

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



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



**OCTOBER EW PHASE**



**Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification**

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

Biophysical Indicators	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	76	>35
VCI-3month (Pokot Central)	69	>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)	84	>76
Milk Consumption	1.5 Litres	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	2.2 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)	4.0	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	2.0	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	48	>35

**Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification**

**Biophysical Indicators**

- The County received sufficient rainfall across all livelihood zones. The temporal and spatial distribution was good and even respectively.
- The vegetation index recorded was above normal range, with a stable trend across the livelihoods as demonstrated by the stability in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. Forage condition is good.

**Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)**

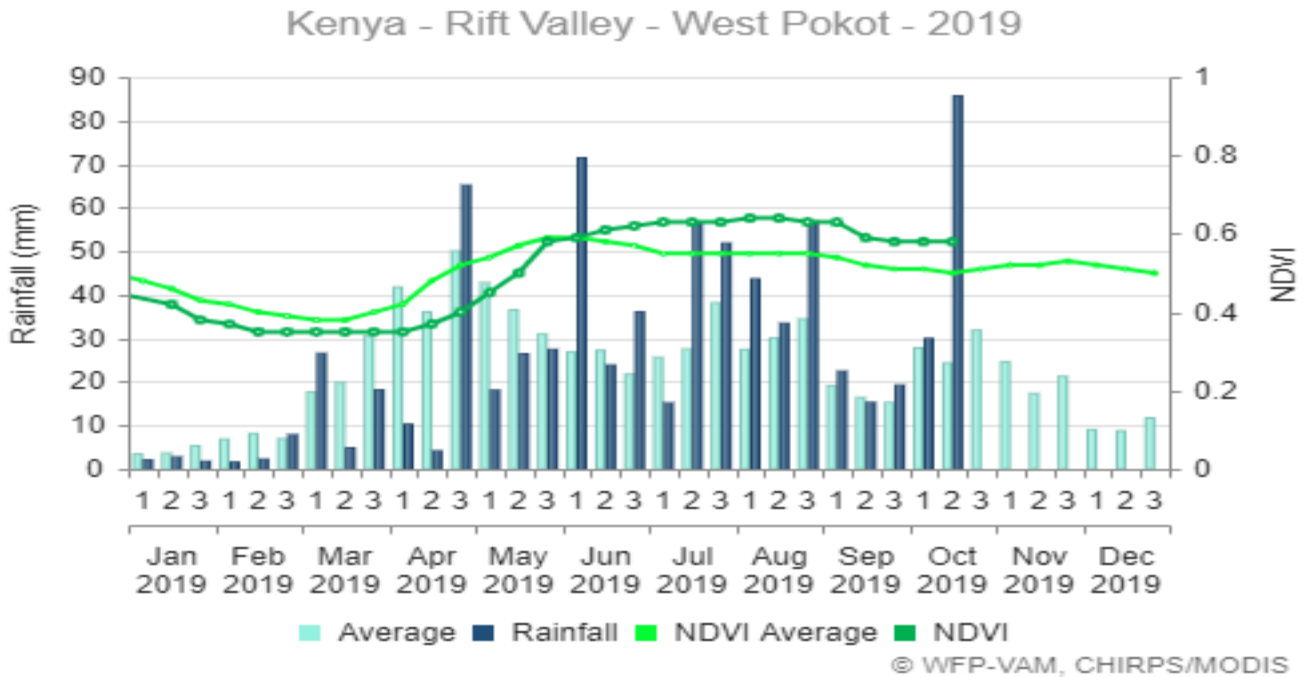
- The livestock body condition is still good with stable trend across the County. Distance to water sources decreased.
- The terms of trade is favourable with an upward trend.
- Milk production and consumption at household level is stable and above the long term average.
- Majority of the households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index decreased.
- Nutrition status improved as the proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition fell within the normal range with a downward trend.

<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 (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 October, the county received enhanced rainfall in all dekads. The intensity was fair across both the highlands and lowlands.
- The rainfall situation is normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- The dekadal rainfall increased from 22.4 mm to 44.6 mm and 15.2 mm to 85.6 mm in the first and second dekads respectively. The amount was above normal.

## 1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- During the month, the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution remained fair across the livelihoods. The intensity was good in all livelihood zones.

