



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



## National Drought Management Authority WEST POKOT COUNTY DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR MARCH 2021

### MARCH EW PHASE



#### Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

##### Biophysical Indicators

- The County remained dry and sunny in March. The temporal and spatial distribution remained poor across the livelihood zones.
- The vegetation cover index recorded was at normal range, with a worsening trend across the livelihoods as indicated by the sharp drop in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded normal vegetation conditions. Forage condition was generally poor with downward trend.

##### Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- Milk production decreased in March while milk consumption at household level dropped and above the long term average.
- The livestock body condition is poor, with a deteriorating trend across the County for all species. Distance to water sources increased further across the County.
- The County's terms of trade was unfavourable with a downward trend in all livelihood zones.
- Most of the households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index increased across livelihood zones. There were no notable variations in livelihood coping strategies employed between livelihoods.

#### Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification

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

Biophysical Indicators	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	43	>35
Forage Condition	Poor	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Poor	Normal
Milk Production	1.4	>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)	102	>76
Milk Consumption	1.4	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	4.0 km	0.0-2.6km
Cost of water at source (Ksh. /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

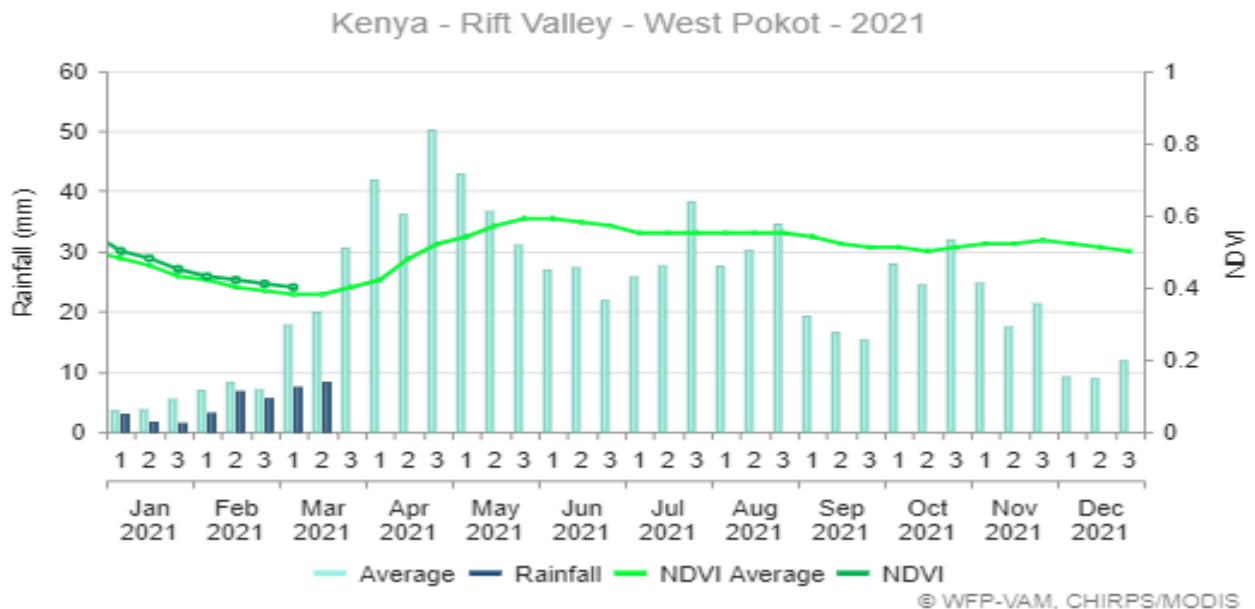
Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	2.8	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	1.5	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	48	>35

<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

- In the month under review, insignificant rainfall was received. The situation is below normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- In March, the dekadal precipitation was at 7.8 mm from 6.6 mm in the first dekad and at 8.1 mm in the second dekad from 3 mm in February. When compared with the previous month the amounts slightly increased. The dekadal amounts were below normal.
- The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is slightly above normal in first and second dekads with a similar trend when compared to their respective long term dekadal NDVI values.

## 1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- In March, the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution is still poor across the livelihoods. The amounts received were below normal.

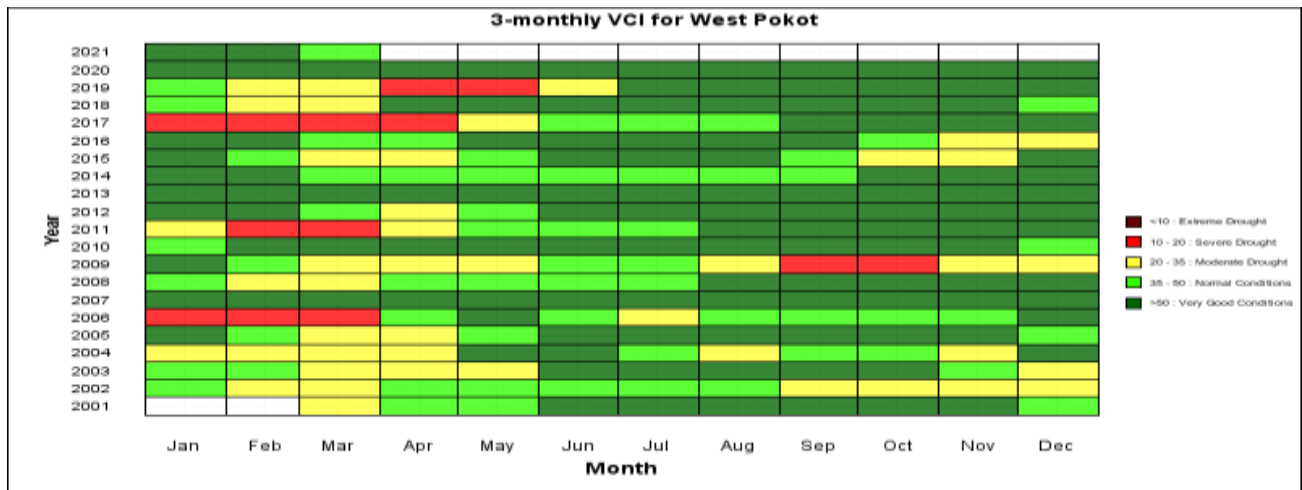
## 1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable events were reported across the County during the month.

