

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



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



DECEMBER EW PHASE



Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- In December, sufficient rains were received across all livelihood zones. The temporal and spatial distribution was fair.
- The vegetation index recorded was above normal range, with an increasing trend across the livelihoods as denoted by the increase in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above vegetation conditions. Forage condition is good.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- The livestock body condition is good with stable trend across the County. Distance to water sources decreased.
- The terms of trade is favourable with an increasing trend.
- Milk production and consumption at household level improved and is above the long term average.
- Majority of households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index decreased.
- Nutrition status increased as the proportion of children 'at risk' fell 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)	85	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot Central)	81	>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)	109	>76
Milk Consumption	1.6 Litres	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	1.9 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

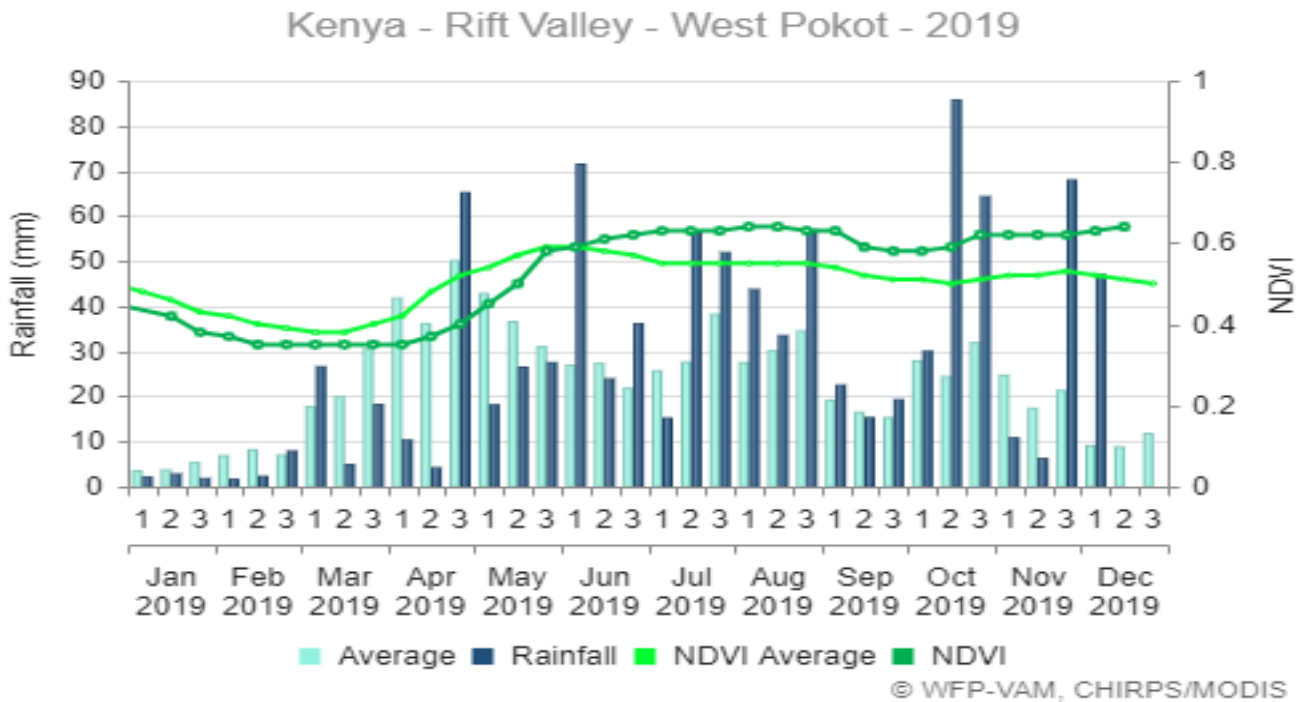
Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	3.1	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	1.7	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	48	>35

<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 December, the county received sufficient rainfall. The intensity was moderate in the highlands and lower in the lowlands.
- The rainfall situation is above normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall amounts increased from 10.7 mm to 47mm mm in the first dekad. The amount was above normal.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- During the month, the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution was still fair across the livelihoods. The intensity was higher in highlands as compared to lowlands zones.