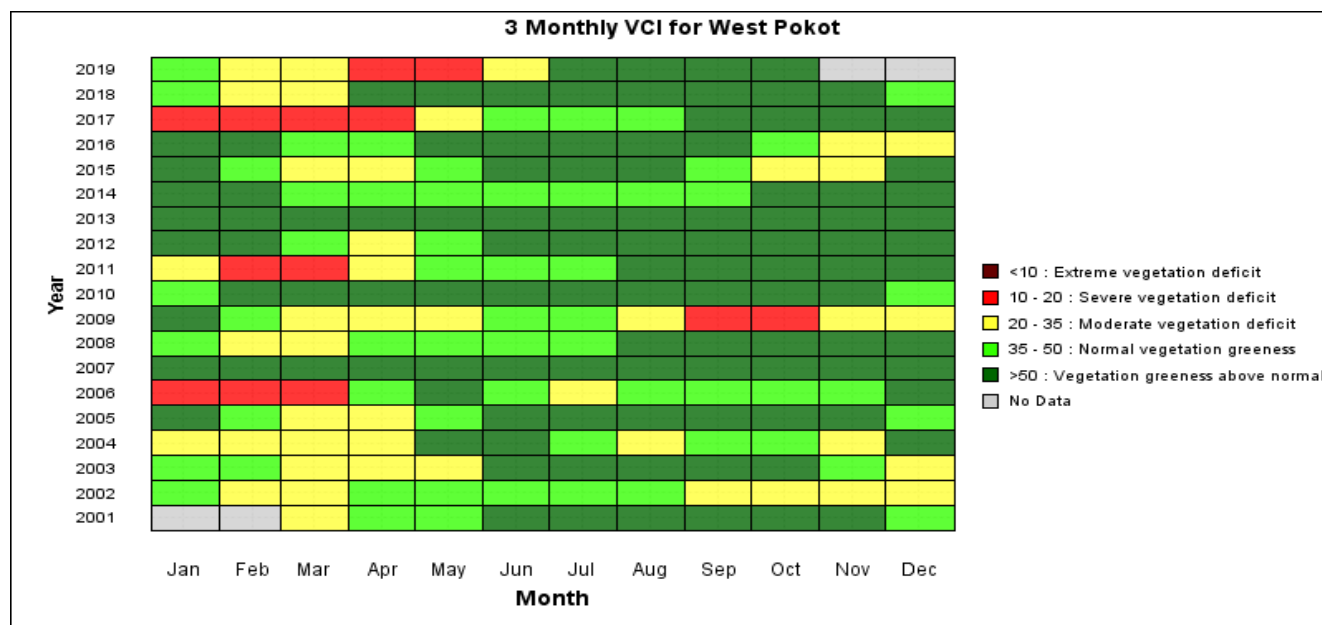
## 1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- Landslides incident was reported in Muino area in Pokot Central where 2 children were buried alive and one woman injured. About 30 households were also displaced.

## 2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

### 2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

#### 2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

- The VCI (VCI-3 month) which portrays the vegetation status of the County was 76 in October, a slight decrease from 79 recorded in September. The current VCI indicates above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI trend is stable across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties reported above normal vegetation conditions. The slight drop in VCI is from 80 to 76, 77 to 74, 84 to 83 and from 75 to 69 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The slight declining trend in VCI is attributed to reduced regeneration of vegetation cover, linked to insufficient rains during the previous month.

#### 2.1.2 Pasture

- The proportion of sampled community members which stated that the pasture was good is still at 100 in October.
- Pasture situation was good in all livelihood zones. The communities stated that the condition was normal for such time of the year. The trend remained stable in comparison to that of September, owing to significant rainfall.
- 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.

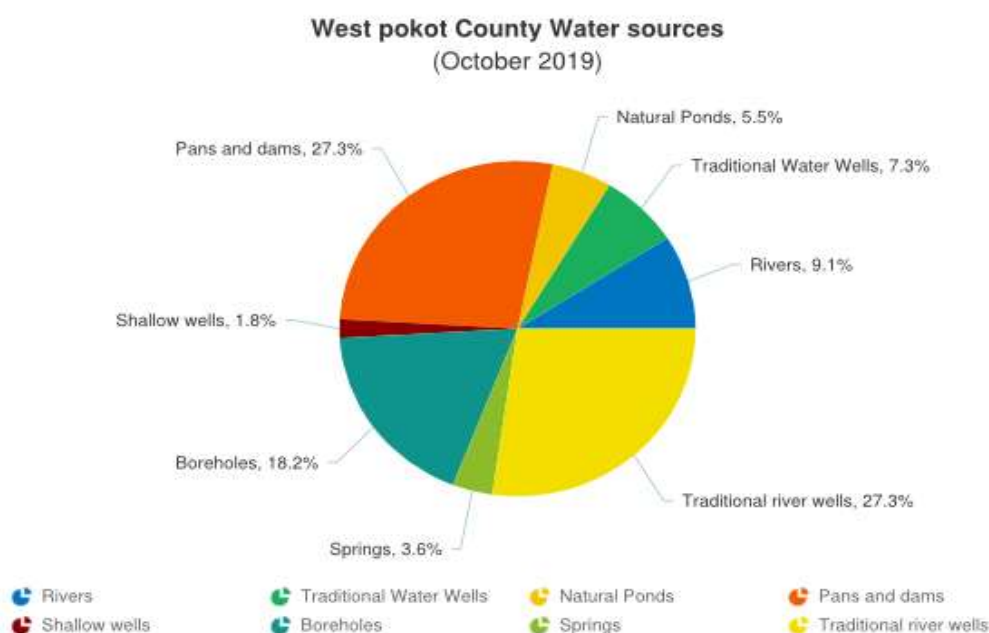
### 2.1.3 Browse

- The proportion of sampled community members which indicated that browse condition was good stood at 100 percent, same as that recorded in September.
- Browse condition is still good across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse was good compared to that of September.
- The quantity of browse is good across the livelihood zones as there was no significant variation between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The access to forage has been boosted by heightened peace building efforts along Pokot-Marakwet/Turkana borders.

