

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



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



APRIL EW PHASE

Drought Status: **NORMAL**



Shughuli za kawaida

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)	55	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot North)	59	>35
Forage Condition	Good	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Good	Good
Milk Production	1.6 Litres	>1.2 Litres
Livestock Migration Pattern	Usual	Normal
Livestock deaths (attributed to drought)	No deaths	No deaths

Access Indicators	Value	Normal range
Terms of Trade (ToT)	85	>76
Milk Consumption	1.4 litres	>1.2 litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	2.8 km	<2.8 km
Cost of water at source (Kshs /20 litres)	Kshs 5	<Kshs 5

Utilization Indicators	Value	Normal range
Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition)	6.1	<9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	7.3	<14.5
Food Consumption Score	40	>35

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- Enhanced rainfall was received across the County in the first and second dekads. The spatial and temporal distribution is good. The ongoing long rains season is predicted to be at normal to near normal performance.
- The vegetation condition depicted an improving trend in all livelihoods as demonstrated by the increase in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation greenness. Forage condition was good during the month.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

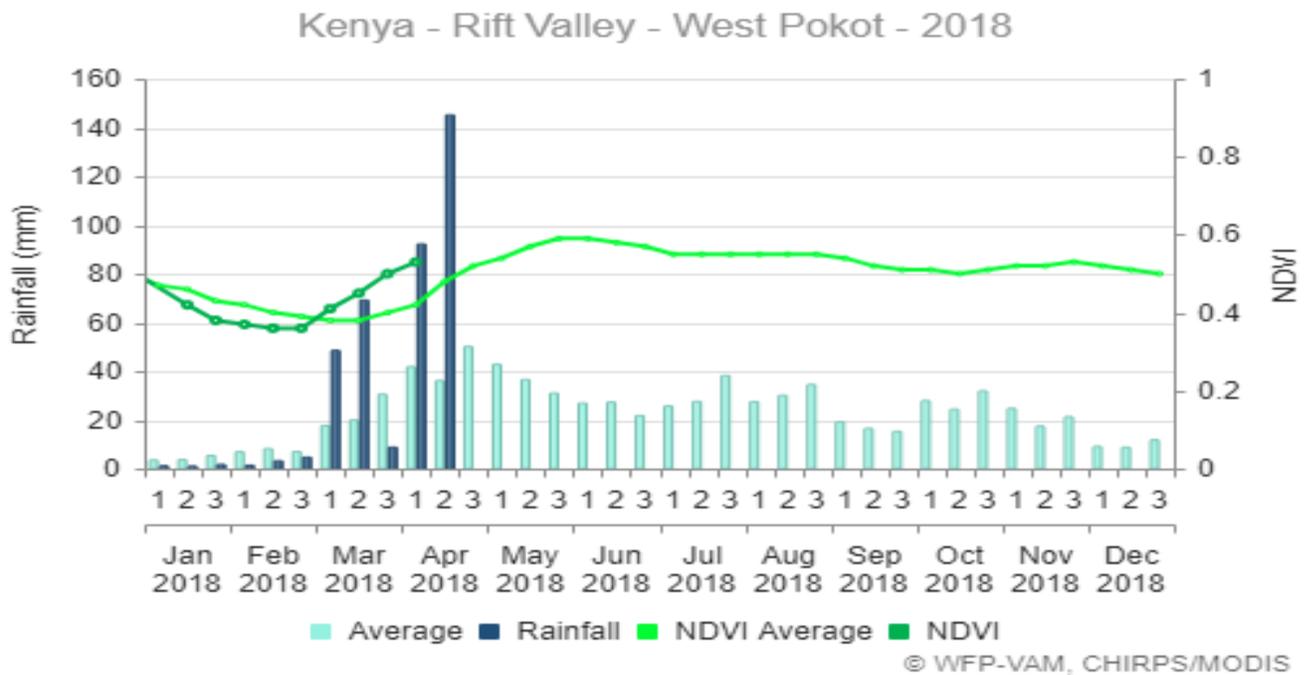
- Cattle and small stock recorded good body condition across the county with a stable trend. Distance to water sources decreased significantly. Milk production and consumption at household level increased. Terms of trade got favourable in April.
- Pastoralists are still at migrated destinations outside the county accessing better pastures than in their normal season grazing areas.
- Most households fell within the acceptable food consumption score. Coping strategy index decreased significantly.
- Proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition was stable; within the normal range.

<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

- Enhanced rainfall continued being received across the county, with more intensity compared to the previous month as recorded in the first and second dekads of the month. The ongoing long rains season is expected to continue until end of the next month (May 2018).
- The situation is normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The decadal rainfall increased from 69.1 mm (March) to 92 mm (April) in the first dekad and from 48.4 mm (March) to 145 mm (April) in the second dekad. The rainfall amounts were notably above the Long Term Average (LTA) in both the first and second dekads.
- The current NDVI values are above the historical NDVI values due to adequate rains received during the month. The trend is stable owing to the enhanced precipitation.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- Heavy rainfall was recorded in both the lowlands and highlands, which constitute the County, with even temporal and spatial distribution. The rainfall amounts and intensity was high in the highlands.
- The County remained wet during the month.

