



A Vision 2030 Flagship Project



**National Drought Management Authority
WAJIR COUNTY
DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR MARCH 2022**

EW MARCH PHASE 2022

Drought Status: **ALARM**



Mipango ya kukabiliana na ukame

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

March normally marks the onset of MAM long rains season in Wajir County. However, some little rainfall was received in parts of the County, with no forage regeneration and recharge of water sources.

Vegetation Condition: Severe vegetation deficit was reported across the county, with Wajir East and Eldas indicating extreme vegetation deficit. The vegetation condition is expected to slightly improve following the little rainfall received in some few areas.

Production indicators

- Livestock body condition is fair to poor and on a worsening trend.
- Reduced milk production was reported.
- Cases of livestock diseases such as CCPP, CBPP, PPR, SGP and FMD still persist in the county.
- **Access indicators:**
- Mass migration of livestock was reported.
- Terms of trade is unfavorable when compared to normal
- There was decrease in household milk consumption.
- There was increase in household distance to water sources
- Livestock grazing distance increased when compared to last month.

Utilization Indicators:

- The proportion of children below the age of five at risk of moderate malnutrition increased to 28.2 per cent in the month under review.
- The outbreak of COVID-19, Kala-Azar and malaria is still active
- Households continue to employ more coping strategies as the dry spell continues.
- There are three confirmed cases of deaths due to severe malnutrition.
- There was an outbreak of Chikungunya in Tarbaj Sub-County

Early Warning Phase Classification

Livelihood Zone	Phase	Trend
Agro-Pastoral	Alarm	Worsening
Pastoral	Alarm	Worsening
Informal Employment	Alert	Worsening
County	Alarm	Worsening
Biophysical Indicators	value	Worsening
Rainfall (% of Normal)	0.0	80 -120
VCI-3Month	13.6	>35
Forecasts (VCI)	14.91	>35
Forecasts (SM)	-	<=0.6
Production indicators	Value	Normal
Livestock Body Condition	Fair-poor	Normal
Crop production	Poor	Good
Milk production	0.9	>3-4litres
Livestock Migration Pattern	Not normal	Normal
Access Indicators	Value	Normal
Terms of Trade (ToT)	38	>66
Milk consumption	0.9	>3
Household Return Distance to water source	10.6	<5 Km
CSI	10.13	<10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short rains harvests ▪ Short dry spell ▪ Reduced milk yields ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ migrations ▪ Land preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planting/Weeding ▪ Long rai Calving Rate ▪ Milk Yields Increase ▪ Breeding period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long rains harvests ▪ Along dry spell and preparation ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Kidding (Sept) ▪ Migrations ▪ Herd separations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short rains ▪ Planting/weeding ▪ High birth rates ▪ Wedding

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITION

1.1 Rainfall performance

Wajir County was generally dry and hot throughout the month, although some little rainfall was received in some few parts of the County, particularly in Tarbaj and Wajir North sub-counties. According to the Kenya Meteorological Department, occasional rainfall is expected during the month of April 2022. The expected rainfall amounts are likely to be below the long-term average. The current Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is below average and on a declining trend when compared to the previous month as shown in the figure below.

