A Vision 2030 Flagship Project

National Drought Management Authority
Laikipia County
Drought Early Warning Bulletin for May 2025

May 2025 EW PHASE: NORMAL

Early Warning Phase Classification

LIVELIHOOD ZONE		EW PHASE	TREND
Pastoral		Normal	Stable
Marginal Mixed Farming		Normal	Stable
Mixed Farming		Normal	Stable
County		Normal	Stable
Biophysical Indicators	**Value**	**LTA**	**Biophysical Indicators**
Rainfall	86.92	56.15	Rainfall
VCI (3 month)	88	<50	VCI (3 month)
State of Water Sources	5		State of Water Sources
Production indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Livestock Migration Pattern		No Migration	No Migration
Livestock Body Condition		5	5
Milk Production (Ltrs)		4	1.4-5
Reported livestock deaths (due to drought)		No death	No death
Crops area planted (%)		80	90% of LTA
Access Indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Terms of Trade (ToT)		133	139-159
Milk Consumption (Ltrs)		1.5	<2
Return Distance (Water Sources to households)		2.5	1.1-1.9
Return Distance (water sources to grazing areas)		3.5	1.8-3.5
Utilization indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
MUAC (% at risk)		0.2	0.12-2.88
FCS		Borderline 44% Acceptable 55% Poor 1%	>35.5
CSI		4.47	<3.5

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification

Biophysical Indicators

Rainfall Performance: The performance of the March–May (MAM) rains during the month of May was moderate, but characterized by poor temporal and spatial distribution. While some areas received adequate rainfall, localized regions such as Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Likosero in Mukogodo East experienced little to no rainfall, underscoring the uneven coverage and intensity across the county. Cessation was normal and occurred in the third week of May,

Vegetation Condition: The 3-month vegetation condition index remained above normal across all livelihood zones across the county.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

Production Indicators: Crops were generally in good condition, with most farmers undertaking second-round weeding.Livestock body condition ranged from good to moderate, and overall health and productivity including milk production and herd sizes have improved.However, endemic diseases such as FMD, Sheep and Goat Pox, CBPP, PPR, and Blue Tongue continue to affect livestock productivity.

Access indicators: The terms of trade declined but remained within normal ranges. This deterioration was unfavorable to livestock keepers, as they received fewer food items in exchange for livestock. Food prices increased, though they remained within seasonal norms, while milk consumption improved. Household and livestock trekking distances to water sources decreased.

Utilization indicators:

Household food consumption scores remained within the acceptable range. The nutrition status of the population also fell within acceptable thresholds. There was a reduction in the use of consumption-based coping mechanisms among the sampled households, indicating improved food access. Additionally, the percentage of children at risk of malnutrition in May decreased compared to April and remained within normal ranges.

▪ Short rains harvests ▪ Short dry spell ▪ Reduced milk yields ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Land preparation			▪ Planting/Weeding ▪ Long rains ▪ High Calving Rate ▪ Milk Yields Increase			▪ Long rains harvests ▪ A long dry spell ▪ Land preparation ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Kidding (Sept)			▪ Short rains ▪ Planting/weeding		
Jan	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1.1 Rainfall performance

- According to data from the World Food Programme's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (WFP-VAM) and CHIRPS/MODIS satellite-based monitoring systems, the county received 59.52 mm of rainfall during the first dekad and 18.24 mm during the second dekad of May. This represents a significant deviation from the long-term average, which stands at 33.75 mm for the first dekad and 24.45 mm for the second dekad. As illustrated in figure 1, rainfall during the first dekad was substantially above average, while the second dekad experienced a notable deficit, indicating a highly variable and uneven distribution of rainfall over the two dekads.

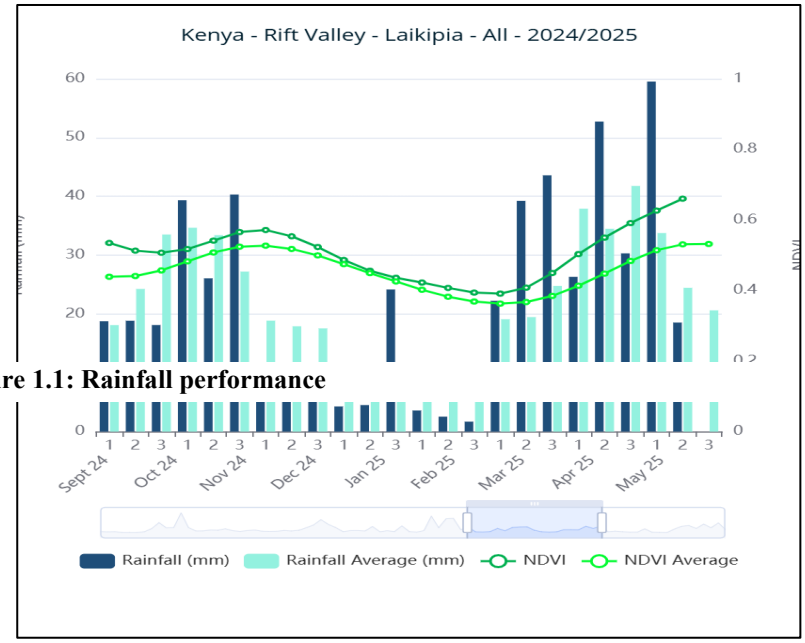


Figure 1.1: Rainfall performance

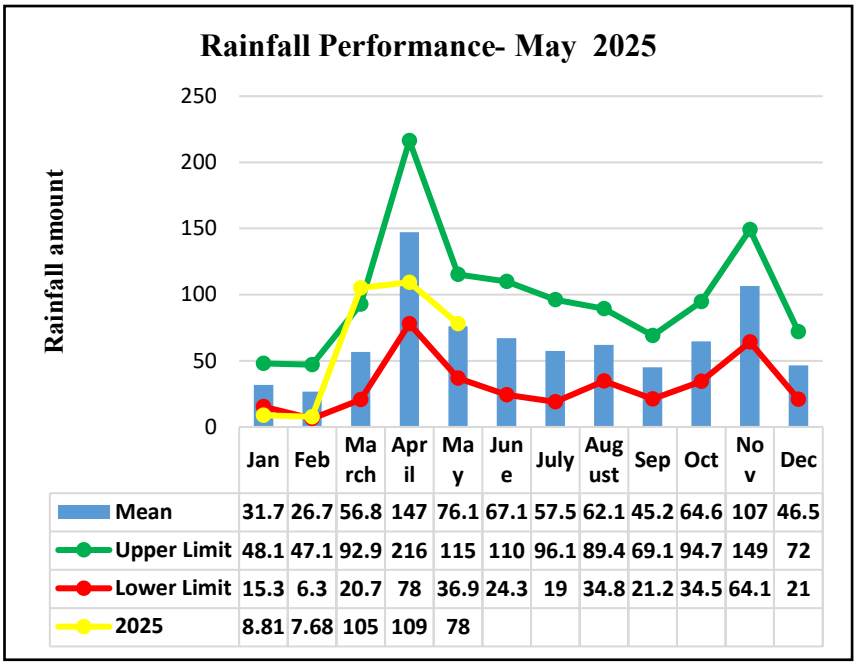
Figure 1: Dekadal rainfall (MM) and NDVI values compared to the long- term average

- The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) values for Laikipia County were 0.63 and 0.66 in the first and second dekads, respectively. These values indicate that the vegetation condition across the county was dense and healthy, reflecting favourable environmental conditions for plant growth. When compared to the long-term averages of 0.51 for the first dekad and 0.53 for the second dekad, the current NDVI values are significantly above average. This suggests improved vegetation performance, supported by sufficient rainfall and conducive weather conditions during the month of May.

1.2 AMOUNT OF RAINFALL AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

- According to the Kenya Meteorological Department, Laikipia County received between 76 percent and 126 percent of the normal rainfall during the review period. However, some parts of the county specifically areas within Segera, Umande, Nanyuki, and Thingithu wards recorded higher rainfall amounts, ranging from 126 percent to over 151 percent of

the normal. Despite these generally favorable rainfall figures, our field observations revealed that certain locations, including Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Likosero in Mukogodo East, did not record any measurable rainfall during the month under review, indicating localized dry conditions.



