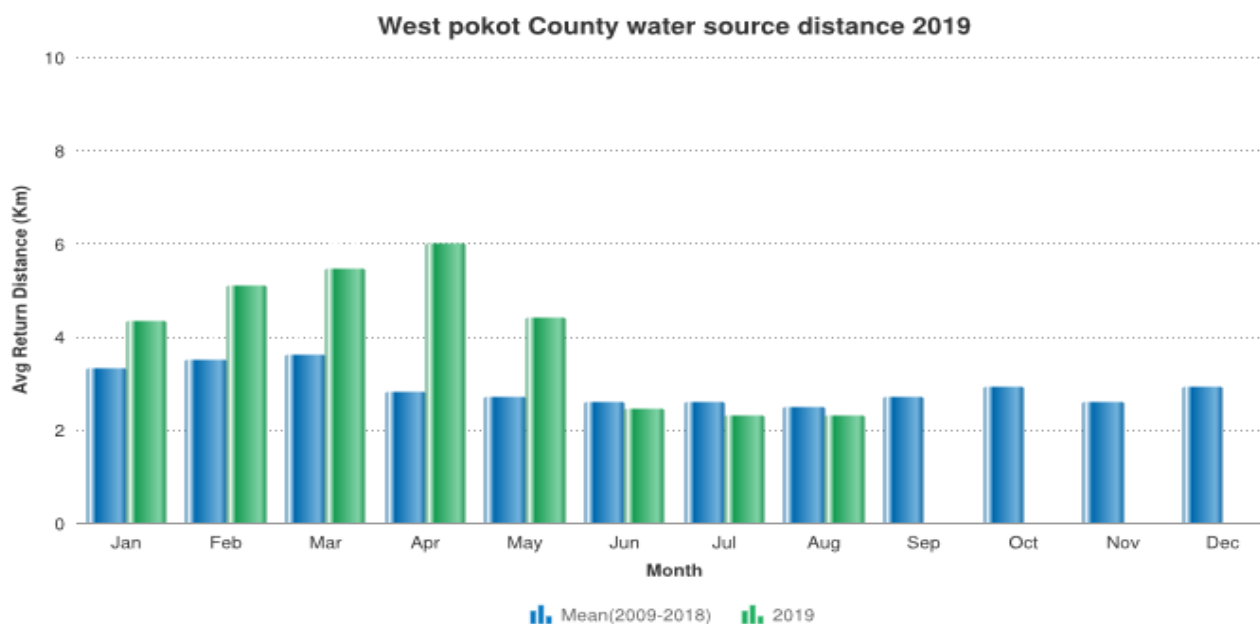
2.2.1 Sources

- During the month, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock is 23 percent for rivers, 21.2 percent for both boreholes and traditional river wells and 17 percent for pans and dams. Other water sources in use include natural ponds at 7.7 percent.
- There was sufficient water recharge to all surface water sources in August in comparison to the previous month. The situation is attributed to good rainfall 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

- The return distance to water source from the household was 2.3 km, similar to that reported in July. The current distance is 8 percent below the Long Term Average (LTA).
- Pastoral livelihood zones reported longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The stable trend in distance is owed to adequate recharge of water sources during the month.