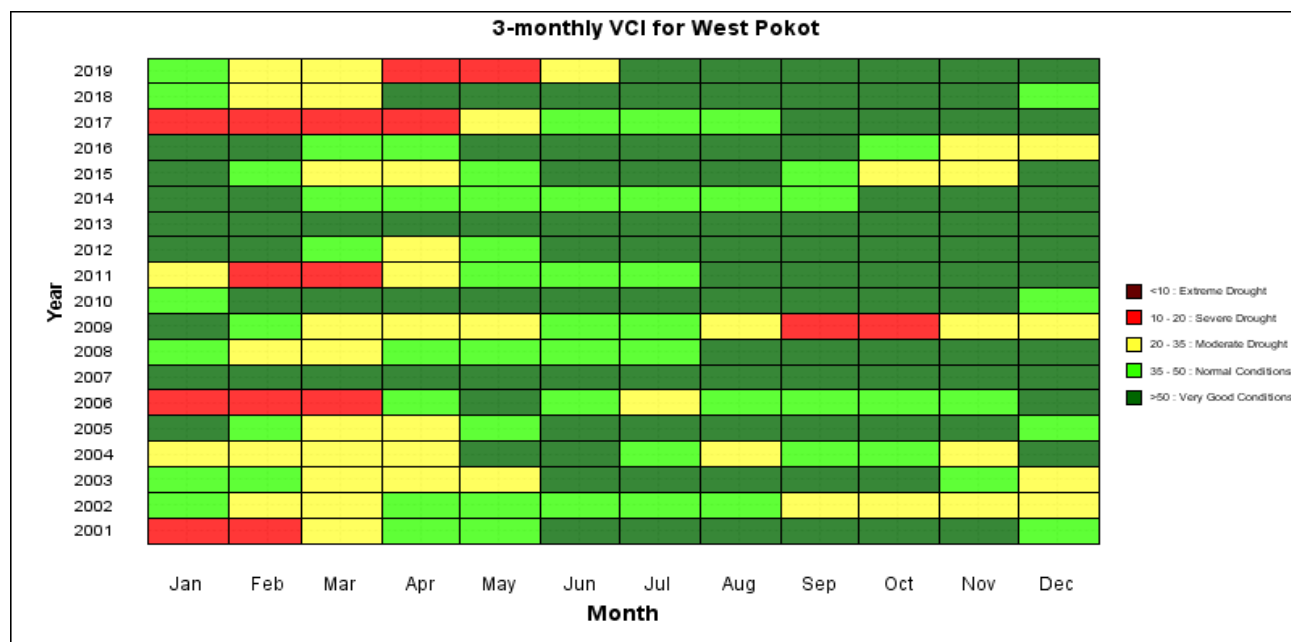
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- Victims of massive landslides incidences in Parua, Nyarkulian and Muino areas in the County are still camping in schools.

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 depicts the vegetation status of the County was 85 in December, a slight increase from 79 recorded in November. The current VCI portrays above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI trend is upwards across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. The increase in VCI is from 79 to 85, 77 to 84, 85 to 88 and 72 to 81 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The improving trend in VCI is associated with heightened regeneration of vegetation cover within the month.

2.1.2 Pasture

- The proportion of sampled community members which stated that the pasture was good is at 75 percent in December a decrease from 100 percent the previous month.
- During the month, pasture situation was good in all livelihood zones. The communities reported that the condition was normal for such time of the year. The trend remained stable in comparison to that of previous month owing to good rains.
- The pasture condition is anticipated to remain good with the ongoing rainfall.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity between livelihood zones.

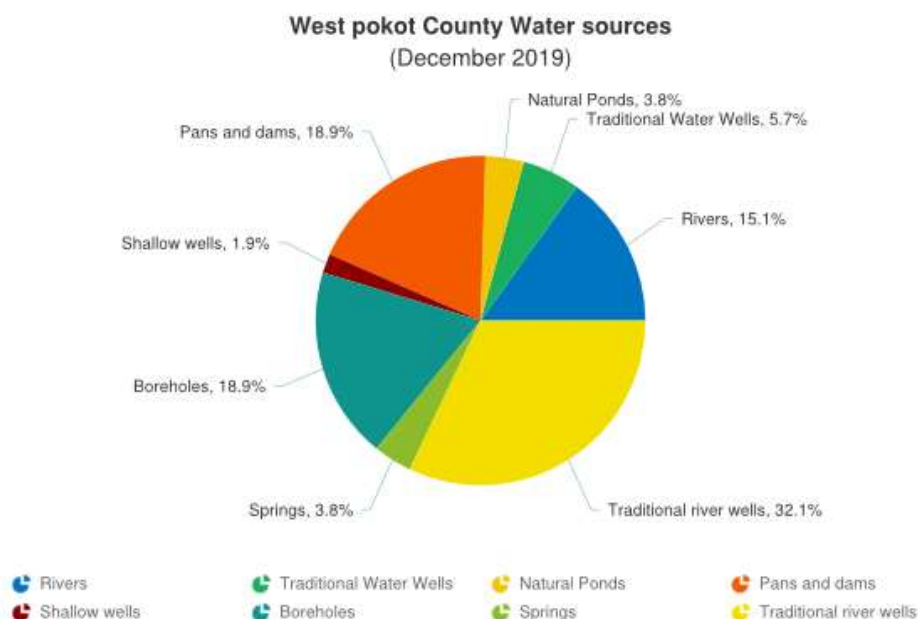
2.1.3 Browse

- In December, the proportion of sampled community members which reported that browse condition was good is at 95 percent a slight drop from 100 percent reported in November.
- The browse condition is good across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition was good as compared to that of the previous month.
- 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 boosted by increased peace building efforts along the borders.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

