

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



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



SEPTEMBER EW PHASE

Drought Status: **NORMAL**



Shughuli za kawaida

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

- Substantial rains were received across all livelihood zones in the County. The temporal and spatial distribution was good.
- The vegetation index recorded was above normal range, with an upward trend across the livelihoods as illustrated by the increase in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. Forage condition is good in September.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

- The livestock body condition is good with a 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 is stable and above the long term average.
- Majority of the households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index dropped.
- Malnutrition status decreased as the proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition 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) | 79 | >35 |
| VCI-3month (Pokot Central) | 73 | >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 | Nodeaths |

| Access Indicators | Value | Normal range |
|--|------------|--------------|
| Terms of Trade (ToT) | 66 | >76 |
| Milk Consumption | 1.5 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 |

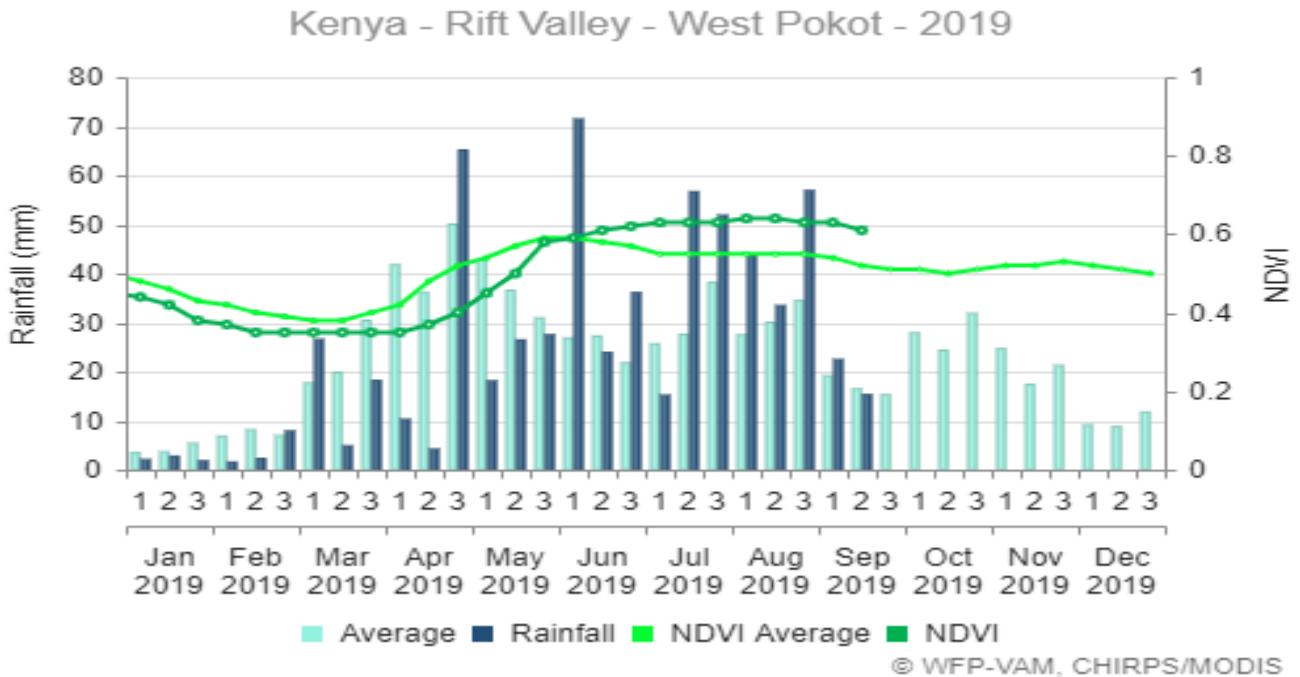
| Utilization Indicators | Value | Normal range |
|--|-------|--------------|
| Nutrition status, MUAC (% at risk of malnutrition) | 4.8 | 0.0-9.6 |
| Coping Strategy Index (CSI) | 2.2 | 0.0-14.5 |
| Food Consumption Score | 47 | >35 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| <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

- The county received substantial rainfall in all dekads. The highlands received rainfall of higher intensity than the lowlands.
- The rainfall situation is normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall decreased from 45.4 mm to 22.4 mm in the first dekad. The amount was however above normal.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

