

**National Drought Management Authority
WEST POKOT COUNTY
DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FEBRUARY 2021**

FEBRUARY EW PHASE

Drought Status: **NORMAL**



Shughuli za kawaida

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- Many parts of the county remained dry and sunny throughout the month of February. The temporal and spatial distribution was poor across the livelihood zones.
- The vegetation cover index reported was above normal range, with a decreasing trend across the livelihoods as shown by the decline in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. Forage condition was generally fair with deteriorating trend.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- Milk production dropped in February while milk consumption at household level decreased and above the long term average.
- The livestock body condition is fair, but with a worsening trend across the County for all species. Distance to water sources increased across the County.
- The County's terms of trade is still favourable with a downward trend in all livelihood zones.
- Majority of the households fell within the Acceptable

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)	53	>35
Forage Condition	Fair	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Fair	Normal
Milk Production	1.6	>1.6 Litres
Livestock Migration Pattern	Usual	Normal
Livestock deaths (attributed to drought)	No deaths	No deaths

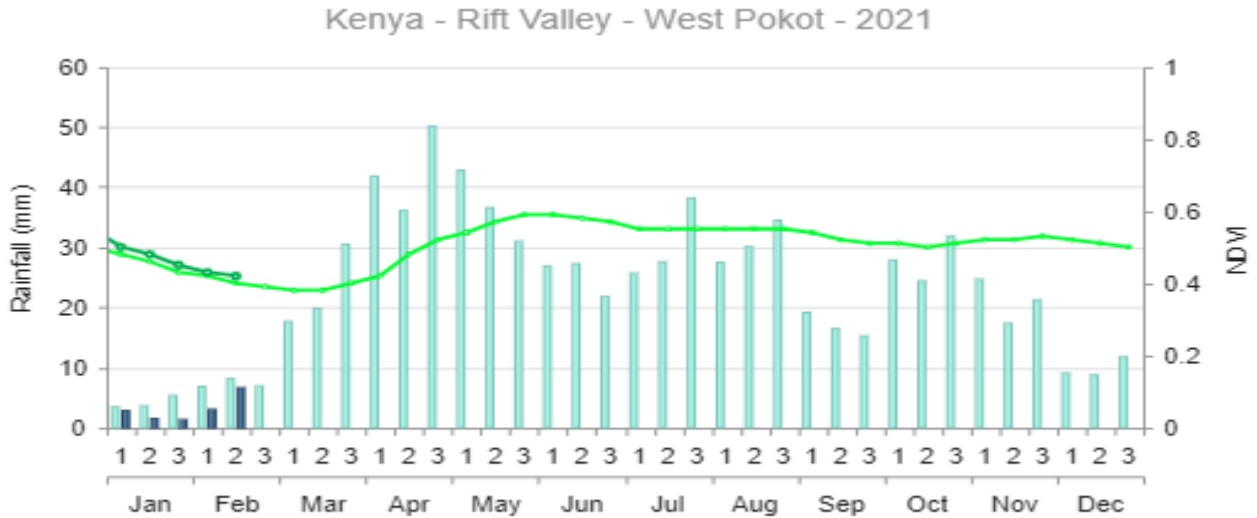
Access Indicators	Value	Normal range
Terms of Trade (ToT)	113	>76
Milk Consumption	1.5	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	3.6 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	2.5	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	1.4	0.0-14.5

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1.1 RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

- In the month of February, insufficient rainfall was received. The situation is below normal for such time of the year.



<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)
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dekads with a downward trend when compared to their respective long term dekadal NDVI values.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- During the month, the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution remained poor across the livelihoods. The amounts received were below normal.

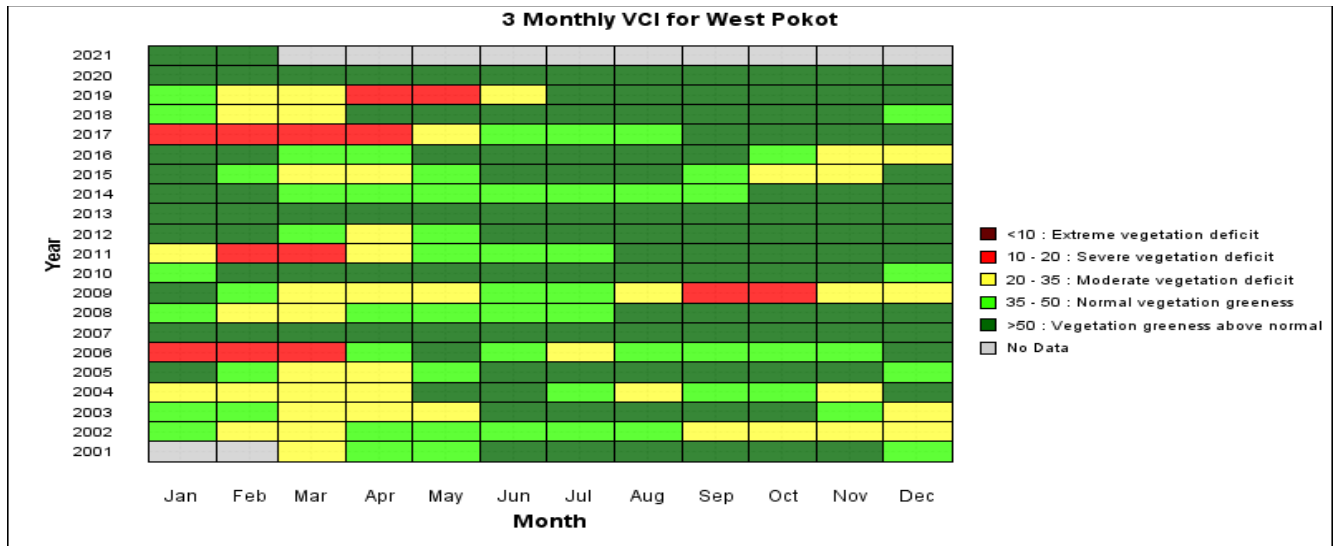
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable events were reported across the County in February.