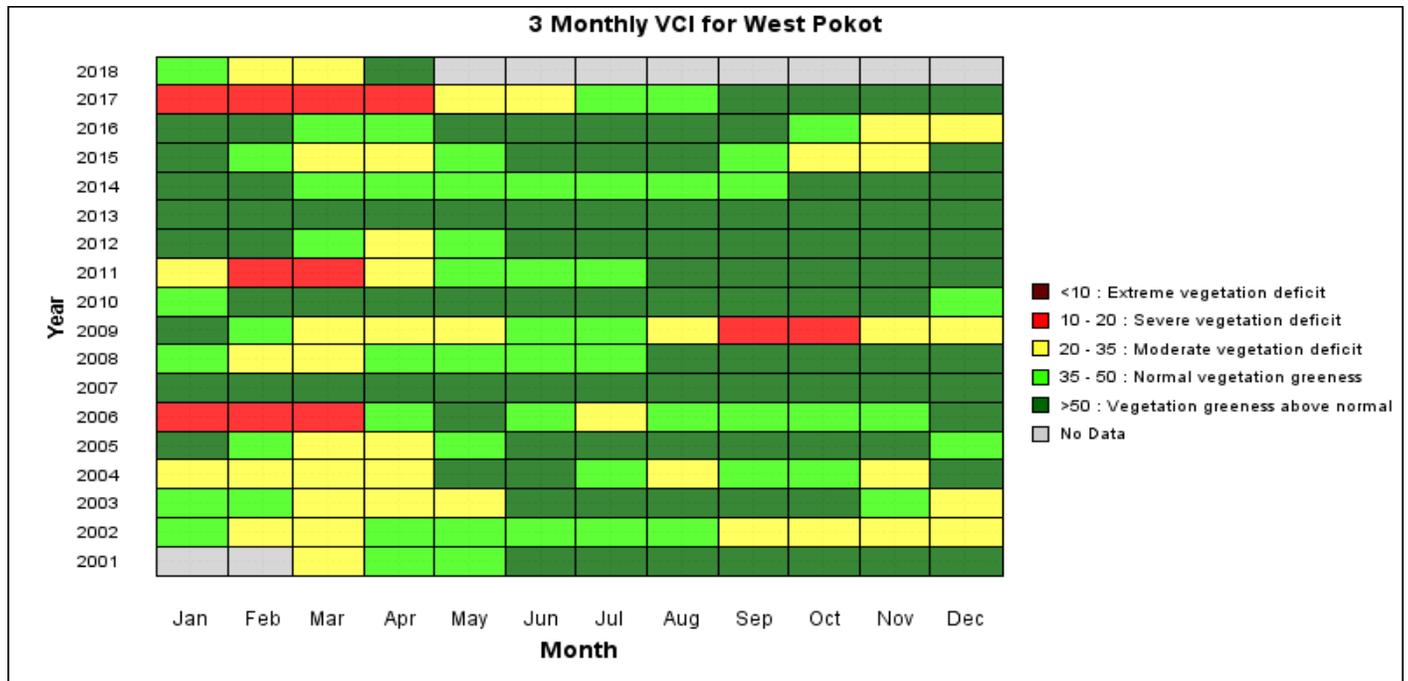
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- Floods were experienced in Wei Wei and Runo in Pokot Central sub-county, where crops were swept away and over 30 households affected. Landslides occurred in Tamkal leaving 3 people reportedly dead.

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

- In April 2018, the VCI (VCI-3month), which depicts the vegetation status of the County was 55, which showed a sudden increase from 28 recorded in March 2018. The current VCI portrays normalcy in vegetation condition; as such, vegetation greenness **above** normal.
- The VCI shows an upward trend across the county during the month under review. All sub-counties were generally categorized in normal vegetation greenness band. The VCI for all Sub-counties, Pokot North, Pokot West, Pokot South and Pokot Central increased from 26 to 59, 28 to 51, 26 to 41 and 34 to 57 respectively. The improving trend in the VCI is attributed to fast regeneration of vegetation influenced by enhanced rains during the month.

2.1.2 Pasture

- The proportions of sampled communities who reported that pasture was good and fair is 75 and 25 respectively. None reported poor pasture condition. The communities reported that the condition was normal for such a time of the year.

- The pasture condition is good across livelihoods. The condition is normal in comparison to the pasture situation during a normal year. In comparison to the previous month, the trend is improving and is attributed to good rainfall received during the month under review.
- The ongoing long rains in the month is projected to stabilize pasture situation across livelihoods.
- The fear of Pokot-Marakwet border conflict remains the major constraint to accessing pasture.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity in both livelihood zones.

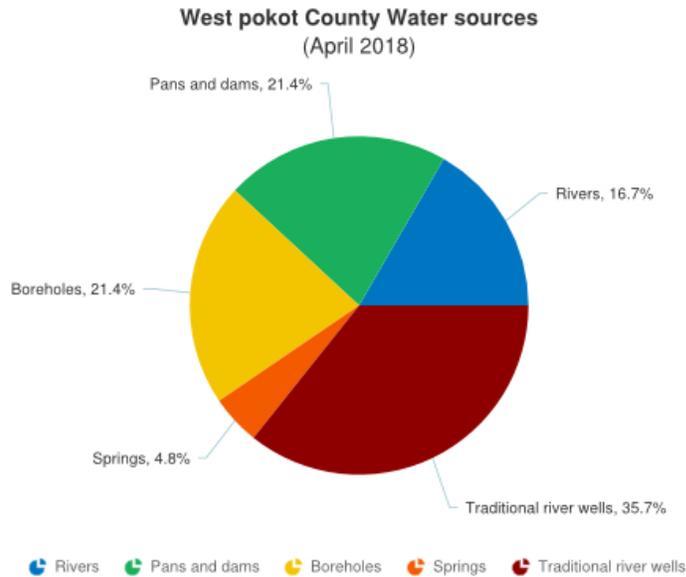
2.1.3 Browse

- The proportion of community population sampled that reported browse being good and fair is 85 and 15 respectively.
- The browse condition across the two livelihood zones is good. The condition is normal in comparison to the browse situation during such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition improved in relation to that of the previous month owing to good rainfall received during the month.
- The fear of conflict along the Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders still affects access to browse.
- The quantity and quality of browse is good in both livelihood zones and there is no significant variation between the Pastoral and Agro-pastoral livelihood zones.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