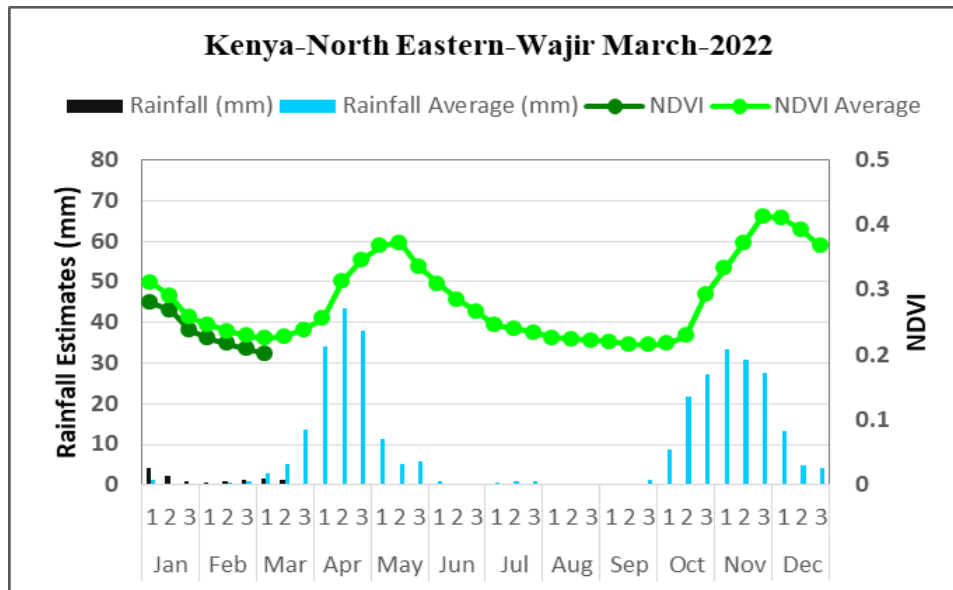


Figure 1: Rainfall and NDVI Trend

1.2 Amount of rainfall and spatial Distribution

Wajir county remained largely dry and sunny throughout the month. However, some little rains were received in the last week of March 2022 although the distribution was poor both in time and space. The peak of the rains is expected to be in the month of April. The season is likely to experience poor distribution across the County.

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 Vegetation Condition

2.1.1 Vegetation condition index (VCI)

Current Vegetation Condition Index (VCI) showed severe vegetation deficit with a score of 13.6, which was a deterioration when compared to the previous month figure of 14.9. However, Wajir East Sub-County recorded extreme vegetation deficit. The remaining sub-counties were in the severe vegetation deficit band although field observation shows extreme vegetation deficit. This worsening vegetation deficit is attributed to the cumulative impact of the poor performance of the rains in three consecutive seasons.

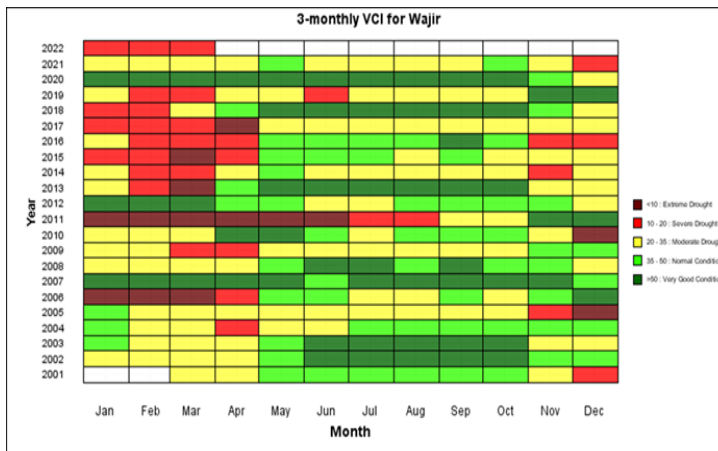


Figure 2: VCI Chart for March 2022

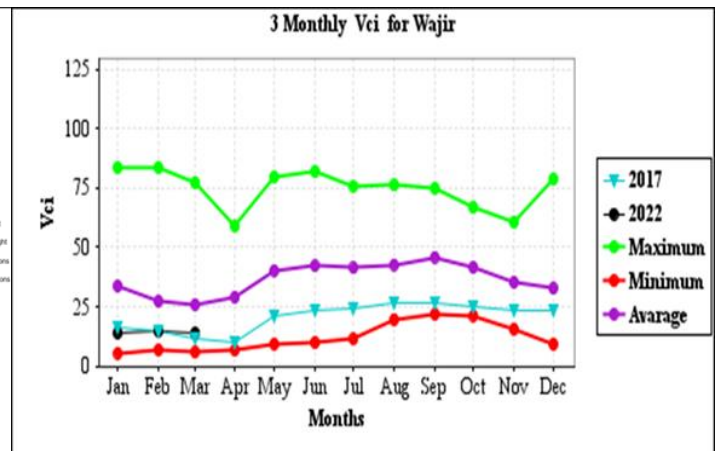


Figure 3: VCI graph for March 2022

2.1.2: Vegetation Condition Index Forecast

- Based on Sussex Vegetation Outlook, the 3-month VCI forecast indicates severe vegetation deficit across the sub-counties.
- Wajir East is forecasted to have the most deficit followed by Tarbaj Sub-County, with scores of 10.5 and 13.2 respectively.
- The vegetation condition is expected to slightly improve during the 2022 long rains season.