	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	31.7	26.7	56.8	147	76.1	67.1	57.5	62.1	45.2	64.6	107	46.5
Upper Limit	48.1	47.1	92.9	216	115	110	96.1	89.4	69.1	94.7	149	72
Lower Limit	15.3	6.3	20.7	78	36.9	24.3	19	34.8	21.2	34.5	64.1	21
2025	8.81	7.68	105	109	78							

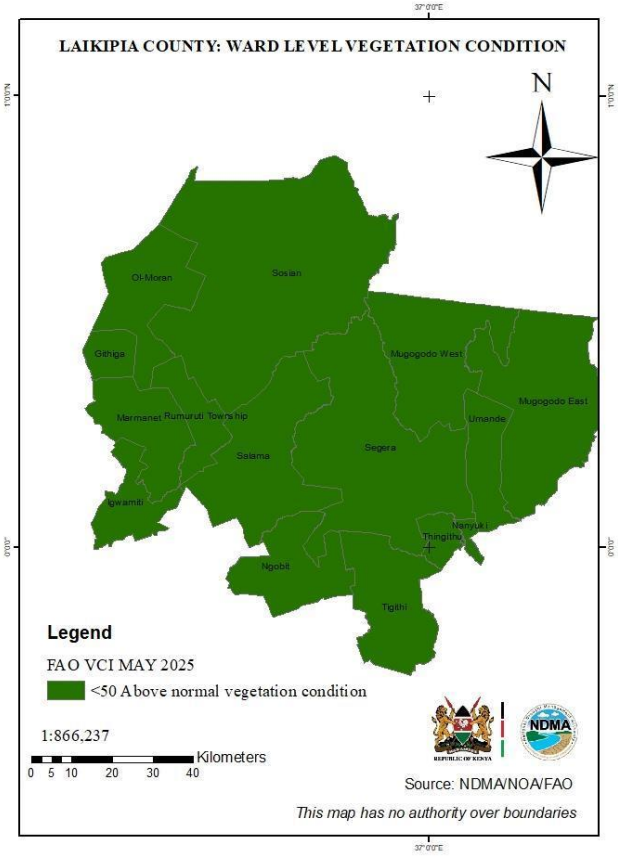
This uneven spatial distribution of rainfall has likely impacted pasture regeneration, crop development, and water availability in the drier zones. The cessation of the rains occurred as expected during the third week of May, consistent with the normal seasonal pattern. Although the season ended on time, the variability in rainfall distribution poses challenges that could have lasting effects on agricultural productivity and livelihoods, particularly in the most severely affected areas.

2.0 IMPACT ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 Vegetation Condition

2.1.2 Vegetation Condition Index (VCI)

- The 3-month Vegetation Condition Index (VCI) showed a notable improvement, increasing from 78 in April to 88 in May. This positive change is largely attributed to the March-April-May (MAM) seasonal rains, which have significantly enhanced vegetation growth and soil moisture availability across the county. The increase in VCI reflects better conditions for vegetation and indicates that the rainfall is supporting agricultural and ecological recovery.



- The overall VCI for the county was classified as above normal, indicating that the county is experiencing favorable vegetation conditions compared to historical averages. This improvement suggests a healthy and thriving environment, with adequate moisture levels that are benefiting crops, pastures, and other vegetation.

2.1.2 Pasture.

- Pasture conditions across much of the county have improved compared to the previous month, largely due to the March–April–May (MAM) seasonal rains, which supported vegetation growth and rangeland regeneration. However, some parts of the county particularly Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero in Mukogodo East recorded minimal to no rainfall, resulting in only fair pasture conditions in these areas. The lack of precipitation limited pasture regeneration, leaving these locations vulnerable to early depletion and potential grazing pressure.
- The available pasture is expected to sustain livestock for approximately: Six months in Mixed Farming livelihood zones, three to four months in Pastoral and Marginal Mixed Farming zones and as little as one to two months in Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero in Mukogodo East.

- In addition to rainfall variability, pasture availability and quality in pastoral zones are being increasingly affected by the proliferation of invasive plant species, particularly Opuntia stricta (prickly pear cactus) and Acacia reficiens. These invasive species outcompete native vegetation and significantly hinder the growth of more nutritious, palatable forage plants, thereby reducing both the quantity and quality of available browse for livestock. This ongoing invasion poses a serious threat to sustainable rangeland use and further exacerbates the challenges faced by pastoral communities during dry periods.

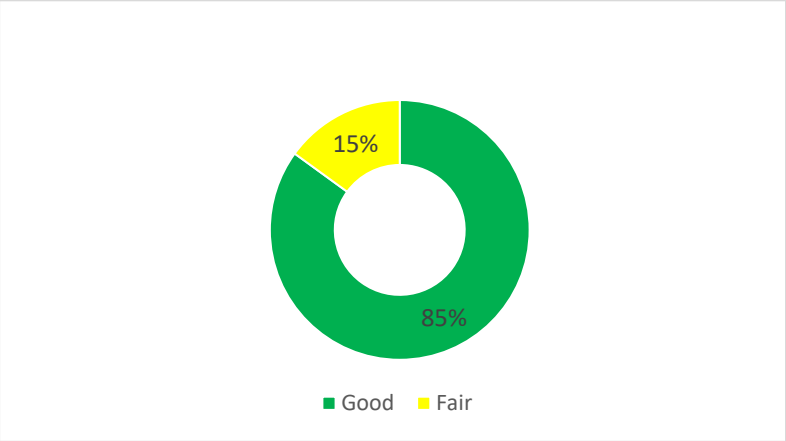


Figure 3: Pasture conditions in Laikipia county

2.1.3 Browse

- Browse conditions improved during the month of May compared to the previous month, primarily due to the March–April–May (MAM) seasonal rains, which facilitated the regeneration of browse across most parts of the county. However, in localized areas such as Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero in Mukogodo East, where rainfall performance was poor, browse conditions remained fair, with limited regeneration observed.

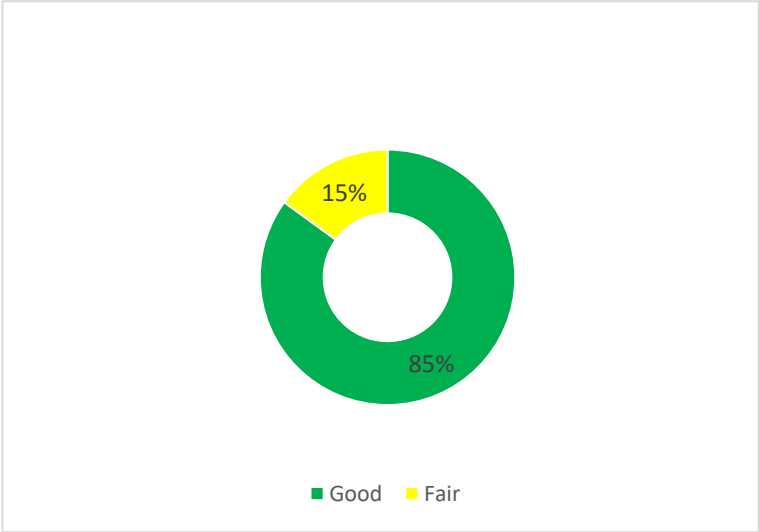


Figure 4: Browse condition

- The current browse availability is expected to last for approximately 5 to 6 months in the Pastoral and Marginal Mixed Farming Livelihood Zones, providing sufficient forage for livestock in the medium term. In the Mixed Farming Livelihood Zone, where crop farming

complements livestock production, the available browse is projected to last up to eight months. This extended duration is attributed to a more diversified land use system, improved soil moisture retention, and enhanced vegetation cover that supports prolonged forage availability. In contrast, in the drier areas of Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero, where vegetation recovery has been limited, the browse is expected to last for only two to three months, raising concerns about potential forage shortages in the near future.

- In the pastoral zones, the quantity, quality, and availability of browse continue to be adversely affected by the spread of invasive plant species, particularly Opuntia stricta (prickly pear cactus) and Acacia reficiens. These invasive species compete aggressively with native vegetation, suppressing the growth of nutritious and palatable forage plants that are vital for livestock. Their proliferation not only reduces the overall quality of browse but also contributes to land degradation, making it increasingly difficult for rangelands to recover naturally. If left unchecked, these invasive species may lead to further reductions in pasture and browse resources, jeopardizing livestock productivity and pastoral livelihoods.

2.2 Water Resource

2.2.3 Sources

- Water access and availability across all livelihood zones in the county was generally good during the reporting period, largely attributed to the March–April–May (MAM) seasonal rains, which replenished most surface and groundwater sources.