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

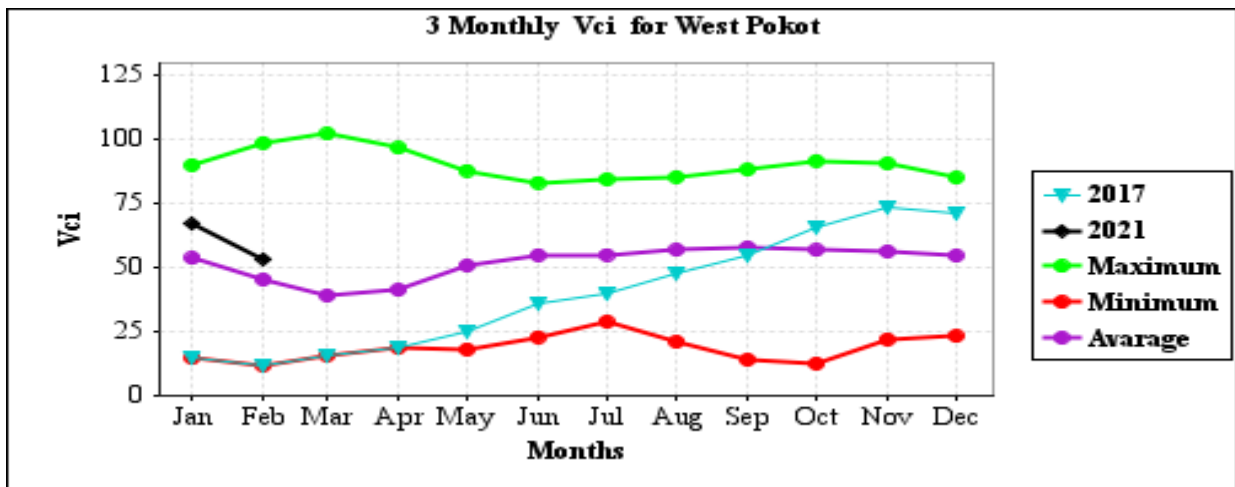
2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

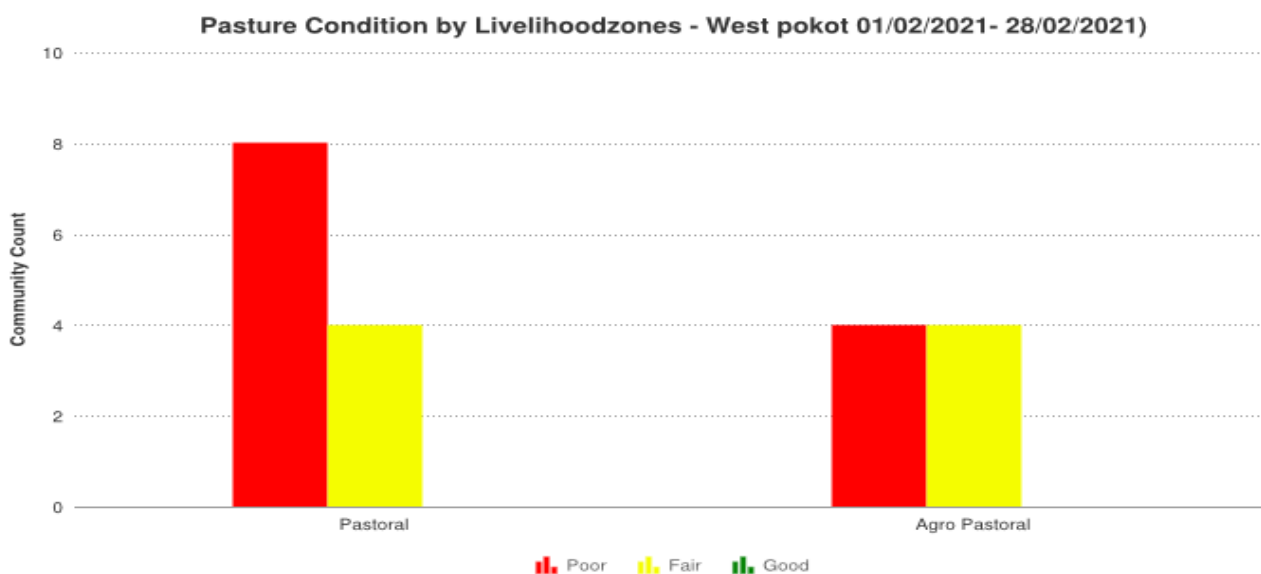
- In the month under review, the VCI (VCI-3month) which denotes the vegetation status of the County dropped to 53 from 67 in January. The current VCI indicates above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI is on descending trend across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. The deterioration in VCI is from 62 to 48, 72 to 59, 70 to 59 and 70 to 54 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The decrease in VCI is linked to insufficient regeneration of vegetation cover.



- The current vegetation condition index is above normal as compared to the long-term average.
- The onset of long rains season in March is expected to improve the 3-months vegetation condition index.
- The current VCI is still below maxima for the County despite being above the long term average for the season.