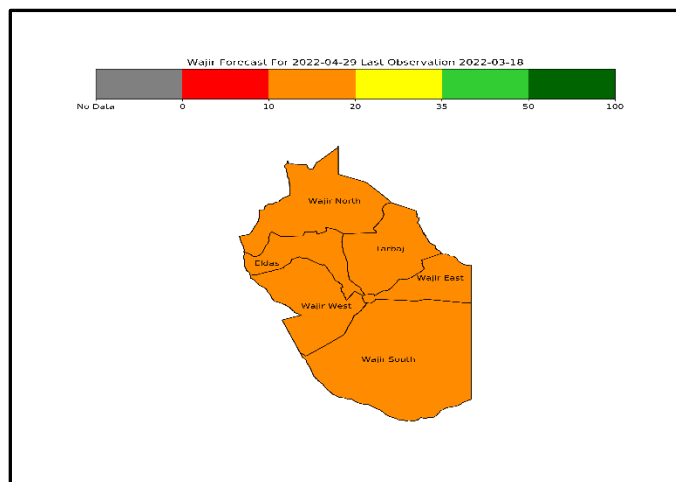


Figure 4: VCI Forecast April 2022

2.1.2 Pasture

- Current pasture condition is very poor across the livelihood zones. This current condition is attributed to the cumulative impact of the prolonged drought resulting from the below normal rains received in three consecutive seasons.
- When compared to similar previous periods, the pasture condition is very poor across the livelihood zones due to the inadequate rains received in the last three consecutive seasons.
- The quality and quantity of pasture is very poor across the County due to high forage depletion occasioned by high livestock concentration at the grazing areas.
- Pasture condition varies according to livelihood zones, with Pastoral Livelihood Zones experiencing extreme vegetation deficit.

2.1.3 Browse

- Browse situation is generally poor across all the livelihood zones. This poor browse condition is as a result of the late onset of the MAM 2022 rains and the depressed rainfall experienced during the previous seasons.
- The little browse that may regenerate as a result of the MAM 2022 long rains will quickly get depleted due to high temperatures and overgrazing resulting from livestock in-migration.
- The quality and quantity of browse is generally poor across the County, with both the Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zones facing the same extreme vegetation deficits due to the poor performance of the rains in three consecutive seasons.

2.2 Water Source

2.2.1 Sources

- Major water sources utilized for both human and livestock use are boreholes, water pan, shallow wells and water trucking. There has been a marked increase in the number of villages and institutions that rely on water trucking as their main source of water. All the water pans are dry across the livelihood zones, except some few in Wajir North that got some little recharge during the month under review.
- When compared to similar previous period, the current water condition is not normal and it is due to the inadequate rainfall that was witnessed in the last previous seasons. The water situation in the County is expected to remain stressed although some few water pans may be fairly recharged by the long rains.

2.2.2 Household access and Utilization

- Current household distance to water sources has increased across the livelihood zones at more than 10km when compared to the previous month distance of 9km. This increase in household distance to water source is due to the quick depletion of water sources

across the County due to high concentration and low recharging of water sources during the current and previous seasons.

- The reported distance in March is above the short term and wet year’s average distances but below the dry year’s average distance.
- Average water consumption per person per day slightly increased when compared to the previous month. This slight increase in water consumption is attributed to the little rainfall received that resulted in some few water pans getting slightly recharged.

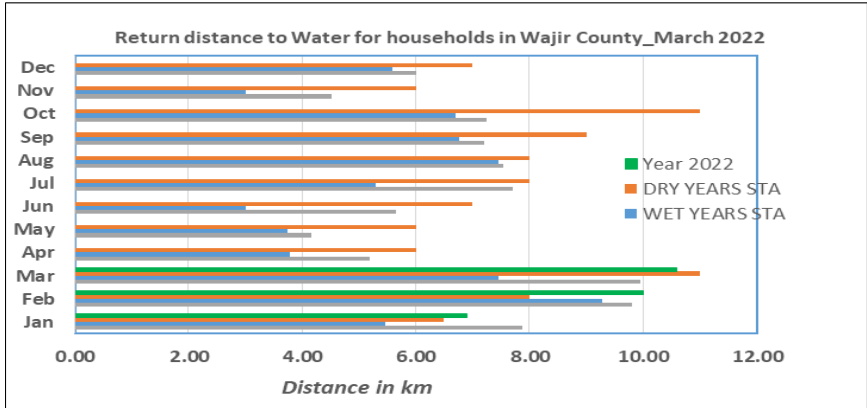


Figure 5: Households Return to Water

2.2.3 Livestock access

- Grazing distance to water sources showed an upward trend in the last two months at approximately 16km in March 2022, which is 17 percent above the previous month’s average distance. This increased distance is due to the drying up of water sources following the poor performance of the rains during the 2021 short rains season.
- The distance is expected to increase as the dry spell continues. The 2022 long rains may only result in short-lived reduction in distance to water sources before the situation deteriorates given that the rains are projected to be below normal.
- Distance from grazing areas to water sources varies according to livelihood zones, with the highest distance to grazing area reported in the Pastoral Livelihood Zone.