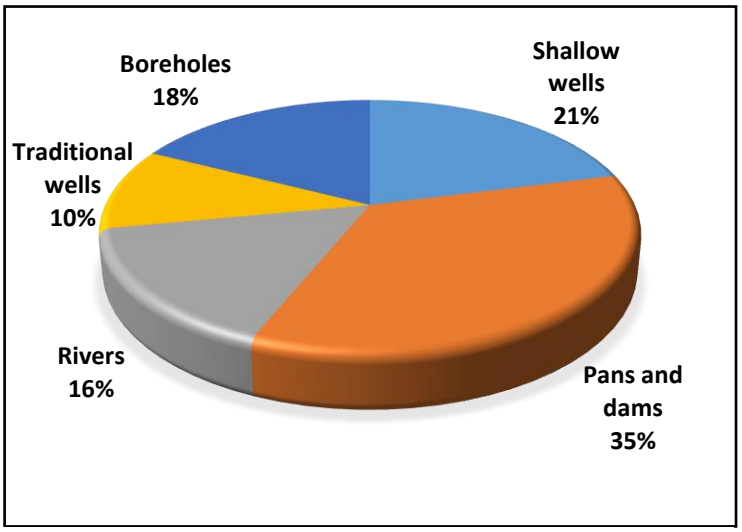


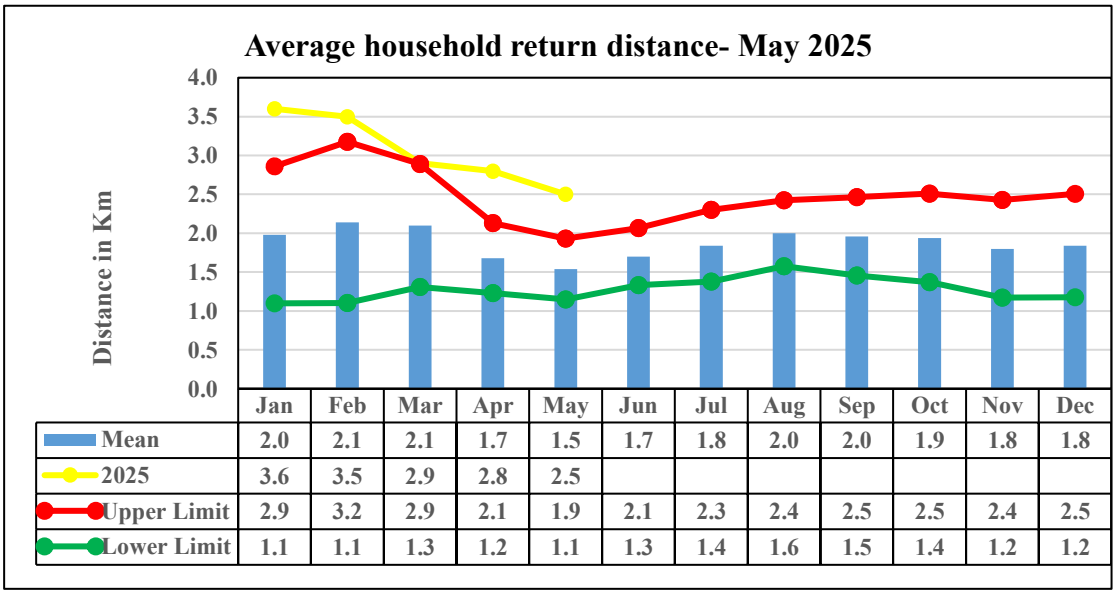
Figure 5: Main sources of water.

- The primary sources of water for both livestock and human consumption are illustrated in Figure 5 and include boreholes, pans and dams, shallow wells, rivers, piped water systems, and roof catchments.
- There was a notable increase in the use of boreholes and pans/dams, with usage rising from 13 percent to 17.5 percent and 20 percent to 35.1 percent, respectively. Conversely, there

was a decline in the use of shallow wells and rivers, which dropped from 30 percent to 21 percent and 27 percent to 15.8 percent, respectively. This shift can be attributed to the increased availability of alternative water sources, such as roof catchment systems and piped water infrastructure, made more functional by recent rains.

- Most open water sources are currently at full capacity, and river flows are ranging from normal to above normal levels, ensuring adequate water supply for both domestic and livestock needs.
- Based on current conditions, the available water sources are expected to last for up to eight months across all livelihood zones. However, the sustainability of water access will depend heavily on the continuation of favorable weather patterns and the effectiveness of existing water management systems, including maintenance of infrastructure and responsible water use.
- Despite the overall positive water situation, some localized areas in Laikipia North, specifically Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero, were reported to be experiencing significant water challenges. In these areas, households are trekking long distances in search of water, and many local dams have dried up due to limited rainfall. For instance, households in Chumvi were relying on piped water supplied by the Mt. Kenya Osirwa Water Project. Of particular concern, Olokirisai Primary School was dependent on water trucking to meet its daily water needs, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions in these drought-affected pockets.

2.2.4 Household Access and Utilization



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.5	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.8
2025	3.6	3.5	2.9	2.8	2.5							
Upper Limit	2.9	3.2	2.9	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5
Lower Limit	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.2

Figure 6: Average household distances

- In the month of May, the average return distance from households to water sources

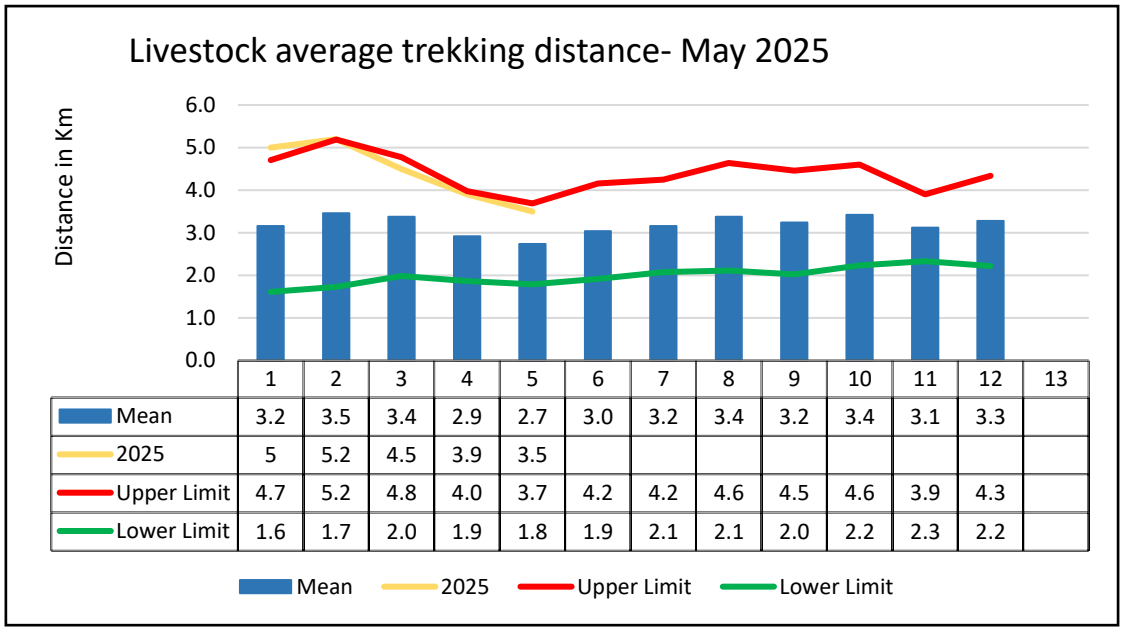
decreased by 10 percent, from 2.8 km in April to 2.5 km, as shown in Figure 6. This decline is attributed to the positive performance of the March–April–May (MAM) seasonal rains, which facilitated the recharge of nearby water sources, including pans, shallow wells, and roof catchment systems, thereby reducing the distance households needed to travel to access water.

- However, despite the overall improvement, the current average trekking distance to water sources still remains 18 percent above the long-term average and is outside the normal range for this period. This anomaly is primarily due to increased distances reported in localized areas that received below-average rainfall, such as parts of Mukogodo East (e.g., Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero), where water sources remain scarce or depleted. In these areas, households continue to trek longer distances in search of water, contributing to the elevated countywide average and highlighting persistent water access challenges in rainfall-deficient zones.
- The average distance households travel to access water varies by livelihood zone. In the Marginal Mixed Farming zone, households travel an average of 2.6 km, whereas in the Pastoral zone, the average distance is 3.2 km. In contrast, households in the Mixed Farming zone have a significantly shorter average trek of 1.7 km.
- These differences are a reflection of the varying water resource availability and infrastructure across the zones. Mixed Farming areas generally benefit from better access to water sources due to the presence of more developed water infrastructure and more reliable access to both rainfall and managed water resources. In contrast, the Pastoral and Marginal Mixed Farming zones tend to rely more on natural sources, which can be more seasonal and located further from homesteads.