2.1.2 Pasture

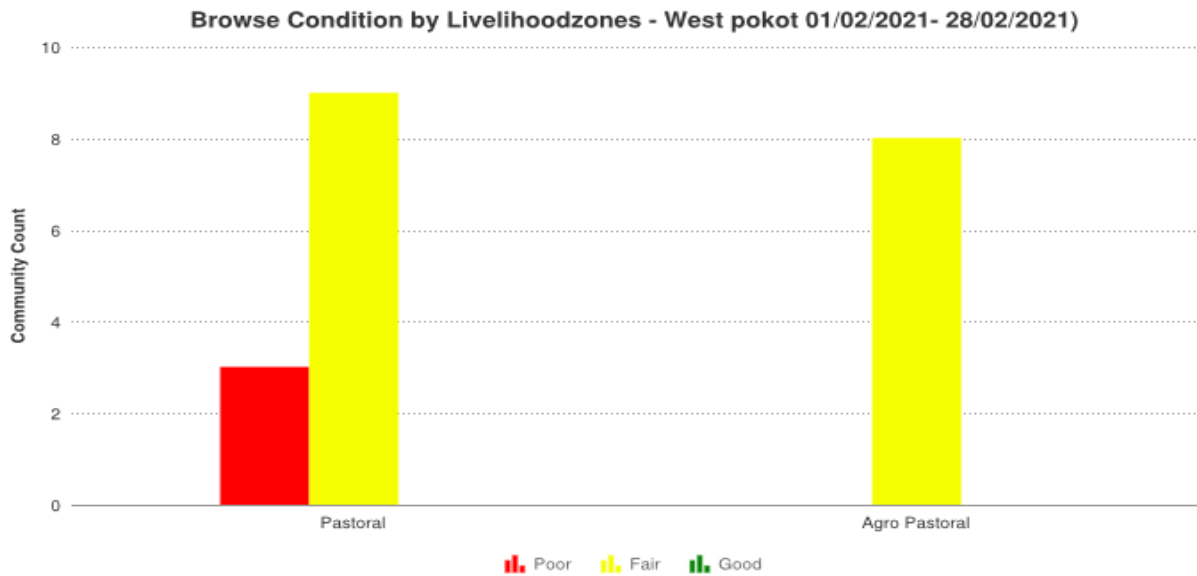
- In the month under review, the proportion of sampled community members which reported that the pasture was poor was at 67 and 50 percent in pastoral and agro pastoral livelihood zones respectively.
- The communities reported that pasture situation was poor-fair in all livelihood zones. The condition was normal for such time of the year.



- The trend is deteriorating in comparison to that of January owing to inadequate rains. The pasture condition is likely improve attributed to expected onset of long rains in March.
- There is significant variation in terms of pasture. Quality and quantity is still fair in agro-pastoral as compared to poor in pastoral livelihood zones.

2.1.3 Browse

- The browse condition is still fair across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition declined when compared to that of January.
- The proportion of sampled community members which stated that browse condition is fair was at 75 percent in agro pastoral and 100 percent in pastoral livelihoods.

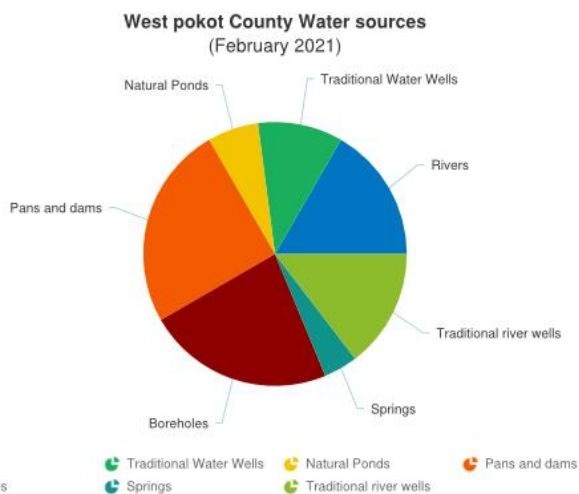


- The quantity of browse is still fair across the livelihood zones and there was no significant variation between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The access to forage in the conflict hotspots is good due to intensified multi agency peace building efforts.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

