

**National Drought Management Authority  
WEST POKOT COUNTY  
DROUGHT EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR DECEMBER 2020**

**DECEMBER EW PHASE**



**Early Warning (EW) Phase Classification**

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

Biophysical Indicators	Value	Normal range
VCI-3month (County)	82	>35
Forage Condition	Good	Good

Production Indicators	Value	Normal range
Livestock Body Condition	Fair	Normal
Milk Production	1.9	>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)	163	>76
Milk Consumption	1.6	>1.2 Litres
Return distance to water sources (household)	1.6 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)	2.2	0.0-9.6
Coping Strategy Index (CSI)	0.8	0.0-14.5
Food Consumption Score	54	>35

**Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification**

**Biophysical Indicators**

- Depressed rainfall was received across livelihood zones in December. The temporal and spatial distribution was poor across the livelihood zones.
- The vegetation cover index recorded was above normal range, with a worsening trend across the livelihoods as portrayed by decrease in the Vegetation Condition Index. All Sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. Forage condition was fair.

**Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)**

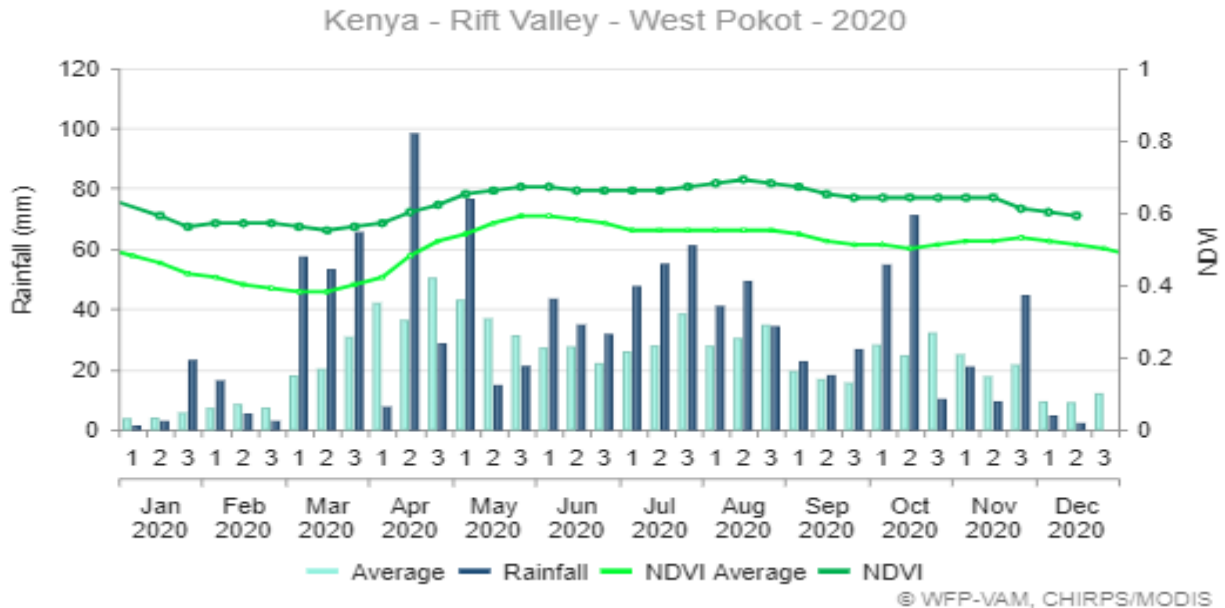
- Milk production dropped during the month while milk consumption at household level remain stable and above the long term average.
- The livestock body condition is fair with worsening trend across the County for all species. Distance to water sources is slightly increasing across the County.
- The County's terms of trade is favourable with a stable trend in all livelihood zones.
- Majority of the households fell within the Acceptable Food Consumption Score as the Coping Strategy Index slightly increased across livelihood zones. There were no notable variations in livelihood coping strategies employed between livelihoods.

<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

- Insufficient rainfall was received in December. The intensity was poor in both the lowlands and highlands. The rainfall situation is below normal for such time of the year.



Source: VAM-World Food Programme

- In the month under review, the dekadal rainfall decreased in the first dekad from 23.9 mm to 4.3 mm and in the second dekad from 11.1 mm to 1.8 mm respectively. The dekad amounts were below normal.
- The first and second dekads remained above normal Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) with a declining trend when compared to their respective long term dekadal NDVI values.

## 1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- During the month, the spatial and temporal rainfall distribution was poor across the livelihoods. The amounts received were below normal.