2.2.5 Livestock Access

- The average return distance from grazing areas to water sources decreased by 10 percent, from 4.5 km in April to 3.9 km in May, as illustrated in Figure 7. This reduction is largely attributed to the March–April–May (MAM) rains, which have significantly contributed to the recharge of water sources located closer to grazing areas.
- Despite this improvement, the current average trekking distance of 3.9 km remains above the long-term average of 2.7 km, though it is still within normal seasonal ranges. This indicates that, while water accessibility has improved due to recent rainfall, challenges persist in certain areas, particularly those where water sources are still under stress or have not fully recovered.

- Among the various livelihood zones, the Pastoral Livelihood Zone recorded the highest average distance to water sources at 4.5 km, reflecting continued water stress in these areas. In comparison, the Marginal Mixed Farming Zone reported an average distance of 3.7 km, while the Mixed Farming Zone had the lowest average at 3.5 km. These figures highlight the disparities in water access across livelihood zones, with pastoral communities facing the greatest challenges.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Mean	3.2	3.5	3.4	2.9	2.7	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.3	
2025	5	5.2	4.5	3.9	3.5								
Upper Limit	4.7	5.2	4.8	4.0	3.7	4.2	4.2	4.6	4.5	4.6	3.9	4.3	
Lower Limit	1.6	1.7	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.2	

Figure 7: Average return distances from grazing zones to water sources.

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 Livestock Production

3.1.1 Livestock Body Condition

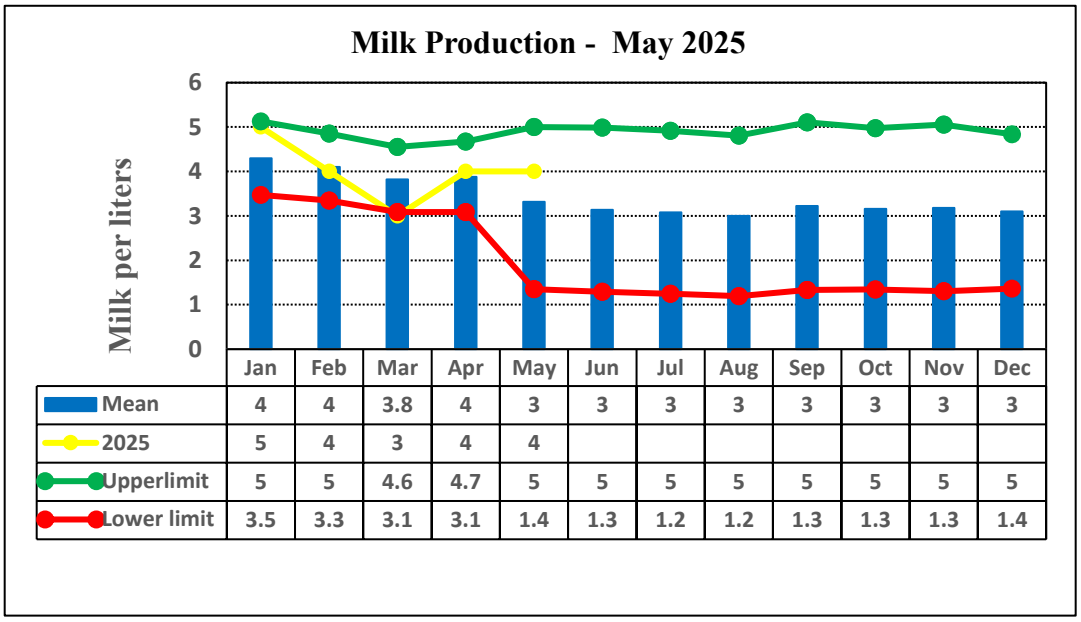
- Livestock body condition ranged from good to moderate across the livelihood zones, with overall improvement noted compared to the previous month. This positive trend is largely attributed to reduced trekking distances and ongoing pasture regeneration. Despite zone-specific variations, livestock health remains stable, signaling recovery in forage availability. Continued monitoring is recommended to track the sustainability of this improvement, especially in areas previously under stress.

3.1.2 Livestock Diseases and Deaths

- Confirmed cases of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) were reported in Igwamiti and Rumuruti wards in Laikipia West Sub- County.
- Confirmed cases of rabies were reported in Githiga Ward in Laikipia West Sub- County and at the Ol Maisha Conservancy in Laikipia North Sub- County.

- Confirmed cases of Sheep and Goat Pox were reported in Sosion Ward, Laikipia North Sub- County.
- Confirmed cases of Contagious Ecthyma (ORF) were reported in Mukogodo East Ward in Laikipia North Sub- County and Thigithu Ward in Laikipia East Sub- County.
- Confirmed cases of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) were reported in Nyakuki and Ngobit Wards in Laikipia East Sub- County.
- Confirmed cases of Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) and Blue Tongue Disease were reported in Nanyuki Ward, Laikipia East Sub- County.

3.1.3 Milk Production



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	4	4	3.8	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
2025	5	4	3	4	4							
Upperlimit	5	5	4.6	4.7	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Lower limit	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.1	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4

- The average household milk production remained stable at 4 liters per household per day during the reporting period, as illustrated in Figure 8.
- This stability in milk production can be attributed to several favorable factors, including the availability of adequate forage and pasture, shorter distances to water sources, and an increase in livestock birth rates, particularly in pastoral livelihood zones. These conditions have contributed to maintaining livestock health and productivity.
- The current milk production level is 33 percent higher than the county's long-term average, reflecting improved livestock conditions and enhanced production capacity. Despite this increase, production levels remain within the normal seasonal range, indicating a healthy but not excessive supply.
- Milk production is highest in the Mixed Farming livelihood zones, where access to pasture, water, and better livestock management practices are generally more favorable. In contrast,

production is relatively lower in the Marginal Mixed Farming and Pastoral Livelihood Zones.

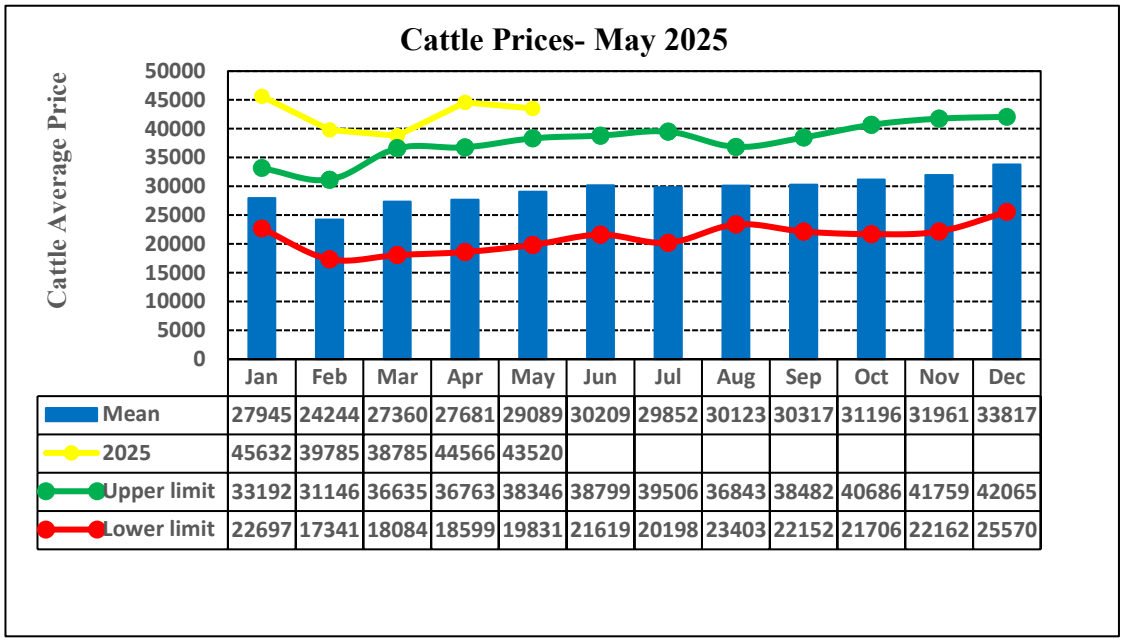
3.2 RAIN-FED CROP PRODUCTION.