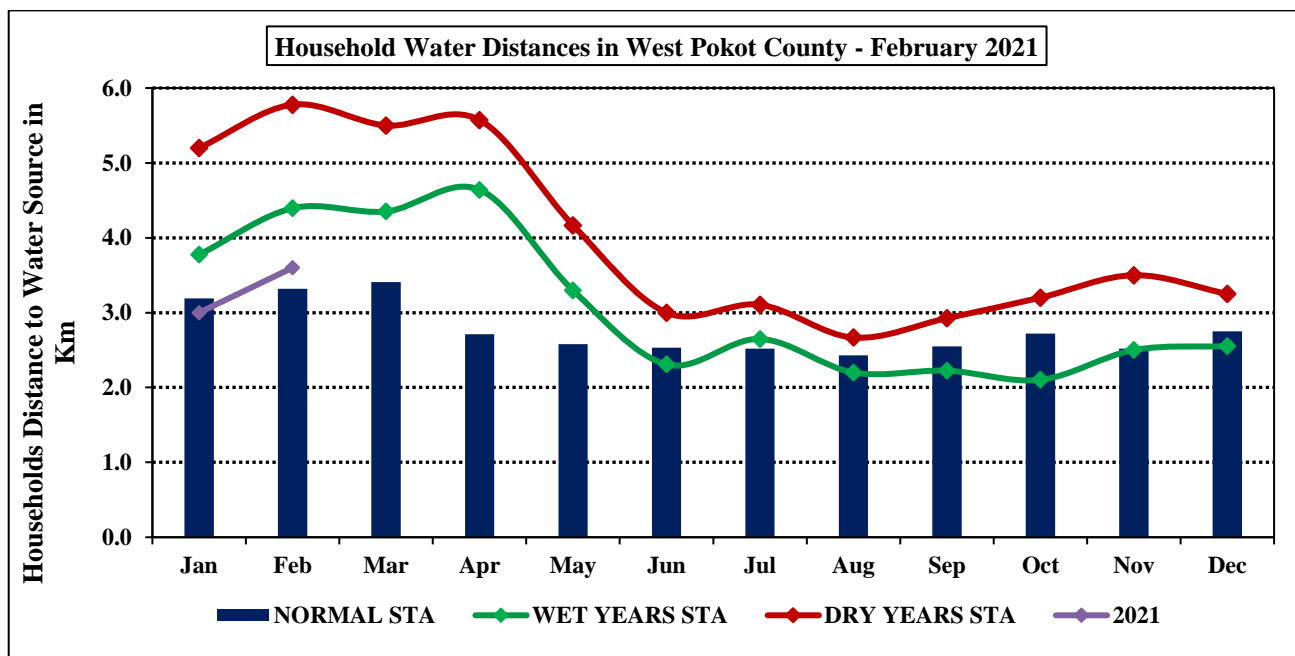
2.2.1 Sources

- In February, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock were; 25 percent for pans and dams, 23 percent for boreholes, 17 percent for rivers, 15 percent traditional river wells and 10 percent for traditional water wells.
- There was poor surface water recharge in all sources during the month. The situation is anticipated to improve owing to expected onset of long rains in March.
- 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 at 3.6 km in February, a rise from 3 km that recorded in the previous month. The current distance is 9 percent above the Long Term Average (LTA).
- As usual, pastoral livelihood zones of Pokot North and Pokot Central Sub counties reported longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The upward trend in distance is attributed to insufficient water recharge to sources.

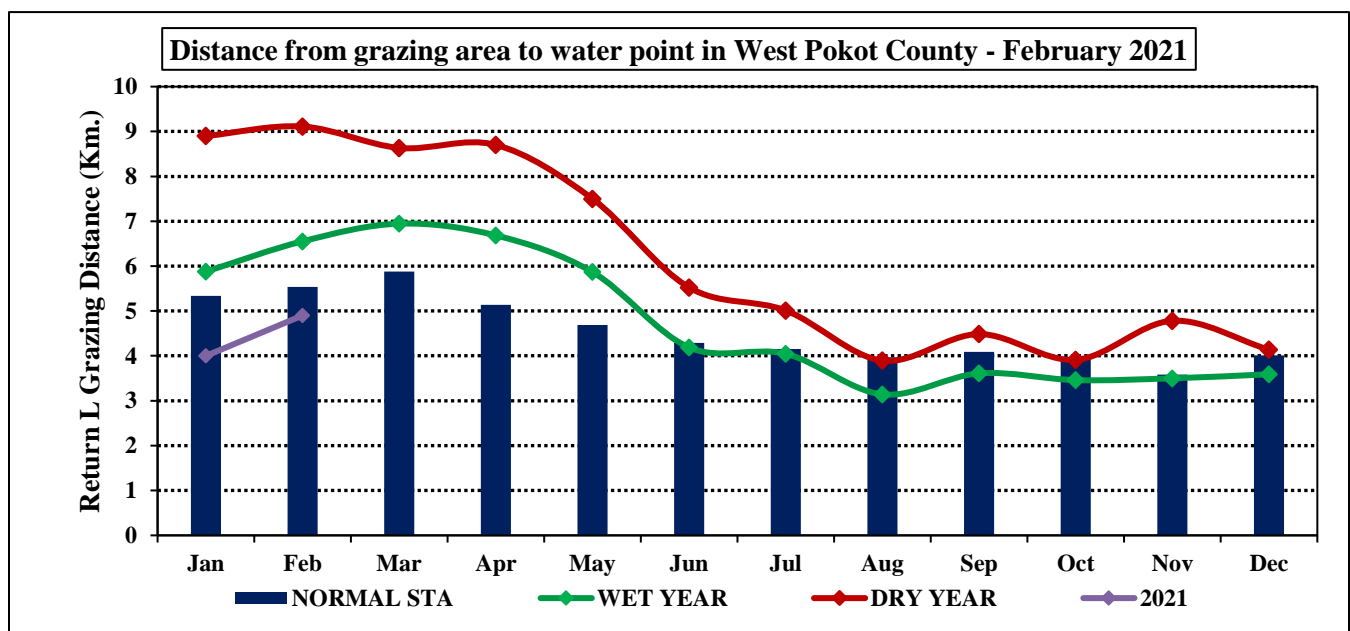


- During the month, the pastoral livelihood zones recorded longer waiting time at water source than the agro-pastoral zones.
- The average household water consumption per person per day was at 8-11 litres in the pastoral zones while that in the agro-pastoral zones was 11-15 at litres.

- The water cost 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 February, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources remained was 4.9km a rise from 4 km that recorded in the previous month. The current trekking distance is 12 percent below 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 as usual.



- The trend in livestock trekking distance to water points is anticipated to decrease due to expected onset of long rains in March.
- Livestock watering frequency is still at 5-7 times in a week for both cattle and shoats and 4-5 times in a week for camel.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