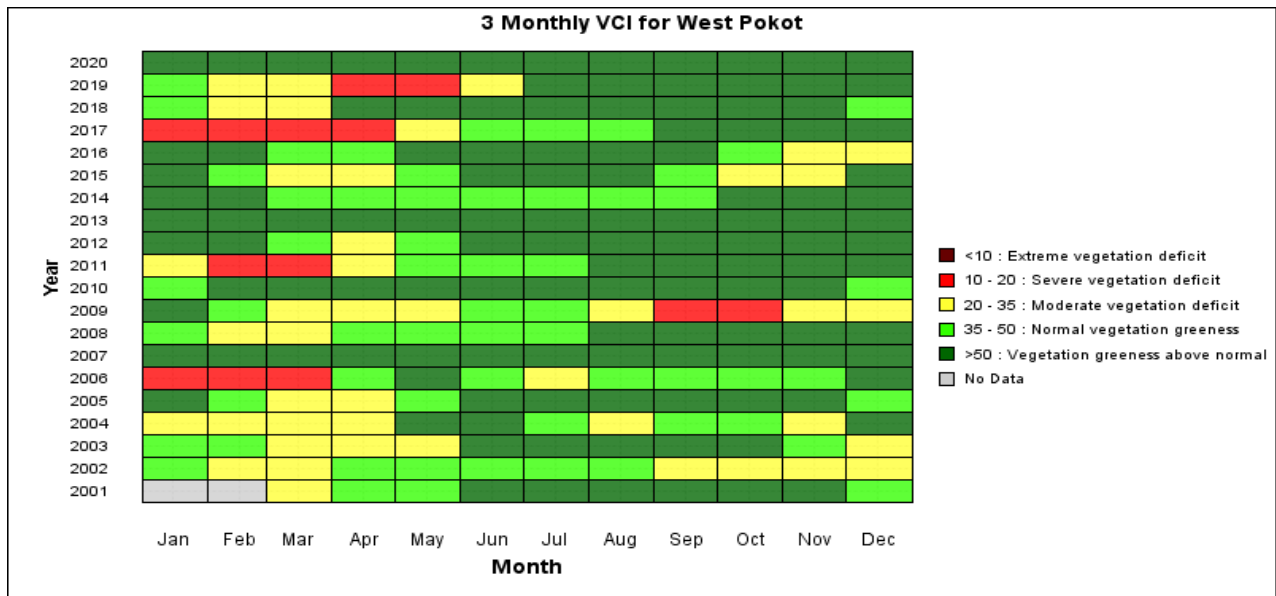
## 1.3 OTHER EVENTS

- No notable events were reported across the County .

## 2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

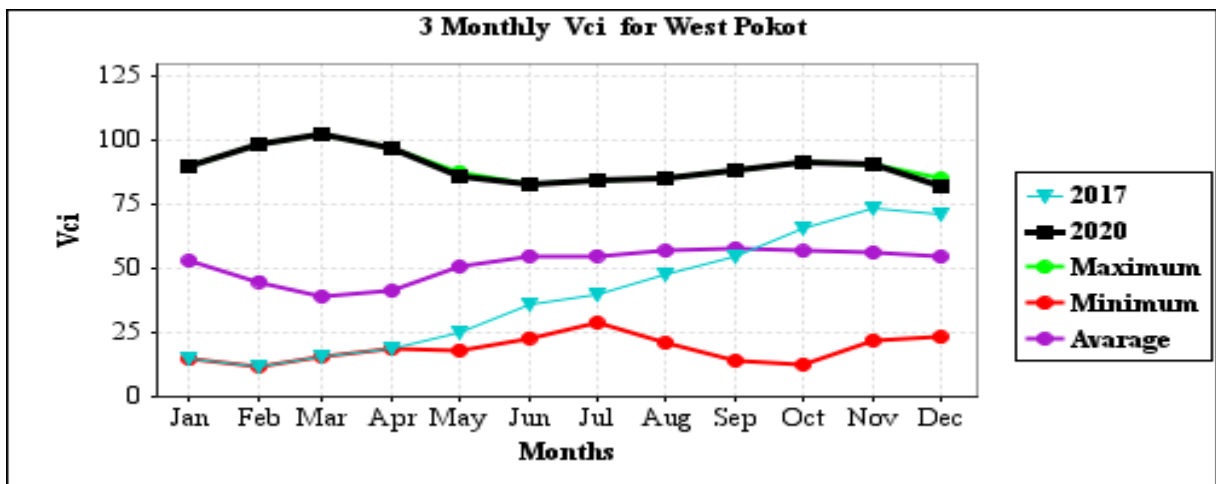
### 2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION

#### 2.1.1 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)



Source: Boku University

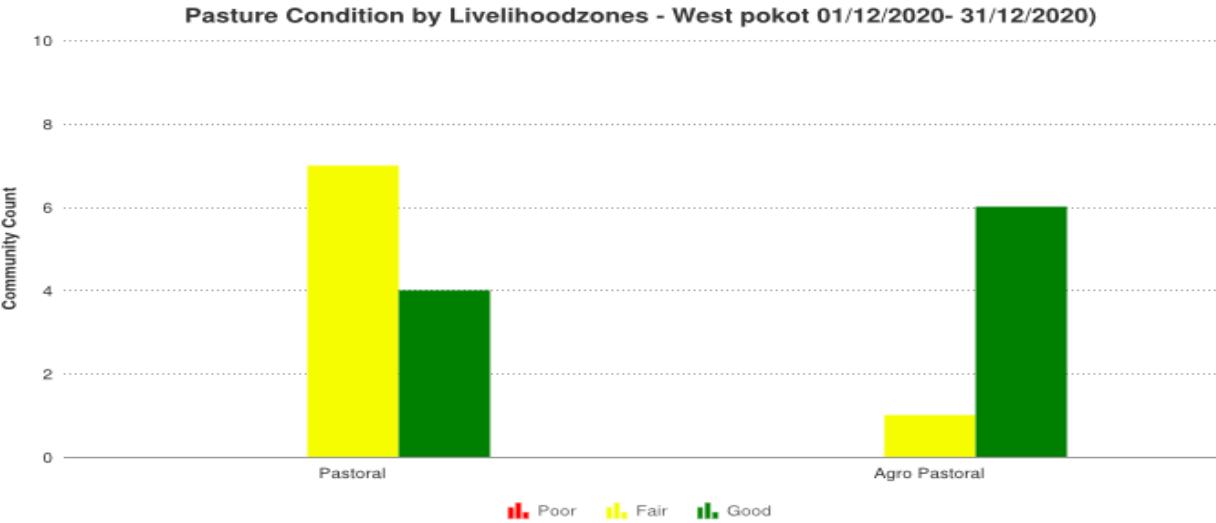
- During the month, the VCI (VCI-3month) which shows the vegetation status of the County decreased from 90 in November to 82 in December. The current VCI represents above normal vegetation condition.
- The VCI is on declining trend across all livelihood zones. All sub-counties recorded above normal vegetation conditions. The decrease in VCI is from 91 to 78, 79 to 77, 93 to 85 and 93 to 89 in Pokot North, Pokot South, Pokot West and Pokot Central Sub-counties respectively. The drop in VCI is attributed to poor regeneration of vegetation cover coupled with below normal rainfall in December.



- The current vegetation condition index is above normal as compared to the long-term average in December.
- The short rains season performance was below average hence the 3-months vegetation condition index is poor when compared to the long term average.
- The current VCI is below maxima for the County in addition to maintaining similar trend for the season.