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

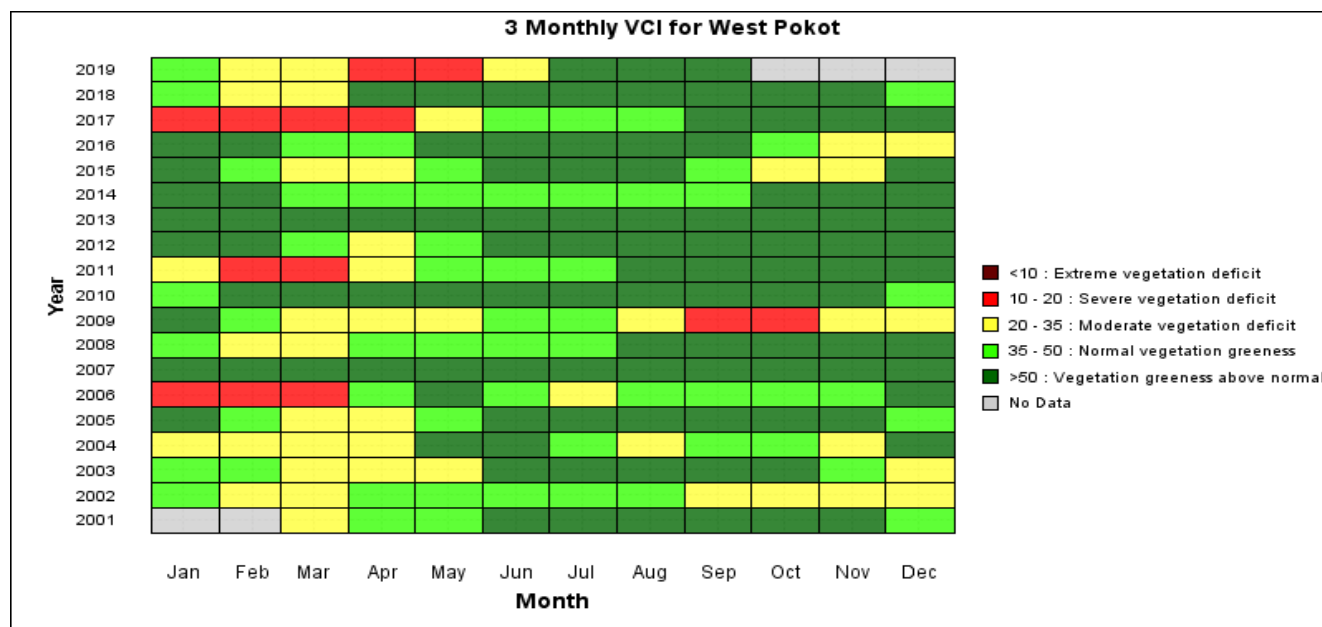
1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable event was recorded in September.

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 indicates the vegetation status of the County was 79 in September, an increase from 73 recorded in August. The current VCI portrays an above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI trend is upward across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties reported above normal vegetation conditions. The rise in VCI between August and September was from 75 to 80, 69 to 77, 74 to 84 and 74 to 75 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The upward trend in VCI is credited to adequate rejuvenation of vegetation cover owing to significant rainfall during the month of September.

2.1.2 Pasture

- The proportion of sampled community members which described that the pasture was good remained 100.
- During the month, pasture situation was good in all livelihood zones. The communities stated that the condition was normal for such time of the year. The trend is stable in comparison to that of the previous month and is linked to substantial rains received.
- The pasture condition is expected to remain stable with the ongoing significant rainfall.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity between livelihood zones.

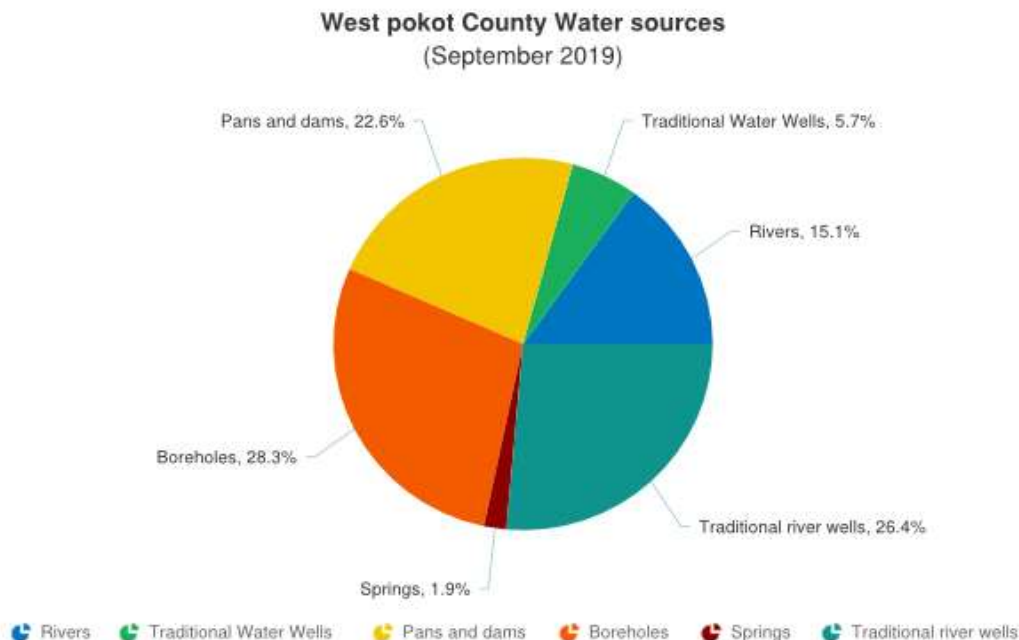
2.1.3 Browse

- In September, the proportion of sampled community members which stated that browse condition was good stood at 100 percent, similar to the one reported in the previous month.
- The browse condition is good across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition is good in comparison to that of August as a result of sufficient rainfall.
- The quantity of browse was 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 enhanced due to the peaceful situation along the Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders.