## 2.2 WATER RESOURCE

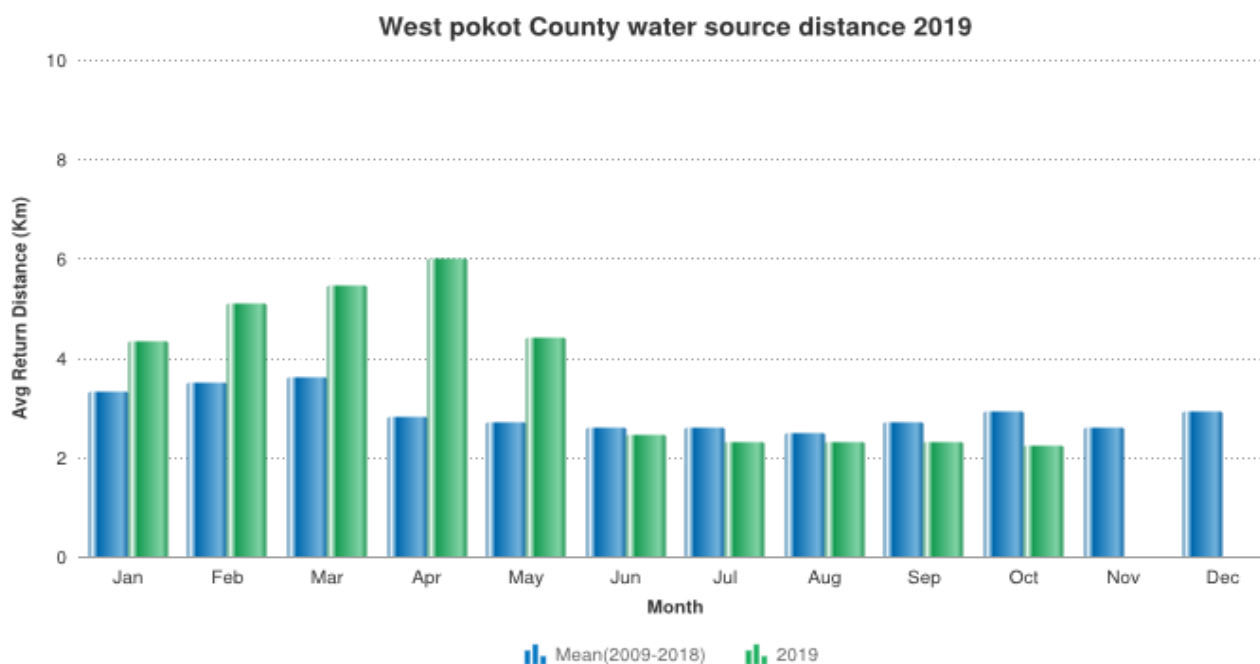
### 2.2.1 Sources

- In October, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock in October is 27.3 percent for both pans/dams and traditional river wells, 18.2 percent for boreholes and use of rivers at 9.1 percent.
- There was significant recharge to all surface water sources in October as compared to that of September. The situation is credited to sufficient rains 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

- The return distance to water source from the household was 2.2 km, a slight drop from 2.3 km reported in September. The current distance is 24 percent below the Long Term Average (LTA).
- In October, pastoral livelihood zones reported longer trekking distance to water source than the agro-pastoral livelihood zones. The downward trend in distance is attributed to stable recharge of water sources within October.