**2.1.2 Pasture**

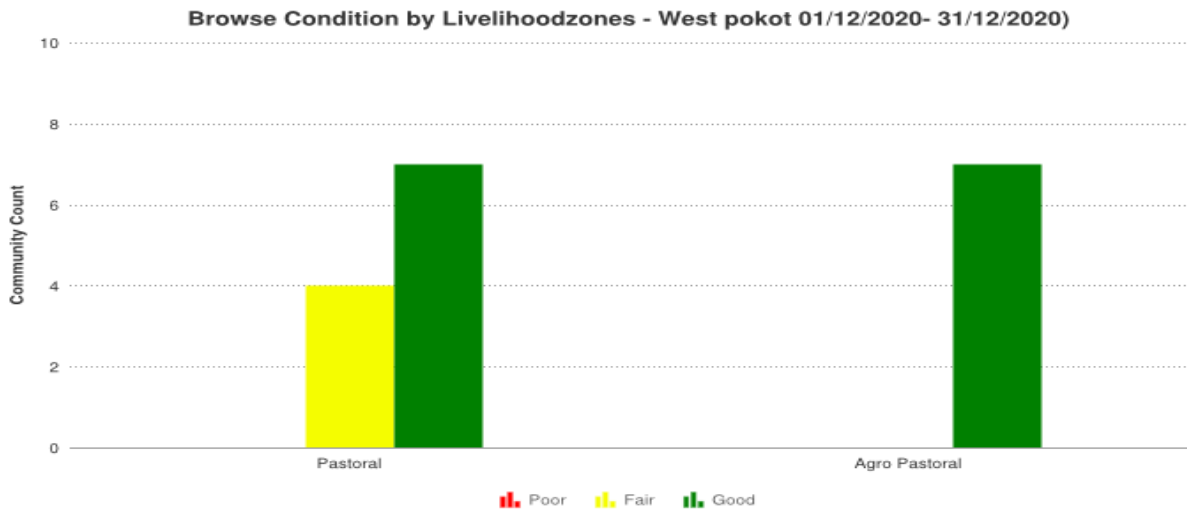
- In December, the proportion of sampled community members which reported that the pasture was good was at 86 and 36 percent in agro pastoral and pastoral livelihood zones respectively.
- The communities stated that pasture situation was good-fair in all livelihood zones. The condition was normal for such time of the year.



- The trend is deteriorating in comparison to that of the previous month due to below normal rainfall. The pasture condition is likely to remain poor owing to onset of dry spells in January.
- There is no significant variation in terms of pasture quality and quantity between livelihood zones.

### 2.1.3 Browse

- The browse condition is fair across the livelihood zones and is normal for such period of the year. The quality of the browse condition dropped when compared to that of November.
- The proportion of sampled community members which reported that browse condition is good was at 100 and 64 percent in agro pastoral and pastoral livelihoods respectively.



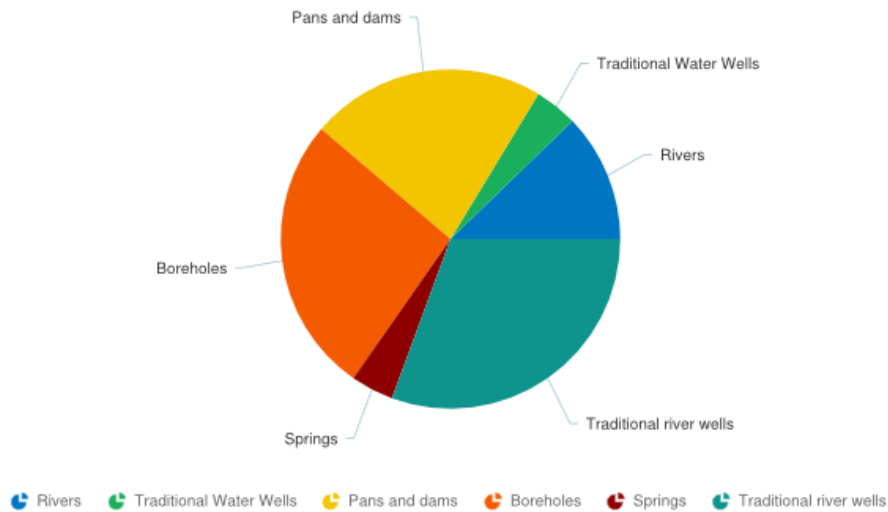
- The quantity of browse is still good across the livelihood zones and there was no significant variation between the pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones.
- The access to forage along the conflict buffer zones improved due to intensified peace building initiatives.

## 2.2 WATER RESOURCE

### 2.2.1 Sources

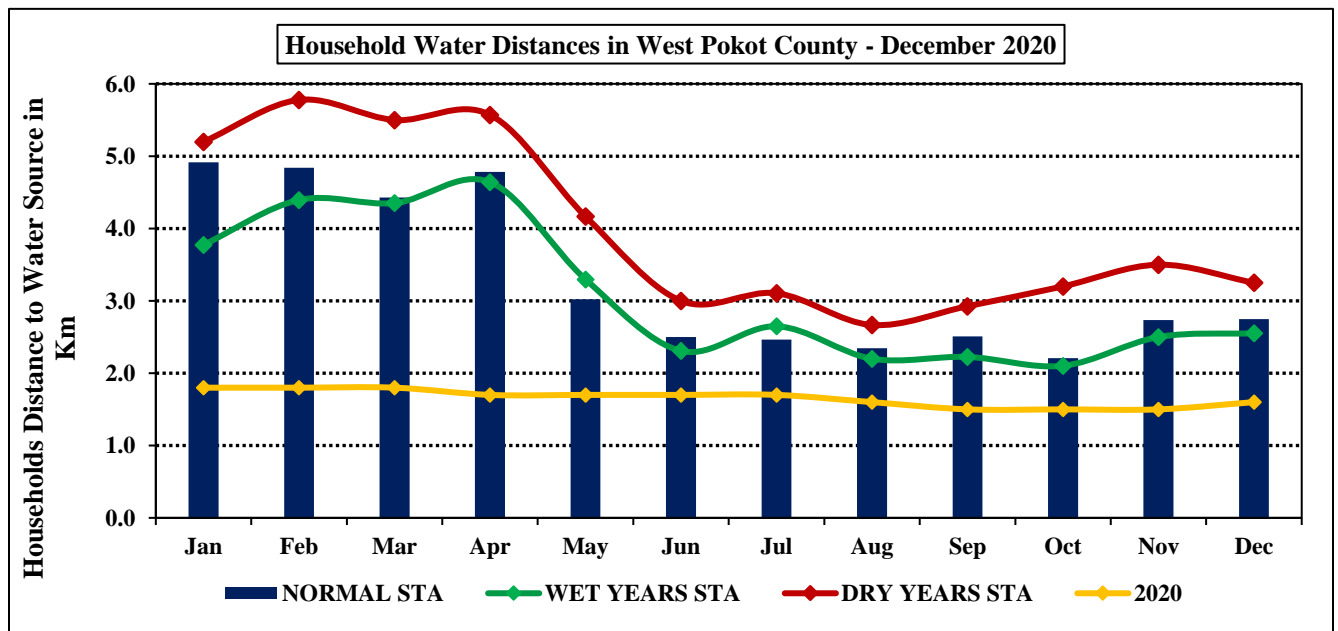
- In December, the proportion of sampled population using main water sources for both households and livestock are; 31 percent for traditional river wells, 22 percent for pans and dams, 27 percent for boreholes and 12 percent for rivers while those using natural ponds were at 4 percent.
- The recharge was poor in all surface water sources in comparison to that of November. The situation is likely to worsen owing to onset of dry in January.
- The current main water sources in use are the normal ones used by households during such time of the year.