## 2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

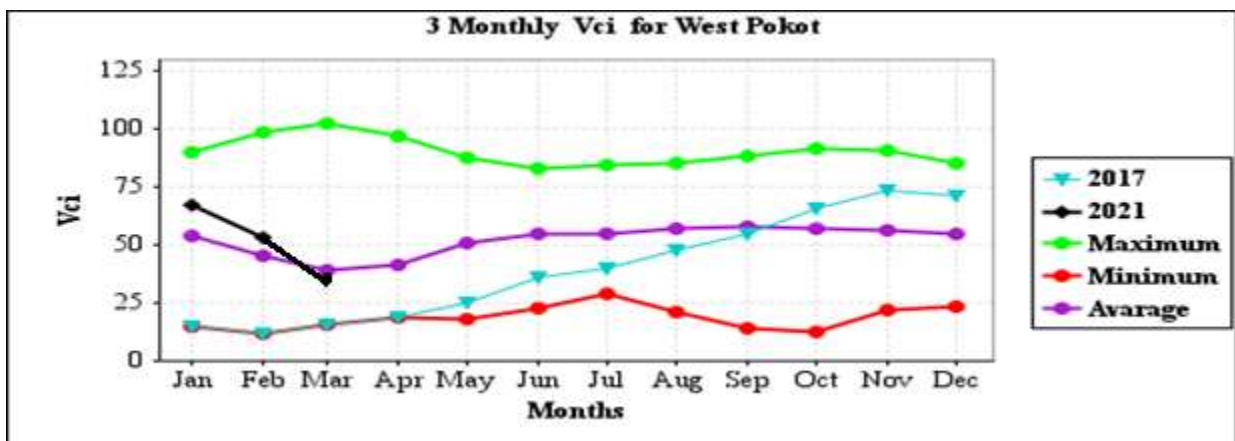
### 2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

#### 2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

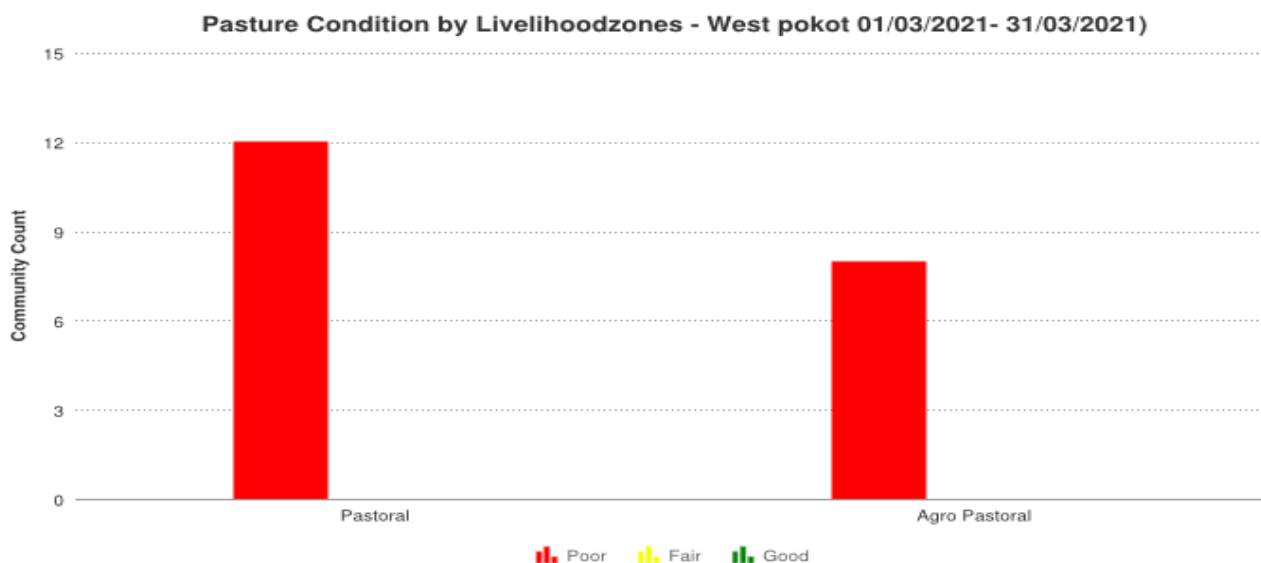
- During the month, the VCI (VCI-3month) which shows the vegetation status of the County declined to 43 from 53 in February. The current VCI portrays normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI is on downward trend across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties reported normal vegetation conditions. The worsening situation in VCI is from 48 to 38, 59 to 46, 59 to 52 and 54 to 42 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The drop in VCI is associated with poor rejuvenation of vegetation cover.



- The current vegetation condition index is below normal as compared to the long-term average.
- The onset of long rains season which was expected to improve the 3-months vegetation condition index has delayed.