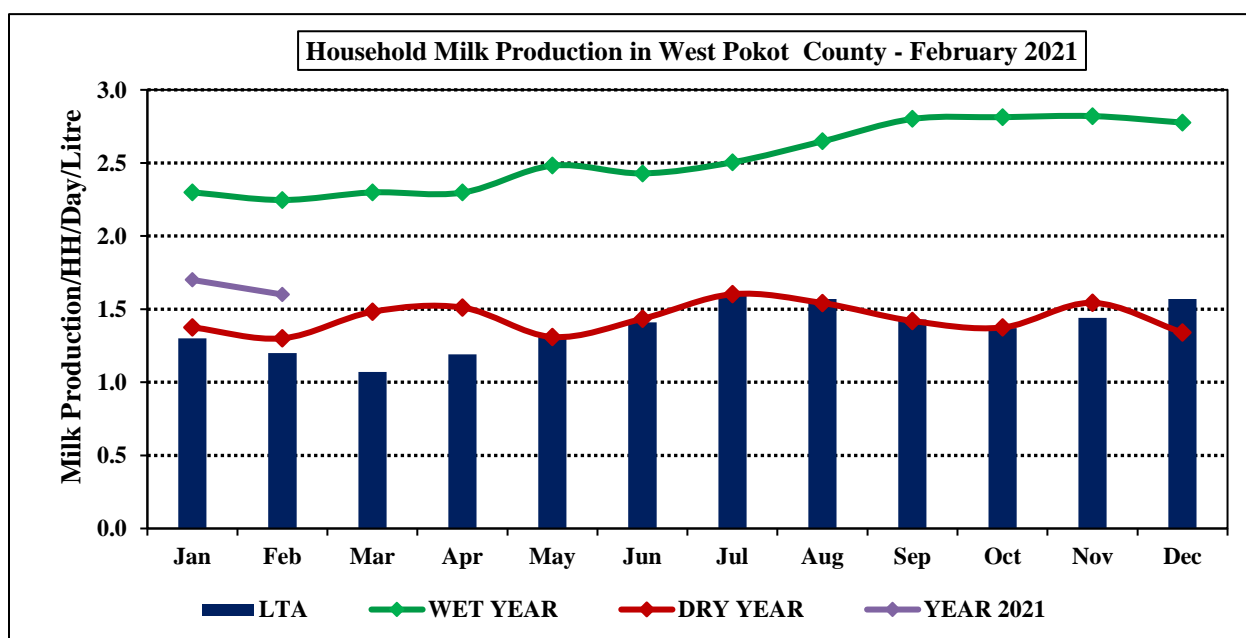
- In the month under review, the body condition for all livestock species is still fair in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones similar as that recorded in the previous month.
- The livestock body condition is projected to improve across the livelihood zones with the expected onset of long rains in March.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to same period during a normal year. The downward trend is due to inadequate forage regeneration during the month.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- (FMD) foot and mouth disease cases were reported in Kiwawa and Sook wards in Pokot North and Pokot West Sub counties respectively. Endemic CCPP incidences in cattle was reported in Masol ward in Pokot Central Sub County.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- During the month, the County reported an average production of 1.6 litres of milk per household per day, a slight decrease from 1.7 litres recorded in the previous month.
- As usual, cattle was the main livestock producing milk at the households in all the livelihood zones in the County.
- The current household milk production is above the long term average by 33 percent.
- The household downward trend in milk production credited to inadequate forage access in the traditional grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

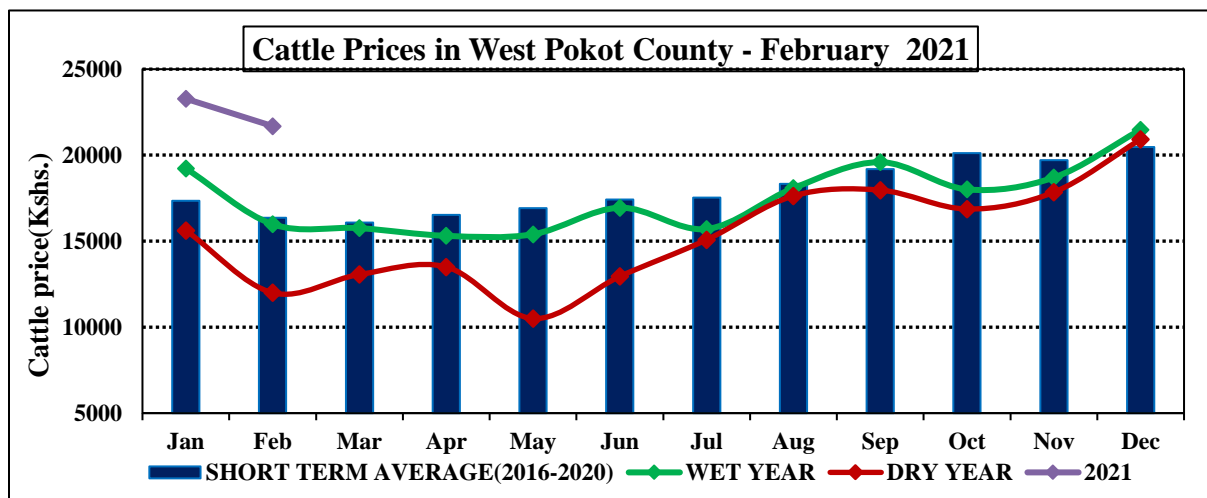
- The County' major crops cultivated include maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions. Most farmers are in land preparation stage.
- The horticultural production and supply to major markets in Ortum and Lomut is at normal levels in comparison to the seasonal performance.
- The level of farming is ongoing along the horticultural production zones due to expected onset of long rains in March in fruit growing zones.
- The harvesting of Mango fruits in the highlands has ended. These are supplied to Lomut, Ortum, Sigor and external markets for distribution to other centres within and outside the County.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