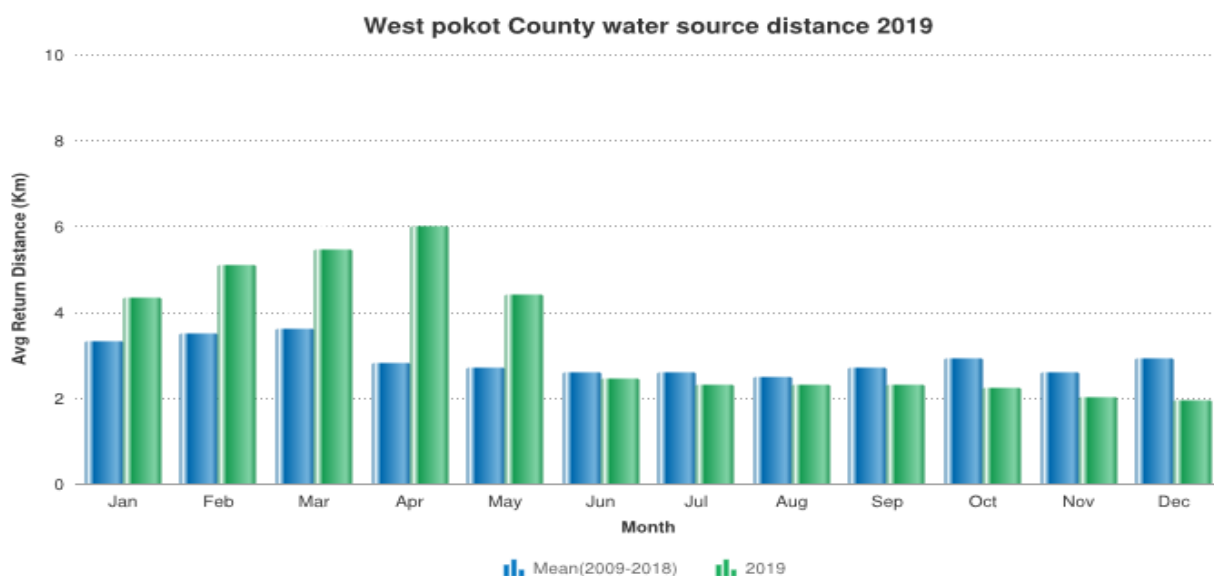
2.2.1 Sources

- The proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock in December is 32.1 percent for traditional river wells, 18.9 percent for both boreholes and pans and dams, 15.1 percent for rivers and use of traditional water wells at 5.7 percent.
- There was stable recharge to all surface water sources in December in comparison to that of November. The situation is attributed to enough rainfall received 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

- In December, the return distance to water source from the household was at 1.9 km, a drop from 2.0 km reported in November. The current distance is 34 percent below the Long Term Average (LTA).
- As usual, pastoral livelihood zones reported longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The down trend in distance is attributed to good water sources recharge within the month.