**West pokot County Water sources**  
(December 2020)



### 2.2.2 Household Access and Utilization

- In the month under review, the return distance to water source from the household was at 1.6 km, a slight increase from that recorded in the previous month. The current distance is 42 percent below 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 upward trend in distance is attributed to poor water sources recharge.

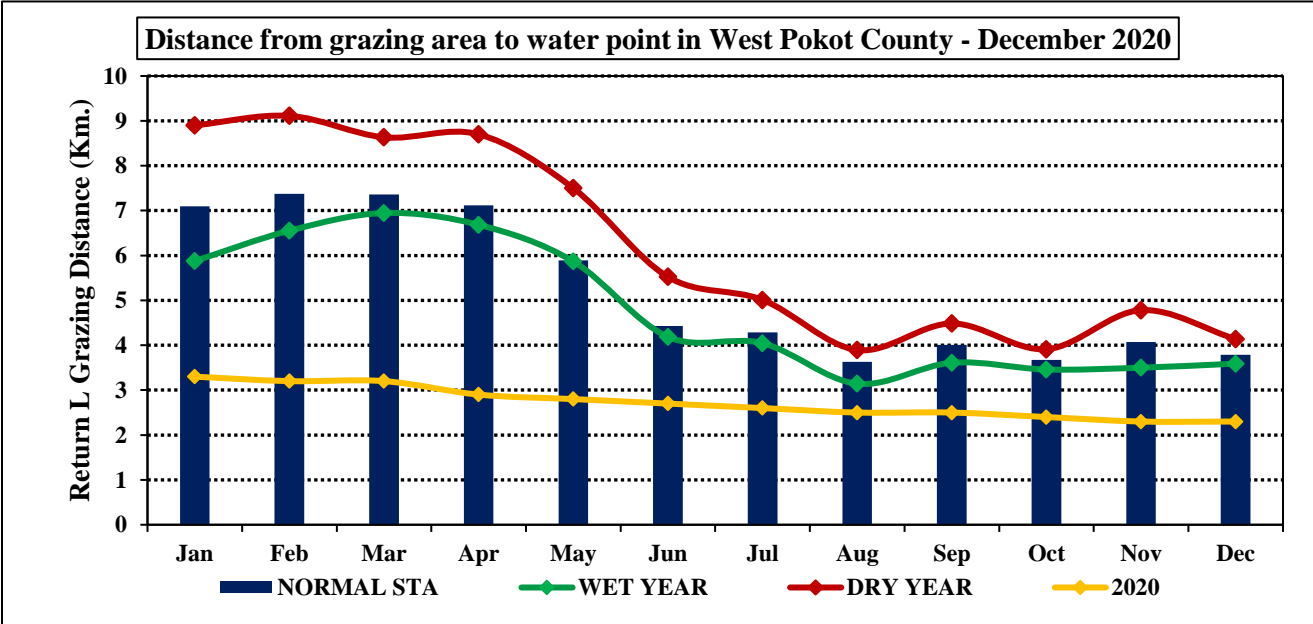


- The pastoral livelihood zones reported relatively longer waiting time at water source than the agro-pastoral zones in December.

- The average household water consumption per person per day was at 12-15 litres in the pastoral zones while that in the agro-pastoral zones was 15-18 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**

- During the month, the livestock return trekking distance from grazing areas to water sources remained at 2.3 km similar to that reported in November. The current trekking distance is 32 percent below the normal range.
- As usual, the pastoral livelihood zone reported longer trekking time from grazing areas to water source as compared to that in the agro-pastoral livelihood zones.



- The trend in livestock trekking distance to water points is likely to worsen owing to onset of dry spell period in January which will occasion poor recharge of the water sources.
- Livestock watering frequency remains at 6 times in a week for both cattle and shoats and 5 times in a week for camel.

## **3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS**

### **3.1 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION**

#### **3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition**

- In December, the body condition for all livestock species is fair in both pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihood zones as compared to that recorded in November.
- The livestock body condition is anticipated to deteriorate across the livelihood zones.
- The body condition is normal for all livestock species in comparison to same period during a normal year. The trend is downward due to poor forage regeneration.
- There was no significant variation in livestock body condition between the two livelihood zones.