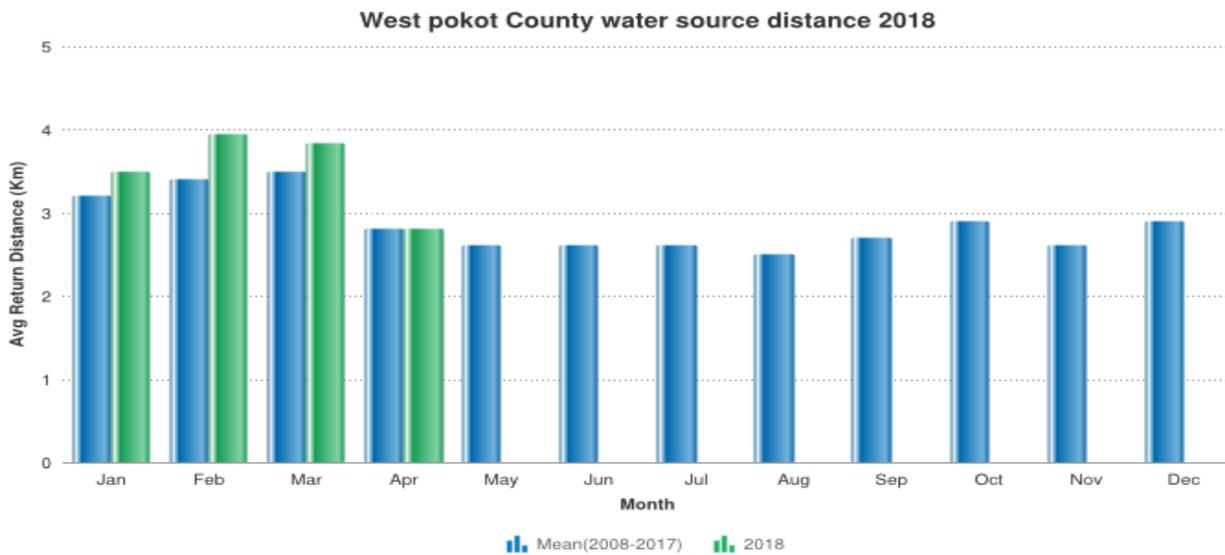
2.2.1 Sources

- The proportion of the population currently using main water sources for households and livestock is 36 percent for traditional rivers and 21 percent for both pans/dams and boreholes. Other water sources in use include rivers, whose proportion is 17.
- The water recharge levels improved in comparison to the previous month due to sufficient rainfall.
- The water levels for rivers and boreholes increased due to continuous recharge.
- The current main sources in use are the normal sources where households draw water during this time of the year.



2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- The household return distance to water sources decreased to 2.8 km during the month from 3.8 km recorded in the previous month. The current distance is at par with the LTA distance.
- Pastoral livelihood zone reported longer trekking distances to water sources in comparison to the Agro-pastoral livelihood zone. The decreased distance was due to the adequate water sources that recharged during the month.