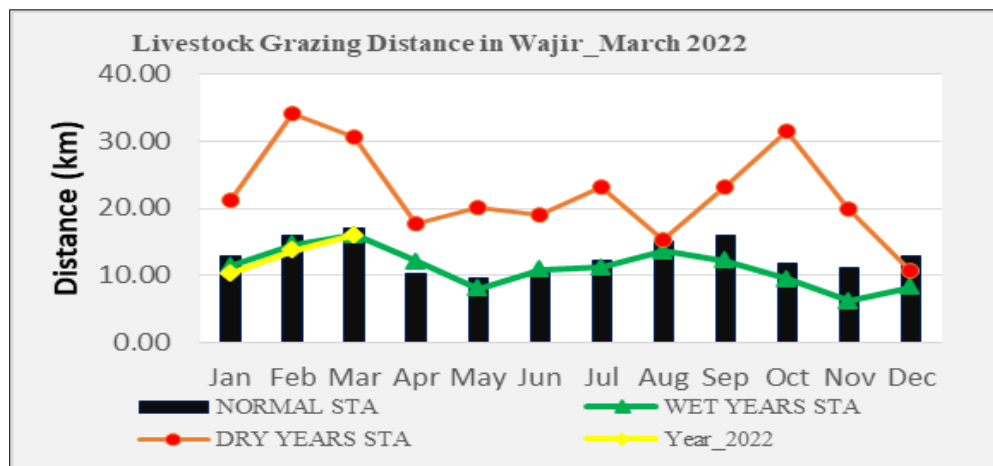


Figure 6: Grazing Area Distance to water sources

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 Livestock production

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

- The livestock body condition for all the species ranges from fair to poor and on a worsening trend across the livelihood zones. This deteriorating livestock body condition is due to quick depletion of forage and increased trekking distance to water sources.
- When compared to similar previous periods, the current condition is not normal due to poor forage, increased grazing distance and high livestock migration attributed to depressed rainfall received during the 2021 short rains season.
- The livestock body condition is expected to slightly improve due to the anticipated regeneration of browse and pasture occasioned by the 2022 long rains.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases

There was an upsurge in endemic livestock diseases such as Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP), Contagious caprine pleuropneumonia (CCPP), Peste des petit ruminants (PPR) and mineral deficiencies. The estimated overall livestock mortality rate in the County is three percent; with cattle as the worst affected at more than 12 percent.

3.1.3 Milk Production

- Milk production per household per day in March 2022 decreased when compared to the previous month and is currently 50 percent below the long-term average (LTA).
- This decline in milk production is due to weakening livestock body condition as pasture and browse depletion increases in most parts of the County.
- Available milk is derived from cattle, camel and small stocks across the County.

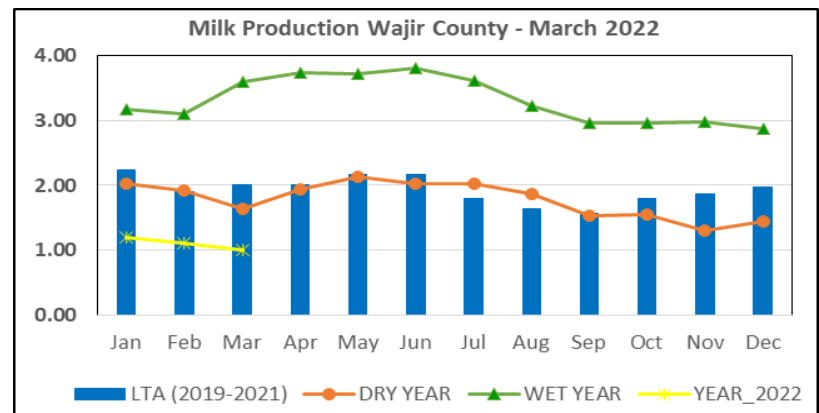


Figure 7: Milk Production

3.2 CROP PRODUCTION

The main crops produced in the County during the long rains season are maize, sorghum and cow peas and is mainly practised in the Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zone. Preparation of land was done but no planting of crops took place in the month under review as the County was generally dry throughout the month under review.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1. LIVESTOCK MARKETING

Cattle Prices

- The price of a 4-year-old medium-size bull currently stands at an average of KES.12,000. When compared to the previous month of February 2022, cattle prices reduced by approximately 20 percent.
- The decline in price is attributed to poor livestock body condition resulting from poor pasture and browse condition during this dry season.
- The reported prices of cattle in the month under review were lower than the short term, dry and wet year average prices.