3.2.1 Stage and Condition of Food Crops

- Crops in the fields were generally in good condition, with most at varying stages of development, indicating a promising agricultural season. Maize was observed to be at stages ranging from knee-high to tasseling, depending on planting time and location. Beans were progressing well, with most fields at the flowering to podding stages, while potatoes were at the flowering to earthing-up stages. In some areas, particularly Tigithi and Ngobit wards, early-maturing varieties have reached maturity, and farmers have already commenced harvesting.
- The majority of farmers were engaged in second-round weeding, which is critical for reducing competition for nutrients and moisture during this growth phase. However, several challenges continue to impact crop production. The inadequate supply of subsidized fertilizer from the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) was a major concern, limiting access to affordable inputs. Additionally, farmers faced high costs of farm inputs including seeds, agrochemicals, and fuel as well as rising wages for casual labor, all of which have increased the overall cost of production.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 Livestock Marketing

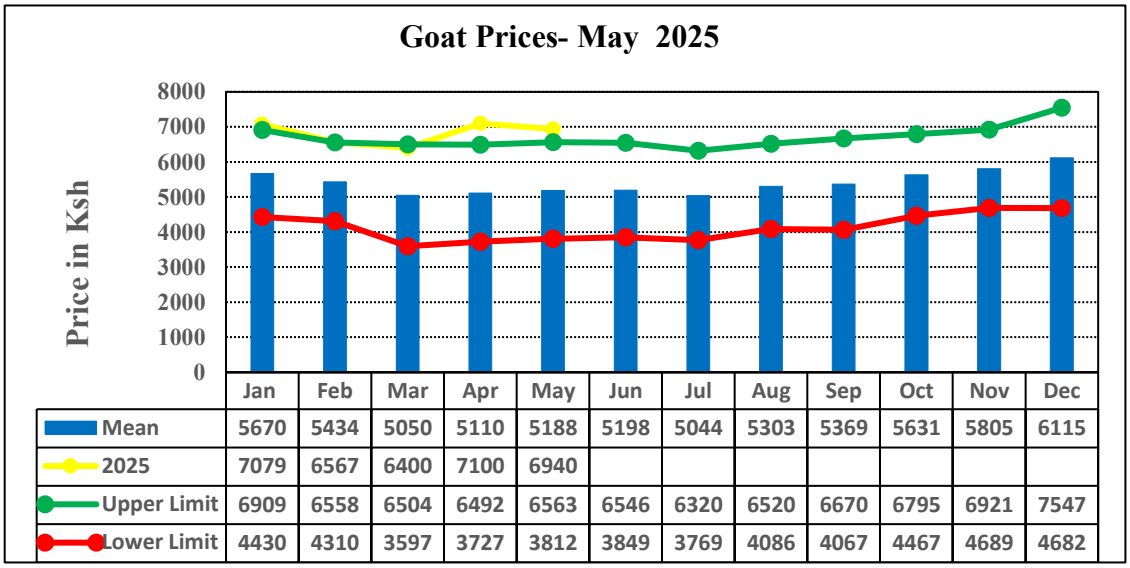


	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	27945	24244	27360	27681	29089	30209	29852	30123	30317	31196	31961	33817
2025	45632	39785	38785	44566	43520							
Upper limit	33192	31146	36635	36763	38346	38799	39506	36843	38482	40686	41759	42065
Lower limit	22697	17341	18084	18599	19831	21619	20198	23403	22152	21706	22162	25570

Figure 9: Average cattle prices trend

- In May, the average market price for cattle stood at Ksh 43,520, which is relatively stable compared to Ksh 44,566 recorded in April, as illustrated in Figure 9. This price stability is largely attributed to improved pasture conditions and shortened trekking distances to water sources, which have enhanced livestock body condition and reduced the urgency among farmers to offload animals. Consequently, the decrease in the number of cattle being brought to market has contributed to sustaining or slightly increasing market prices through reduced supply.
- The current average cattle price is 49 percent above the short-term average of Ksh 29,089 and exceeds the seasonal upper threshold by 14 percent, indicating strong market performance and reflecting favorable livestock health and market demand dynamics.
- Livelihood zone analysis shows that pastoral markets recorded the highest average cattle prices, at Ksh 49,272, supported by better animal body conditions and limited market supply. In contrast, markets in the Marginal Mixed Farming Zone averaged Ksh 44,286, while those in the Mixed Farming Zone reported significantly lower average prices of Ksh 26,000, likely due to differences in livestock breeds, market demand, and production systems across these zones.

4.1.2 Small Ruminants Prices (Goat)



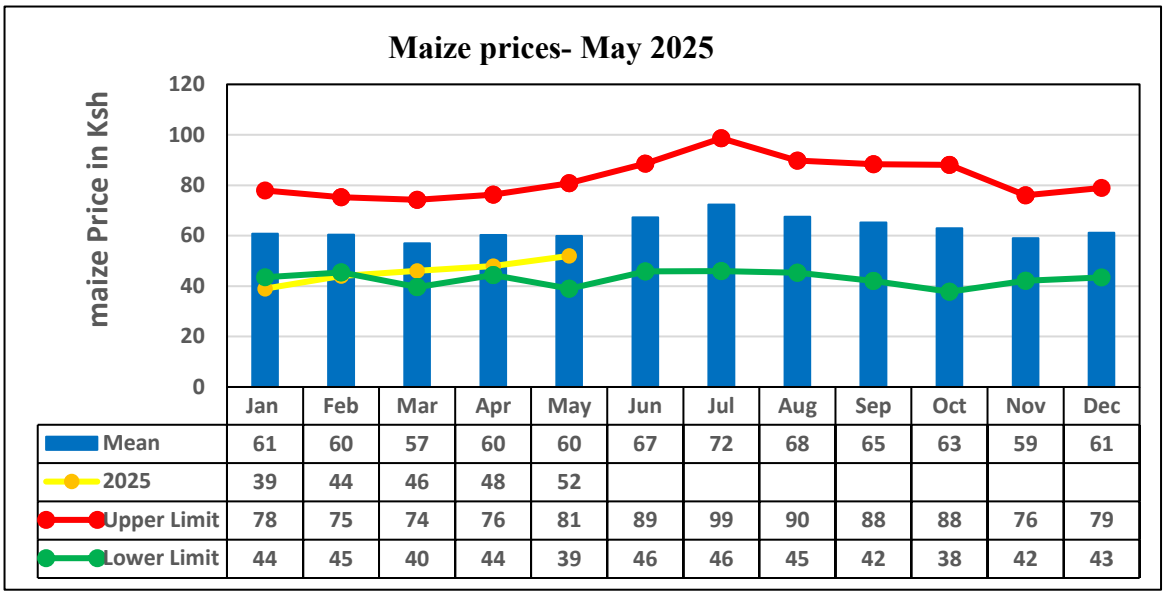
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	5670	5434	5050	5110	5188	5198	5044	5303	5369	5631	5805	6115
2025	7079	6567	6400	7100	6940							
Upper Limit	6909	6558	6504	6492	6563	6546	6320	6520	6670	6795	6921	7547
Lower Limit	4430	4310	3597	3727	3812	3849	3769	4086	4067	4467	4689	4682

Figure 10: Average goat prices trend

- During the month under review, the average market price of a medium-sized goat remained stable, retailing at Ksh 6,940, compared to Ksh 7,100 recorded in the previous month, as illustrated in Figure 10. This stability in prices is primarily attributed to improved browse conditions and the recharge of water sources near homesteads, which have enhanced livestock body conditions and reduced the urgency for farmers to sell their animals.
- With sufficient forage availability, especially for browsers like goats, many farmers have chosen to retain their herds in anticipation of even more favorable market conditions or further price increases. As a result, the reduced market supply has helped maintain prices at relatively high levels, placing upward pressure on market values despite stable demand.
- The current average goat price is 34 percent above the short-term average of Ksh 5,188, reflecting positive livestock market dynamics, while still remaining within the normal seasonal range. This indicates that prices are favorable but not abnormally high, suggesting a healthy balance between supply and demand.
- In terms of livelihood zones, Mixed Farming areas recorded the highest average goat prices, at Ksh 8,183, likely due to better access to markets and stronger local demand. This was followed by Marginal Mixed Farming Zones, with an average of Ksh 7,357, and the Pastoral Zones, where average prices were lower, at Ksh 6,325. These differences highlight the influence of market access, livestock condition, and local demand patterns on pricing.