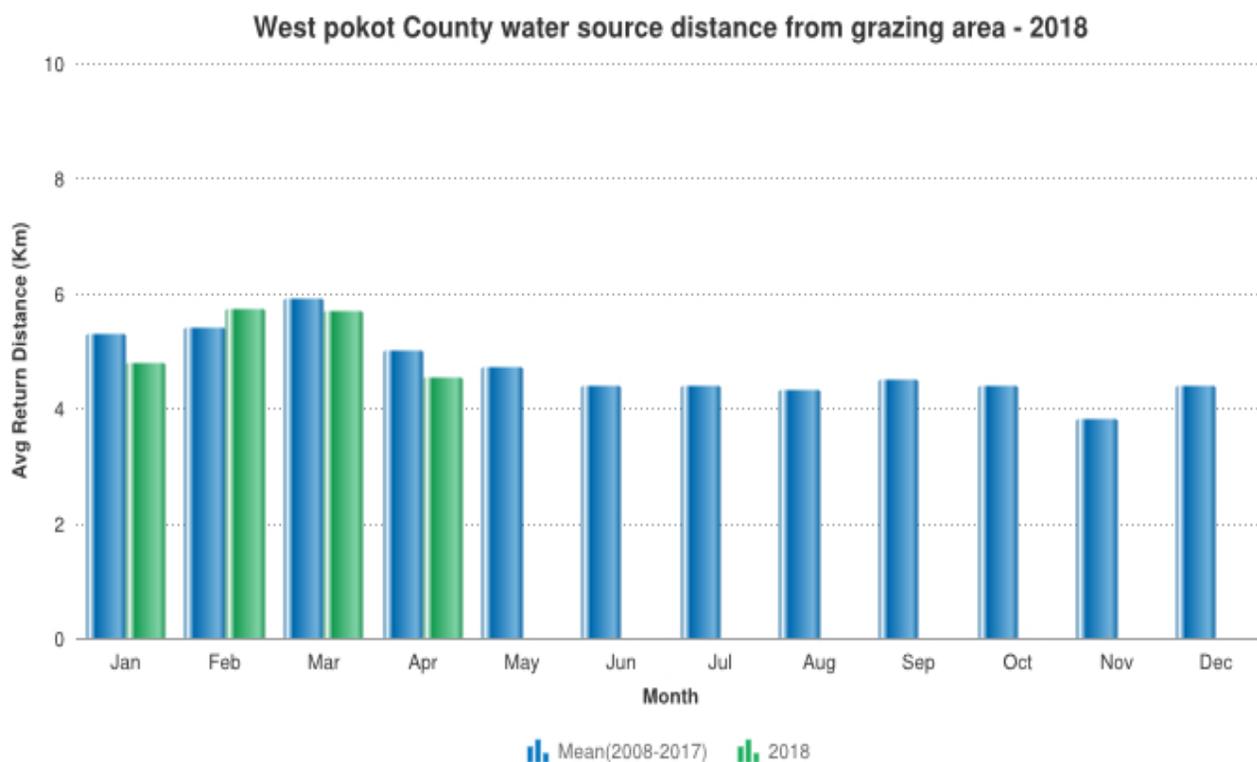


- Agro-pastoral and Pastoral livelihood zones recorded decreased waiting time at water source.
- The average household water consumption per person per day is at 9-13 litres in the Pastoral zone while that in the Agro-pastoral zone remained 10-15 litres.

- The cost of accessing water at the source is still free in the rural areas, unlike in urban centres where a 20litre jerrican cost remained within normal ranges for the period.

2.2.3 Livestock Access

- During the month, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was 4.5 km representing a decrease from 5.7 km recorded in the previous month. In comparison to the normal trekking distance of 5 km, the trekking distance lies below the normal range by 10 percent.
- The trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources is slightly longer in Pastoral livelihood zone than that in the Agro-pastoral livelihood zone.



- The decreasing livestock trekking distance is mainly due to significant rainfall received within the month of April which recharged most of the available water sources.
- The frequency for watering cattle and shoats increased to 5-7 times in a week currently, from 4-6 times in a week in the previous month while for camel increased to 4-5 from 3-5 times in a week.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

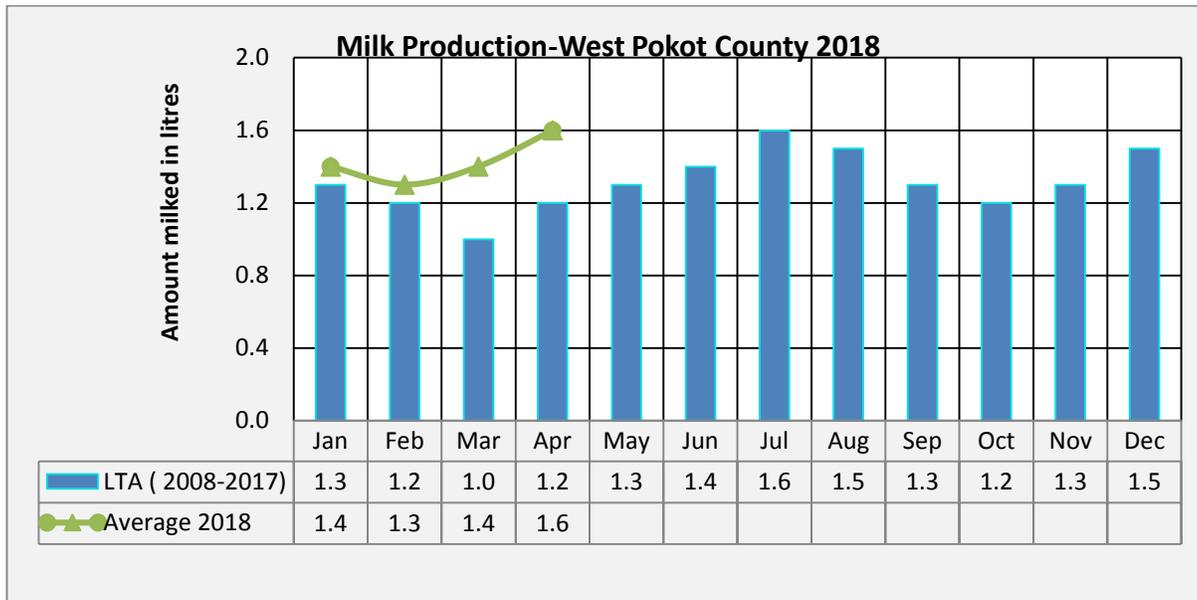
- On body condition, both Pastoral and Agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded a good one for all livestock species.
- The livestock body condition is moreover anticipated to improve over successive months across the livelihood zones, attributed to ongoing long rains.
- In comparison to a similar period during a normal year, the body condition of all species is normal and this is attributed to good forage condition generated during the month. The trend is upward as a result of heavy rains within the month.
- There exists no significant variation in livestock body condition across the two livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Riwo ward reported incidences of diarrhoea and abortion in goats.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- In April 2018, the County recorded an average of 1.6 litres of milk per household per day.
- The milk production during the month increased from that recorded in March 2018. Cattle produced most milk within the County.
- The current household milk production is 33 percent above the normal household for the month.
- There was an increase in the household milk production during the month due to adequate forage in the normal grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