### 2.1.2 Pasture

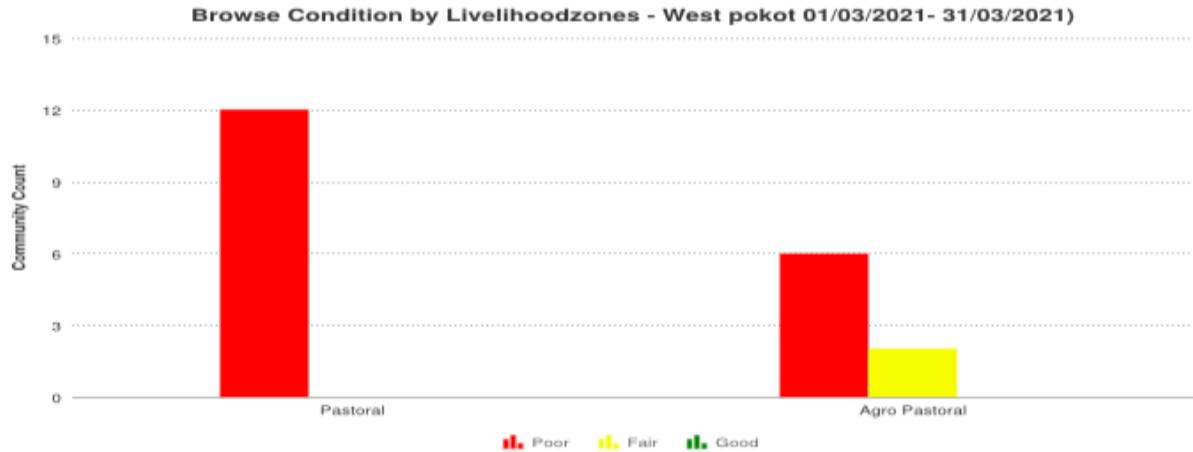
- During the month, the proportion of sampled community members which recorded that the pasture was poor was at 100 in both pastoral and agro pastoral livelihood zones respectively.
- The communities stated that pasture situation was poor-fair in all livelihood zones. The condition was below normal for such time of the year.



- The trend is worsening when compared to that of the previous month due to delayed onset of long rains in March. The pasture condition is likely to deteriorate if the MAM (March-April-May) season reason delays further.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture. Quality and quantity is poor in both agro-pastoral and pastoral livelihood zones.

### 2.1.3 Browse

- During the month, the browse condition is fair in agro pastoral and poor in pastoral livelihood zones and is below normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition deteriorated when compared to that of February.
- The proportion of sampled community members which stated that browse condition is poor was at 100 percent in pastoral and 90 percent in agro pastoral livelihoods.

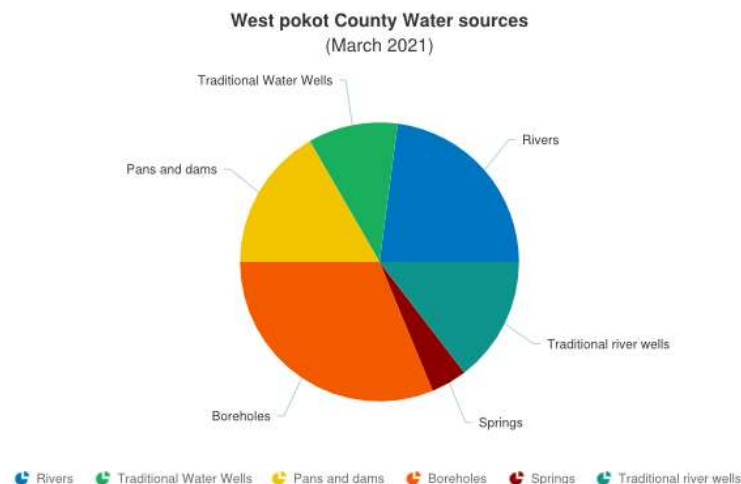


- There was significant variation between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The intensified multi agency peace building efforts have improved access to forage in the conflict zones in the County.