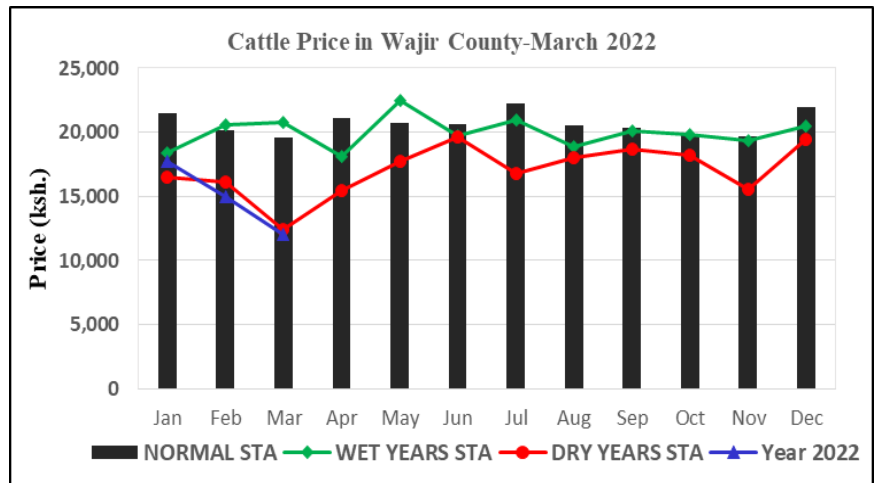


Figure 8: Cattle Price

4.1.2 Small Ruminant (Goat price)

- The price of a medium sized goat decreased slightly by six percent from KES. 2,660 in February 2022 to KES. 2,500 in the month under review. This decline in goat prices is attributed to reduced demand in the market which was occasioned by poor livestock body condition.
- Prices are likely to improve due to enhanced livestock body condition resulting from forage regeneration during the 2022 long rains season.
- The highest prices were recorded in the urban areas and lowest in the rural areas.

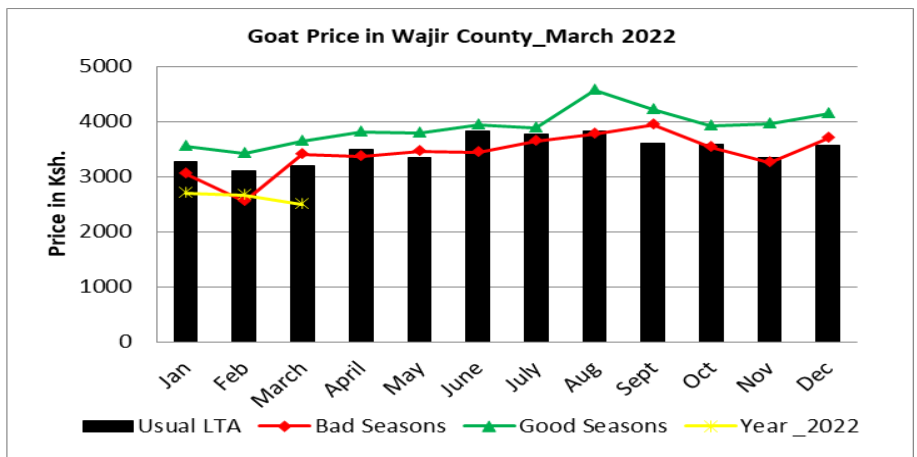


Figure 9: Goat Price Trends

Camel price

- There was a decrease in camel prices from KES. 21,000 in the month of February 2022 to KES. 20,000 in the month under review.
- This decrease in prices is due to poor livestock body condition, high supply and low demand in the market.
- The current price is below the short term, wet and dry year's average prices.

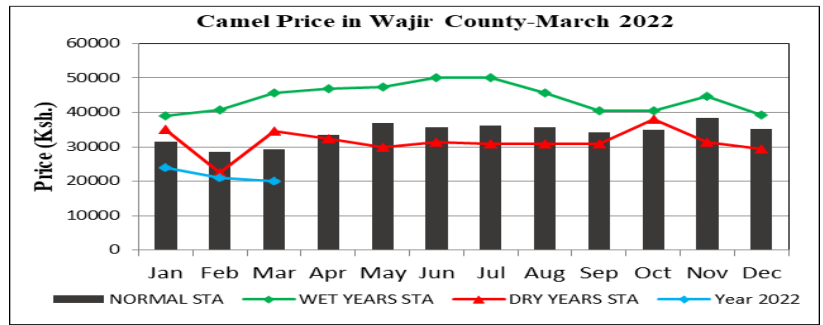


Figure 10: Camel Price

4.2 CROP PRICE

4.2.1 Maize

- Current average maize prices increased from KES.65 in the month of February 2022 to KES.67 in the month under review. This slight increase in maize prices is attributed to reduction in supply and increased demand by the pastoralists. The product is largely outsourced which sometimes results in reduced supply.
- The reported price is still above the normal, short-term, wet and dry year's average prices. The highest prices were recorded in the rural areas and lowest recorded in the urban area.