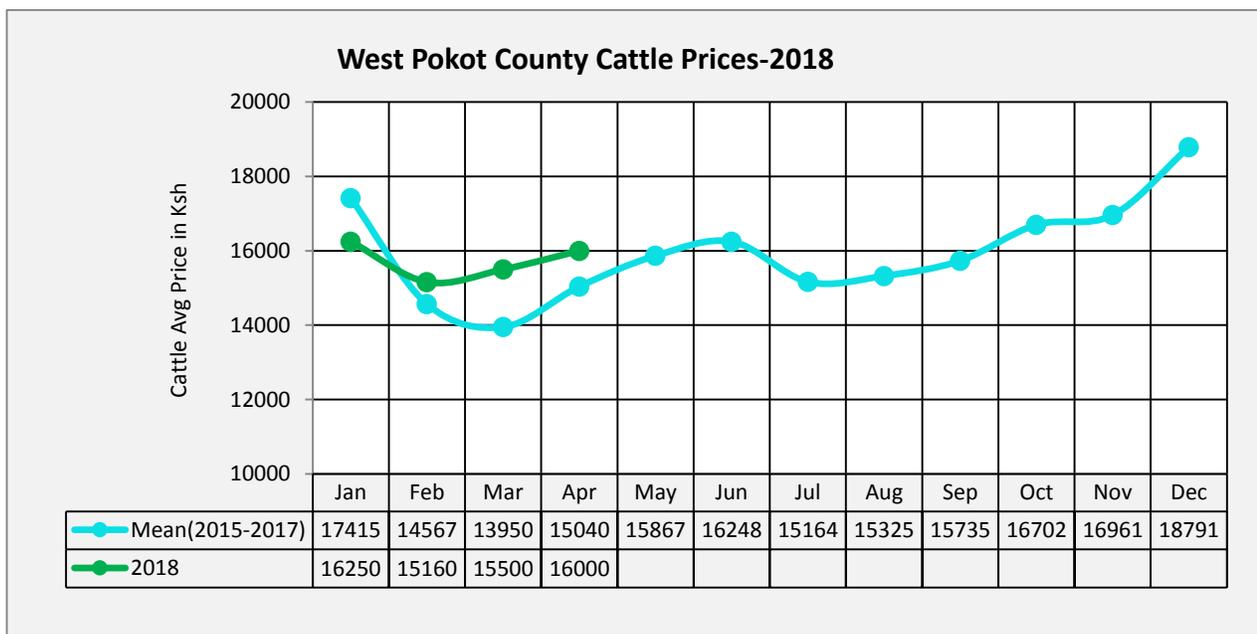
- Maize, beans and bulb onions are main crops grown in the county, where most farms are currently at weeding stage.
- The horticultural supplies levels of fruits such as pawpaw and onions to major markets including Sigor, Ortum and Lomut is projected to increase due to the ongoing long rains season.
- 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 is thriving with stability in farming activities being witnessed along the production zones of Lelan, Sebit, Wakorr, Wei Wei and Lomut.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

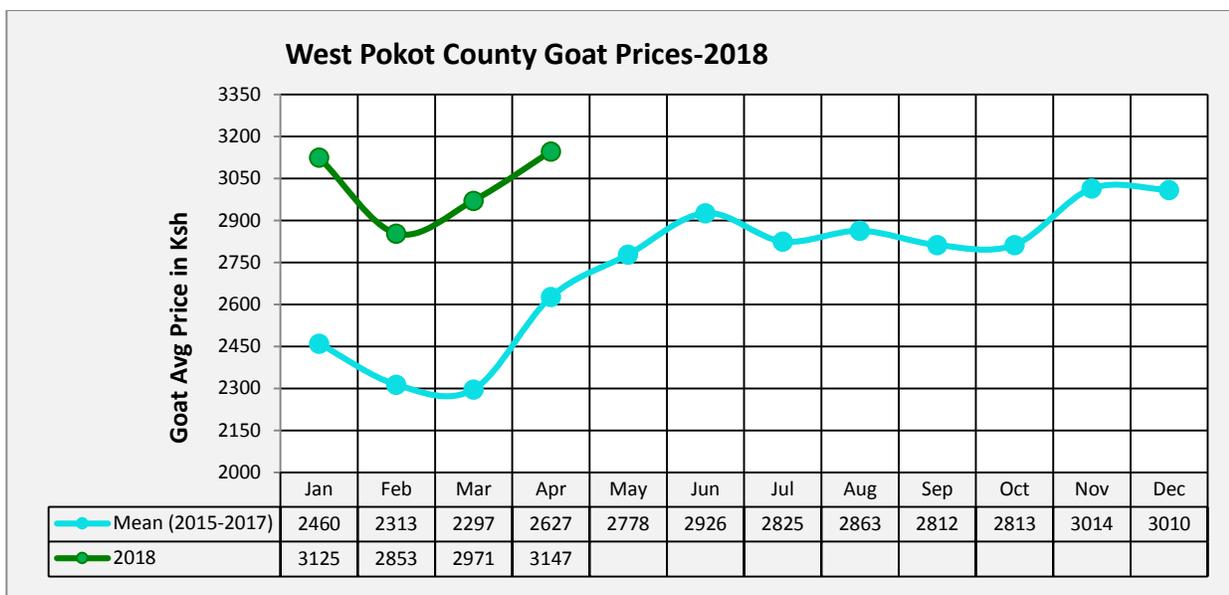
- The medium sized 4-year bull in the County was sold at an average price of Kshs 16,000 during the month, which represented an increase from Ksh15,500 that was recorded in the previous month.