## 2.2 WATER RESOURCE

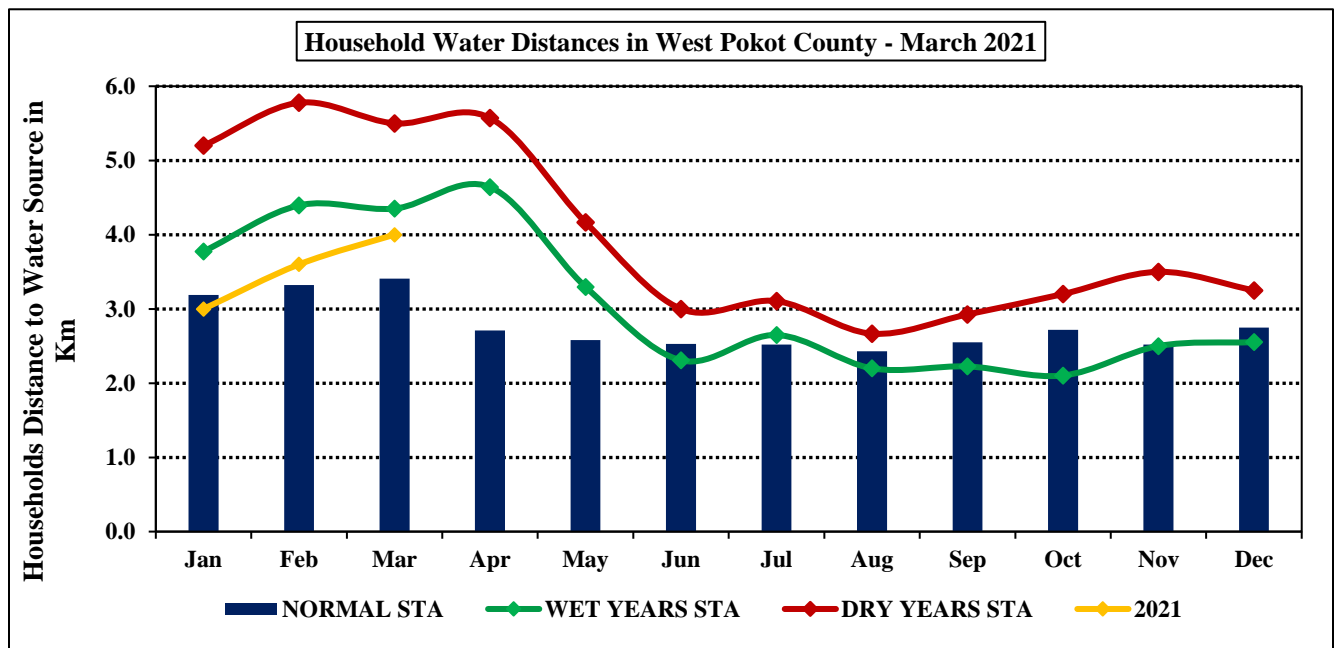
### 2.2.1 Sources

- In the month under review, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock were; 31 percent for boreholes, 23 percent for rivers, 17 percent for pans and dams, 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 has worsened due to delayed onset of long rains.
- 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

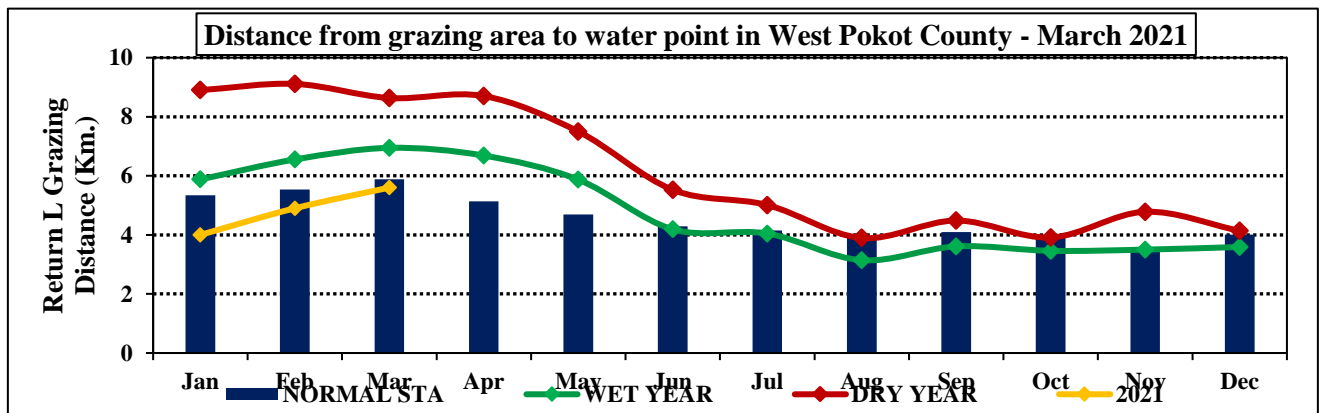
- During the month, the return distance to water source from the household was at 4 km, an increase from 3.6 km that reported in February. The current distance is 11 percent above the Long Term Average (LTA).
- Pastoral livelihood zones of Pokot North and Pokot Central Sub counties recorded longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The increase trend in distance is linked to inadequate recharge to water sources.



- As usual, 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 is still 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

- The livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources remained was at 5.6 km a rise from 4.9 km that recorded in February. The current trekking distance is 5 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 has increased further due to delayed onset of MAM rains.
- Livestock watering frequency remained 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 March, the body condition for all livestock species was poor in pastoral fair in agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The condition worsened in comparison to that of February.
- The livestock body condition is likely to deteriorate further across livelihood zones with the delayed onset of long rains in March.
- The body condition is below normal for all livestock species in comparison to same period during a normal year. The declining trend is attributed to insufficient forage rejuvenation in March.
- There was significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