4.2 Crop Prices

4.2.1 Maize (market price)

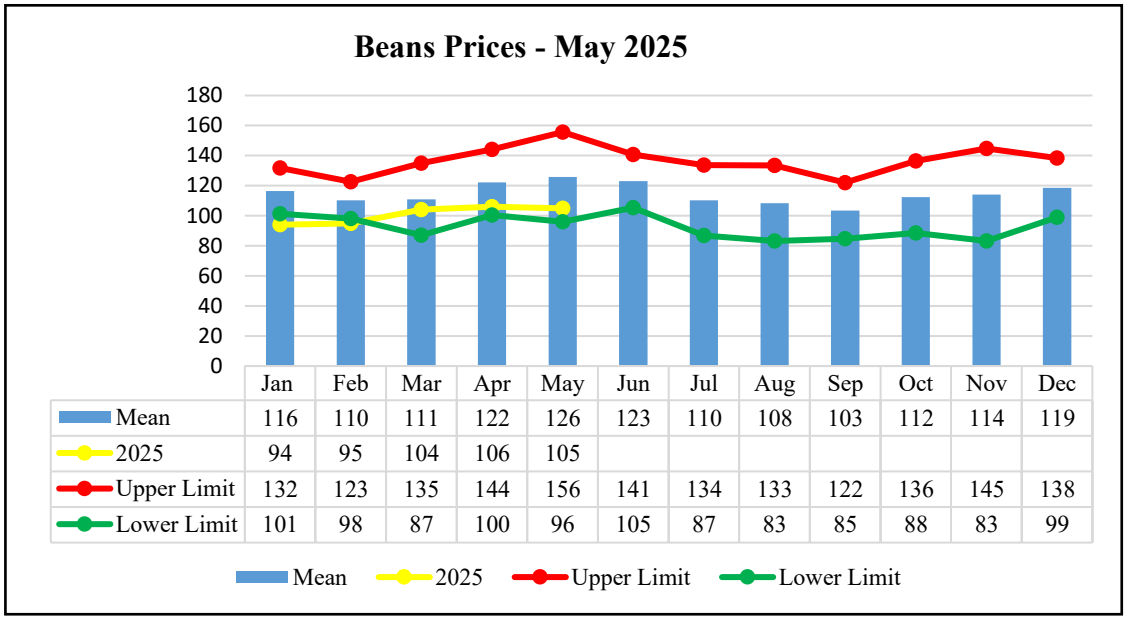


	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	61	60	57	60	60	67	72	68	65	63	59	61
2025	39	44	46	48	52							
Upper Limit	78	75	74	76	81	89	99	90	88	88	76	79
Lower Limit	44	45	40	44	39	46	46	45	42	38	42	43

Figure 11: The average maize prices trends.

- The average market price for a kilogram of maize increased from Ksh 48/kg in April to Ksh 52/kg in May, as illustrated in Figure 11. This increase is primarily attributed to the fact that most households have exhausted their maize stocks, or have only negligible amounts remaining in storage. Many households sold off their remaining maize stocks earlier to meet immediate financial needs, such as paying school fees and covering other essential expenses, leading to increased reliance on market purchases and subsequent price pressure.
- Despite the recent price increase, the current maize price remains 13 percent below the short-term average, and within normal seasonal ranges. The below-average prices can be largely attributed to ongoing imports and inflows from Rift Valley counties, where surplus production has helped stabilize supply and moderate price spikes in deficit areas.
- At the livelihood zone level, Pastoral zones recorded the highest average maize prices, at Ksh 55/kg, reflecting greater reliance on market-sourced food and higher transport costs. In contrast, Marginal Mixed Farming zones recorded an average price of Ksh 52/kg, while the Mixed Farming zones posted the lowest average price at Ksh 45/kg, likely due to better local availability and lower dependence on external markets.

4.2.2 Beans (market price)

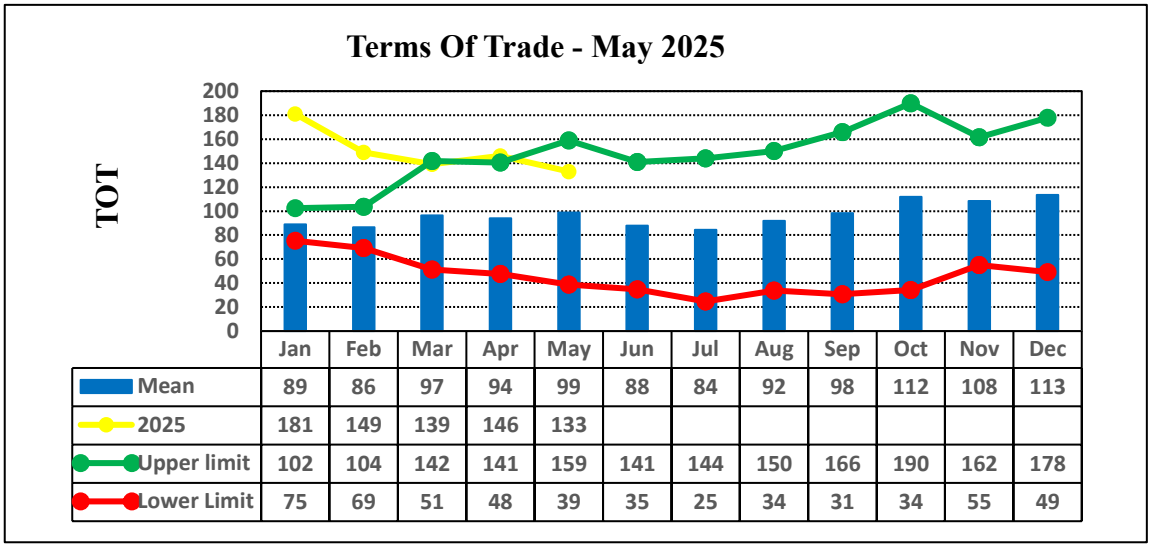


	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	116	110	111	122	126	123	110	108	103	112	114	119
2025	94	95	104	106	105							
Upper Limit	132	123	135	144	156	141	134	133	122	136	145	138
Lower Limit	101	98	87	100	96	105	87	83	85	88	83	99

Figure 11: The average maize prices trends.

- The average market price for a kilogram of beans remained stable at Ksh 105/kg in May, which is comparable to the Ksh 105/kg recorded in April, as illustrated in Figure 13. This stability in prices reflects a balanced supply-and-demand situation in most areas.
- The current price is 17 percent below the short-term average and remains within the normal seasonal range, indicating a favorable market environment for consumers. The below-average price can be largely attributed to the availability of household-level bean stocks from the short rains season, which reduced reliance on market purchases and helped moderate price volatility.
- At the livelihood zone level, Pastoral zones recorded the highest average bean prices, at Ksh 117/kg, due to lack of local production and high transport costs associated with moving produce into remote areas. In contrast, Marginal Mixed Farming zones recorded an average of Ksh 100/kg, while Mixed Farming zones had the lowest average at Ksh 86/kg, benefiting from better on-farm production and market access.

4.2.3 Livestock Price Ratio/Terms of Trade



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	89	86	97	94	99	88	84	92	98	112	108	113
2025	181	149	139	146	133							
Upper limit	102	104	142	141	159	141	144	150	166	190	162	178
Lower Limit	75	69	51	48	39	35	25	34	31	34	55	49

Figure 12: Terms of trade

- During the month under review, the Terms of Trade (ToT) for pastoral households deteriorated, declining from 146 kilograms of maize per medium-sized goat in April to 133 kilograms in May. This decline is primarily attributed to a rise in maize prices alongside a slight reduction in livestock prices, which together have reduced the amount of maize that can be purchased from the sale of one goat thereby weakening household purchasing power.
- Despite the monthly decline, the May ToT remains 34 percent higher than the short-term average of 99 kilograms, and is still within normal seasonal ranges. This indicates that while there has been a short-term setback, overall trade conditions for pastoral households remain favorable when compared to historical averages.
- Looking ahead, household purchasing power is expected to improve in the coming months. This anticipated improvement is driven by two main factors: Maize prices are projected to decline, supported by above-average harvests expected from the ongoing long rains season, which will boost local supply. Goat prices are likely to increase as improved forage conditions and water availability enhance livestock body condition and market value.

5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 Milk Consumption

- The average household milk consumption increased slightly from 1.4 liters per household per day in April to 1.5 liters per household per day in May, indicating a modest improvement in household dietary intake. However, this level of consumption remains below the long-term average of 2 liters per household per day, suggesting that milk

availability and access are still somewhat constrained, particularly for households without livestock.

- Milk consumption varies by livelihood zone, reflecting differences in livestock ownership, herd sizes, and the availability of pasture and water. In Pastoral zones, where livestock rearing is the main livelihood, average daily milk consumption is highest at 1.8 liters per household. This is followed by Marginal Mixed Farming zones at 1.5 liters, and Mixed Farming zones at 1.2 liters. The relatively lower consumption in Mixed Farming areas is largely due to households opting to sell milk to generate income, rather than consume it at home.
- The average household price of milk remained steady at Ksh 42 per liter, which is within the normal price range for this time of year. This price stability is attributed to the availability of adequate forage and water, which has helped maintain consistent milk production levels across most zones.