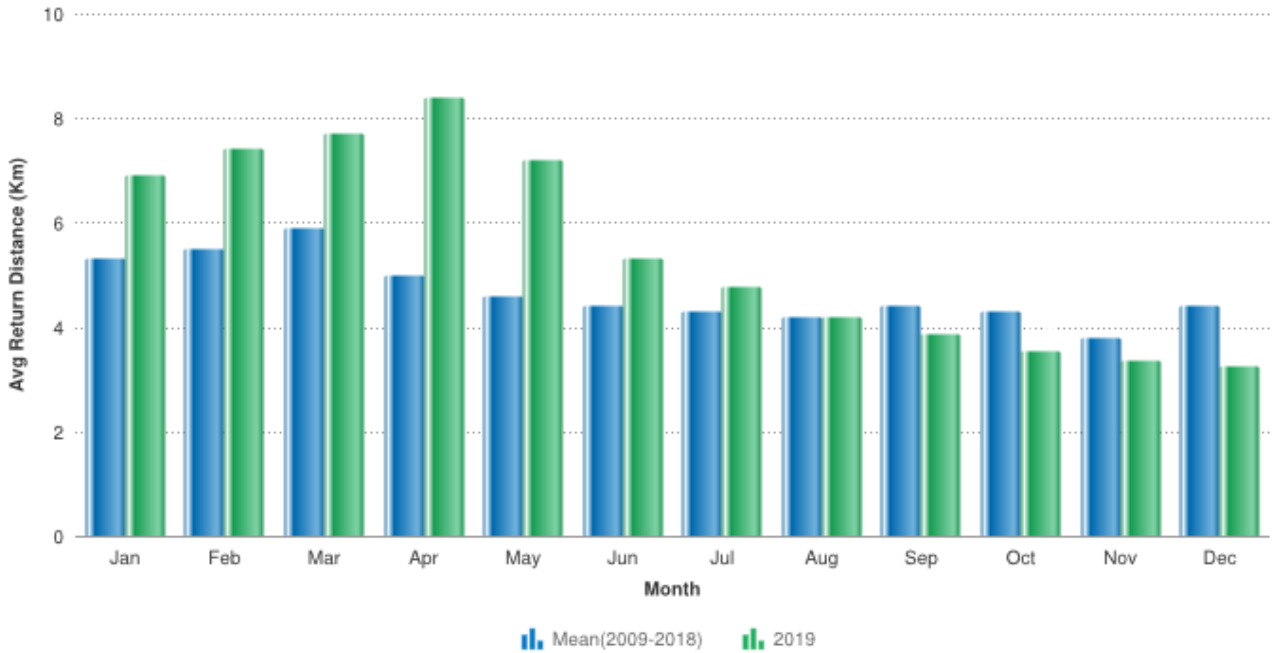


- The pastoral livelihood zones reported longer waiting time at water source than the agro-pastoral zones.
- The average household water consumption per person per day is at 10-12 litres in the pastoral zones while that in the agro-pastoral zones remained at 11-13 litres.
- The cost of accessing water 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

- During the month, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was 3.3, demonstrating a decrease from 3.4 km recorded in November. The current trekking distance is 25 percent below the normal range.
- The pastoral livelihood zone as usual, 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 drop in livestock trekking distance to water points is attributed to significant rainfall received coupled with good recharge to the water sources.
- Frequency of watering remained 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

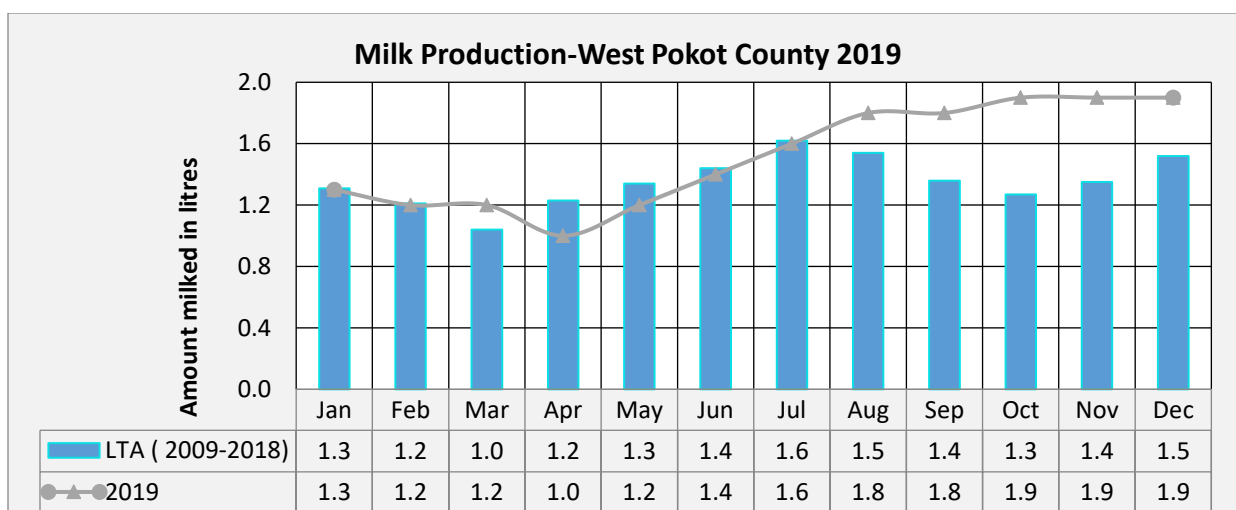
- The body condition for all livestock species is good in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones in December, in comparison to that recorded in November the condition is stable.
- The livestock body condition is expected to remain stable across the livelihood zones, with the significant rains.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to same period during a normal year. The trend is stable owing to fair forage regeneration.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) and Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) disease cases were still reported in Kapchok and Batei wards.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- The County reported an average production of 1.9 litres of milk per household per day in December, similar to that reported in November.
- The cattle produced most milk than other livestock species as usual.
- The current household milk production is above the LTA by 27 percent.
- The household 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