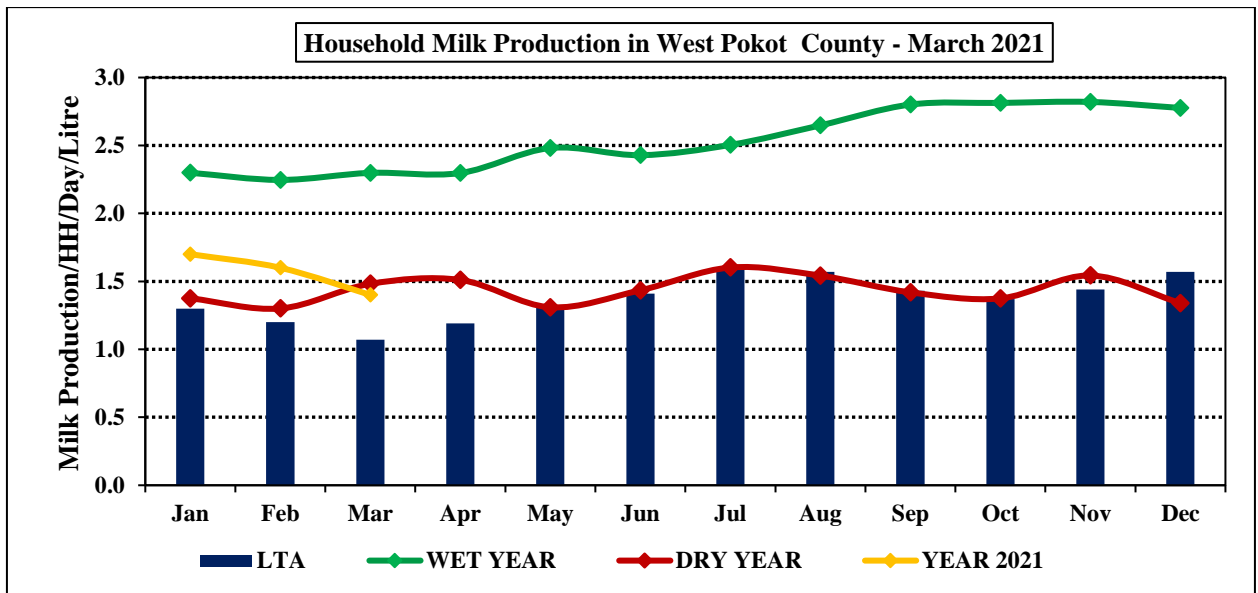
#### **3.1.2 Livestock Diseases**

- Pestes Des Petit (PPR) cases were reported in Pokot Central Sub County. Endemic CCPP and CCBP incidences in cattle was reported in Pokot North Sub County.

#### **3.1.3 Milk Production**

- In March, the County reported an average production of 1.4 litres of milk per household per day, a decrease from 1.6 litres recorded in February.
- 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 27 percent.
- The household declining trend in milk production attributed to insufficient forage access in the traditional grazing areas.





### 3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

#### 3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

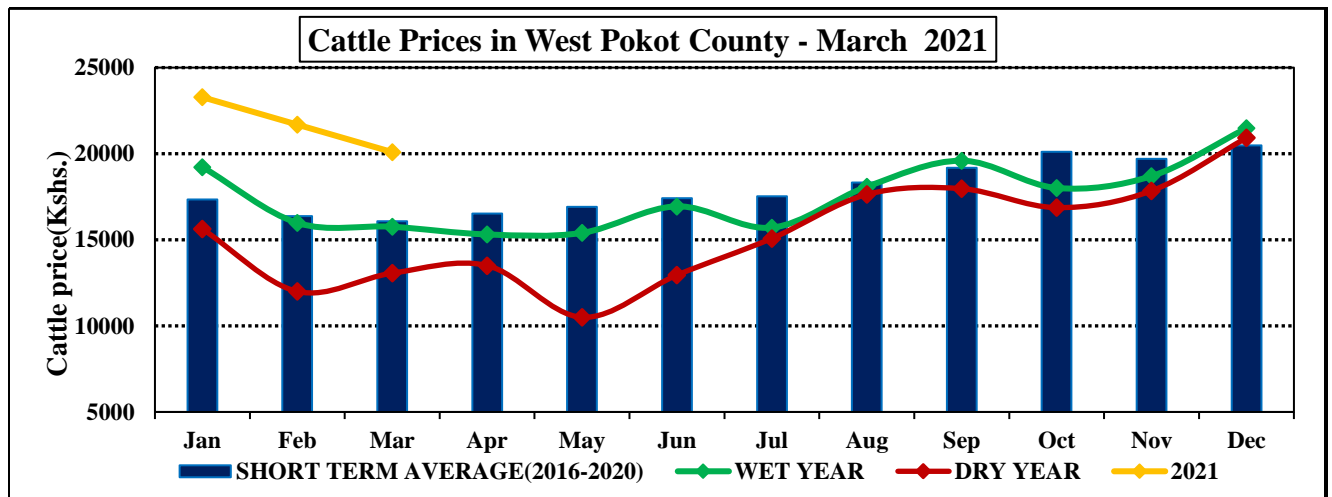
- In the month under review, the County’ major crops cultivated include maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions. Most farmers are in land preparation stage.
- The horticultural production and supply to major markets in Ortum and Lomut is low in comparison to the seasonal performance due to delayed long rains.
- The land preparation is ongoing along the horticultural production zones in anticipation of onset of long rains in the fruit growing zones.
- The Mango fruits supply is off-season. 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