- The increase in cattle price is mainly attributed to heavy rains received resulting to sufficient pasture condition and water sources, leading to improvement in the cattle body condition that currently fetches higher prices in the market. The urge to sell animals is low, where instead most pastoralists want to restock thus high demand causing higher prices.
- The current cattle price is above the LTA price (Ksh 15,040) for the month by 6.3 percent.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- The average price of a 2-year old medium size goat was Ksh.3, 147 across the livelihood zones during the month. The price increased in comparison to the previous month (Ksh 2,971).

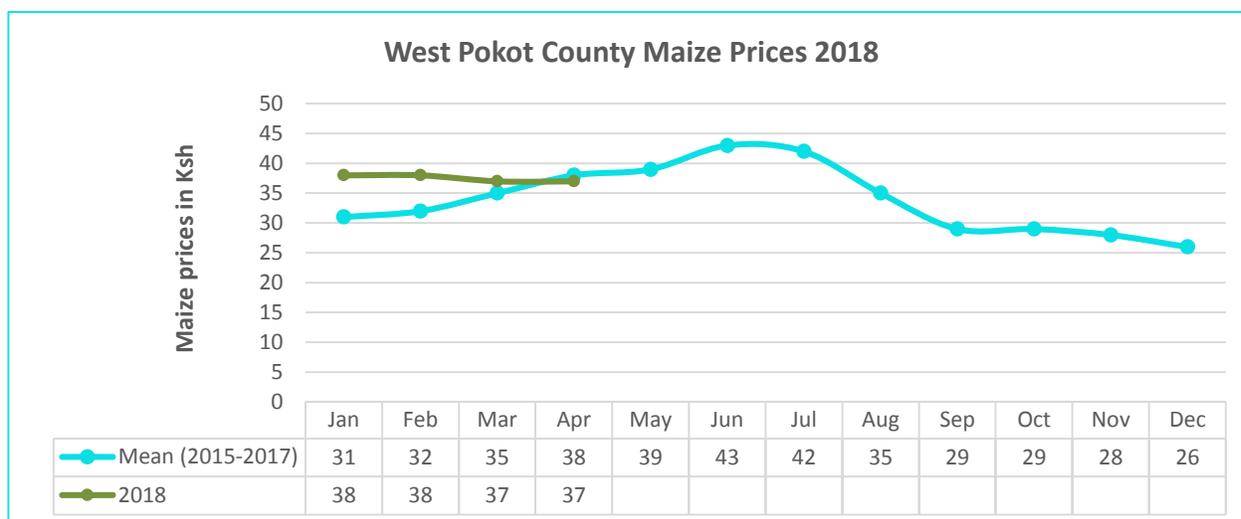


- The price increase is mainly attributed to sufficient forage condition and significant recharge of water points resulting to a boost in the body condition.
- The current price of goat is however 20 percent above the LTA price for the month.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

- Maize price stood at Kshs 37 per Kg, similar to the previous month.
- The current price is 3 percent below the LTA price (Kshs 38) for such time of the year.

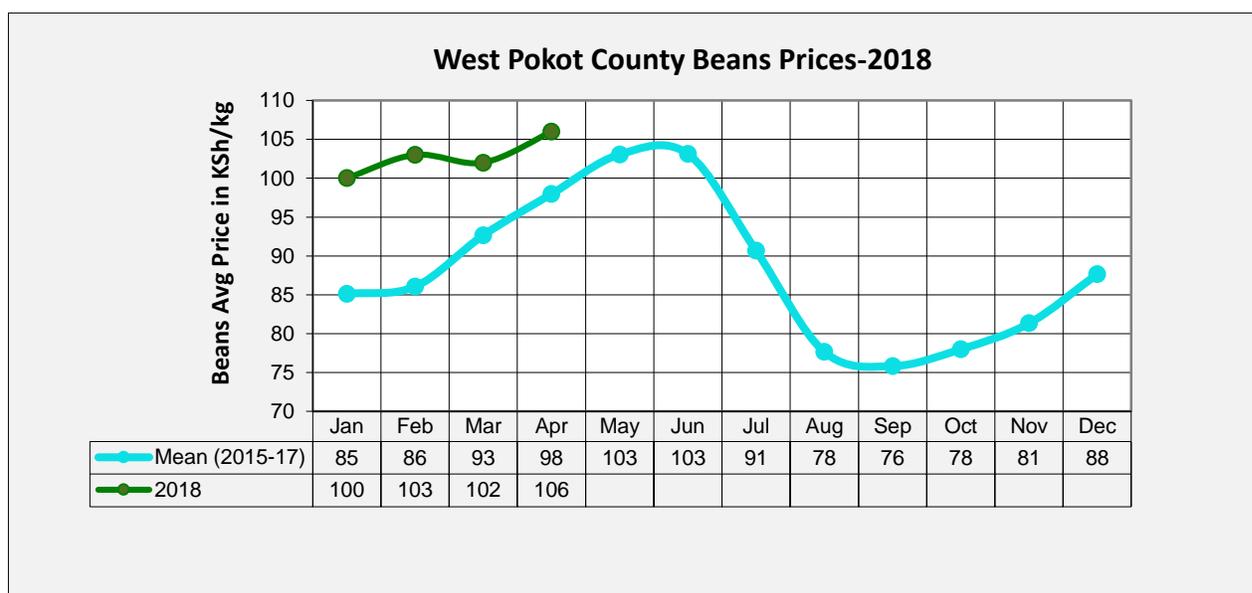


- The conflict at Pokot-Marakwet border with the Pastoral zones in Pokot central resulted to a higher price in comparison to other livelihood zones as a result of the normal external supply sources being affected.