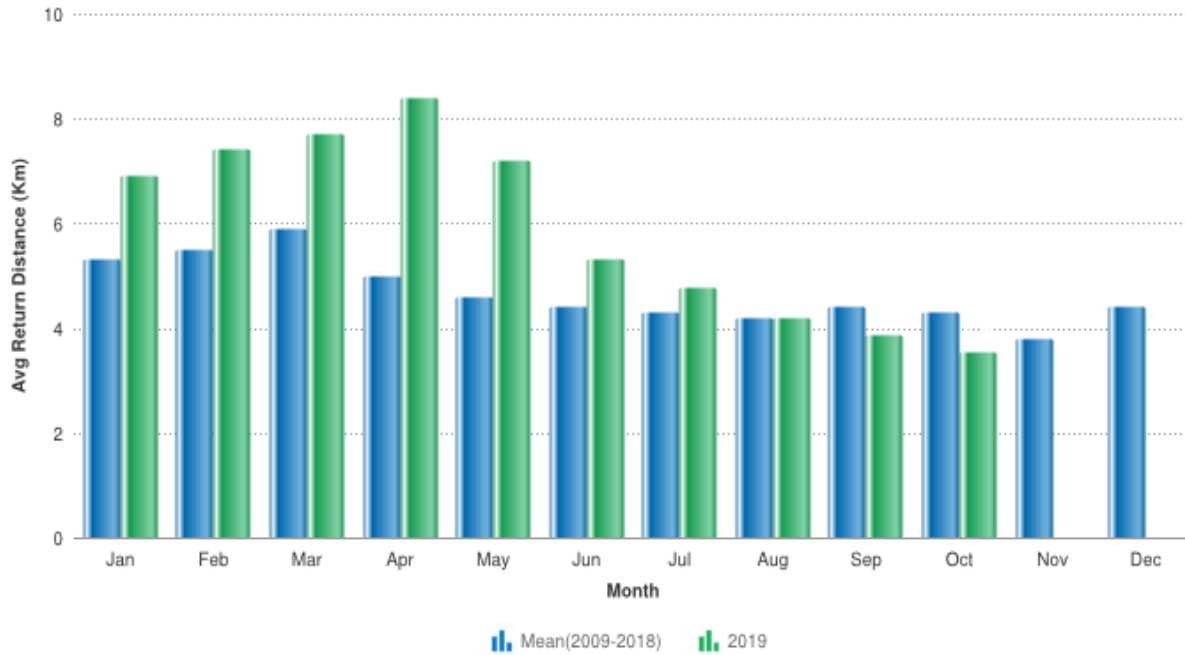


- The pastoral livelihood zones reported longer waiting time at water source than the agro-pastoral zones.
- The average household water consumption per person per day is at 10-13 litres in the pastoral zones while that in the agro-pastoral zones was 12-14litres.
- The cost of accessing water at the 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

- In October, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources was 3.6 km, demonstrating a decrease from 3.9 km recorded in September. The current trekking distance is 16 percent below the normal range.
- The pastoral livelihood zone recorded 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 owed to good rains received which supported ample recharge of the water sources.
- Frequency of watering is 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**

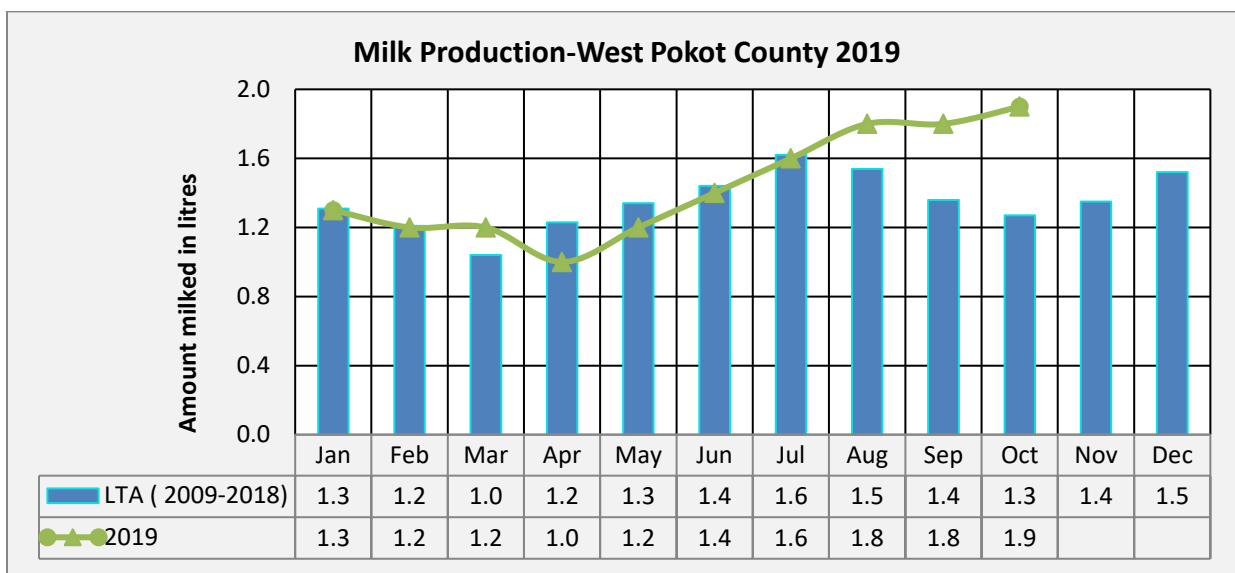
- The body condition for all livestock species is good in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones, in comparison to that recorded in September the condition was still stable.
- The livestock body condition is anticipated to remain stable across the livelihood zones, with the ongoing rainfall.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to same period during a normal year. The trend is improving, owing to adequate forage rejuvenation.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

#### **3.1.2 Livestock Diseases**

- Konyao and Masol wards reported cases of Lumpy Skin Disease.

#### **3.1.3 Milk Production**

- During the month, the County reported an average production of 1.9 litres of milk per household per day, an increase in comparison to the one reported in September.
- Cattle provided most milk than other livestock species.
- The current household milk production is above the LTA by 32 percent.
- The household improved 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 was on-going in most areas.
- During the month, horticulture production and supply to major markets in Ortum and Lomut was at normal levels in comparison to the seasonal performance.
- The harvesting of bulb onions in highlands is still going on. These are supplied to Ortum and Sigor markets for distribution to other centres within and outside the County.
- The level of farming is stable along the production zones of Ortum.