2.2 WATER RESOURCE

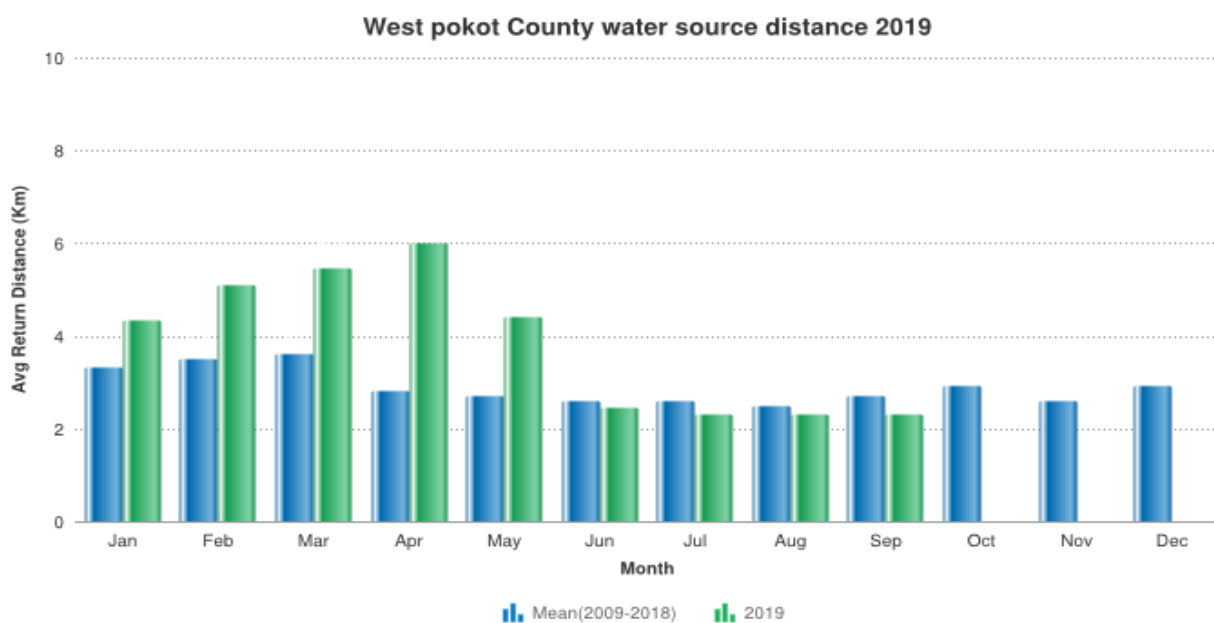
2.2.1 Sources

- The proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock in September was 28.3 percent for boreholes, 26.4 percent for traditional river wells and 22.6 percent for pans and dams, with other water sources being Rivers, at 15.1 percent.
- There was substantial water recharge in all surface water sources during September, in comparison to that of August. The situation is attributed to significant rains received.
- 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

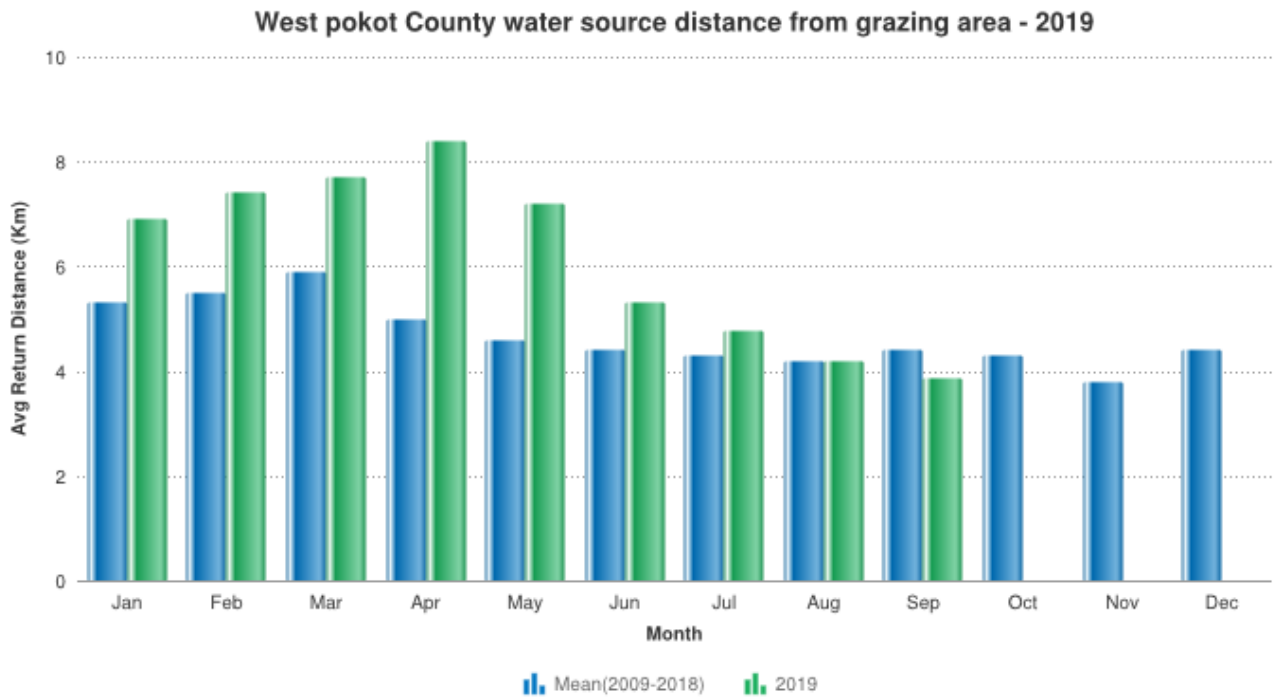
- In September, the return distance to water source from the household remained 2.3 km, similar to that recorded in the previous month. The current distance is 15 percent below the Long Term Average (LTA).
- Pastoral livelihood zones reported longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The stable trend in distance is attributed 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.
- During the month, the average household water consumption per person per day remained 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 was 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 was 3.9 km during the month, having dropped from 4.2 km reported in the previous month. The current trekking distance is 11 percent below the normal range.
- The pastoral livelihood zones recorded longer trekking time from grazing areas to water source compared to agro-pastoral livelihood zones.