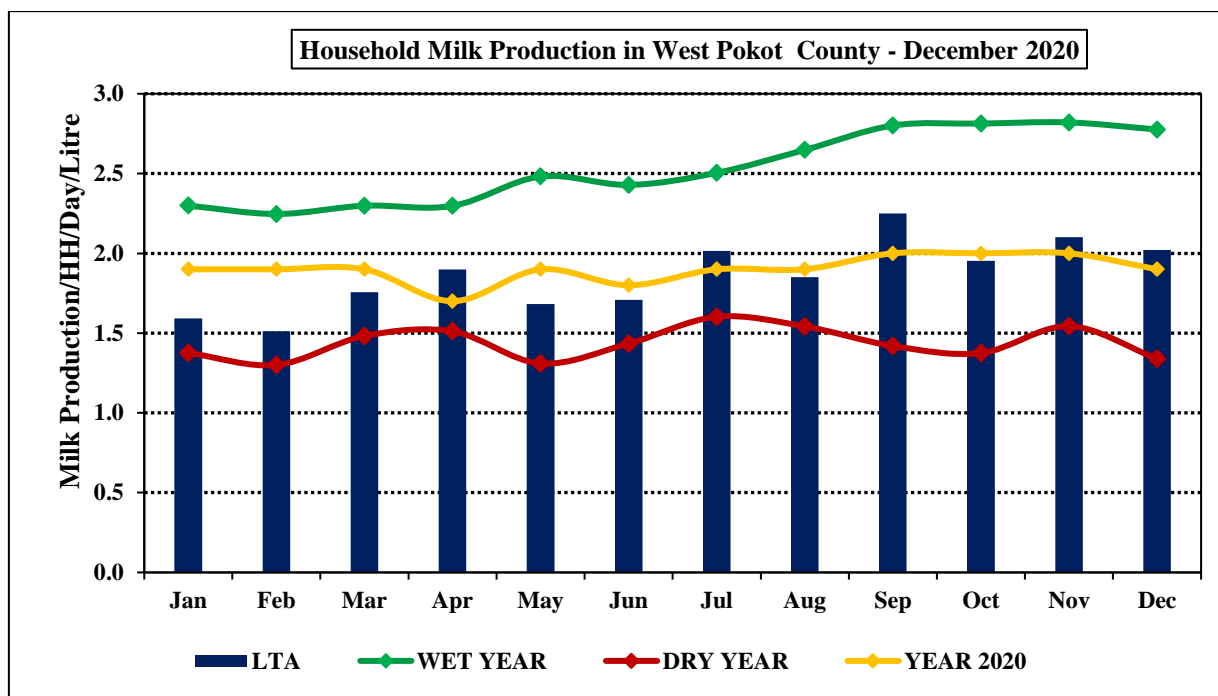
#### **3.1.2 Livestock Diseases**

- During the month, the cases of (FMD) foot and mouth disease were reported in Chepareria and Sook wards in Pokot West and Pokot South Sub counties respectively. CCPP incidences in cattle was reported in Kapchok ward in Pokot North Sub County.

#### **3.1.3 Milk Production**

- In the month under review, the County reported an average production of 1.9 litres of milk per household per day, a decrease as compared to 2.0 litres recorded in November.
- 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 6 percent.
- The household stable trend in milk production is linked to good forage access in the traditional grazing areas.





### 3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION

#### 3.2.1 Stage and Condition of food Crops

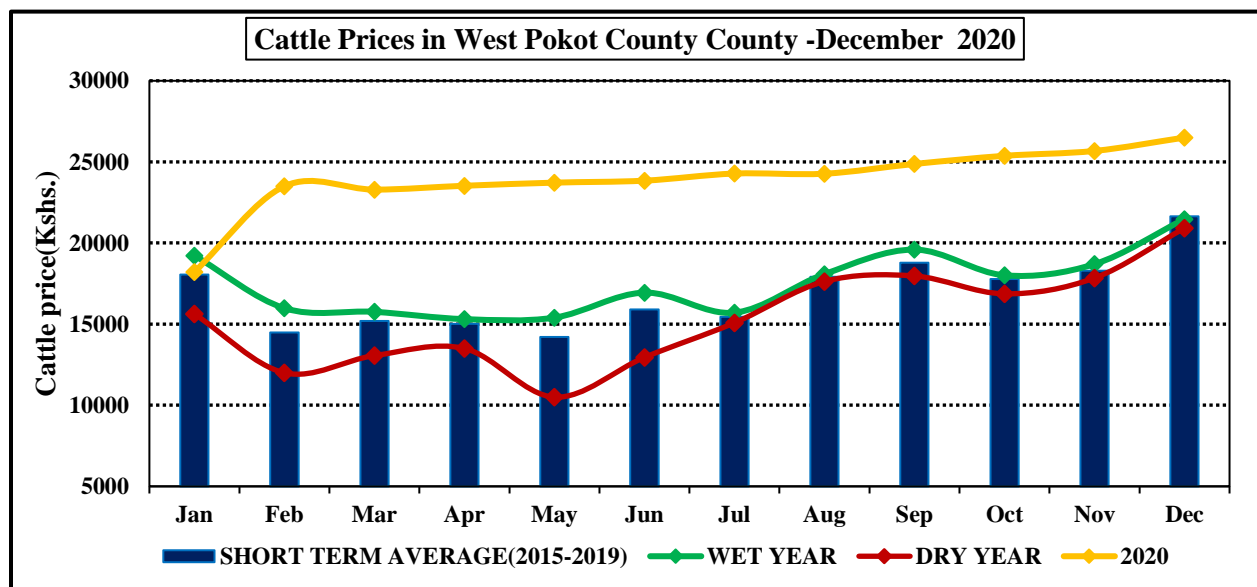
- The County's major crops cultivated in include maize, beans, potatoes and bulb onions. Most farmers are preparing their farms.
- The horticultural production and supply to major markets in Ortum and Lomut is at below normal levels in comparison to the seasonal performance.
- The level of farming is declining along the horticultural production zones owing to onset of dry spell in January in fruit growing areas.
- The harvesting of Mango fruits in the highlands is still ongoing. 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