- The households depend more on local markets to replenish their stocks, therefore maize price is likely to be stable as its supply will remain the local and cheap external sources (Uganda and Trans Nzoia County) which are suppliers to the County.

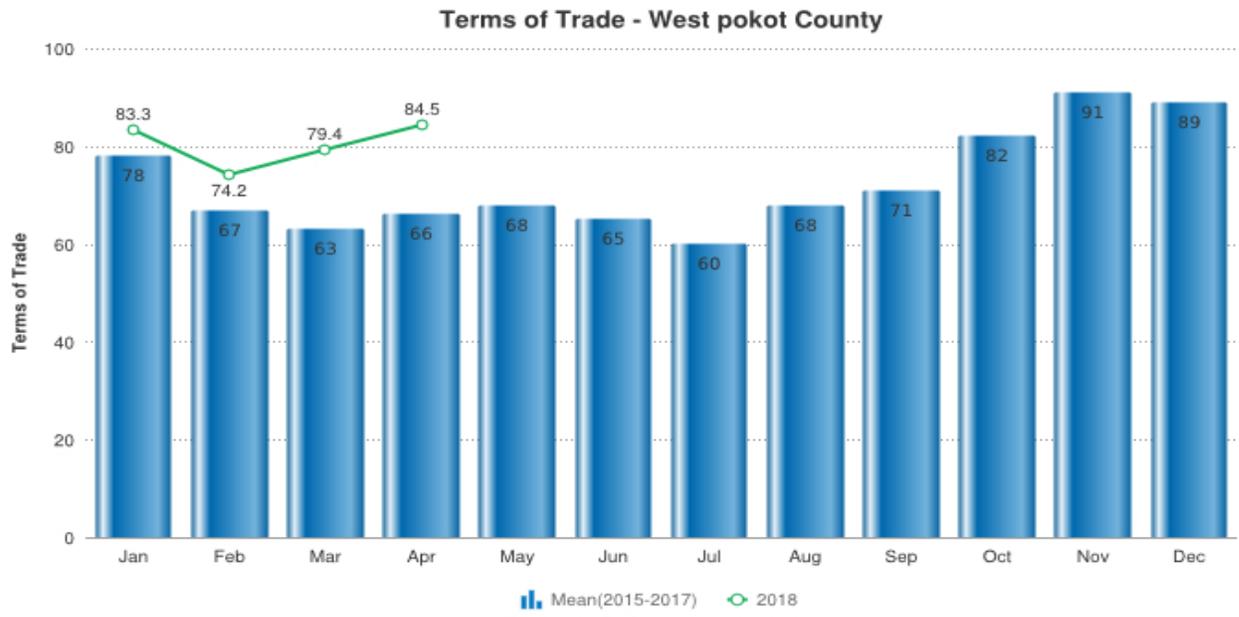
4.2.2 Beans

- The beans traded at Kshs 106 per Kg in April 2018, having increased from Kshs 102 recorded in March 2018.
- The price increase is attributed to dwindling 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 market price of beans remains significantly above the LTA price (Ksh.98) for a normal season during this time of the year by 8 percent.



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

- The Terms of Trade (TOT) is 85 in April 2018, representing an increase from 79 recorded in the previous month. The increase shows that pastoralists would obtain more maize for the sale of a goat than they did during the previous month. The current ToT is moreover 29 percent above the LTA for such time of the year.
- The increase in ToT is mainly attributed to increasing goat prices and the stability in maize prices.

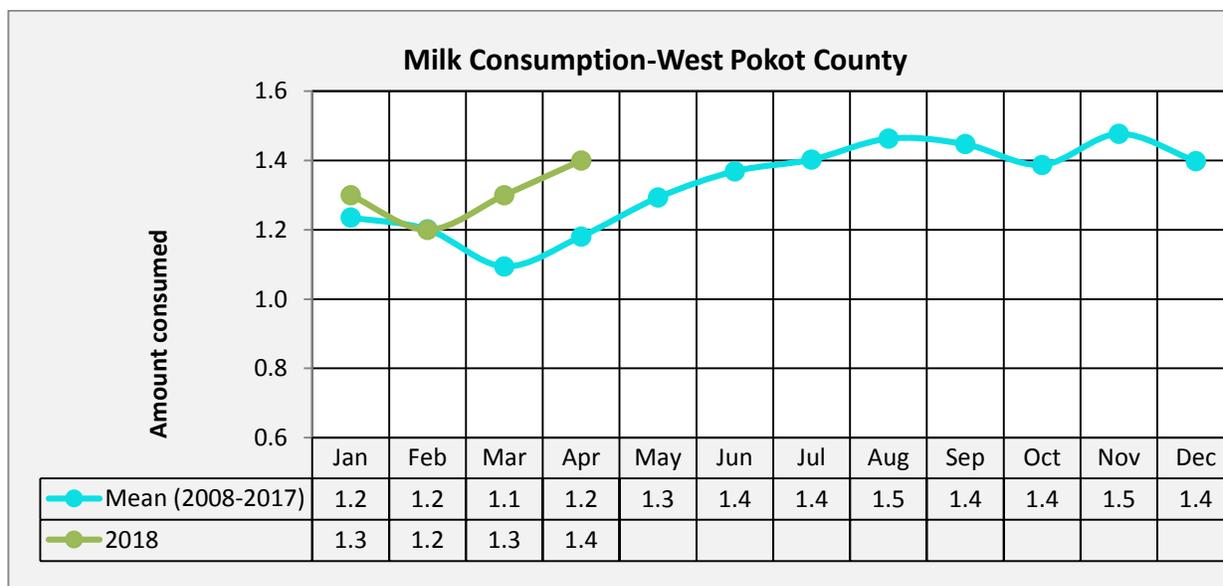


- Variation is expected over the next three months as the price of goat is projected to improve with the ongoing long rains coupled with stability in maize price during the same period.