5.1.1 Food Consumption Score

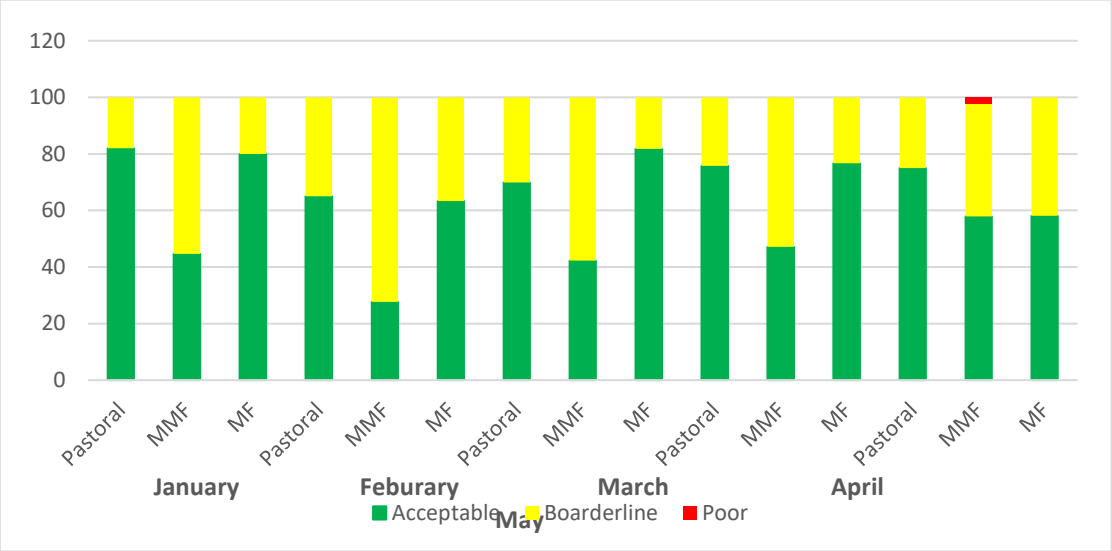


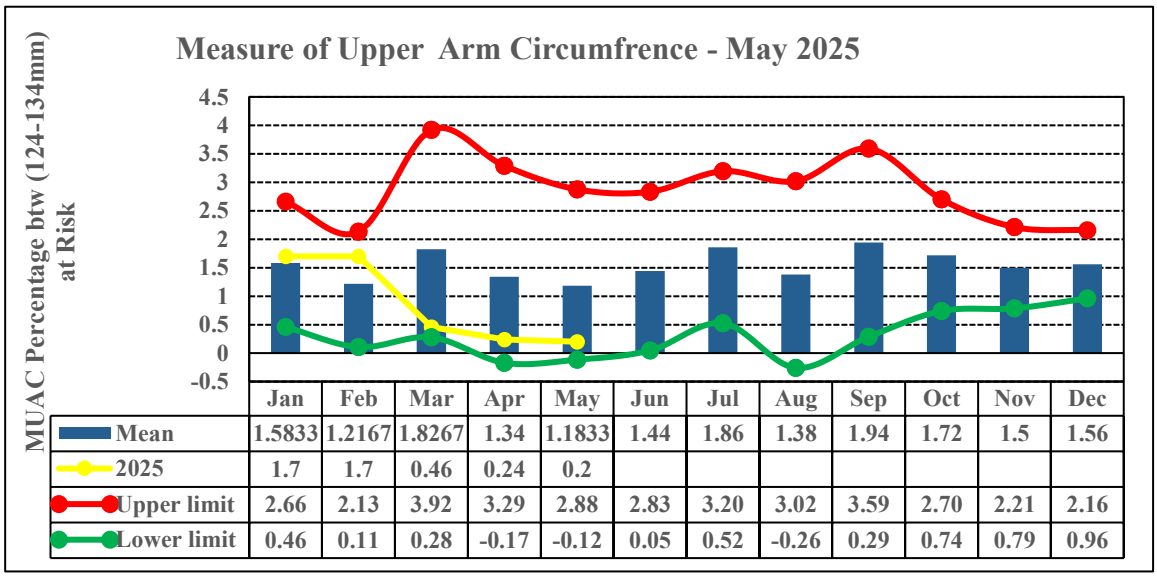
Figure 14: Food consumption score

- As illustrated in Figure 14 above, the Food Consumption Score (FCS) remained relatively stable compared to the previous month. This stability can be attributed to several contributing factors, including the continued availability of agricultural wage-based casual labor, the harvest of short-cycle maturing crops, increased household milk consumption, and residual food stocks from the recent short rains season. These elements likely helped cushion households against significant fluctuations in food access and consumption quality.
- In May, the distribution of households by Food Consumption Score was as follows: 55 percent of households had an acceptable food consumption score, 44 percent fell within the borderline category, and 1 percent were classified as having poor food consumption.

- Specifically, in the Marginal Mixed Farming livelihood zones, 2.1 percent of households recorded a poor food consumption score, indicating that they did not consume either a staple food or a vegetable during the reporting period. This is a concerning indicator of reduced dietary diversity and potential nutritional deficiencies.
- A deeper look at the data shows that the proportion of households with an acceptable food consumption score varied across livelihood zones. In Pastoral zones, 75 percent of households fell within the acceptable range, followed by 58 percent in Mixed Farming zones, and only 40 percent in Marginal Mixed Farming zones.

5.2 Health and Nutrition Status

5.2.1 Nutrition Status



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean	1.5833	1.2167	1.8267	1.34	1.1833	1.44	1.86	1.38	1.94	1.72	1.5	1.56
2025	1.7	1.7	0.46	0.24	0.2							
Upper limit	2.66	2.13	3.92	3.29	2.88	2.83	3.20	3.02	3.59	2.70	2.21	2.16
Lower limit	0.46	0.11	0.28	-0.17	-0.12	0.05	0.52	-0.26	0.29	0.74	0.79	0.96

Figure 16:MUAC

- The percentage of children under the age of five years at risk of malnutrition decreased slightly from 0.24 percent in April to 0.2 percent in May. This slight decline, while modest, is a positive indication of improving child nutrition conditions. The figure remains not only significantly below the long-term average but also well within the acceptable threshold for child malnutrition, suggesting that acute malnutrition among young children is currently not a major concern.
- This improvement can be attributed to several key factors. These include the sustained availability of agricultural wage-based casual labor, which has enhanced household income and food purchasing power; the ongoing harvest of short-cycle maturing crops, contributing to increased food availability at the household level; higher levels of household milk consumption, particularly in livestock-keeping areas; and the presence of food stocks carried over from the short rains season. Collectively, these factors have supported better

dietary intake and food security, thereby contributing to improved nutritional outcomes among children under five.

5.1.3 Consumption based coping strategies

- Households in the Mixed Farming livelihood zones employed a greater number of coping strategies compared to those in the Marginal Mixed Farming and Pastoral livelihood zones during the reporting period.

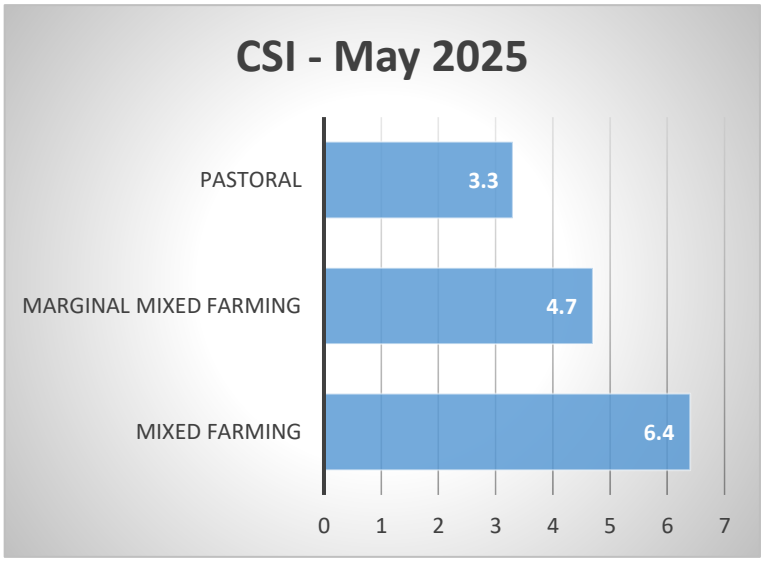


Figure 16: Coping strategy Index

- The average Coping Strategy Index (CSI) during the month under review improved, decreasing to 4.47 from 5.16 in April. This decline indicates that households experienced slightly less stress in meeting their food needs, suggesting a modest improvement in food security and access. However, the continued reliance on coping mechanisms highlights the ongoing challenges faced by many households.
- The most commonly employed coping strategies included consuming less expensive or less preferred foods, reducing portion sizes at meals, and decreasing the number of meals consumed per day. These strategies reflect efforts by households to stretch limited food supplies and manage scarcity without completely compromising dietary intake. Other strategies include charcoal burning.
- Notably, households in the Mixed Farming livelihood zones reported employing a greater number of coping strategies compared to those in the Marginal Mixed Farming and Pastoral livelihood zones. This may be attributed to varying levels of food availability, market access, or income-generating opportunities within these zones, influencing the extent to which households need to adjust their consumption patterns.