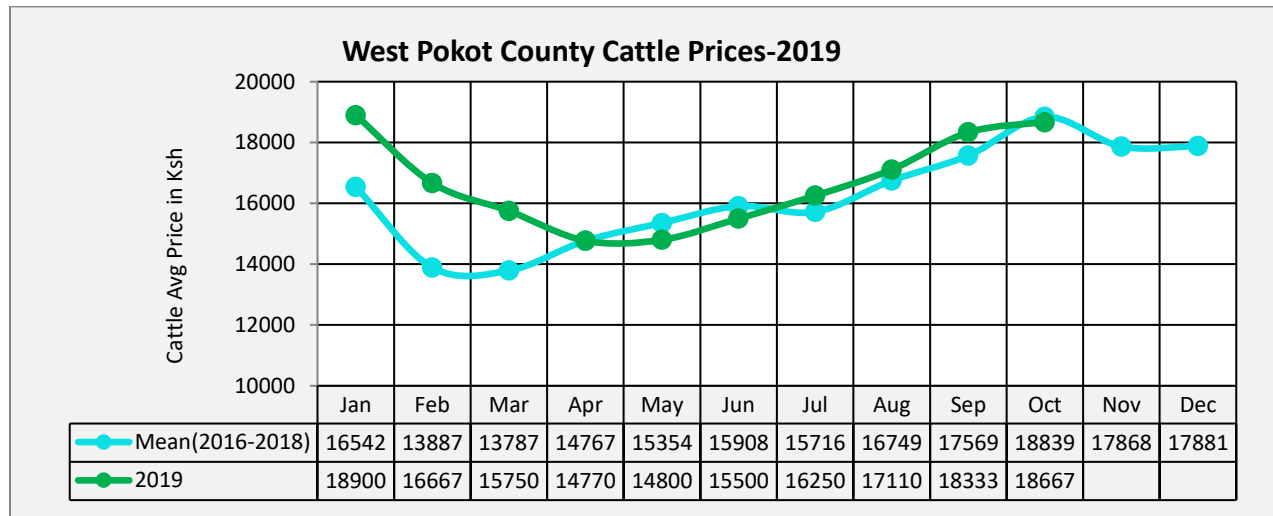


## 4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 LIVESTOCK MARKETING

#### 4.1.1 Cattle prices

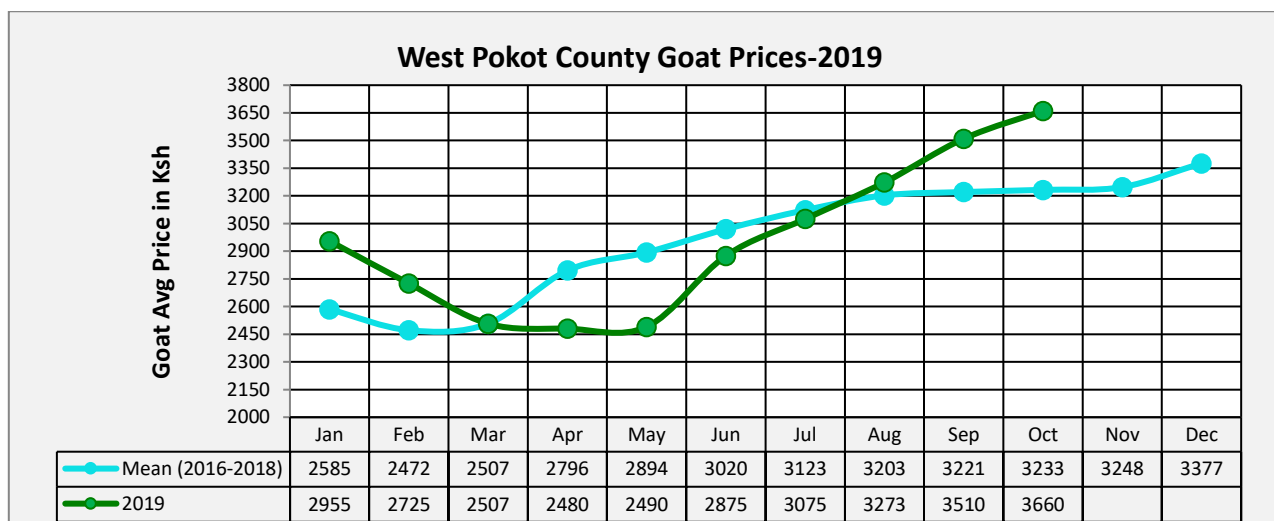
- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 18,667 representing an increase in price as compared to Kshs 18,333 recorded in September.



- The cattle price rise is credited to good body condition resulting from adequate forage access, along with good recharge of water sources for livestock.
- The current cattle price is one percent below the LTA.

#### 4.1.2 Goat Prices

- In October, the County recorded an average price of Kshs 3,660 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which depicted a rise in comparison with Kshs 3,510 recorded in the previous month.