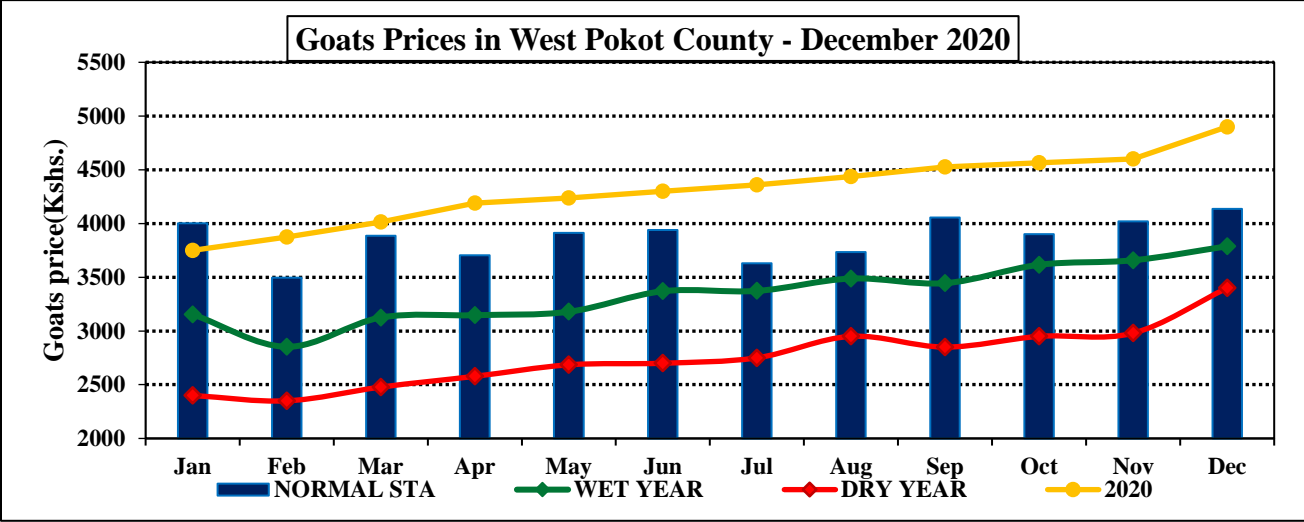
#### 4.1.1 Cattle prices

- The medium sized 4-year bull was sold at an average price of Kshs 26,500 in December, demonstrating a rise in price as compared to Kshs 25,677 recorded in November.
- The up-trend in cattle price is mainly attributed to fair body condition along with effects of festivities season pushing prices up.
- When compared, the current cattle price is 22 percent above the long term average.



#### 4.1.2 Goat Prices

- In the month under review, the County recorded an average price of Kshs 4,900 for a 2-year old medium size goat, which demoted an increase in comparison with Kshs 4,600 reported in November.

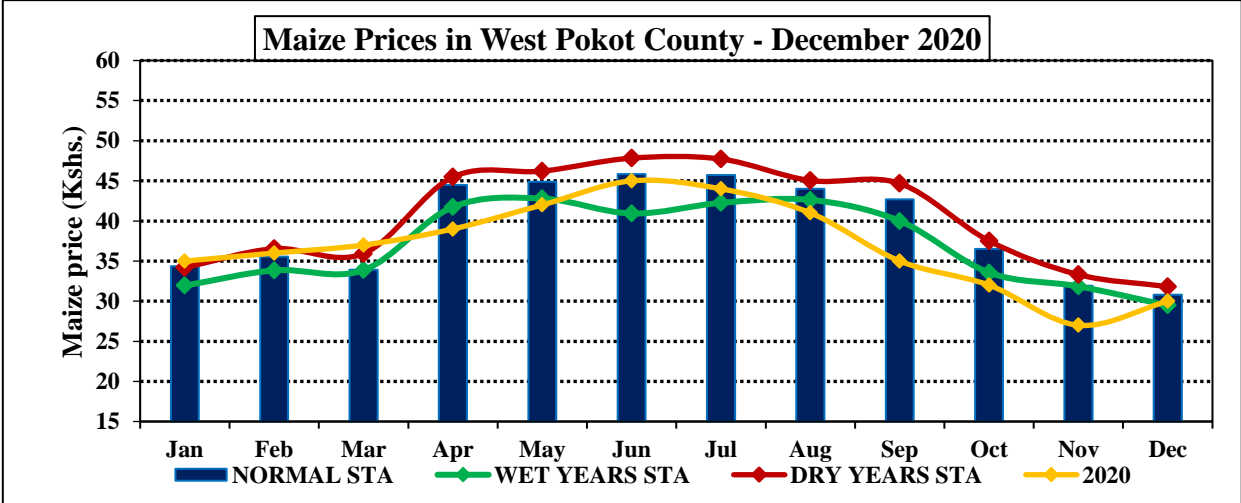


- The price increase is due to fair body condition along with high demand for goats in festive season across the livelihoods. The current goat price is 19 percent above long term average for such a time of the year .

**4.2 CROP PRICES**

**4.2.1 Maize**

- In the month under review, the maize was sold at Ksh 30 per kg, an increase from (Ksh 27) that was recorded in the previous month.
- When compared to the short term average, the current price is 9 percent below the long term average price.

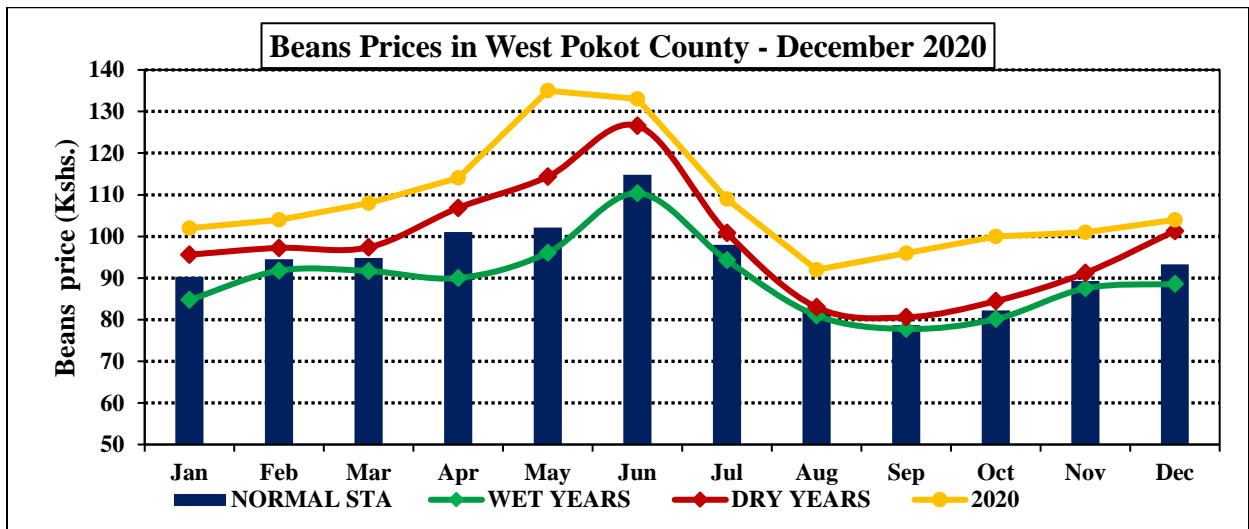


- The rise in price is owed to the fluctuating supplies in the market during festivities mainly in Chepareria, Sigor and Makutano areas in Pokot South, Pokot Central and Pokot West Sub Counties.