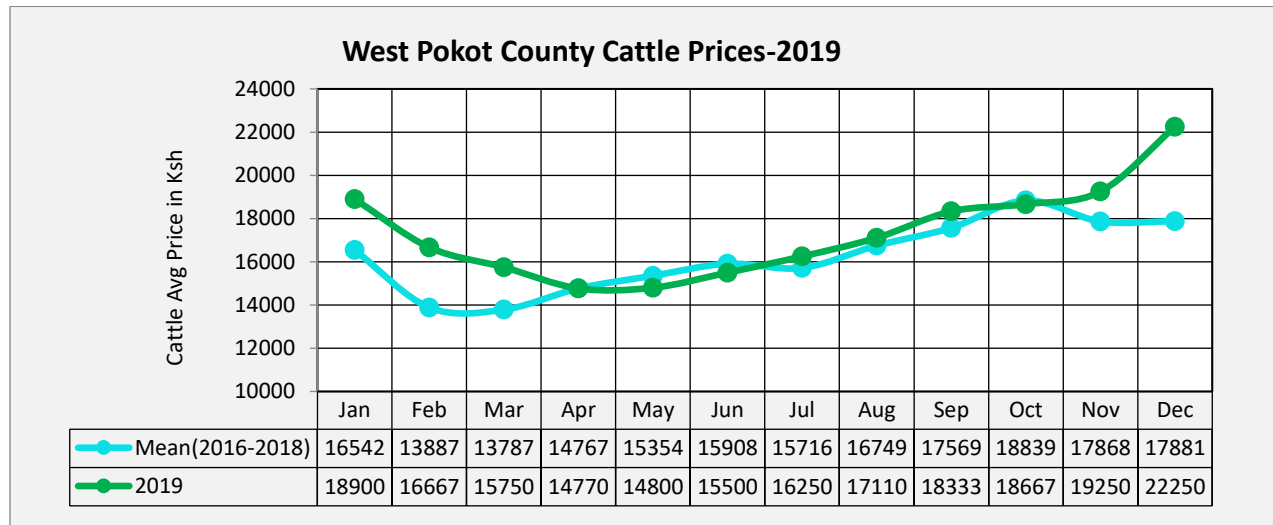
- The County's main crops cultivated include; maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions. Maize harvesting has been concluded in in both mixed and agro pastoral zones.
- The horticulture production and supply to major markets in Wakkor, Ortum and Lomut is still at normal levels in comparison to the seasonal performance.
- The harvesting 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.
- The level of farming is still stable along the production zones of Ortum.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

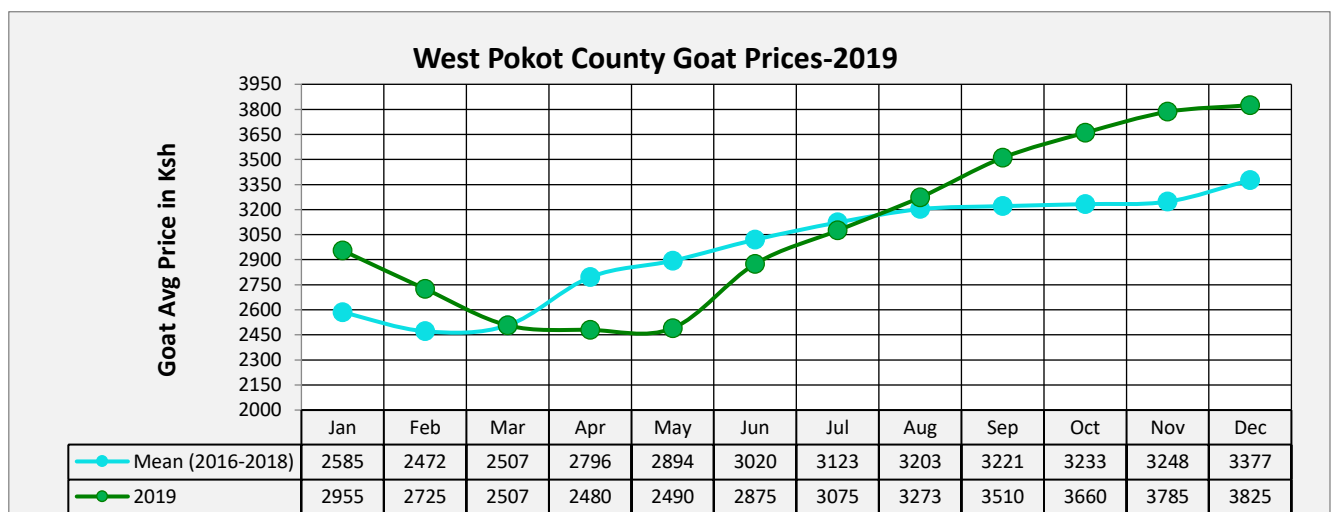
- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 22,250 in December, representing an increase in price as compared to Kshs 19,250 recorded in November.



- The cattle price up-trend is credited to enhanced body condition linked to adequate forage access, along with fair recharge of water sources for livestock.
- The current cattle price is 24 percent above the LTA.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- In December, the County recorded an average price of Kshs 3,825 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which depicted a rise in comparison with Kshs 3,785 recorded in November.