- The decrease in livestock trekking distance to water is attributed to consistent rains that boosted recharge of 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

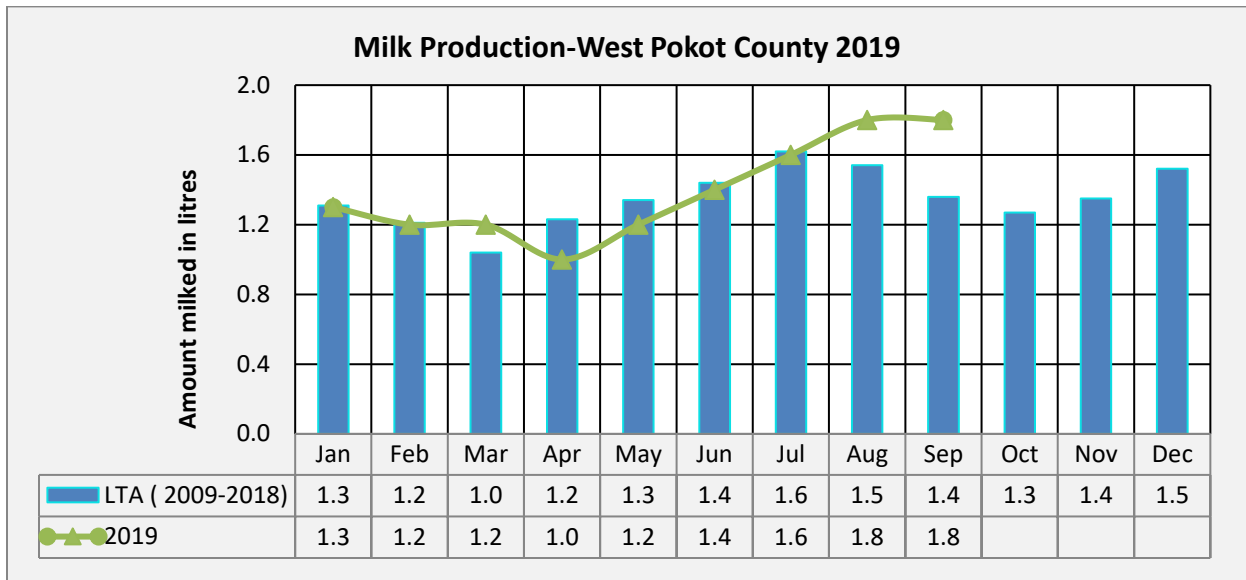
- In September, the body condition for all livestock species was good in all livelihood zones, showing stability in comparison to that recorded in the previous month.
- With the ongoing rains, livestock body condition is expected to improve further across the livelihood zones.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to a similar period during a normal year. The trend is stable and is attributed to sufficient forage regeneration.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

- Riwo, Masol and Konyao ward reported cases of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD).

3.1.3 Milk Production

- The County reported an average production of 1.8 litres of milk per household per day in September, same as the one recorded in August.
- Cattle produced most milk than other livestock species.
- The current household milk production is above the LTA by 29 percent.
- The households' stable milk production is credited to improved forage access in the traditional grazing areas.



3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

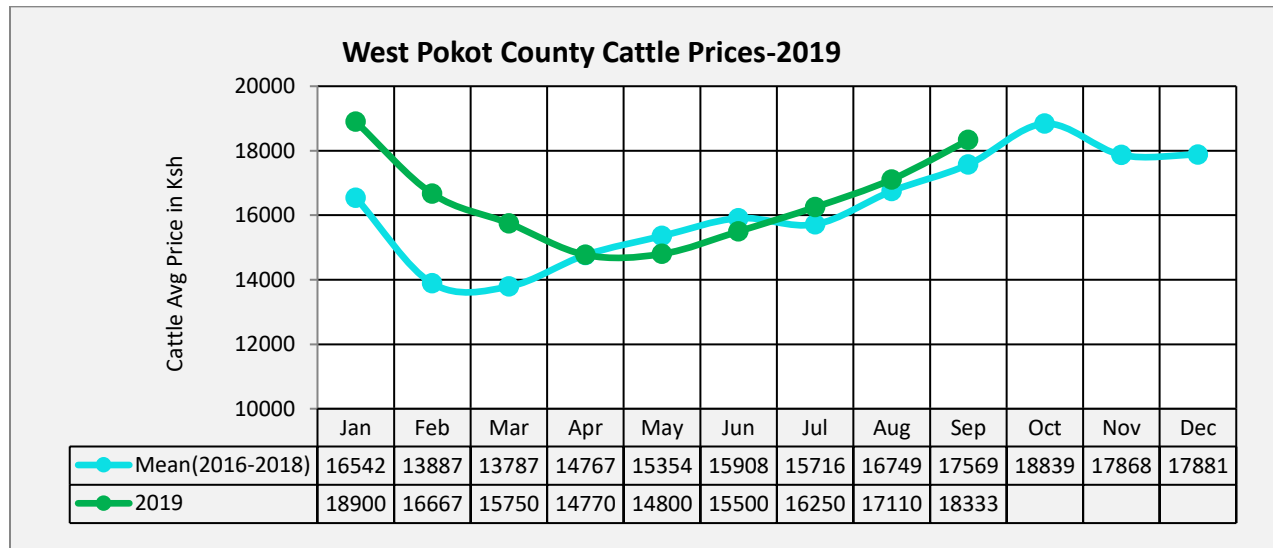
- The main crops cultivated in the County include, maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions, where currently, the maize crop has ripened in most areas.
- Horticultural production and supply to major markets like Sigor, Ortum and Lomut is still at normal levels compared to the seasonal performance.
- The 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 remained stable along the production zones of Ortum and Wakorr.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