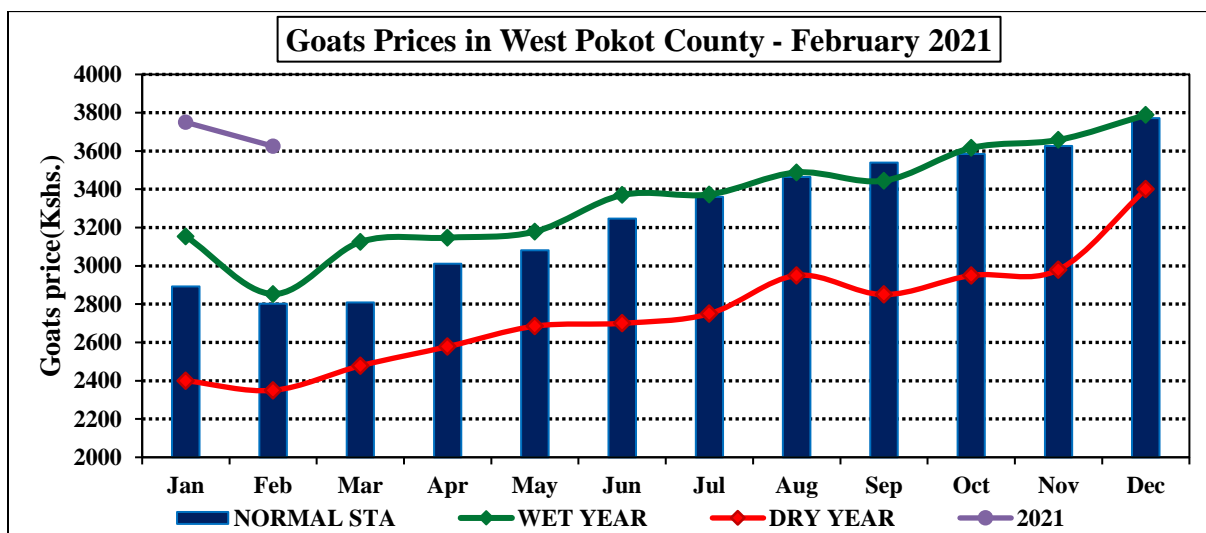
4.1.1 Cattle prices

- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 21,688, representing a rise in price as compared to Kshs 23,281 reported in January.
- The declining trend in cattle price is mainly due to worsening body condition as well as insufficient recharge of water points.
- When compared, the current cattle price is 32 percent above the long term average.



4.1.2 Goat Prices

- The County reported an average price of Kshs 3,625 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which represented a decline in comparison with Kshs 3,750 recorded in the previous month.

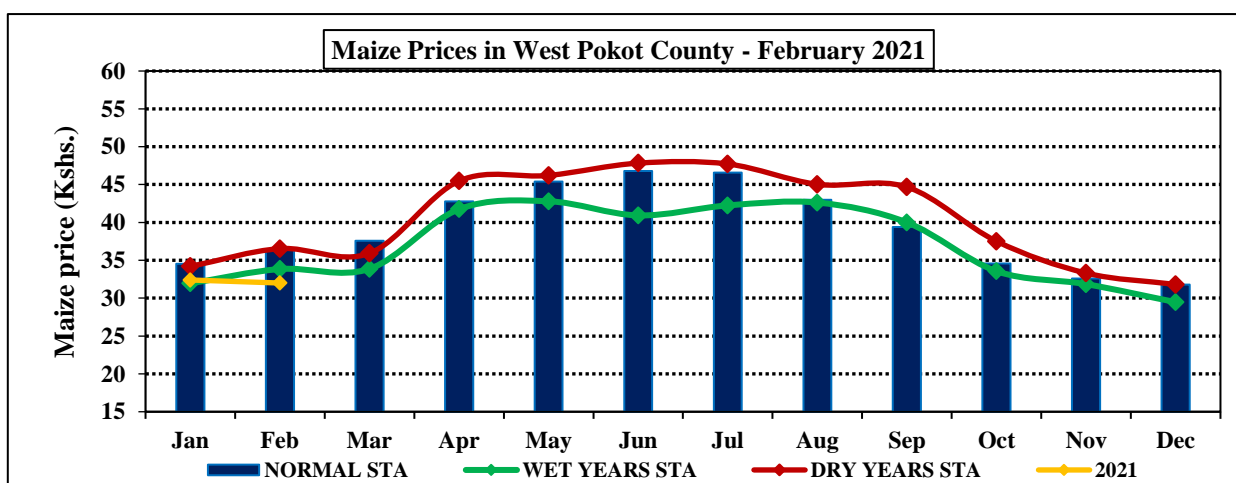


- The price decrease is linked to worsening body condition along with increasing trekking distances across the livelihoods. The current goat price is 29 percent above long term average for such a period of the year .

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

- In February, the maize was sold at Ksh 32 per kg, same as that reported in the previous month.
- When compared to the short term average, the current price is 12 percent below the long term average price.

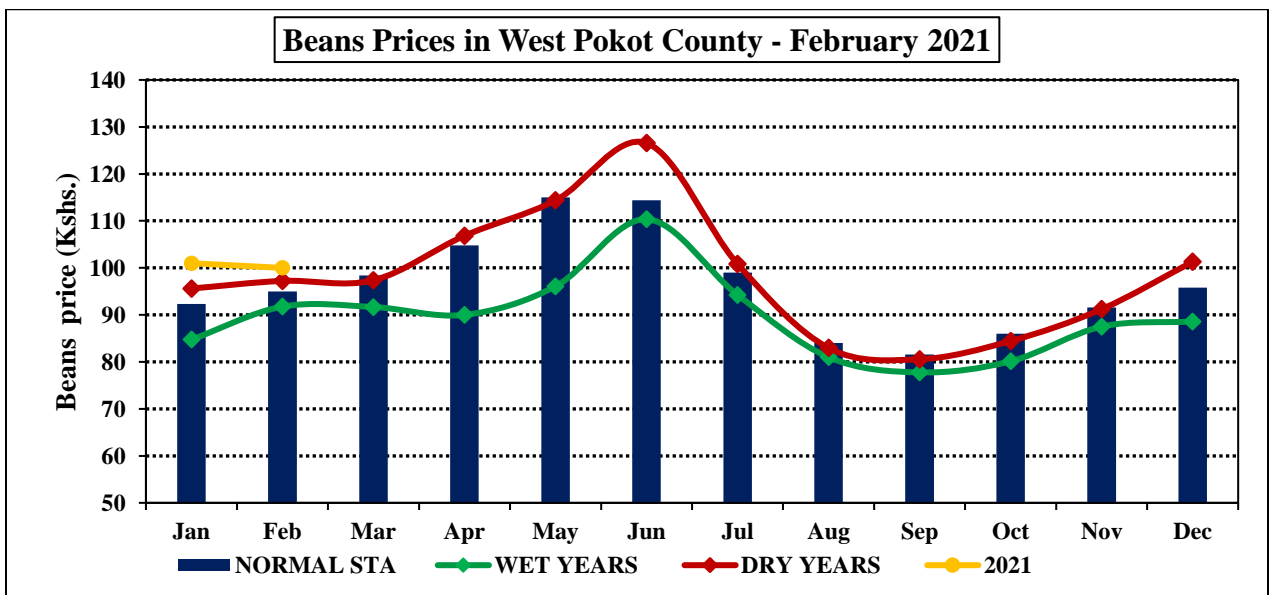


- The increase in price is linked to the stable supply in the market mainly in Chepareria, Sigor and Makutano areas in Pokot South, Pokot Central and Pokot West Sub Counties.