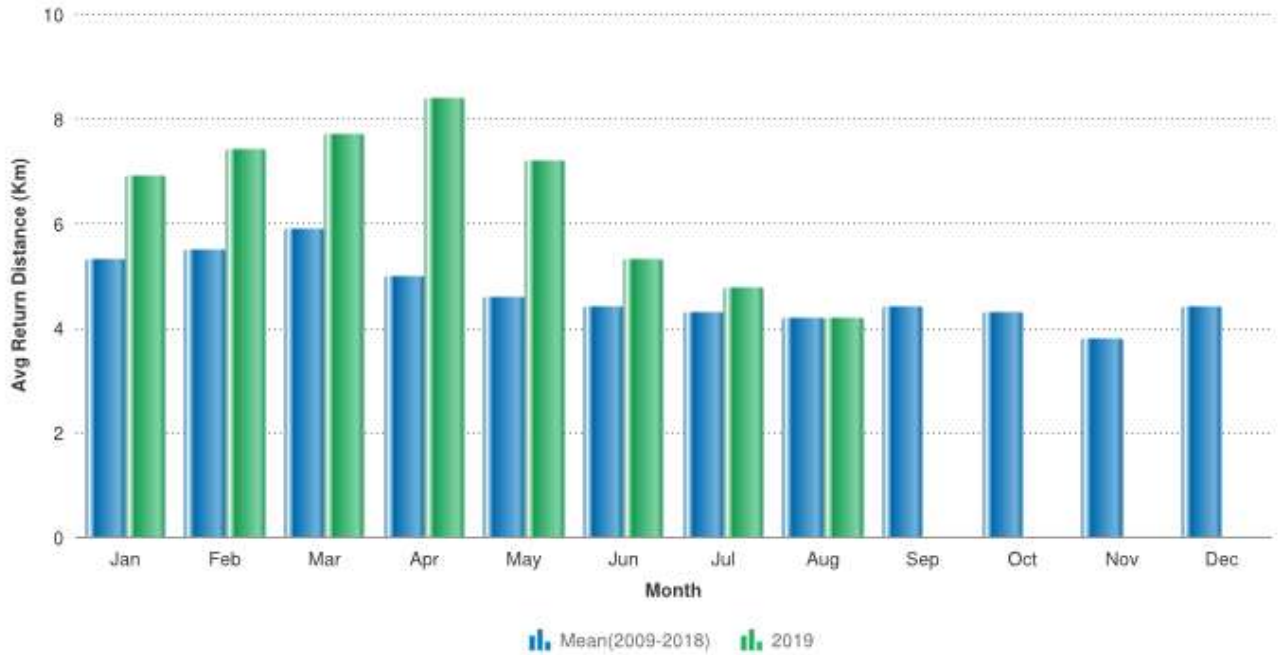


- The pastoral livelihood zones reported longer waiting time at water source than the agro-pastoral zones.
- The average household water consumption per person per day is at 9-13 litres in the pastoral zones while that in the agro-pastoral zones was 11-14 litres.
- The cost of accessing water at the 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 August, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was 4.2 km, indicating a decline from 4.8 km reported in July. The current trekking distance is at par with 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.

West pokot County water source distance from grazing area - 2019



- The decrease in livestock trekking distance to water is credited to sufficient rainfall that supported enhanced recharge of the water sources.
- Frequency of watering is still same as for the previous month, which was 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