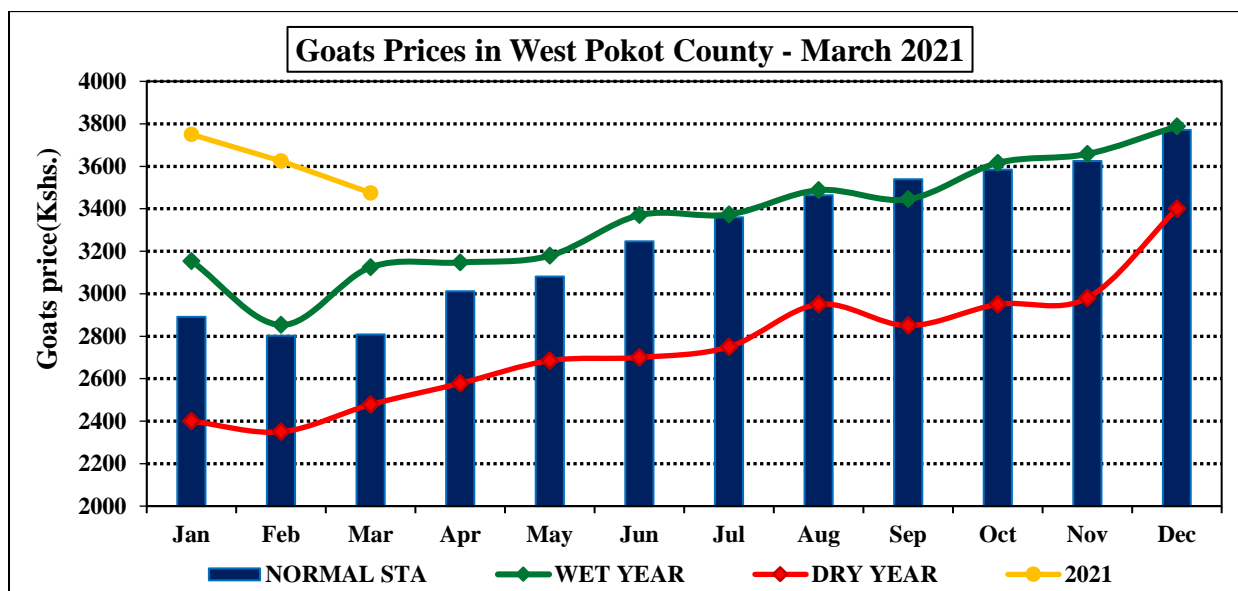
#### 4.1.1 Cattle prices

- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 20,093 in March, demonstrating an increase in price as compared to Kshs 21,688 reported in the previous month.
- The down trend in cattle price is mainly attributed to deteriorating body condition as well as poor recharge of water sources.
- The current cattle price is 25 percent above the long term average.



#### 4.1.2 Goat Prices

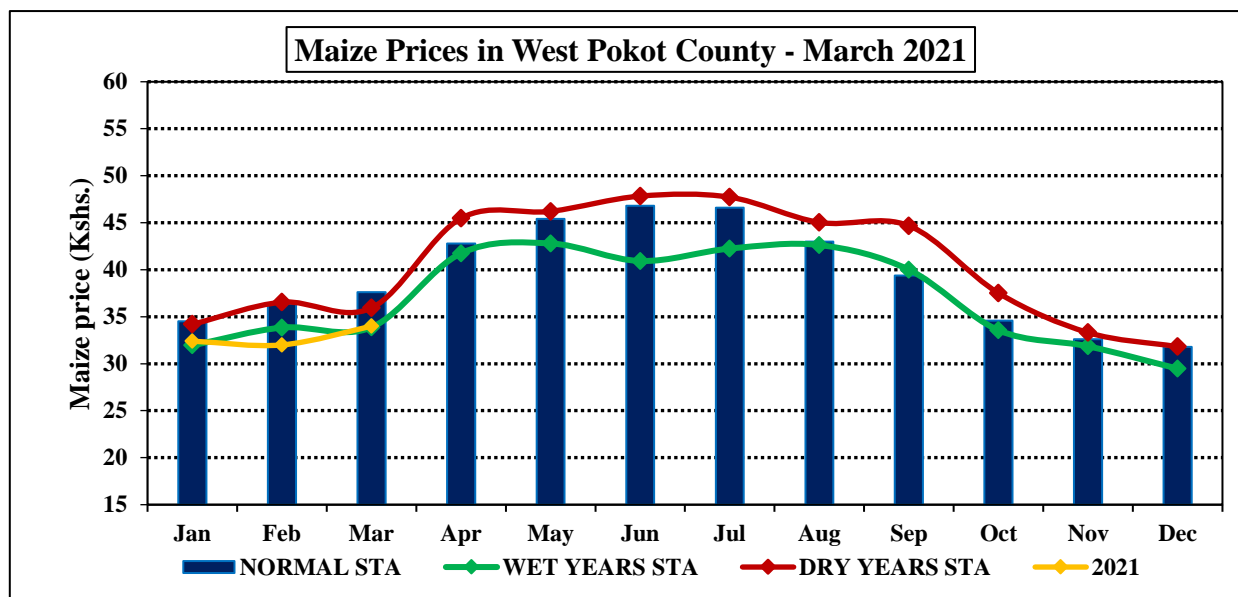
- In March, the County reported an average price of Kshs 3,475 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which denoted a drop in comparison with Kshs 3,625 recorded in February.
- The price downward trend is associated with deteriorating body condition as well as increasing trekking distances across the livelihoods. The current goat price is 24 percent above long term average for such a period of the year .



## 4.2 CROP PRICES

### 4.2.1 Maize

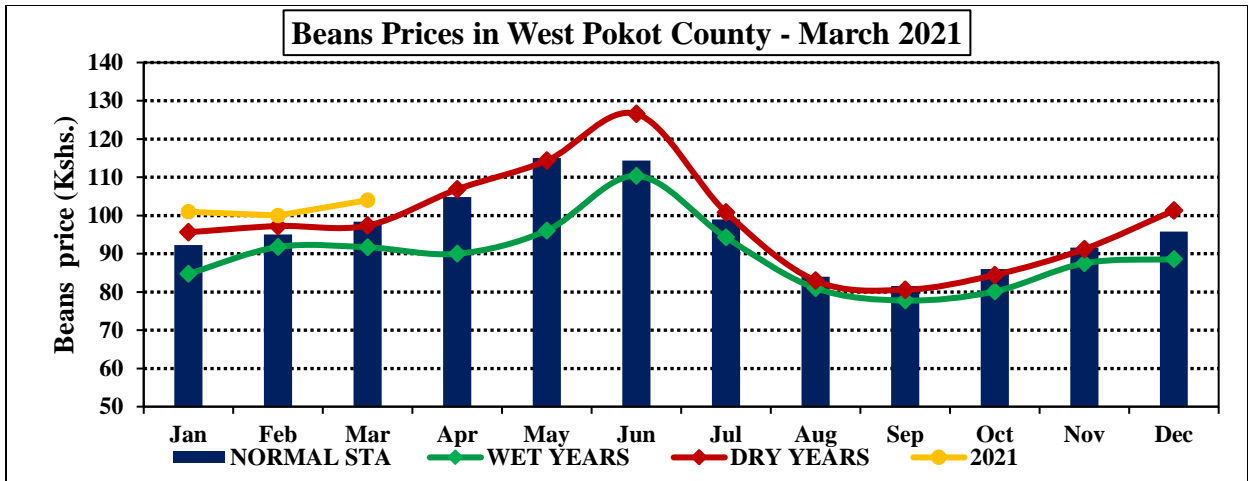
- The maize was sold at Ksh 34 per kg in March, same as that recorded in February.
- When compared to the short term average, the current price is 10 percent below the long term average price.