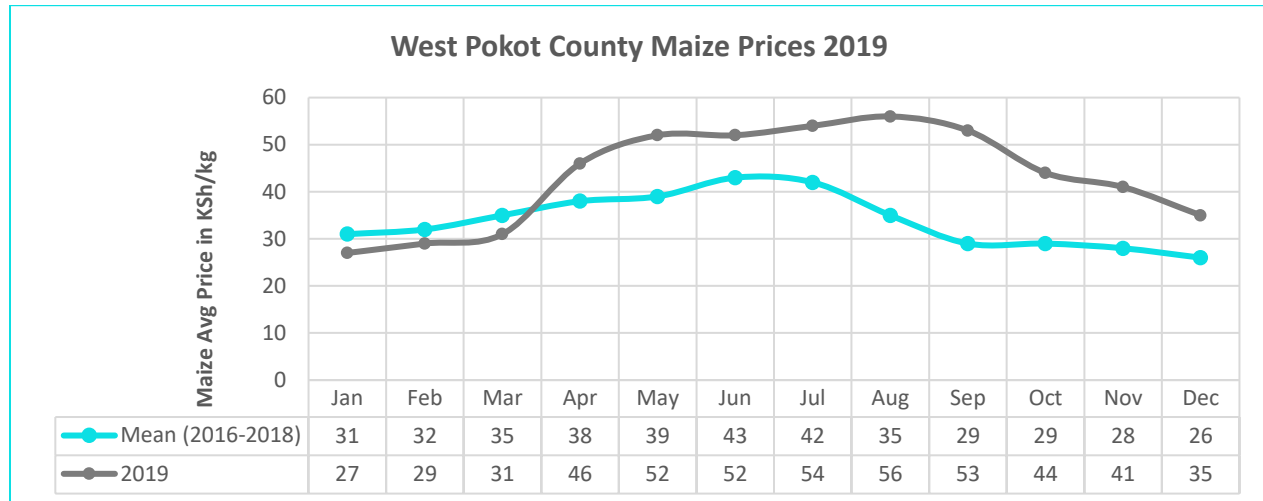


- The price increase is attributed to the good body condition for goats in the livelihoods.
- The current goat price is 13 percent above LTA for December.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

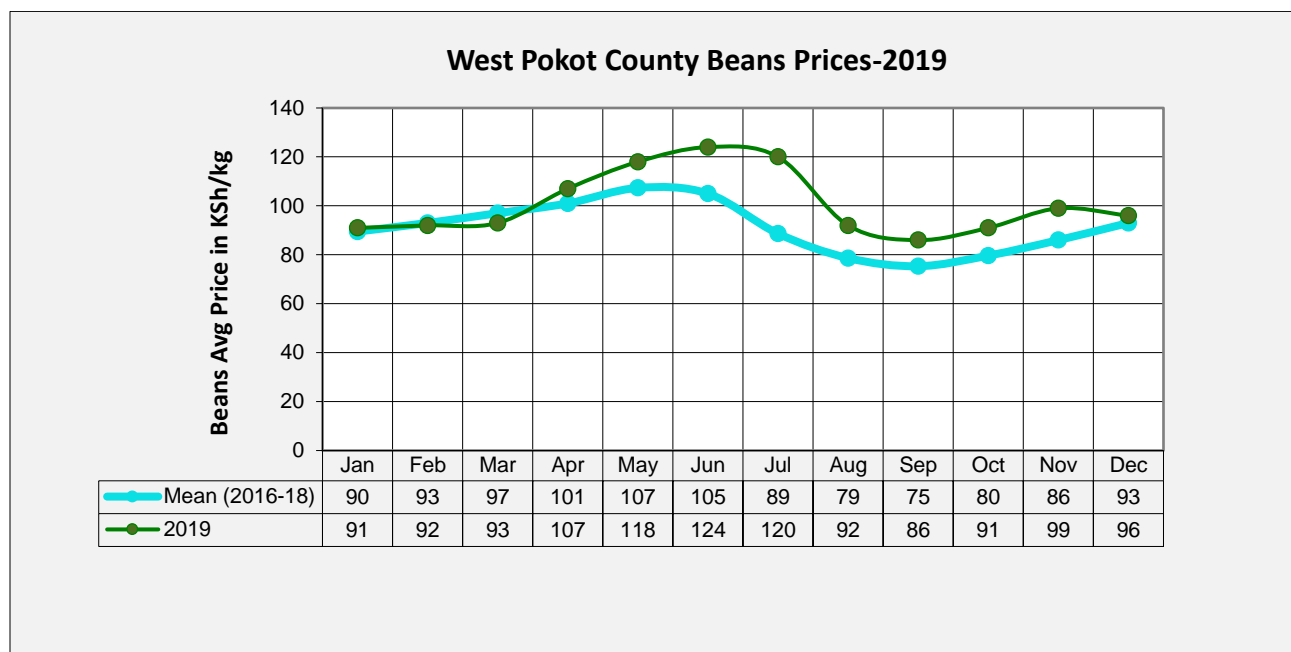
- During the month, the maize was sold at Kshs 35 per Kg, a decrease from Kshs 41 recorded in November.
- The current price is 35 percent above the LTA price.



- The price decrease is attributed to the increase local harvesting of maize along with stable supplies from Uganda.
- Majority of the households depend more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is projected to descent due to the enhanced local harvests.