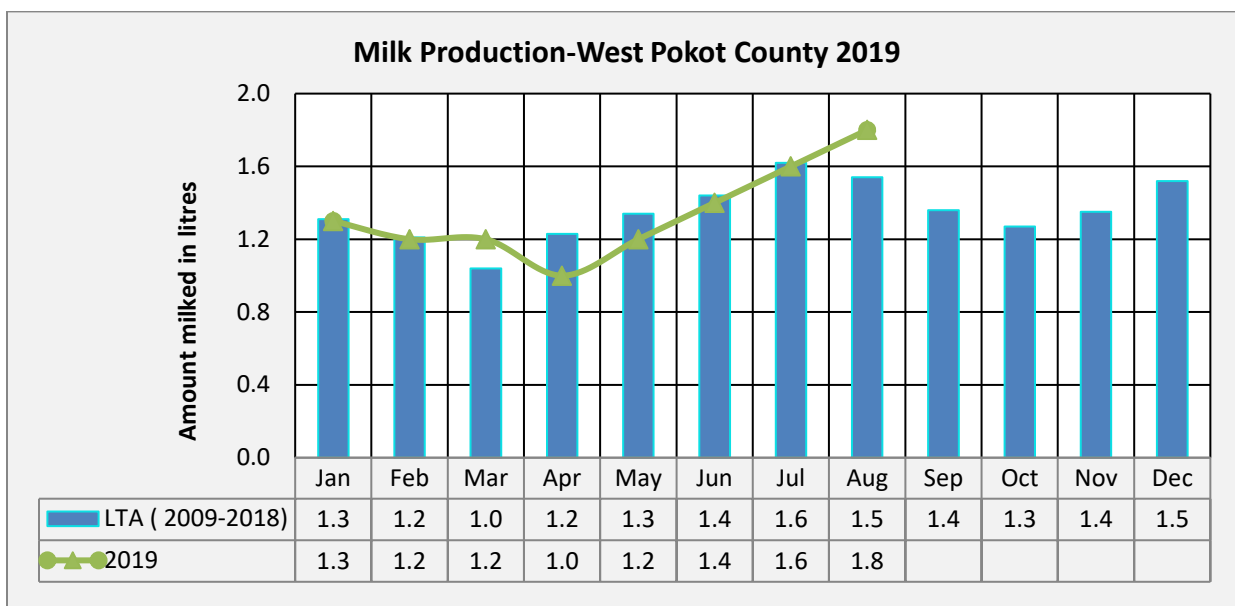
- The body condition for all livestock species was good in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones, an improvement from the situation in July.
- The livestock body condition is projected to improve across the livelihood zones, with the ongoing heavy rains.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to a similar period during a normal year. The trend is upward and is as a result of abundant forage.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Chepareria ward reported cases of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD).

3.1.3 Milk Production

- In August, the County reported an average production of 1.8 litres of milk per household per day, representing an increase from 1.6 litres recorded in the previous month.
- Milk from cattle constituted the highest proportion as compared to that from other livestock species.
- The current household milk production is above the LTA by 20 percent.
- The household improved milk production is due to improved forage access in the traditional grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

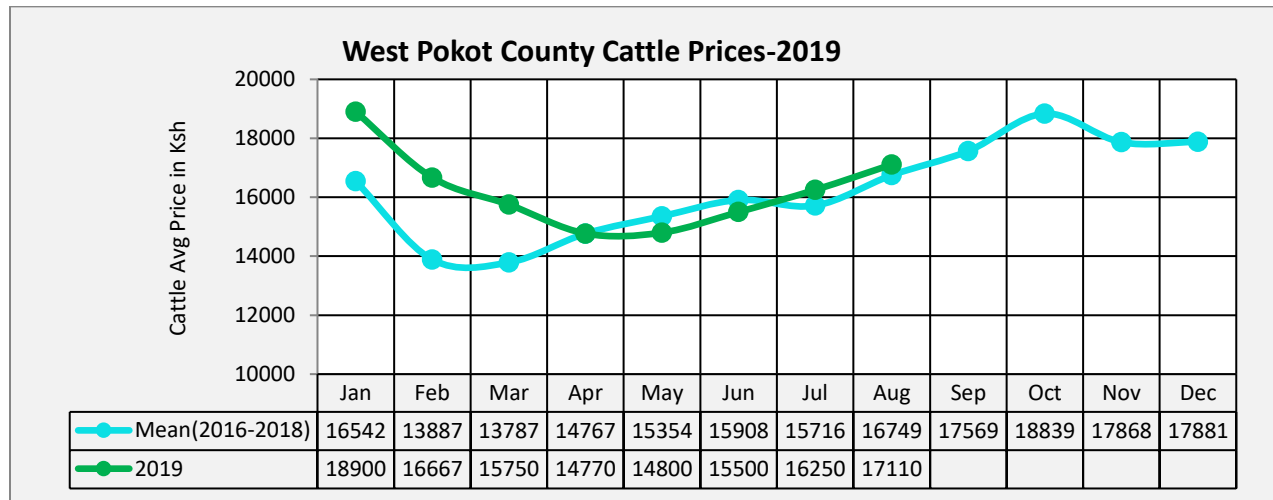
- The County's main crops include maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions. Maize crop has ripened in most areas.
- During the month, horticulture production and supply to major markets such as Sigor, Ortum and Lomut was at normal levels compared to the seasonal performance.
- The harvesting of bulb onions in highlands was still ongoing. These are supplied to Ortum and Sigor markets for distribution to other centres within and outside the County.
- The level of farming is stable along the production zones of Lomut, Ortum and Wakorr.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