6.0 Emerging issues

- Incidents of human-wildlife conflict were reported in Ex-Erock and Munyaka areas of Ngobit Ward, located in Laikipia East Sub-County. Elephants encroached into farmland, leading to the destruction of crops at various stages of development. Affected crops

included maize, beans, and potatoes, which form a significant part of household food security and income. As a result, farmers incurred substantial losses, undermining their livelihoods and reducing food availability at the household level.

7.0 Food Security Prognosis

Food security conditions across Laikipia County are expected to remain generally stable in the short term, supported by the following favorable factors:

- Improved pasture and browse conditions, especially in Mixed and Marginal Mixed Farming zones, following above-average rainfall during the March–April–May (MAM) season.
- Adequate water availability, with most water sources replenished and projected to last up to eight months in some areas. This will support both crop and livestock production.
- Stable livestock health and milk production, with milk output at 33% above the long-term average and improved Tropical Livestock Units (TLUs), supporting dietary intake and income.
- Harvesting of short-cycle food crops, particularly in areas like Tigithi and Ngobit, will continue to boost food availability and reduce market dependence.
- Food prices, though increasing, remain within normal seasonal ranges, helped by ongoing inflows from surplus regions.

However, localized challenges in areas such as Chumvi, Olekinyei, and Lukosero in Mukogodo East where rainfall was poor are likely to undermine food access and availability due to:

- Limited pasture and browse regeneration.
- Water scarcity and long trekking distances.
- Elevated risk of forage depletion and livestock stress.

8.0 CURRENT INTERVENTION MEASURES (ACTION)

8.1 Ongoing non-food interventions

No	Intervention	Ward	Supporting Agency	Cost
1.	Subsidized fertilizer	All wards	NCPB	100,000,000

2.	Reticulation of water from Naiperere borehole to Nosorai Primary School and Munichoi ECDE	Mukogodo West	IMPACT/CGL Water	1M
3.	supporting Shulumai Community Conservancy in Kurikuri area to drill a borehole.	Mukogodo East	IMPACT/CGL Water	3.5M
5.	drilling and equipping a borehole at Oldigiri	Mukogodo East	Element Access	3.5M
6.	Equipping of Lekasuyan Borehole	Sossian	CGL	3.5 M
7	Excavation of water pans	Laikipia West	CGL	2 M

8.2 Recommended intervetions

Sectors & Interventions	**Activities to be supported**	**Areas to be covered**	**Cost of planned support**	**Possible source of resources**
Food & Safety Nets	Provision of relief food to 44,568 persons in Laikipia County	Olmoran, Githiga, Rumuruti township, Salama, Marmanet, Igwamiti, Ngobit, Tigithi, Thingithu, Nanyuki, Umande, Sosian, Segera, Mukogodo West and Mukogodo East	68,726,940	NGAO CGL NDMA Kenya Redcross

Livestock	Vaccinations-FMD, LSD, CBPP, CCPP, S&G, PPR, Newcastle	County wide	57,000,000	CGL
	Disease surveillance (Sampling and laboratory diagnostics)	County wide	30,000,000	CGL
Health and Nutrition	Recommend and Conduct MIYCN KAP survey to extensively understand the MIYCN practices in the county including some barriers to effective programming	County wide	2,000,000	CGL
	Carry out integrated outreaches in hard-to-reach areas in all sub counties	County wide	2,100,000	CGL
Water	Water trucking	Laikipia North	10,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Routine inspection and repair of all boreholes systems	Laikipia North	100,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Equipping of Lekasuyian borehole	Sossian	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Equipping of Kinamba-Sossian borehole	Sossian	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Equipping of Nosorai borehole	Mukogodo East	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture

	Solar equip Kaptagat borehole	Sosian	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Solar equipping of Muthengera borehole	Igwamiti	6,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Equipping of Mutamaiyu borehole	Rumuruti	5,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Solar equipping of Rehema-Solio borehole	Tigithi	6,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Solar equipping of Sirma borehole	Ngobit	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Solar equipping of Chuma/Mathenya borehol	Ngobit	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Solar equipping of Kibubung`i borehole	Tigithi	6,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Solar equipping of Kiahuko borehole	Tigithi	6,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT Permaculture
	Equipping of OMC borehole	Rumuruti	4,000,000	CGL NDMA Impact Kenya NRT

				Permaculture

Table 1: Drought Phase Classification

Normal	Alert	Alarm	Emergency
All environment Agricultural and pastor indicators are within th seasonal ranges	Biophysical droug indicators mov outside season ranges	Environmental and at least thr production indicato are outside long term seasonal range	All Environmenta Metrological ar Production indicators a outside normal ranges.
Recovery: The drought phase must have reached at least Alarm stage. Recovery starts after the end of drought as signalled by the environmental indicators returning to seasonal norms; local economies starting to recover			

Table 2: Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI)

Color	SPI Values	Meteorological Drought Category
	> +1.5 or more	Wet Conditions
	0 to +1.5	No drought
	-0.1 to -0.99	Mild drought
	-1 to -1.99	Severe drought
	<-2 and less	Extreme drought

Table 3: Vegetation Condition Index Values (VCI)

Color	VCI values	Agricultural Drought Category
	3-monthly average	
	≥50	Wet
	35 to 50	No agricultural drought
	21 to 34	Moderate agricultural drought
	10 to 20	Severe agricultural drought
	<10	Extreme agricultural drought

Table 4: Livestock Body Condition

Level	Classification	Characteristics (this describes majority of the herd and not individual isolated Stock)

5	Normal	Very Fat Tail buried and in fat
		Fat, Blocky. Bone over back not visible
		Very Good Smooth with fat over back and tail head
		Good smooth appearance
4	Moderate	Moderate. neither fat nor thin
3	Stressed	Borderline fore-ribs not visible. 12th & 13th ribs visible
2	Critical	Thin fore ribs visible
1	Emaciated	Very thin no fat, bones visible
		Emaciated, little muscle left

Definition of Early Warning Phases; The EW phases are defined as follows:

NORMAL: The normal phase occurs when **biophysical *drought indicators (VCI and SPI) show no unusual fluctuations*** hence remain within the expected ranges for the time of the year in a given livelihood zone, division or county

ALERT: The alert phase is when either the **vegetation condition index or the standard precipitation index *(biophysical indicators) show unusual fluctuations below expected seasonal ranges*** within the whole county/sub-county or livelihood zones.

ALARM: The alarm phase occurs when both **biophysical *and at least three production indicators fluctuate outside expected seasonal ranges*** affecting the local economy. The production indicators to be considered are livestock body condition, crop condition, milk production, livestock migration and livestock mortality rate. If ***access indicators*** (impact on market, access to food and water) move outside the normal range, the status remains at "alarm" but with a worsening trend. Proposed access indicators include ToT, price of cereals, availability of cereals and legumes, and milk consumption. The trend will be further worsening when also welfare indicators (MUAC and CSI) start moving outside the normal ranges.

EMERGENCY: In the emergency phase, ***all indicators are outside of normal ranges***, local production systems have collapsed within the dominant economy. The emergency phase affects asset status and purchasing power to extent that seriously threatens food security. As a result, coping strategy index, malnutrition (MUAC) and livestock mortality rates move above emergency thresholds.

RECOVERY: **Environmental *indicators returning to seasonal norms***. The drought phase must have reached at least Alarm stage. Recovery starts after the end of drought as signaled by the environmental indicators returning to seasonal norms while production indicators are still outside the normal seasonal range but local economies start to recover. The status changes to normal once the bio physical and production indicators are back to normal range.