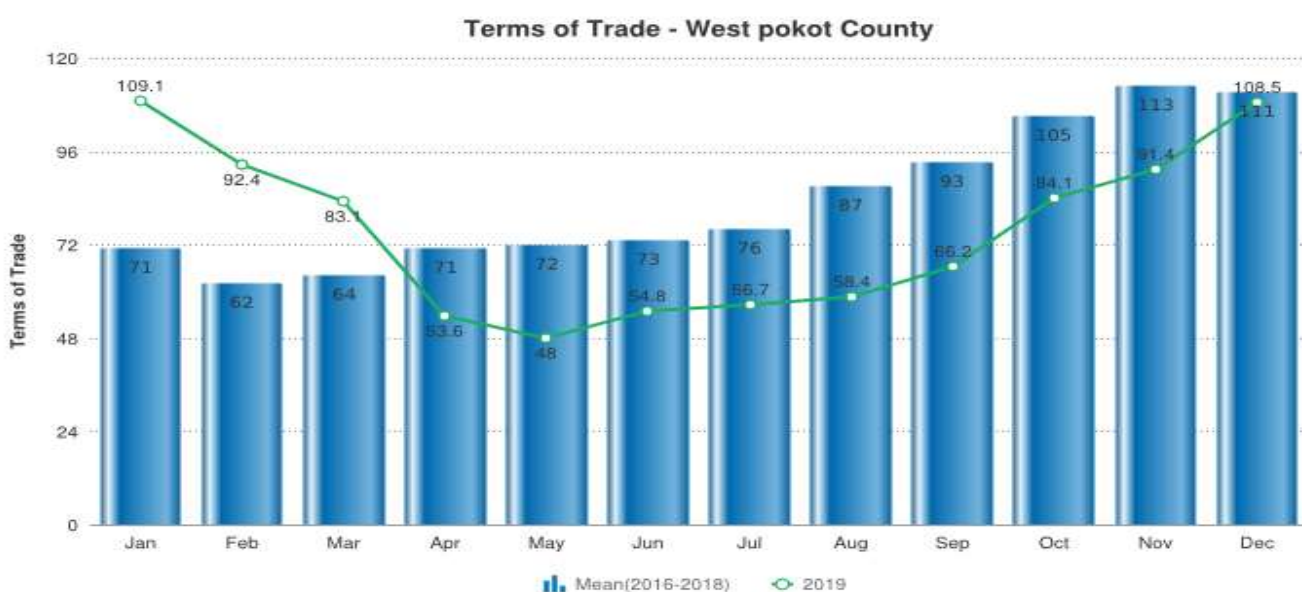
4.2.2 Beans

- The beans traded at Kshs 99 per Kg in December, demonstrating a price increase in comparison to that of November.
- The price rise is credited to unstable 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 3 percent above the LTA price (Ksh.93) for similar period of the year.



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

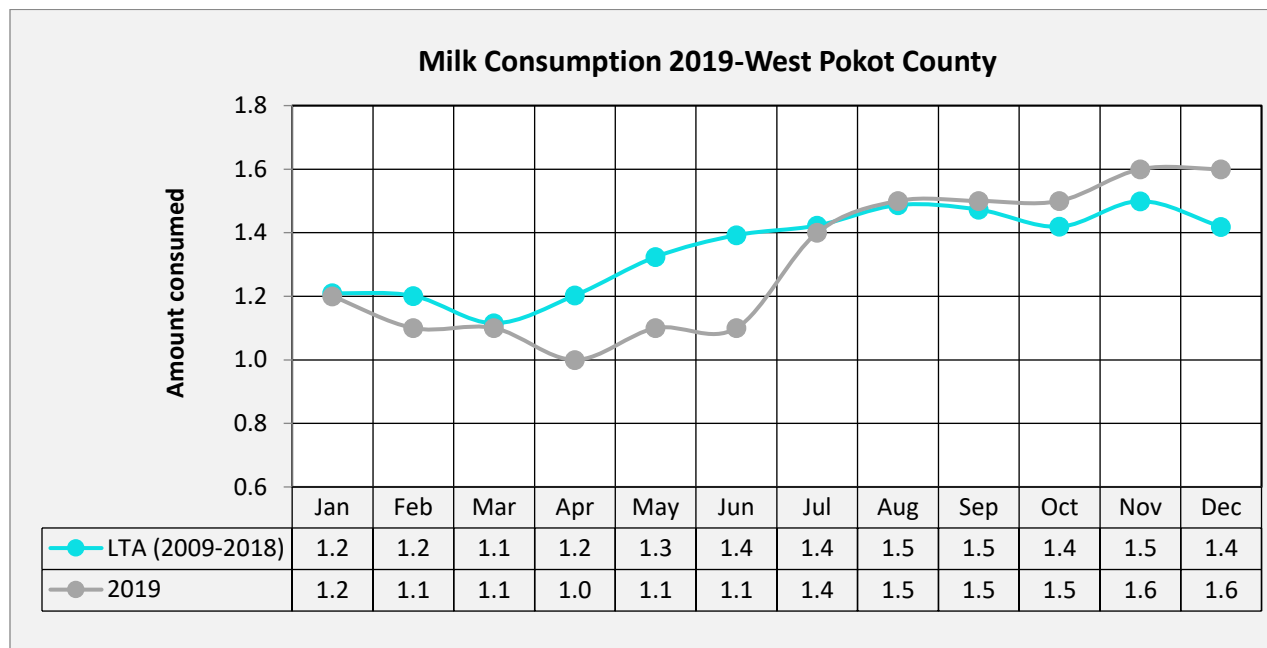
- During the month, the Terms of Trade (TOT) went up to 109, compared 91 recorded in November, signifying that households could obtain more maize for sale of a goat currently than they did in November.
- The upward trend in ToT is credited to increase in goat prices, and dropping maize prices within the month.
- The TOT variation is projected over the next three months as the price of goat is expected to stabilize with the significant rainfall within the period.