- Majority of the households relied more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is expected to increase due to likely exhaustion of local stock during long rains season.

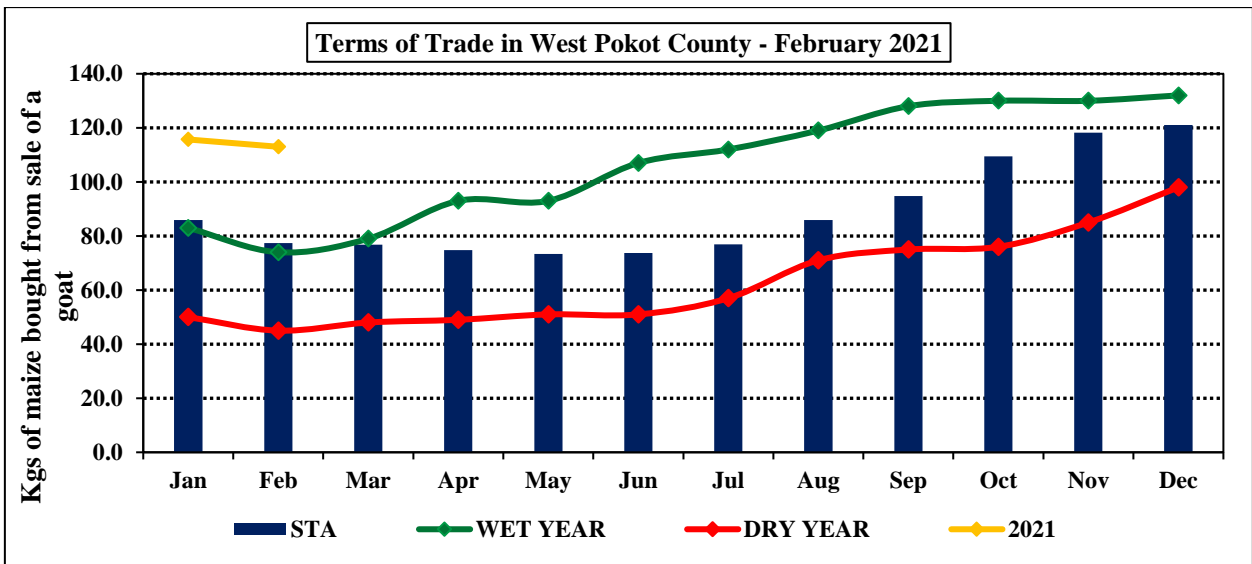
4.2.2 Beans

- During the month, the beans traded at Kshs 100 per kg, signifying a price stability in comparison to Kshs 101 reported in January.
- The price stability is linked to stable external supplies. There was no significant variation in price across the two livelihood zones since they both rely on the same external sources for supply.
- The current price of beans is 5 percent above the short term average price (Ksh 95).



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

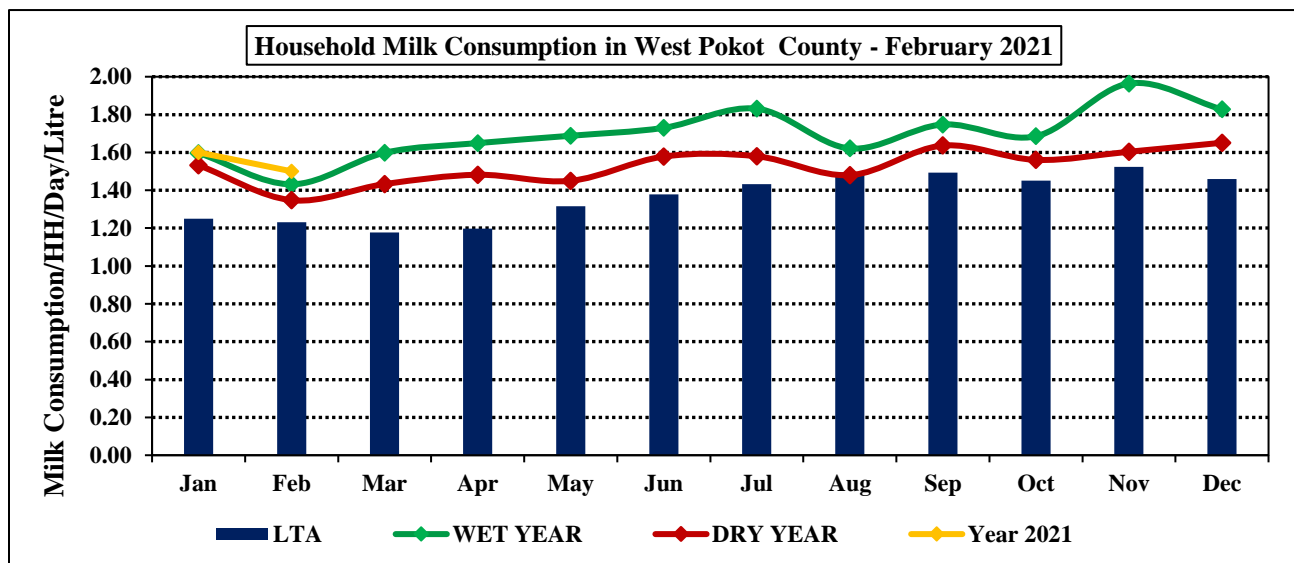
- In the month under review, Terms of Trade (TOT) was at 113, having decreased from 116 recorded in the previous month, demonstrating that households obtained less amount of maize for sale of a goat.
- The downward trend in ToT is owed to decreasing goat prices and stability cereal prices in the market.
- The TOT variation is projected over the next three months as the price of maize is likely rise over the period.