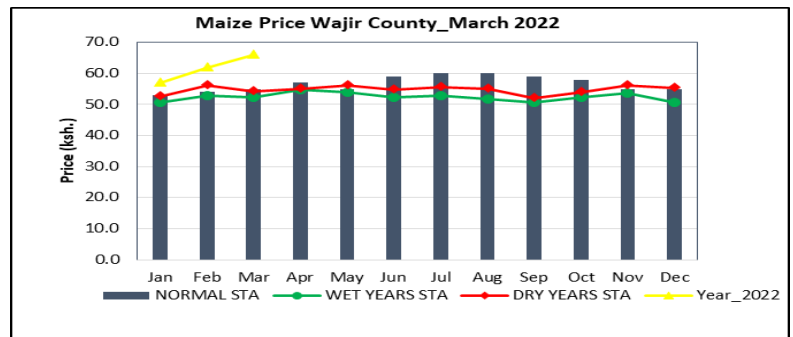


Figure 11: Maize Price

4.3 Terms of Trade (TOT)

- The terms of trade (ToT) in the month under review stood at 38 when compared to the previous month ratio of 42, which is approximately 35 percent below the short-term average (STA).
- This is an indication that households purchasing power (measured by the goat to maize terms of trade) is unfavourable due to low goat prices and high maize prices in the market.
- The below normal livestock prices have resulted in reduced household access to food and income.

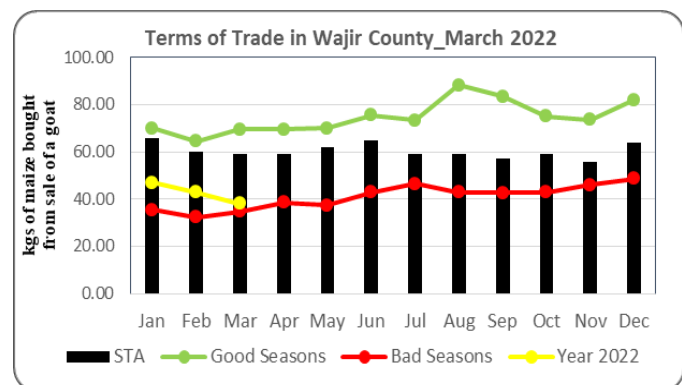


Figure 12: Terms of Trade Trends

5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- Household milk consumption per household per day stands at less than a litre in March 2022. This decrease in milk consumption is attributed to the reduced milk production and availability.
- The current average household milk consumption per household per day is below the long-term and wet years' average and it is attributed to the failed 2021 short rains that affected livestock productivity due to poor forage regeneration.

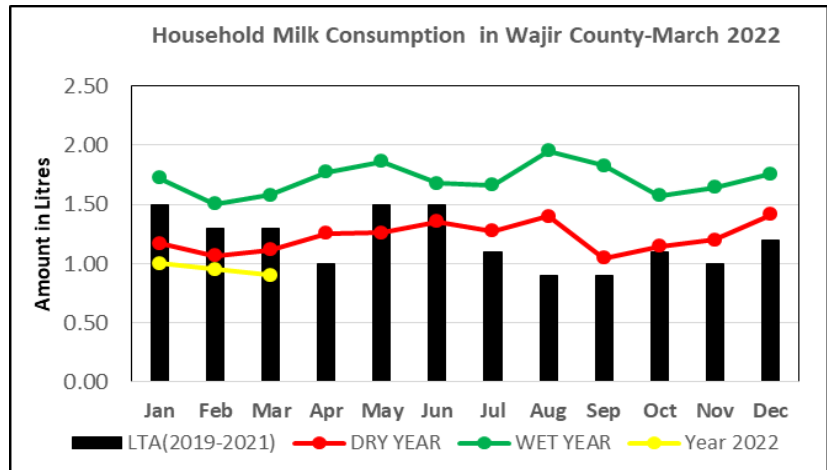


Figure 13: Milk Consumption

5.2 Food Consumption Score

- Patterns of household food consumption continue to deteriorate as shown in Figure 14 where an estimated 23.4 and 28.3 percent of the sampled households had poor and borderline food consumption scores respectively.