5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- The households across livelihood zones milk consumption remained 1.6 litres of milk on average in December, similar to that consumed in November. The consumption is above that of the LTA (1.4) by 14 percent.



- The Increase in milk consumption is attributed to the increased milk production along with good livestock body condition and adequate forage. Availability of milk was good during the month.

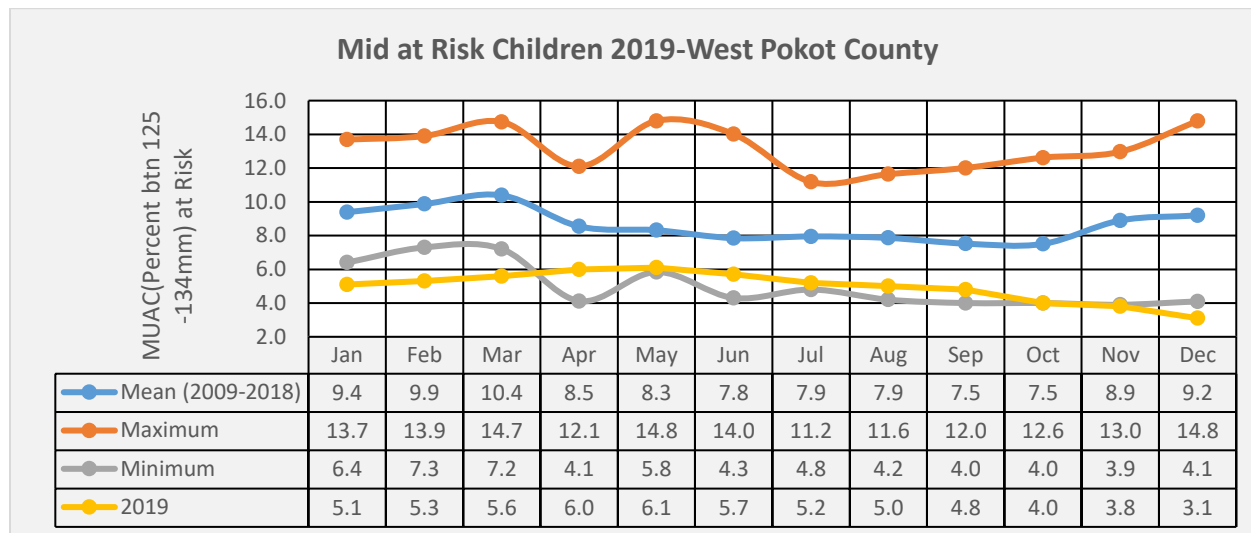
5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- In December, the households' proportions of 75%, 24% and 1% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score was stable for the acceptable category, while borderline decreased and poor categories increased in comparison to that of November. The FCS is still acceptable in November.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones is still at 48 in December; same as that recorded in November.
- There was significant variation between the two livelihood zones with for instance 96 percent of households in the agro-pastoral zone being categorized as having acceptable FCS compared to 60% 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

- The proportion of 48 and 52 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled in December, where the children rated as being ‘at risk’ of malnutrition were at 3.1 percent, a decrease from 3.8 reported in November.
- The current proportion is below the LTA (9.2) for the such time of the year.



- The nutrition status of under-fives increased and is linked to sufficient milk consumption alongside other essential health and nutrition commodities. These were the main drivers for the reducing number of children ‘at risk’ of malnutrition.

5.3.2 Health

- Malaria is still commonly reported ailment among the sampled households in December.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The County’s CSI for October was at 1.7 during the month, a drop from 2.0 recorded in November. The decrease represents that households continue to employ 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 2.4 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

- Joint multi-agency emergency response interventions continued in Parua, Tamkal and Tapach areas targeting landslide displaced victims living in camps. Blankets and other non-food items were distributed.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- No livestock theft incidences were reported along West Pokot/Turkana border in December.

7.2 MIGRATION

- Normal livestock movements were reported during the month.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- Milk availability is expected to drop with the diminishing pasture and water affecting livestock production as the onset of dry spells are expected to set in January. Malnutrition cases are projected to increase over the period, as children would access less milk.
- Rains are projected to reduce, as such, the distance to water sources for both human and livestock is likely to go up.
- In the next one month, maize prices are anticipated to remain stable while goat price is expected to decrease. As such, the terms of trade would decrease and unfavourable within the period.
- The livestock productivity is likely to decrease, as the forage conditions deteriorates with the dry spells, resulting to poor livestock body condition thus low livestock prices and reduced access to food linked to the decreased purchasing power.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Support livestock vaccination along migration corridors

2. WATER SECTOR

- Provide water treatment chemicals to check on the waterborne cases.

3. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Emphasis on households still living around flood/landslide risk areas are advised to move to safer places to avoid loss of lives and destruction of property.

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.