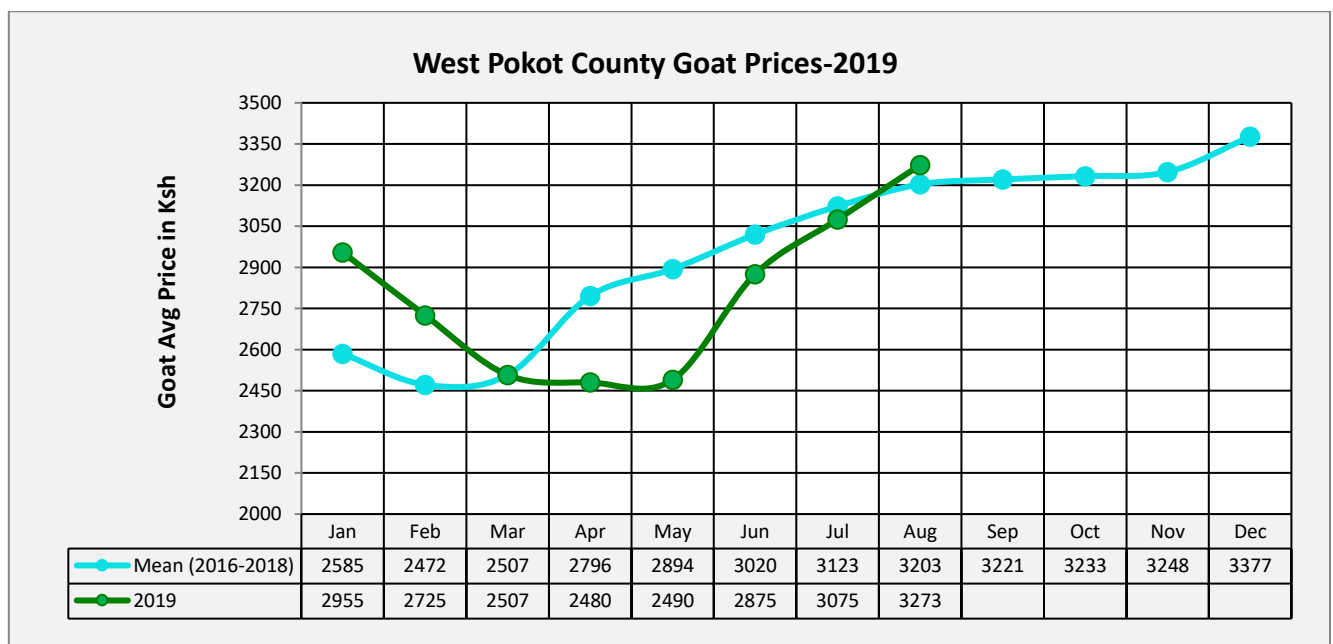
- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 17,110, portraying an increase in price as compared to Kshs 16,250 recorded in July.



- The cattle price rise is attributed to the good body condition resulting from adequate forage condition, along with improved recharge of water sources for livestock.
- The current cattle price is 22 percent above the LTA.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- In August, the County reported an average price of Kshs 3,273 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which showed an increase in comparison with Kshs 3,075 recorded in July.