4.1.1 Cattle prices

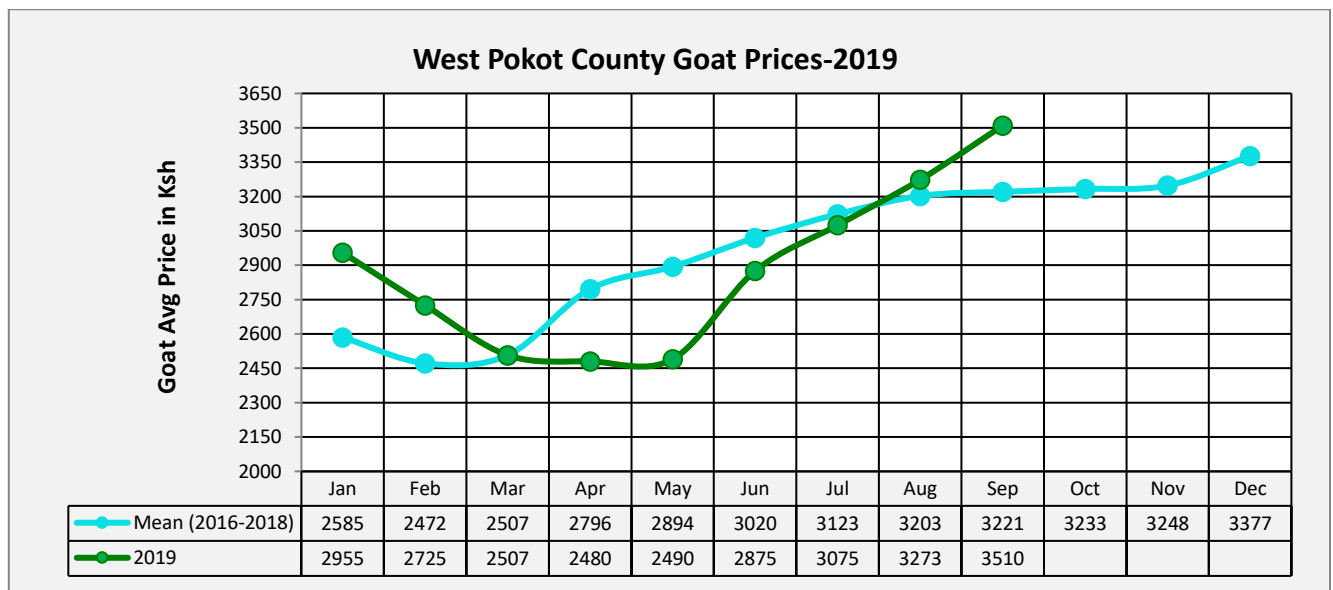
- During the month, the medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 18,333, depicting a rise in price as compared to Kshs 17,110 recorded in the previous month.



- The increase in cattle price is attributed to sustained good body condition arising from sufficient forage access, coupled with enough recharge of water sources for livestock.
- The current cattle price is 4 percent above the LTA.

4.1.2 Goat Prices

- The County recorded an average price of Kshs 3,510 for a 2-year old medium size goat in September, which indicated an increase in comparison to Kshs 3,273 recorded in August.