5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

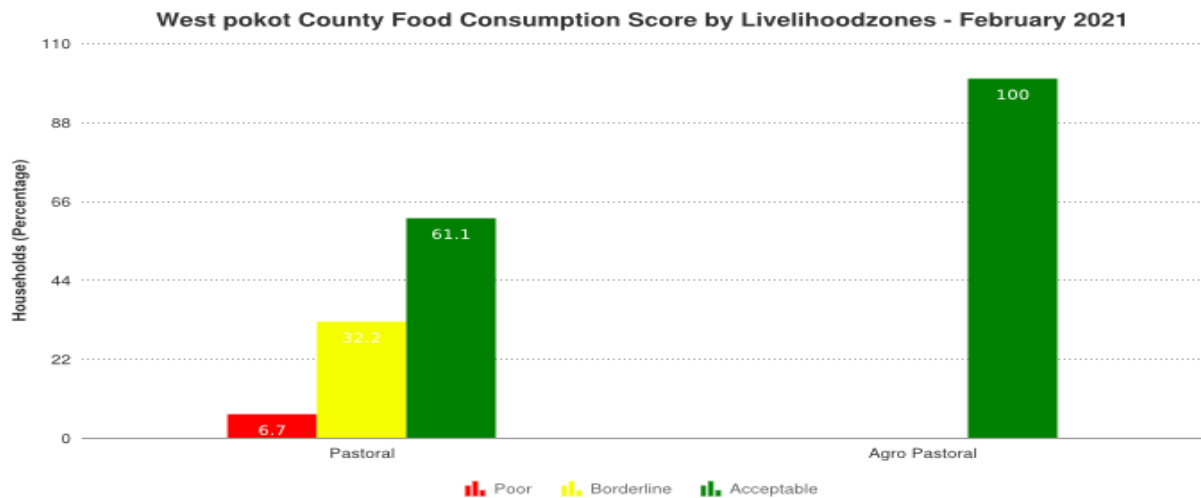
5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- In February, the households across livelihood zones had milk consumption of 1.5 litres of milk on average, a slight drop from 1.6 litres recorded in the previous month. The consumption is 25 percent below long term average.



- The decrease in milk consumption is correlated to the poor access to milk in the households coupled with unstable food consumption scores in the households. Generally, availability of milk was poor during the month.

5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE



- The households' proportions of 77%, 19% and 4% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score dropped for both the acceptable borderline category and increased for poor category as compared to that of January. The FCS is generally acceptable during the month.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones was at 50; signifying a decrease when compared to that recorded in the previous month.
- There was significant variation between the two livelihood zones with for instance 100 percent of households in the agro-pastoral zone being categorized as having acceptable FCS compared to 61% 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 due availability of local harvest stocks in agro pastoral areas.

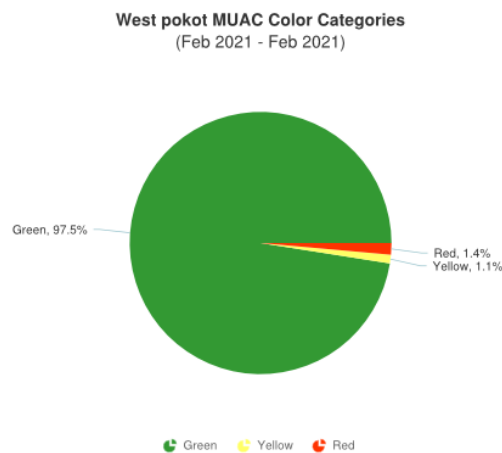
5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition Status

The proportion of children under the age of five years who were 'at risk' of malnutrition was 2.5 percent (Moderate acute-1.1 percent and Severe acute-1.4 percent malnutrition), while that of

the January was 2.4 percent depicting a rise in malnutrition cases.

In comparison to the long term average of 3.7 percent, proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition is below the normal range due to steady food consumption score across the livelihood zones.



5.3.1 Health

- In February, Malaria was reported as a common ailment among the sampled households across the livelihood zones

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- During the month, the County CSI was at 1.4, demonstrating an increase from 1.1 recorded in January. The rise depicts that households continue to employ more strategies to cope, which could be linked to high food commodity prices and inconsistent access to commodities markets.
- The pastoral zones recorded a CSI of 2.1 while agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded 0.7.
- 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

- Ministry of health COVID-19 pandemic control measures are being enforced across the County.
- ACF and County health department conducted KAP Survey for 2021.
- County multi agency team carried out cross border transhumance corridor development planning.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- In February, no livestock theft incidences were reported along West Pokot/Turkana border.

7.2 MIGRATION

- Migration of livestock towards Uganda was reported in Mnagei, Masol, Orolwo, Kodich, Alale, and Kiwawa areas in Pokot North sub counties.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- Milk production is likely to increase with rejuvenation of forage and good water recharge owing to expected onset of long rains in March.
- Malnutrition cases are likely to decrease over the period, due to upcoming rains in March, as food consumption is likely to improve for most households.
- The distance to water sources for both human and livestock is expected to drop owing to good water point recharge when long rains begin in March.

- The livestock productivity is likely to increase as the forage conditions is expected to improve with the upcoming long rains season leading to fair livestock body condition thus fetching good livestock prices in the market.
- Maize prices are expected to go up while goat price is likely to stabilize attributed to expected long rains in March, as such terms of trade would remain favourable within the period.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. AGRICULTURE

- Encourage early land preparation in agro pastoral and mixed farming areas in anticipation of near-above normal long starting in March.

2. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Provide early warning alerts and advisories to the communities affected for early action and planning.

3. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Upscale livestock disease surveillance and deworming particularly in wards with reported disease incidences.

4. WATER SECTOR

- Supply water treatment chemicals to communities who use pans and dams as their main source of water.
- Conduct water pan desilting especially the pans that have already dried up

5. PEACE AND SECURITY

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