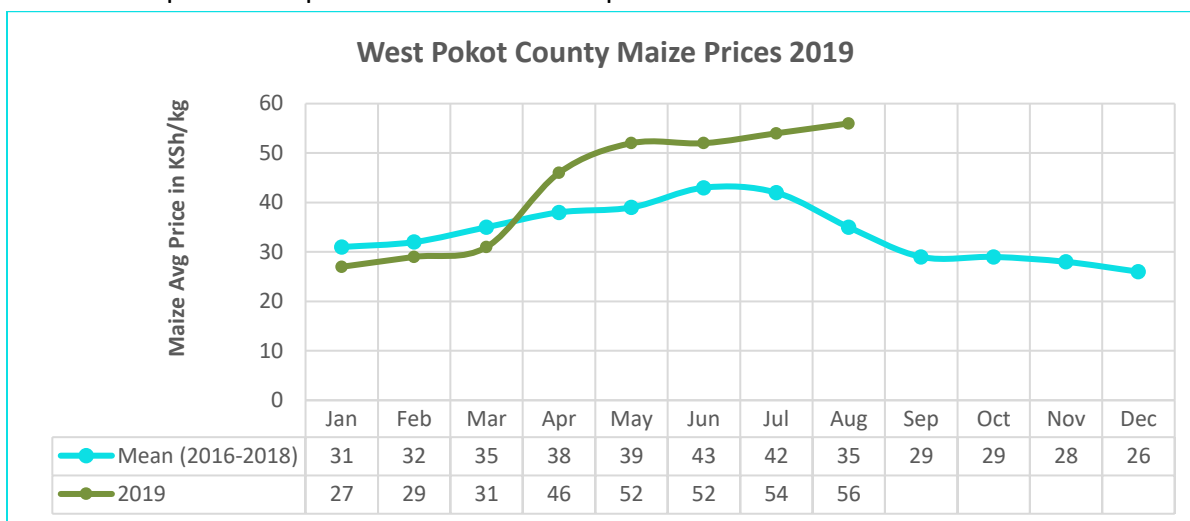


- The increase in price is associated with the good body condition for goat across the livelihoods.
- The current goat price is 2 percent above LTA for the month.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

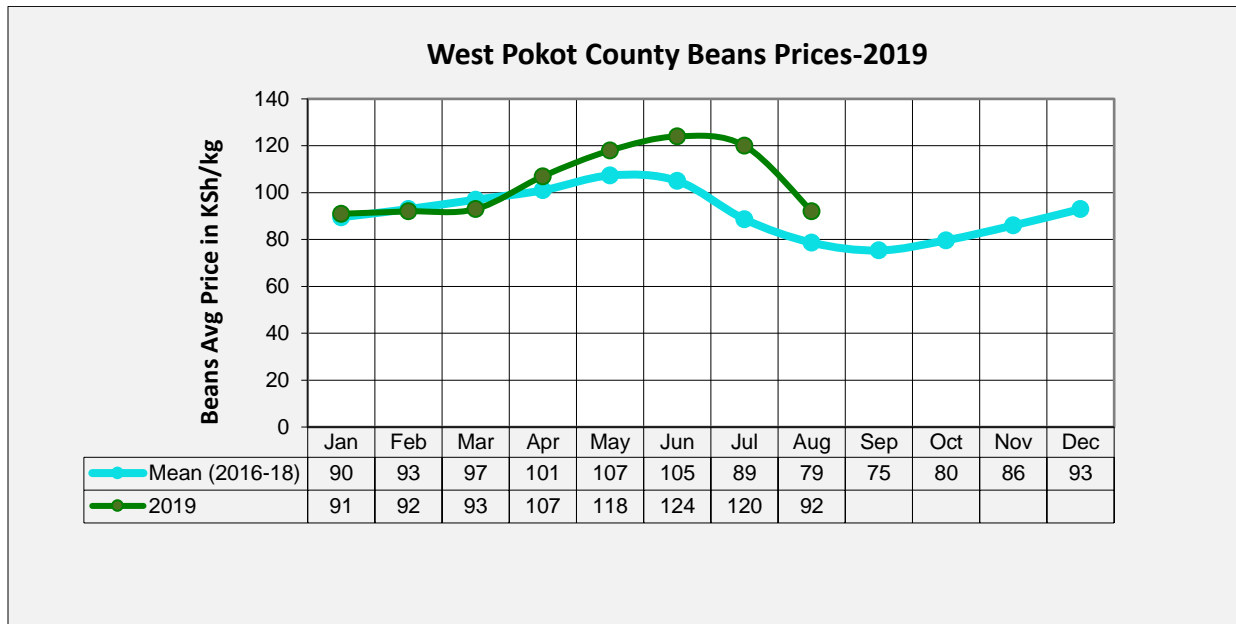
- During the month, the maize was sold at Kshs 56 per Kg, having gone up from kshs 54 recorded during the previous month.
- The current price is 60 percent above the LTA price.