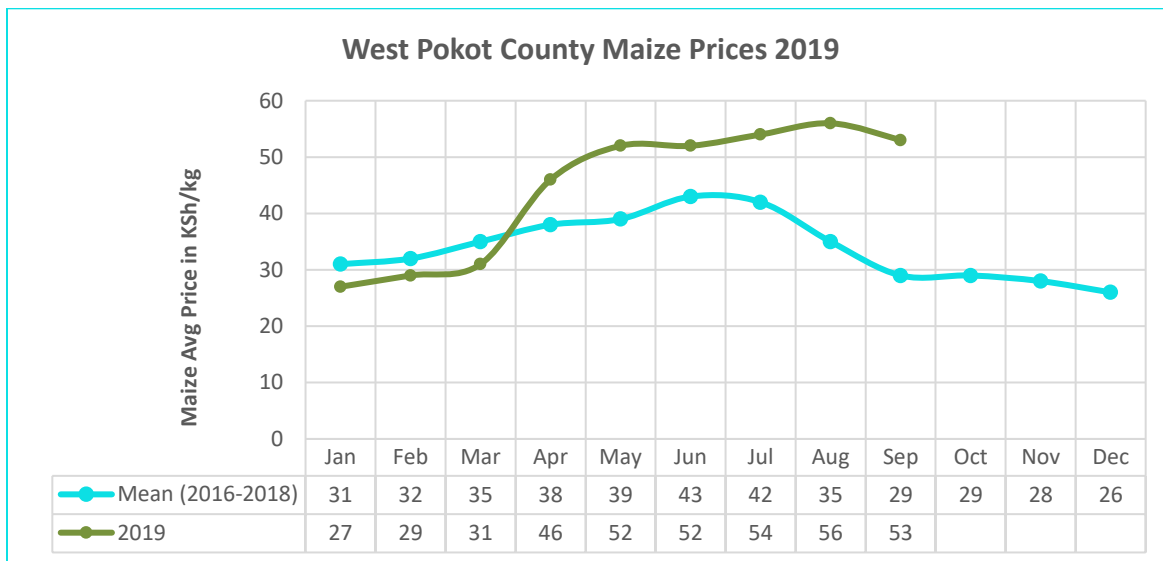


- The increase in price is linked to the good body condition for goats in the livelihoods.
- The current goat price is however 9 percent above the LTA for the month.

4.2 CROP PRICES

4.2.1 Maize

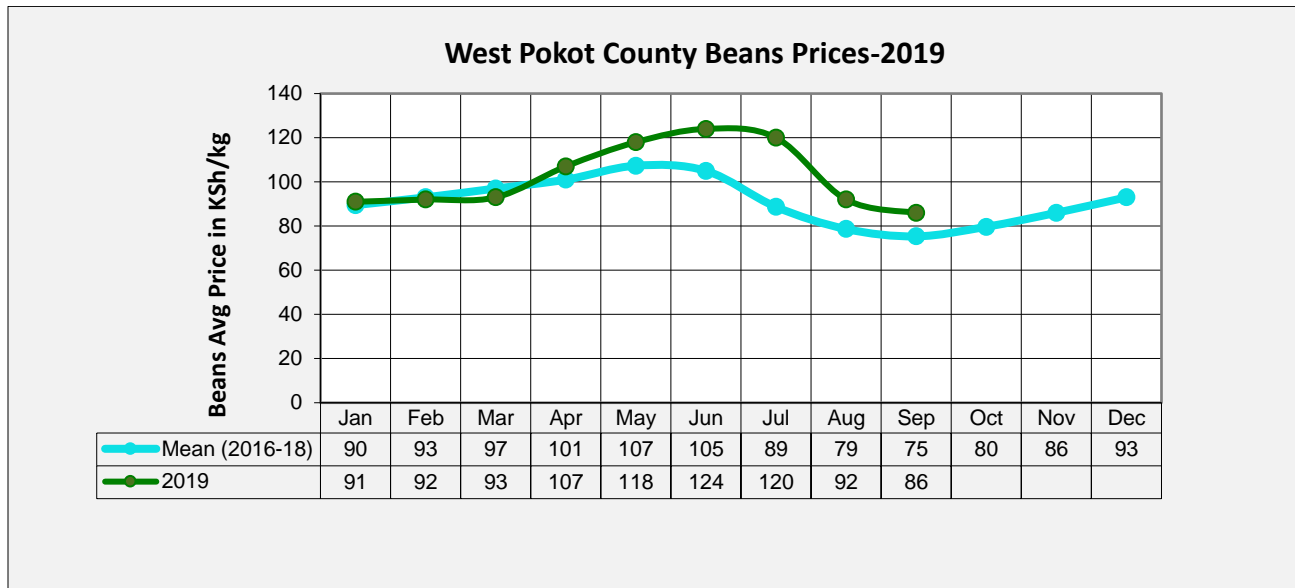
- Maize was sold at Kshs 53 per Kg, a decrease as compared to Kshs 56 recorded in August.
- The current price is however 62 percent above the LTA price.



- The decrease in price is linked to the consistent supply of maize by local traders from Uganda along with ripening local maize in the farming areas of the County.
- Most households depend more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is projected to decrease further due to the expected harvests in a month's time.