- Majority of the households depended more on local market purchase for their maize requirements. Maize price is likely to go up further with the expected dry spell in January.

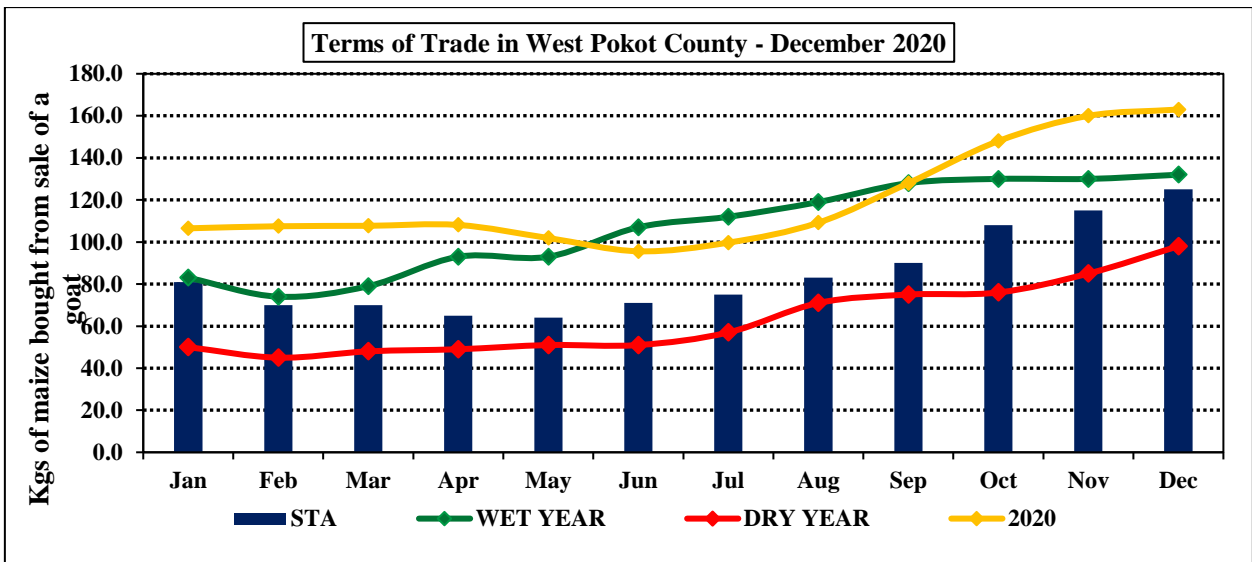
#### 4.2.2 Beans

- The beans traded at Kshs 104 per kg, indicating a price increase in comparison to Kshs 101 recorded in November.
- The price rise is due to unstable 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 12 percent above the STA price (Ksh.93) for same period of the year.



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

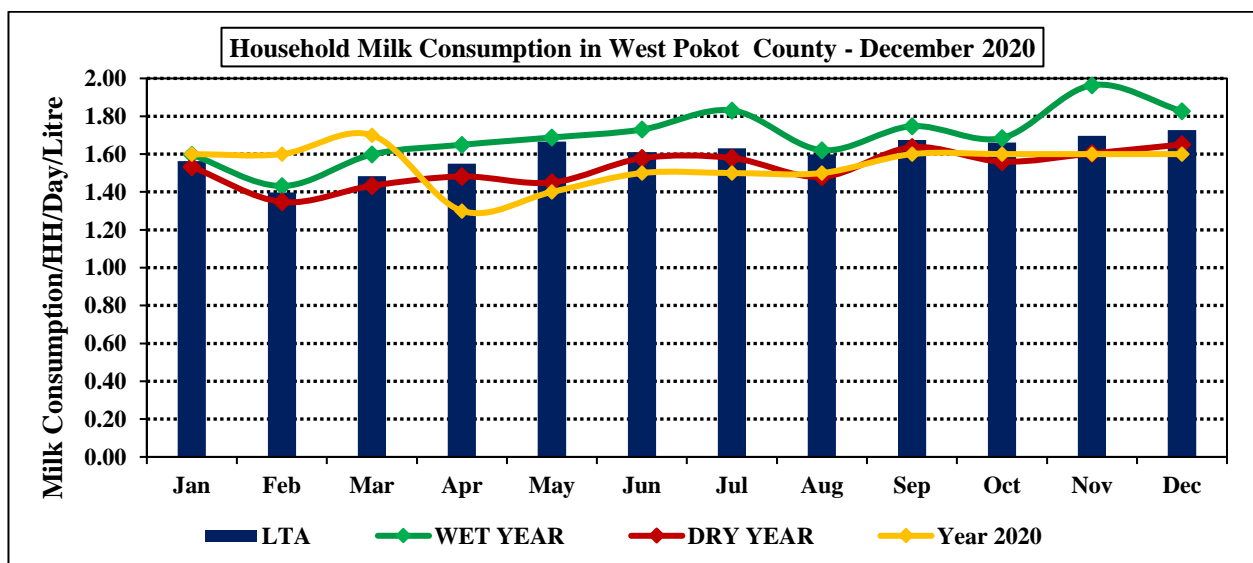
- In the month under review, the Terms of Trade (TOT) was at 163, having increased from 160 reported in the previous month, depicting that households obtained more amount of maize for sale of a goat.
- The upward trend in ToT is owed to stable maize prices coupled with good goat prices.
- The TOT variation is projected over the next three months as the price of maize is likely to remain stable over the period.