- The rise in price is linked to the inconsistent supply of maize by local traders along with unsteady external supply of maize from outside the county.
- Majority of households relied more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is expected to stabilize due to the expected harvests in 2 months time.

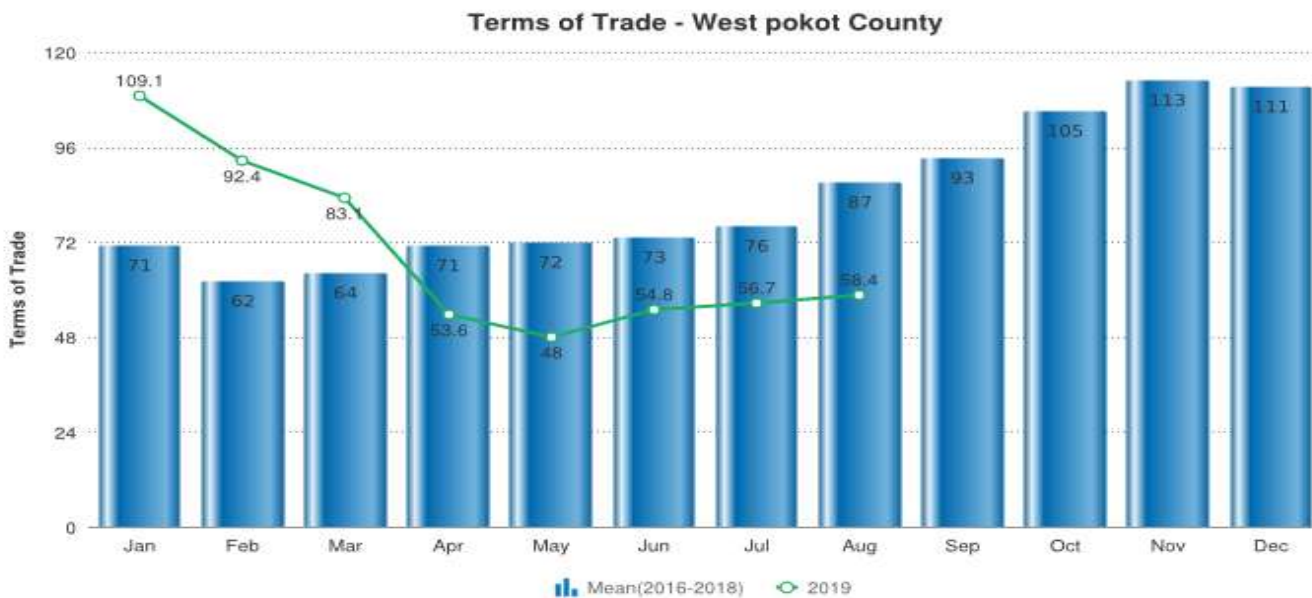
4.2.2 Beans

- The beans traded at Kshs 92 per kg in August, signifying a price decrease as compared to that Kshs 120 recorded in July.
- The decline in price is due to stable 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 however 16 percent above the LTA price (Kshs 79) for same period of the year.