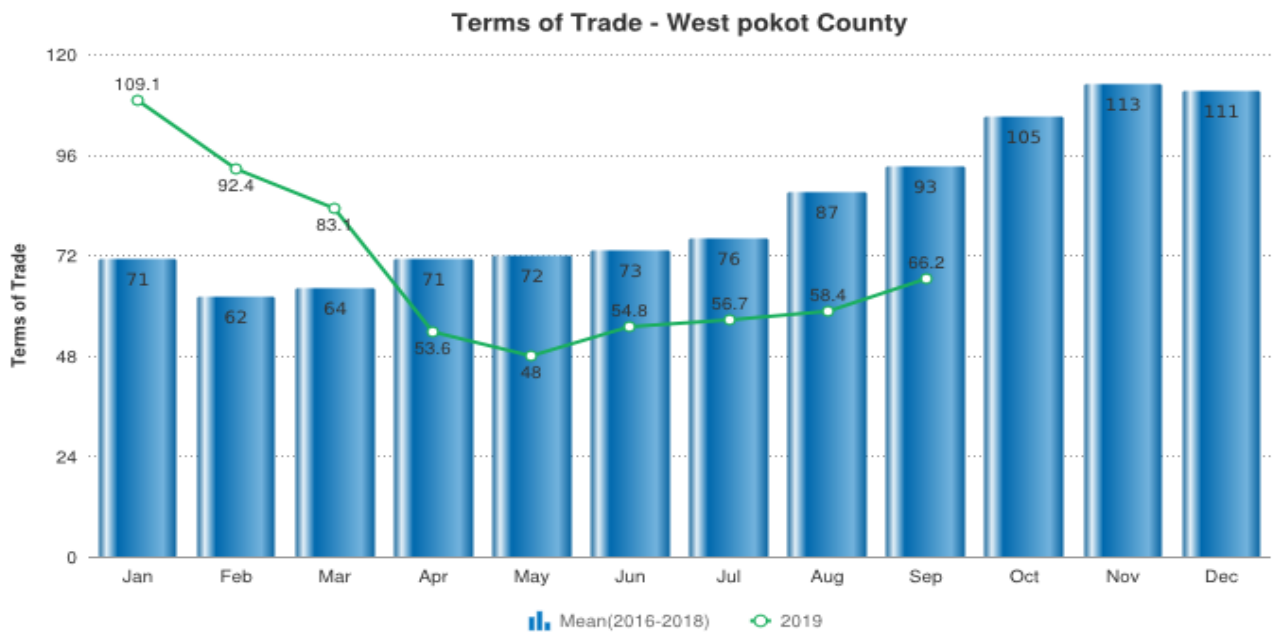
4.2.2 Beans

- During the month, beans traded at Kshs 86 per kg, indicating a price drop as compared to that of the previous month.
- The drop in price is credited 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 15 percent above the LTA price (Ksh.75) for same period of the year.



4.3 LIVESTOCK PRICE RATIO/ TERMS OF TRADE (TOT)

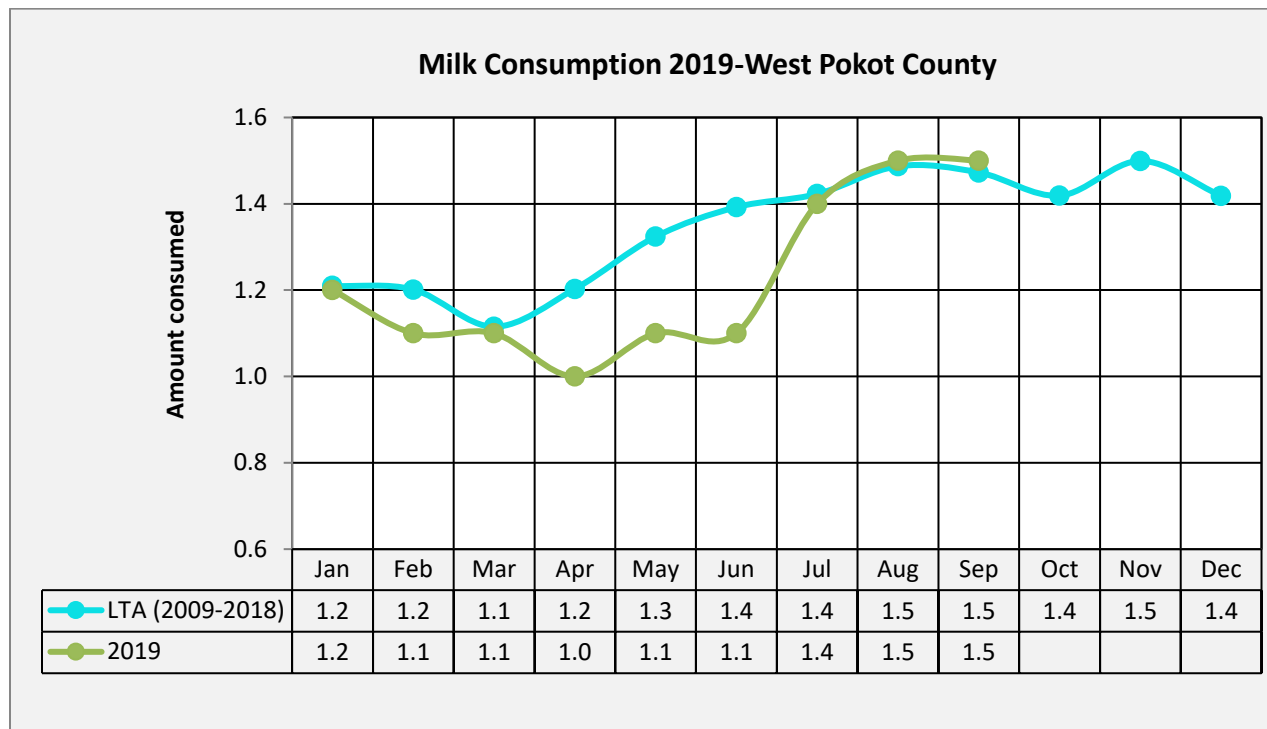
- In September, the Terms of Trade (TOT) increased to 66, compared 58 recorded in the previous month, implying that households could obtain more maize for sale of a goat currently than they did in August.
- The increasing trend in ToT is attributed to rising goat prices, mainly due to good body condition in September. In addition, the maize price decrease contributed to improvement in ToT.
- The TOT variation is expected over the next three months as the price of goat is estimated to go up with the significant rains alongside affordable maize prices within the period.