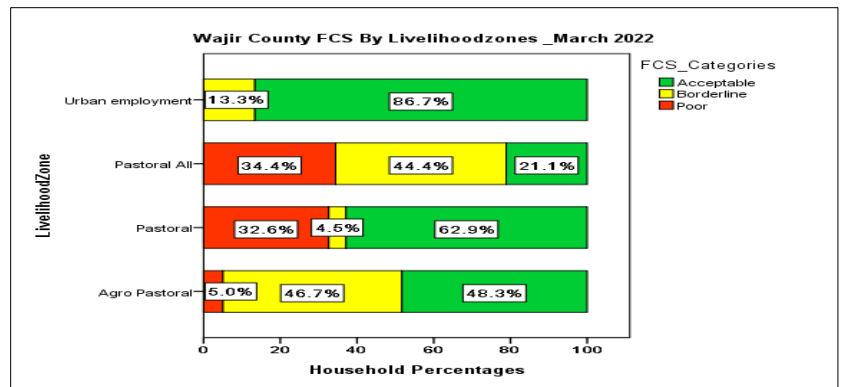


Figure 14: Food Consumption Score by livelihood zones

- The number of households having poor food consumption score increase from 17 percent in February 2022 to 23.4 percent in the month under review. This increase in the number of households with poor food consumption score is attributed to the low purchasing power among the pastoral households.
- Dietary diversity, especially in the Pastoral Livelihood Zone, remained poor; a scenario that reflects reduced household access to food and income.

5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.3.1 Nutrition Status

- The proportion of children under the age of five at risk of malnutrition, determined by the Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurement, has risen from 25.6 per cent in the month of February 2022 to 28.2 percent in March 2022.
- This marked increase in malnutrition rate is attributed to poor dietary diversity and low milk consumption following the failed rainy seasons experienced in three consecutive seasons.
- From the March 2022 mass screening report, the global acute malnutrition rate (GAM) in the County was at 37.5%. An estimated 12,342 and 49,942 children below the age of five are severely and moderately malnourished respectively across the County, with Eldas and Tarbaj sub-counties as the worst affected. There are three confirmed cases of deaths due to severe malnutrition.

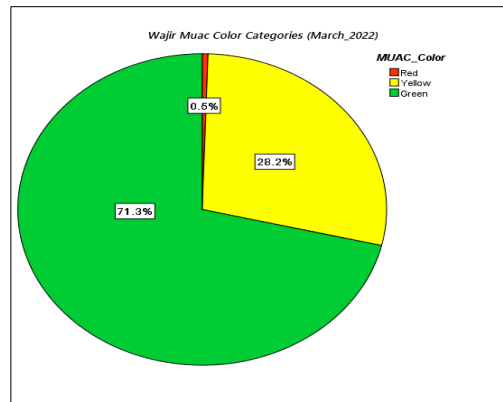


Figure 15: Malnutrition Rate

5.3.2 Health Status

There was an outbreak of Chikungunya at Wargadud Ward in Tarbaj Sub-County with five and 83 confirmed and probable cases respectively. The number of COVID-19 positive cases as of the end of March 2022 stood at 313 with 28 confirmed deaths. There was an outbreak of Malaria in Wajir North with 333 cases although there were no deaths. The Kala-Azar outbreak is still active with 414 cases and four fatalities.

5.4 COPING STRATEGY INDEXES

5.4.1: Reduced coping strategy index (rCSI)

- There was an increase in the consumption-based coping strategies, measured using the Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI), from 9.8 in the month of February 2022 to 10.13 in March 2022.
- Households in Pastoral Livelihood Zone applied the most coping strategies at 12.8 while those in Urban Employment applied the lowest index at 2.3.
- Strategies commonly employed by pastoral households include relying on less preferred food, borrowing food, reducing number of meals and reducing portion size and quantity for adults.

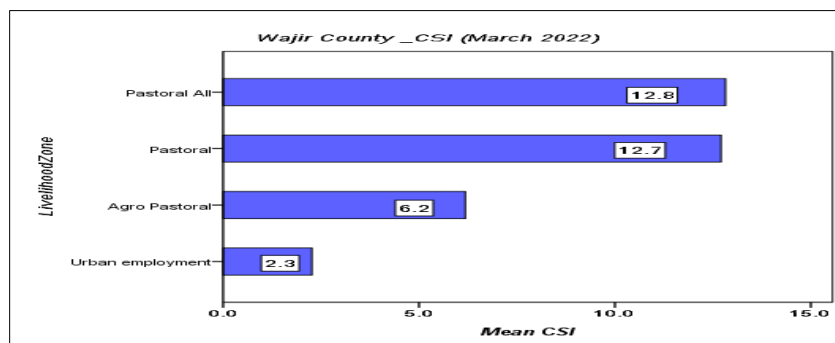


Figure 16: Coping Strategy Index

6.0 CURRENT INTERVENTION MEASURES (ACTION)

6.1 Non-food interventions.

Water Sector

- Water trucking
- Rehabilitation and repair of boreholes
- Equipping of boreholes
- Distribution of water storage facilities