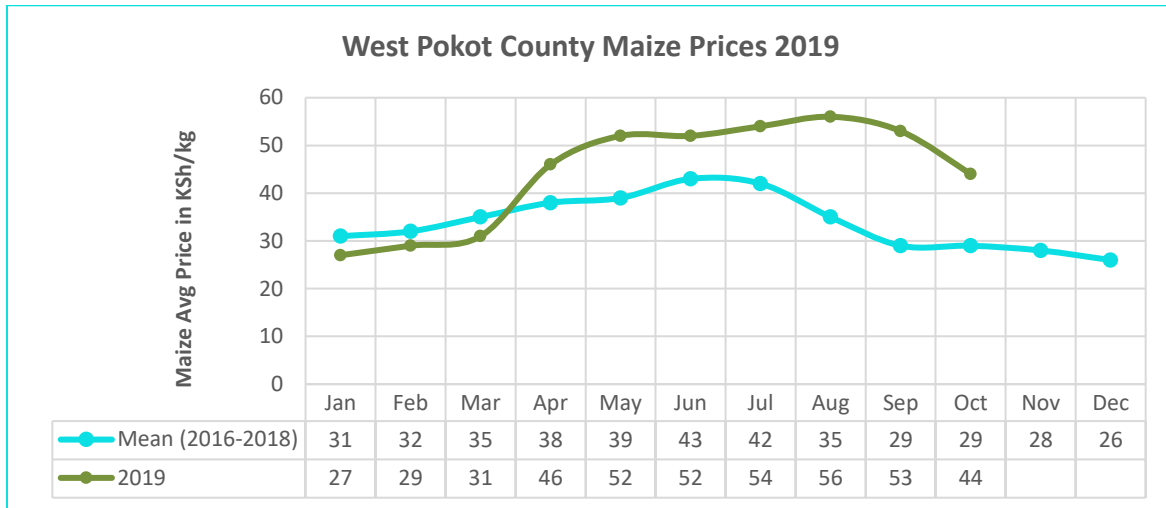


- The increase in price is associated to the good body condition for goats in the livelihoods.
- The current goat price is however 13 percent above LTA for the month.

## 4.2 CROP PRICES

### 4.2.1 Maize

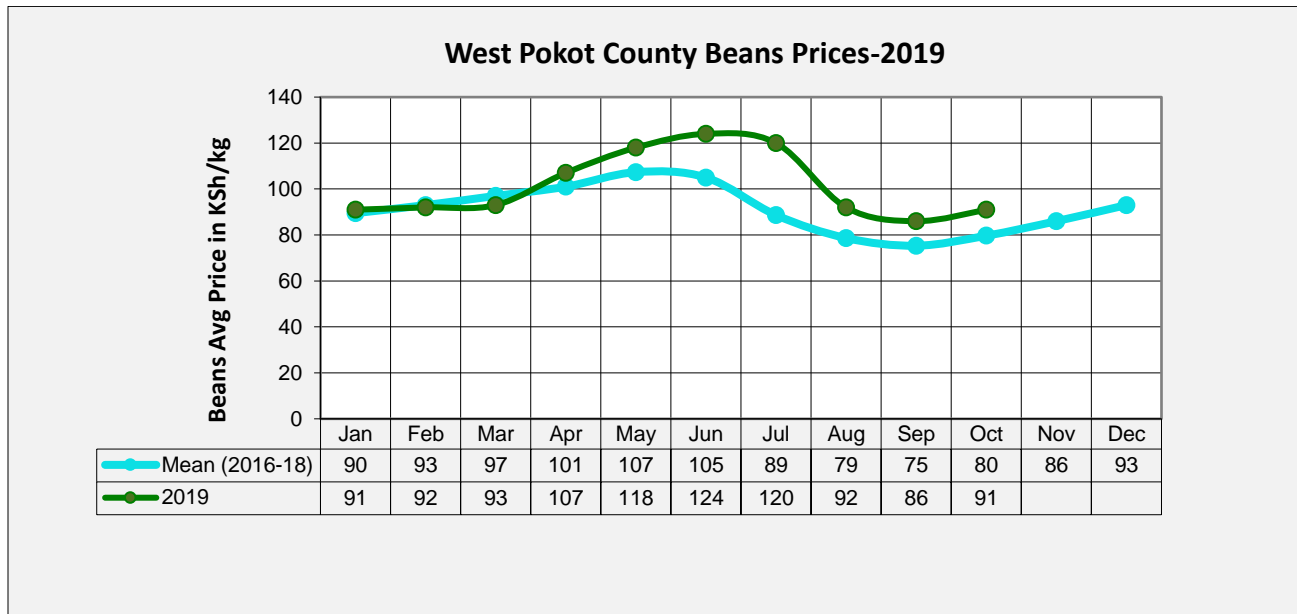
- Maize was sold at Kshs 44 per Kg, a sharp decrease as compared to Kshs 53 seen in September.
- The current price is 52 percent above the LTA value.