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

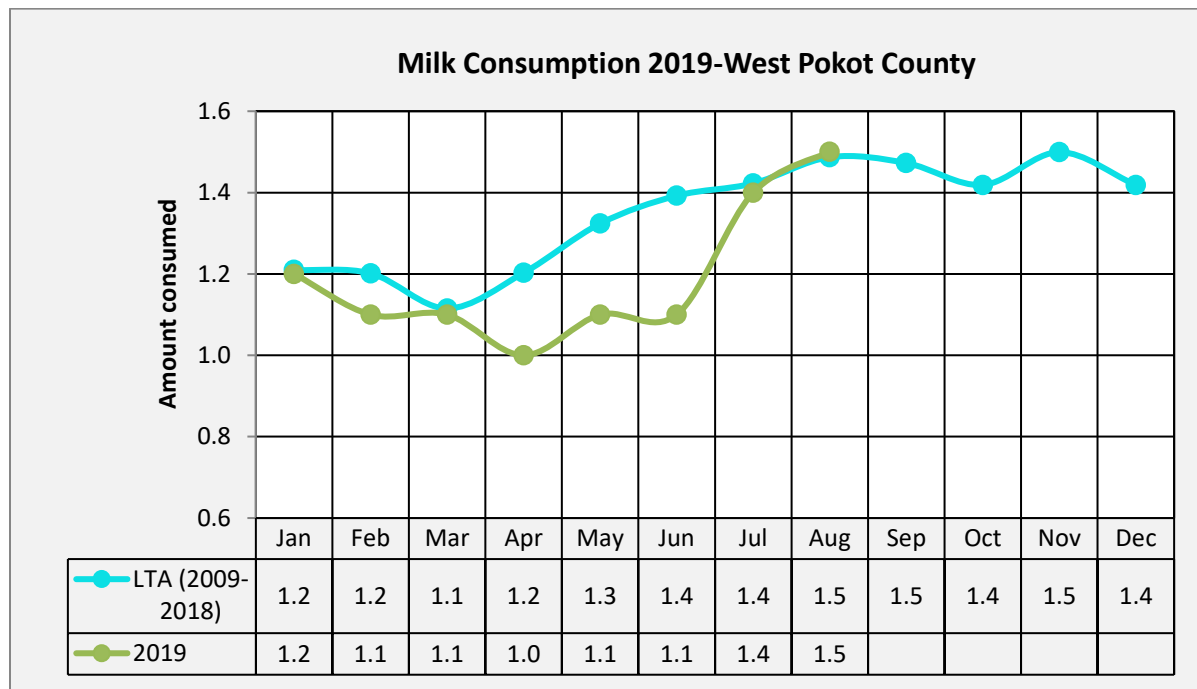
- The Terms of Trade (TOT) went up to 58, compared 57 recorded in July, denoting that households could obtain more maize for sale of a goat currently than they did in the previous month.
- The upward trend in ToT is credited to increasing goat prices, particularly owing to good body condition within the month.
- The TOT variation is projected over the next three months as the price of goat is anticipated to increase with the sufficient rains along with decrease in maize prices during the period.



5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- The households across livelihood zones consumed 1.5 litres of milk on average, implying a rise from 1.4 litres that they consumed in July but same to 1.5 litres of LTA.



- The increase in milk consumption is owed to the improved milk production linked to good livestock body condition occasioned by adequate forage availability. Access to milk was good in August.