- The uptrend in price is owed to the erratic supply in the market mainly in Chepareria, Sigor and Makutano areas in Pokot South, Pokot Central and Pokot West Sub Counties.
- Most of the households depended more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is projected to go up further due depletion of local stock during the up-coming long rains season.

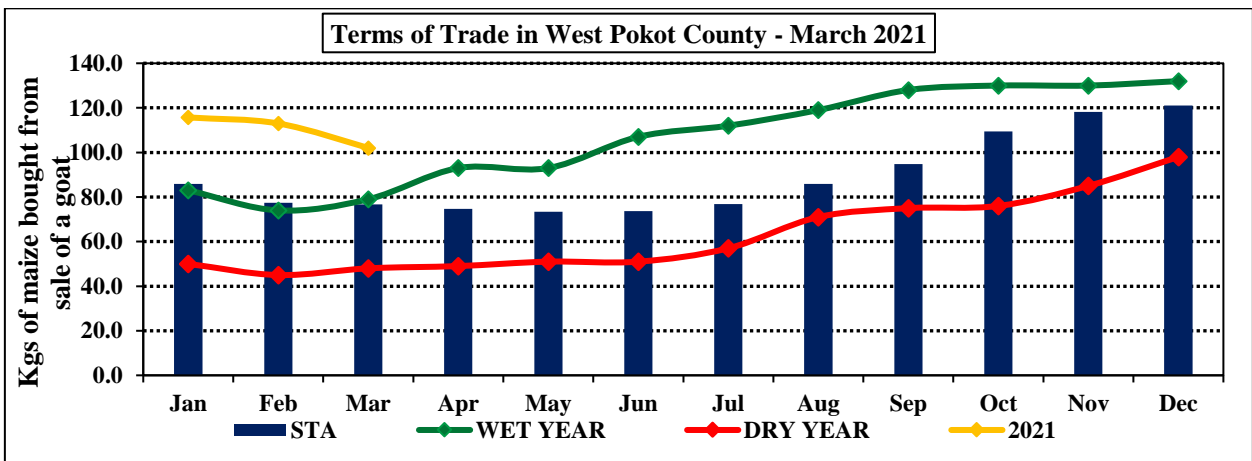
#### 4.2.2 Beans

- In March, the beans traded at Kshs 104 per kg, representing a price increase in comparison to Kshs 100 reported in the previous month.
- The price rise is credited to fluctuating 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 6 percent above the short term average price (Ksh 98.4).



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

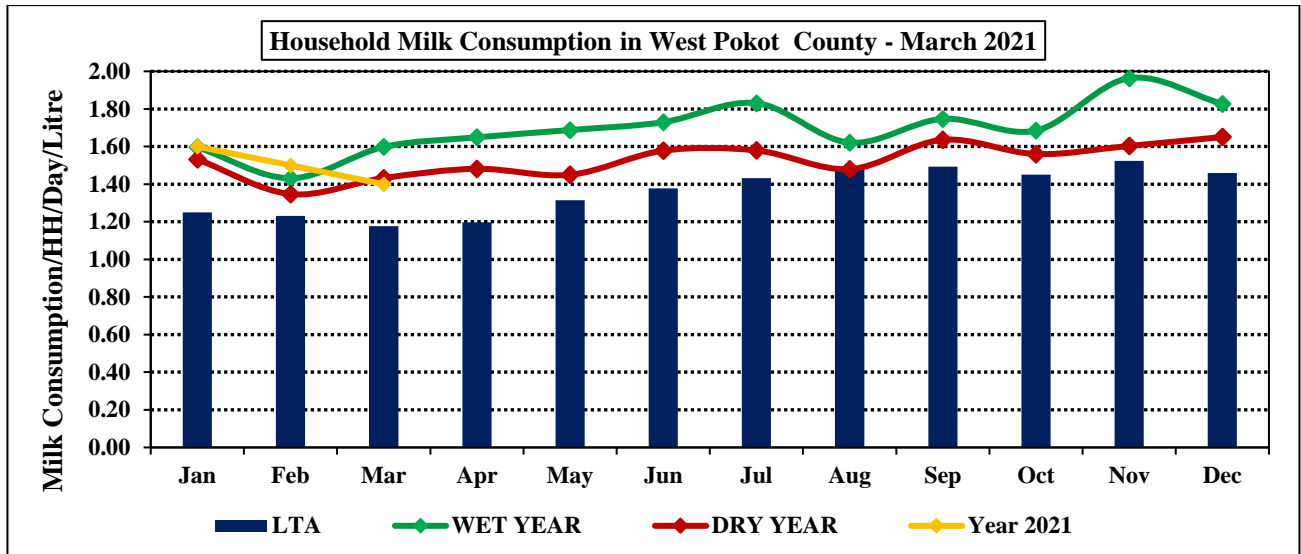
- Terms of Trade (TOT) was at 102 in March, having decreased from 113 recorded in February, signifying that households obtained less amount of maize for sale of a goat than in the previous month.
- The declining trend in ToT is linked to dropping goat prices and increasing cereal prices in the market.
- The TOT variation is anticipated over the next three months as the price of maize is likely to go up further over the period.