- The price decrease is attributed to the heightened local harvesting of maize coupled with stable supplies from Uganda.
- Majority of households depend more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is expected to stabilize owing to the ongoing harvests.

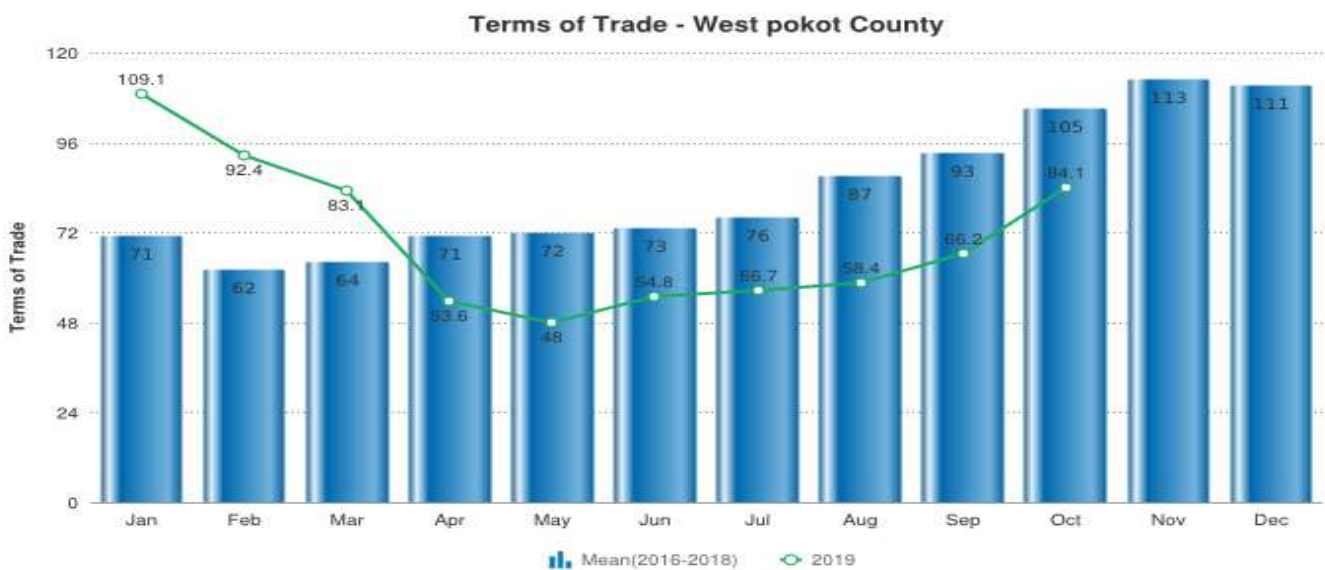
### 4.2.2 Beans

- The beans traded at Kshs 91 per kg in October, depicting an increase in comparison to September.
- The rise in price is attributed to fluctuating 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 beans price is 14 percent above LTA price (Ksh.80) for same period of the year.



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

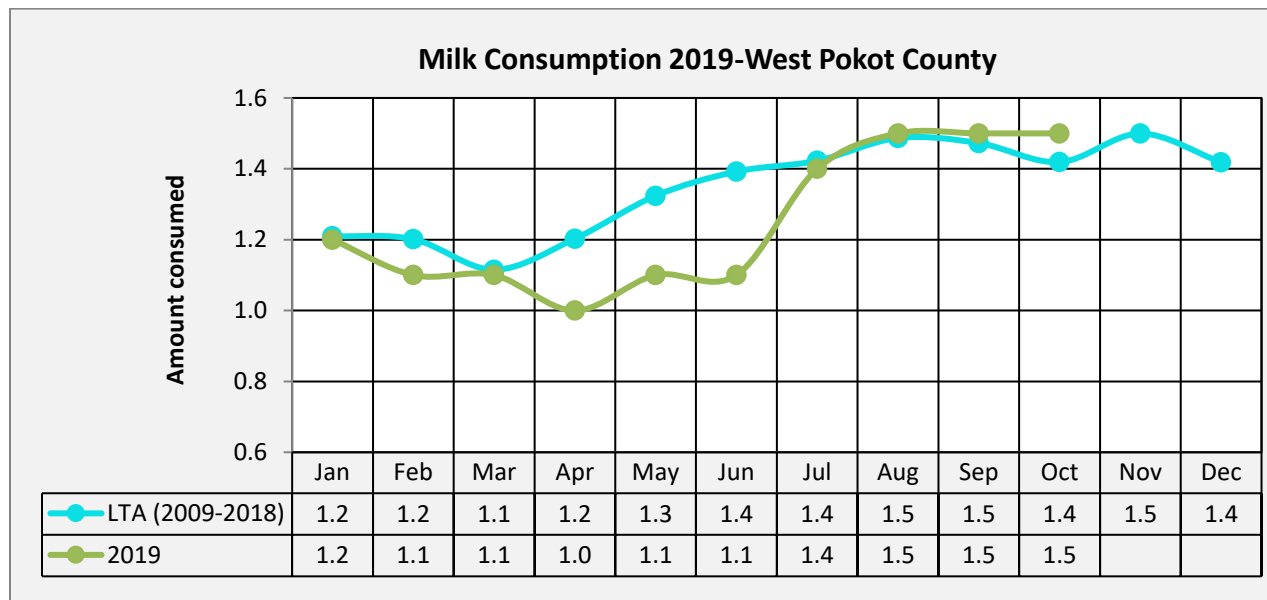
- The Terms of Trade (TOT) increased to 84, compared 66 reported in September, demonstrating that households could obtain more maize for sale of a goat currently than they did in September.
- The upward trend in ToT is credited to increasing goat prices, largely attributed to good body condition along with low maize prices.
- The TOT variation is projected over the next three months as the price of goat is expected to go up with the significant rains coupled with stable maize prices within the period.