Livestock Sector

- Ring vaccination and targeted treatment/management
- Routine monitoring and surveillance of livestock disease

Health Sector

- High impact Nutrition Interventions by the Department of Health.
- Strengthening of BFCI (Baby Friendly Community Initiative)
- Integrated health outreaches by Wajir County Government and KRCS(20 sites)
- Upscaling of disease surveillance and monitoring

Social Protection/Cash Transfer

- Cash transfer by Islamic Relief targeting 1,000 drought affected households in Wajir West, Eldas and Wajir North. Each household receives kshs 6,150
- Cash transfer by World Vision targeting 900 households, each receiving KES. 7,449 in Wajir South
- 4,667 households in 41 sites across the county receiving five thousand (5,000) shillings via MPESA for eight (8) months until June 2023 by the World Food Programme
- Cash transfer by WASDA targeting 650 households distributed across Wajir South (Kursi, Ibrahim Ure and Burder), Wajir West (Boa) and Eldas (Tula Tula, Mirgo Harun and Abaq Madhobe)
- Cash transfer by ALDEF targeting 236 households in Tarbaj Sub-County, with each household receiving KES. 9,255.
- Cash-Plus by FAO targeting 1,250 households with each beneficiary receiving KES. 5,400

6.2 Food Aid/Interventions.

- Distribution of relief food to 1,000 drought affected households by the Kenya Red Cross Society
- Ramadhan relief food distribution by Islamic Relief, targeting 4,000 households in Wajir North, Wajir West, Eldas and Wajir town.
- Distribution of assorted dry foodstuffs to 1,150 needy households affected by drought in Tarbaj, Wajir East and Wajir South sub-counties by Baitul Maal Inc. Kenya
- Distribution of assorted foodstuffs to 420 households in Wajir East, Wajir West and Tarbaj sub-counties by North Eastern Youth for Development (NEYD).

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

7.1 Insecurity/Conflict/Human Displacement

- There were no cases of insecurity reported in March 2022 although the resource-based conflict on the border with Isiolo County is still active. There is the need to strengthen peace building initiatives in the affected areas, particularly along the border of Marsabit and Isiolo counties.

7.2 Migration

- Mass migration of livestock within and outside the county was experienced across the livelihood zones. Migration towards Garissa and Tana River counties and parts of Wajir South (Dadajabula, Diif and Banane wards) and into the neighbouring Somalia were reported.
- Migration into the traditional grazing areas in Isiolo and Marsabit Counties has been curtailed by conflicts among the border communities. Pastoralists from the Pastoral Livelihood Zone in Wajir West and Eldas sub counties have limited access to the rangeland resources along the border grazing areas due to the resource-based conflict on the border with Isiolo and Marsabit counties.

7.3 Food security prognosis/forecasts

- According to the Kenya Meteorological Department, the peak of the 2022 long rains is expected to be in the month of April. The season is likely to experience poor distribution across the County.
- The forage condition is expected to be poor. The forecasted below average long rains season will result in a short-lived regeneration of browse and pasture.
- Based on Sussex Vegetation Outlook, the 3-month VCI forecast indicates severe vegetation deficit across the sub-counties, with Wajir East projected to have the most deficits.
- Milk production and consumption is likely to significantly decline due to deteriorating livestock body condition resulting from diminishing rangeland resources.
- Livestock prices are likely to decrease due to declining livestock body condition leading to reduced demand in the market.
- The poor forage and water resources will intensify resource-based conflict, especially on the border with Isiolo and Marsabit counties.
- Reduced livestock productivity and high staple food prices will likely constrain household purchasing power, thus leading to reduced household access to food and income.
- There is the need to monitor the livestock disease situation in the County following the upsurge of endemic livestock diseases.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Health & Nutrition

- Strengthening of baby friendly community initiatives by the Department of Health.
- High impact nutrition intervention (HINI).
- Mass screening and integrated health outreaches
- Upscaling of disease surveillance and monitoring and training of community disease reporters

Livestock Sector.

- Monitoring and surveillance of livestock disease by the department of veterinary department.
- Vaccination and targeted treatment/management by the departments
- Livestock feeds distribution
- Commercial livestock offtake programme

Water Sector.

- Water trucking
- Rehabilitation and repair of boreholes
- Equipping of boreholes
- Distribution of water storage facilities

Education sector

- Meals for ECD and primary schools
- Provision of clean water and water storage facilities
- Food for fees
- Bursary for vulnerable children
- Provision of hand washing facilities
- Provision of clean water and water storage facilities