5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- During the month, the households across livelihood zones consumed 1.5 litres of milk on average, same as the previous month. The consumption is at par with the LTA.



- The stability in milk consumption is due to the sustained milk production associated with good livestock body condition and sufficient forage. Availability of milk was good within the month.

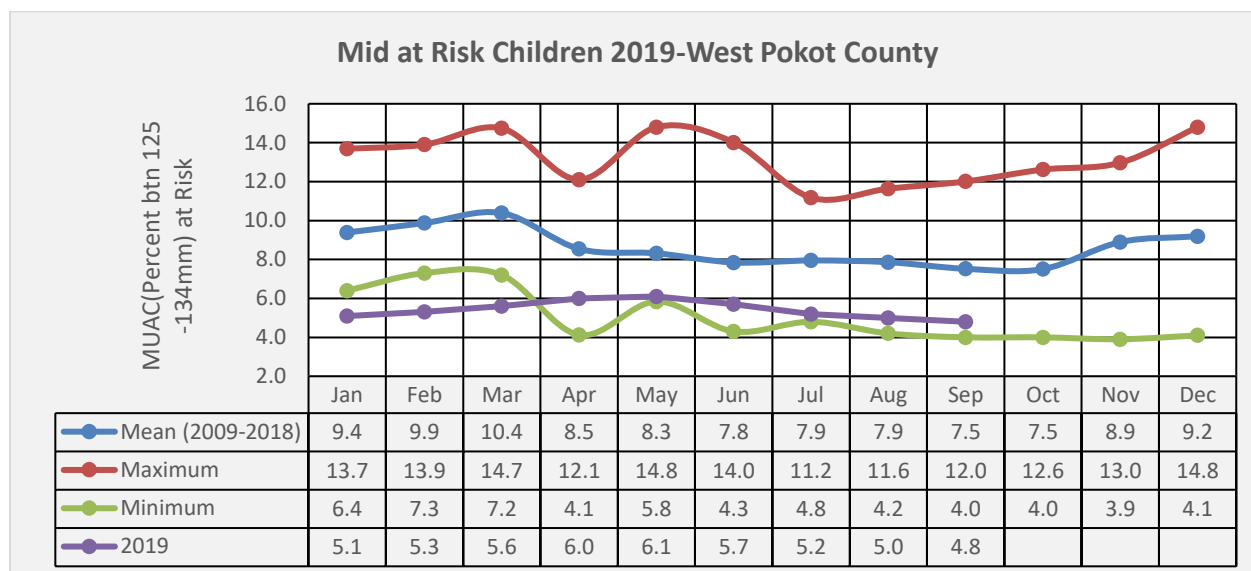
5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

- In September, the households' proportions of 78, 20 and 2 percent were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. Comparing the scenario with that of August, the score increased for the Acceptable category, while Borderline and Poor categories decreased. The FCS is Acceptable in September.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones was 47 within the month; an increase from 46 reported in August.
- 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 63% 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

- During the month, the proportion of 47 and 53 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled, where the children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition were at 4.8 percent, a drop from 5.0 recorded in the previous month.
- The current proportion is below the LTA value of 36 percent for such time of the year.



- The malnutrition status of under-fives decreased and is linked to adequate milk consumption along with other essential health and nutrition commodities being accessed by households. These were the main drivers for the downward trend in number of children 'at risk' of malnutrition.

5.3.2 Health

- Generally, the commonly reported ailment among the sampled children was Malaria in September.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY

5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The County's CSI stood at 2.2; same as that of August. The apparent low CSI denotes that households employed few of strategies to cope, which could be explained by favourable food commodity availability and access at households and markets respectively.
- The pastoral zones recorded a CSI of 2.9 while agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded 1.5.
- 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

- Action Against Hunger (ACF) conducted emergency response interventions in livestock, water and nutrition sectors in Pokot Central, Pokot North and Pokot South sub-counties.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 INSECURITY/CONFLICT/HUMAN DISPLACEMENT

- Minimal livestock theft incidences were reported along West Pokot/Turkana border.

7.2 MIGRATION

- Normal livestock movements were reported within the county during the month.

7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

- In the next one month, maize prices are projected to drop while goat price is expected to stabilize. As such, the terms of trade would stabilize and get favourable within the period.
- Milk availability is likely to remain stable with the rejuvenation of pasture and water supporting livestock production as rains are expected to continue. Malnutrition cases are likely to continue going down over the period, as children would continue accessing more milk.
- As rains are anticipated to continue, the distance to water sources for both human and livestock is expected to decrease.
- The livestock productivity is projected to increase, as the forage conditions are expected to remain good with the on-going rains, causing improved livestock body condition thus better livestock prices and increased access to food due to the enhanced purchasing power.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. 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.

2. 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 across the County.

3. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- Support pasture development in all sub-counties.

4. WATER SECTOR

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