## 5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

### 5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- In October, the households across livelihood zones consumed 1.5 litres of milk on average, similar to that consumed in September. The consumption is slightly above that of the LTA.



- The increased milk consumption is owed to the milk production, which is linked to good livestock body condition and adequate forage. Availability of milk was good in October.

### 5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

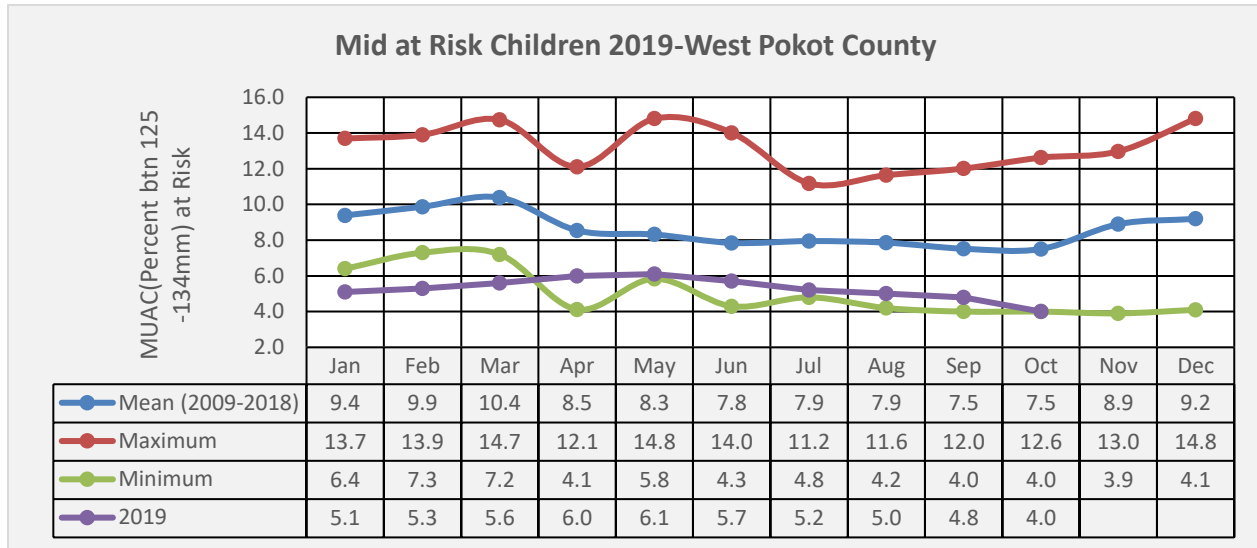
- The households' proportions of 80, 19 and 1 percent were recorded of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score increased for the acceptable category, while borderline and poor decreased in comparison to that of September. The FCS is still acceptable in October.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones increased to 48 percent from 47 recorded in September.
- There was significant variation between the two livelihood zones with for instance 98 percent of households in the agro-pastoral zone being categorized as having acceptable FCS compared to 68 percent 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

- In October, the proportion of 48 and 52 percent of girls and boys under 5 years respectively were sampled, where the children rated as being 'at risk' of malnutrition were at 4.0 percent, a drop from 4.8 recorded in September.

- The current proportion is below the LTA value of 7.5 percent for the such time of the year.



- During the month, the malnutrition status of under-fives dropped and is attributed to sufficient milk consumption coupled with other essential health and nutrition commodities. These were the key factors for the decreasing number of children ‘at risk’ of malnutrition.

### 5.3.2 Health

- The commonly reported ailments among the sampled children was Malaria.

## 5.4 COPING STRATEGY

### 5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- The County’s CSI for October was at 2.0, down from 2.2 recorded in September. The decrease signifies that households employed few 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 2.8 while agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded 1.2.
- 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**

- Red Cross led team of partners conducted emergency response interventions to landslide displaced households. 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.

### **7.2 MIGRATION**

- Normal livestock movements were reported within the month.

### **7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS**

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

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

- Households around flood prone areas are advised to move to safer places to avoid loss of lives and destruction of property.

### **2. LIVESTOCK SECTOR**

- Support pasture development in all sub-counties.

### **3. WATER SECTOR**

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

### **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.