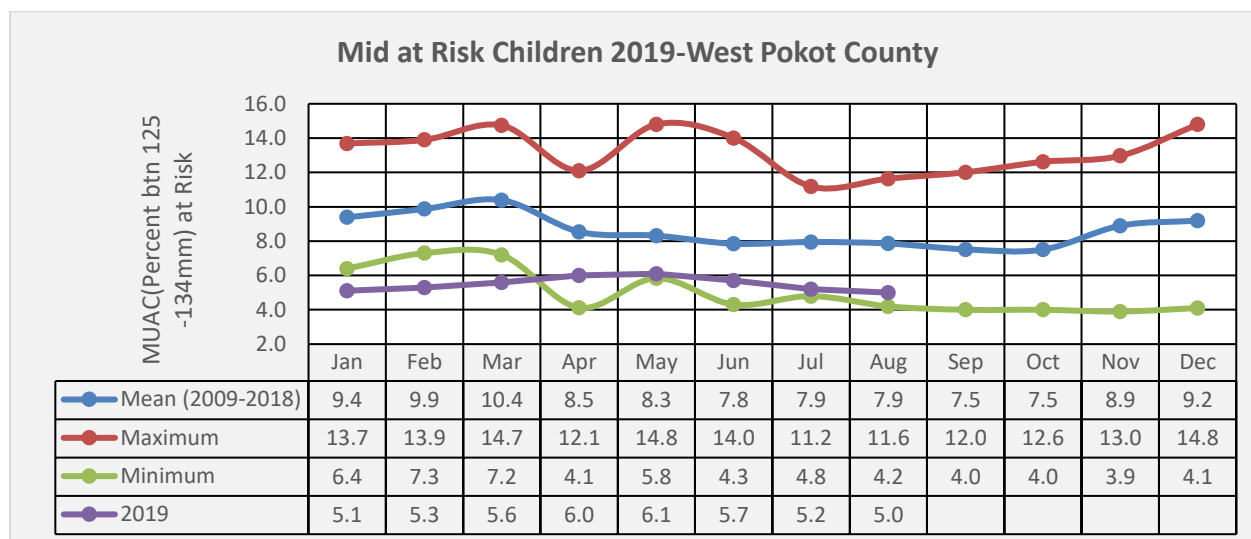
5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- In August, the households' proportions of 71%, 26% and 3% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score increased for the acceptable category, while borderline category stabilized, whereas that poor categories decreased in comparison to that of July. The FCS is generally, acceptable in during the month.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones increased to 46 in August, from 41 recorded in July.
- There was significant variation between the two livelihood zones with for instance 98 percent of households in the agro-pastoral zone being categorized as having acceptable FCS compared to 52% 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 August, the proportion of 44 and 56 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled, where the children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition were at 5.0 percent, a decline from 5.2 recorded in July.
- The current proportion is below the LTA value of 7.9 percent for the such time of the year.



- The nutrition status of under-fives improved and is linked to sufficient milk consumption coupled with other essential health and nutrition commodities. These were the key factors for the declining trend in number of children 'at risk' of malnutrition.

5.3.2 Health

- The commonly reported ailment among the sampled children was Malaria.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The County's CSI for the month of August remained at 2.3, similar to the one reported in the previous month. The stability implies that households employed few of strategies to cope, which could be attributed to favourable food commodity availability and access at households and markets respectively.
- The pastoral zones recorded a CSI of 3.0 while agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded 1.6.
- 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

- Anglican Development Services (ADS) conducted livestock treatment in Pokot North and Pokot Central sub-counties.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- No incidences of insecurity/conflict were reported during the month.

7.2 MIGRATION

- Normal livestock movements were reported within the county in August.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- As rains are expected to continue, the distance to water sources for both human and livestock is anticipated to decrease.
- The forage conditions are anticipated to remain good with the ongoing rains, whereby the livestock productivity is expected to improve, leading to enhanced livestock body condition thus better livestock prices and increased access to food owing to the higher purchasing power.
- In the next one month, maize prices are projected to decrease while goat price is expected to stabilize. As such, the terms of trade would improve and remain favourable over this period.
- Milk availability is likely to stabilize with the restoration of pasture and water supporting livestock production as rains are expected to continue. Malnutrition cases are likely to continue dropping within the period, since children would continue accessing more milk.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Support pasture development in all sub-counties. Pasture reseeding is recommended in pastoral livelihood zones.

2. WATER SECTOR

- Provide water treatment chemicals to check on the water borne cases.
- Build the community capacity on water harvesting and storage techniques.

3. AGRICULTURE SECTOR

- Provide pest control chemicals to fight Fall Army Worm (FAW) in Pokot West, Pokot Central and Pokot South sub-counties.

4. PEACE AND SECURITY

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

5. 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.