## 5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

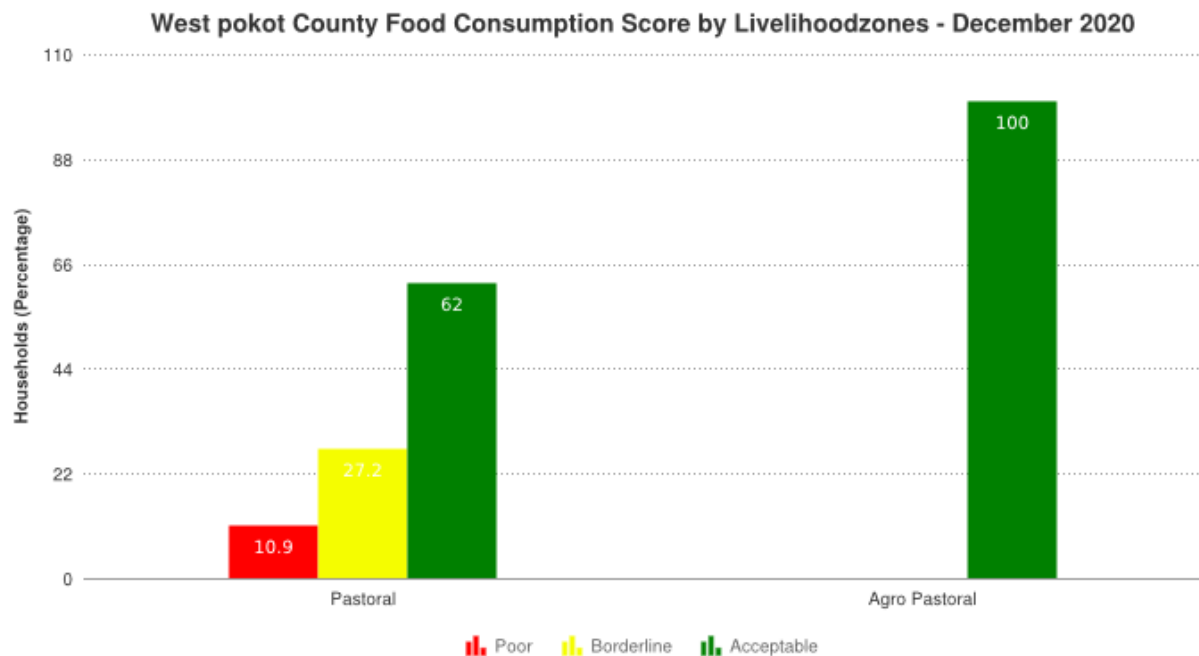
### 5.1 MILK CONSUMPTION

- In December, the households across livelihood zones had milk consumption of 1.6 litres of milk on average, similar to that reported in the previous month. The consumption is 5 percent below long term average.



- The stability in milk consumption is due to the fair access of milk in the households along with acceptable consumption scores. Availability of milk was fair in December.

## 5.2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

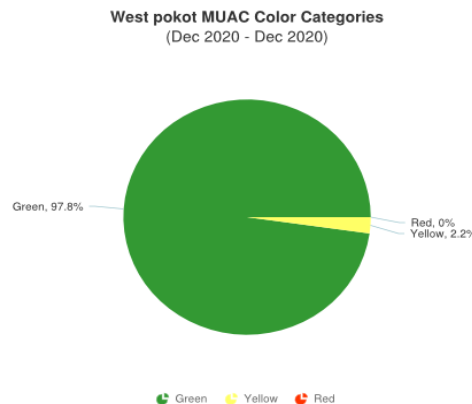


- During the month, the households' proportions of 78%, 17% and 5% were reported of having Food Consumption Score (FCS) within Acceptable, Borderline and Poor categories respectively. The score slightly decreased for the acceptable category and decreased borderline category while poor category increased when compared to that of November. The FCS is generally acceptable in December.
- The mean FCS for the two livelihood zones remained at 54; representing stability as compared to that recorded in November.
- 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 62% 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 ongoing local harvests mainly in agro pastoral areas.

## 5.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS

### 5.3.1 Nutrition Status

In the month under review, the proportion of children under the age of five years who were 'at risk' of malnutrition was 2.2 percent (Moderate acute-2.2 percent and Severe acute-0 percent malnutrition), while that of the November was 2.4 percent portraying improvement in nutrition.



In comparison to the long term average of 4.7 percent, proportion of children 'at risk' of malnutrition is below the normal range due to stable milk consumption and acceptable food consumption score across the livelihood zones.

### 5.3.1 Health

- The sampled households across the livelihood zones reported Typhoid and Malaria as a common ailment among the communities.

## 5.4 COPING STRATEGY

### 5.4.1 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)

- In December, the County CSI was at 0.8, representing a slight increase from 0.7 reported in November. The rise shows that households continue to employ few strategies to cope, which could be linked to favourable food commodity availability and improved access at households and markets respectively.
- The pastoral zones recorded a CSI of 1.4 while agro-pastoral livelihood zones recorded 0.2.
- 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**

- Nutrition department is conducting integrated outreaches across the County.
- 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**

- Normal livestock movements were reported within the month.

### **7.3 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS**

- Maize prices are projected to fluctuate while goat price is likely to drop due to expected dry spells from the next month, as such terms of trade would improve within the period.
- Milk availability is anticipated to decrease with dwindling forage and water thus affecting livestock production.
- Malnutrition cases are likely to increase over the period, as food consumption is likely to decline for most households.
- The distance to water sources for both human and livestock is expected to increase due to poor water point recharge.
- The livestock productivity is anticipated to drop as the forage conditions deteriorates with the dry spells leading to poor livestock body condition thus fetching lower livestock prices in the market.



## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. WATER SECTOR**

- Supply water treatment chemicals to communities who use pans and dams as their main source of water.

### **2. 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.

### **3. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

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

### **4. AGRICULTURE**

- Train farmers on post-harvest management to avert losses on maize through proper drying, handling and storage.

### **5. LIVESTOCK SECTOR**

- Upscale livestock disease surveillance and deworming particularly in wards with reported disease incidences.
- Open all livestock markets across the County to ensure pastoralist get good prices.