## 5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

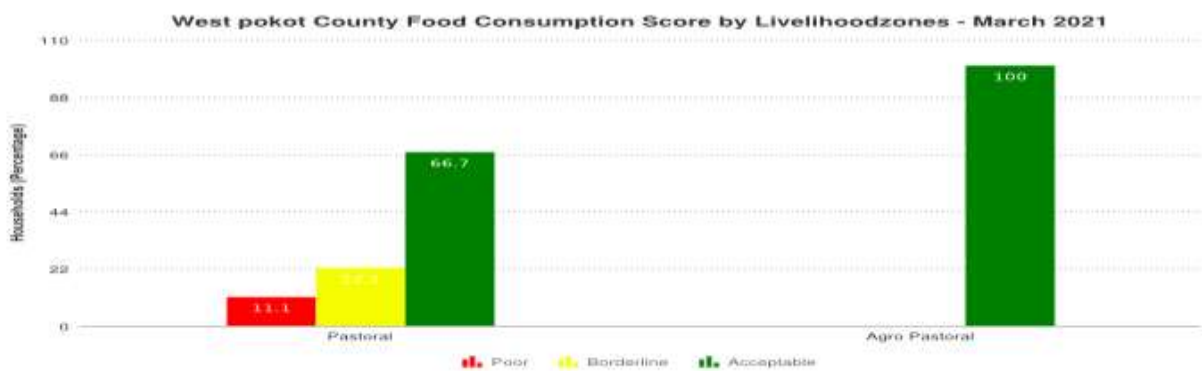
### 5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- The households across livelihood zones had milk consumption of 1.4 litres of milk on average in March, a decrease from 1.5 litres reported in February. The consumption is 17 percent above long term average.



- The drop in milk consumption is linked to the poor access to milk in the households along with decreasing food consumption scores in the households. Generally, availability of milk was low during the month.

### 5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE



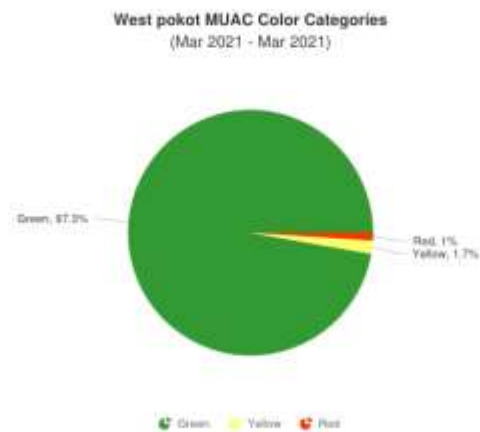
- The households' proportions of 80%, 13% and 7% were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score dropped for borderline category and increased for poor category as compared to that of February. The FCS is generally acceptable in March.

- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones was at 48; indicating a drop when compared to that reported in February.
- 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

- In March, the proportion of children under the age of five years who were ‘at risk’ of malnutrition was 2.8 percent (Moderate acute-1.7 percent and Severe acute-1.0 percent malnutrition), while that of the February was 2.5 percent portraying an increase in malnutrition cases.
- In comparison to the long term average of 4.5 percent, proportion of children ‘at risk’ of malnutrition is below the normal range owing to acceptable food consumption score across the livelihood zones.



### 5.3.1 Health

- 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)

- The County CSI was at 1.5 in March, demonstrating an increase from 1.4 recorded in the previous month. The increase shows that households continue to employ more strategies to cope, which could be associated to high food commodity prices and erratic access to commodities markets.
- The pastoral zones recorded a CSI of 2.2 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**

- NDMA, NDOC and RCMRD conducted hazard mapping across the County.
- County multi agency team carried out cross border transhumance corridor development planning.
- Ministry of health COVID-19 pandemic control measures are being enforced across the County.

## **7.0 EMERGING ISSUES**

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

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

### **7.2 MIGRATION**

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

### **7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS**

- Malnutrition cases are expected to drop over the period, due to upcoming rains, as food consumption is expected to improve for most households.
- The distance to water sources for both human and livestock is likely to decrease due to good water point recharge when long rains begin.
- Milk production is expected to improve with regeneration of forage and good water recharge due to anticipated onset of long rains.
- The livestock productivity is expected to improve as the forage conditions is projected to recover with the upcoming long rains season resulting to fair livestock body condition consequently fetching better livestock prices in the market.
- Maize prices are projected to go up while goat price is expected to drop due to upcoming long rains, as such terms of trade would be favourable within the period.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. LIVESTOCK SECTOR**

- Conduct livestock disease surveillance and deworming along migratory routes and particularly in wards with reported disease incidences.

### **2. WATER SECTOR**

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

### **3. PEACE AND SECURITY**

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

### **4. AGRICULTURE**

- Promote advisories on early land preparation in agro pastoral and mixed farming areas in anticipation of near-above normal long rains.

### **5. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

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