5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

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



- The increase in milk consumption level is due to the improved in production due to regeneration of pastoral resources especially forage as well as decreased livestock trekking distances to water points.
- The quantity of milk consumed is however 3% above the LTA for the same period of the year.

5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

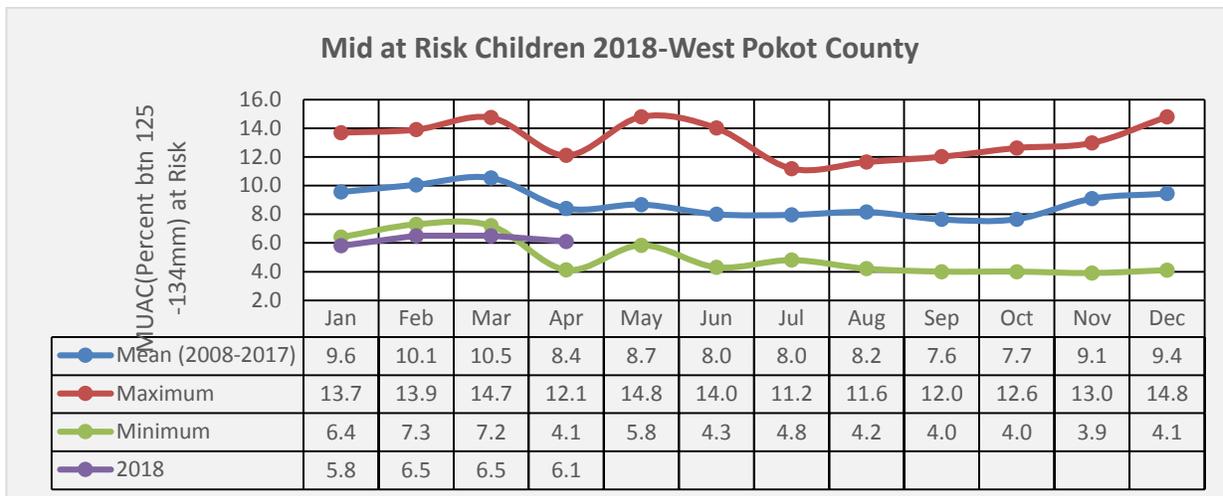
- During the month under review, the proportion of 59%, 36% and 5% of households had Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. In comparison with the previous month, where the proportions were 42%, 43% and 15% for Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively, the FCS improved.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones during the month under review remained 40, same as the one recorded in the previous month.
- There was a significant variation across the two livelihood zones with for instance 47% of households in the Pastoral zone being categorized as having Acceptable FCS in comparison with 77 % households under the same category in the Agro-pastoral zone.

5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition Status

- The proportion of 49 and 51 percent of girls and boys respectively, were sampled.

- The percent of children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition remained 6.1 in April 2018 a decrease from 6.5 recorded in March 2018.
- The current percent of children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition lies below the LTA value of 8.4 for the period in a normal year.



- The drop in malnutrition among under-fives is attributed to steady consumption and accessibility to milk including other essential health and nutrition commodities in the County. These were considered main drivers of the decrease in number of children falling outside the normal range of children 'at risk' of malnutrition.

5.3.2 Health

- Malaria cases remained commonly reported ailments during the month among the sampled children.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- During the month, the CSI recorded was 7.3 portraying a decrease in comparison to 8.4 recorded in the previous month. The decrease in CSI shows that households employed less mechanisms to cope compared to the previous month, which could be attributed to steady food commodity availability and prices in the markets in addition to income from livestock products.
- Agro-pastoral livelihood zone recorded a CSI of 8.4 compared to the 6.6 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

- Cross border peace meetings were conducted by National government, SIKOM and County Government along County borders.
- Coffee seedlings were issued by the County Government in Pokot West Sub-County.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- No cattle rustling incidences were reported within the month.

7.2 MIGRATION

- No migrations have been reported during the current month. However, some animals that had migrated in the recent past dry spell are yet to return back despite the situation normalizing.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- The livestock productivity is projected to improve due to ongoing long rains. The forage conditions would continue to improve resulting to enhanced livestock body condition that will likely lead to better livestock prices.
- With continued rains, distance to water sources (for both human and livestock use) is expected to decrease due to the expected sufficient recharge of water sources.
- Since water and pasture availability is likely to be good, nutritious food such as milk is expected to increase as the pastoral resources would boost livestock milk production. Malnutrition is likely to drop.
- Maize prices are expected to stabilize with that of goat projected upwards. As such, the terms of trade would remain favourable over this period.
- Rampant conflicts along county borders could remain the greatest constraint to food security due to limited accessibility to stocks in the market.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. WATER SECTOR

- Train and support farmers with modern smart water storage technologies to enable maximum utilization of rain water.

2. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Carry out rangeland reseeding in pastoral zones to necessitate pastureland rehabilitation.
- Prepare farmers for pasture establishment skills to enable maximum utilization of the ongoing rains

3. AGRICULTURE

- Upscale provision of drought escaping seeds to the farmers in Agro-pastoral zones as an incentive for optimal crop production.

4. 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.

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.