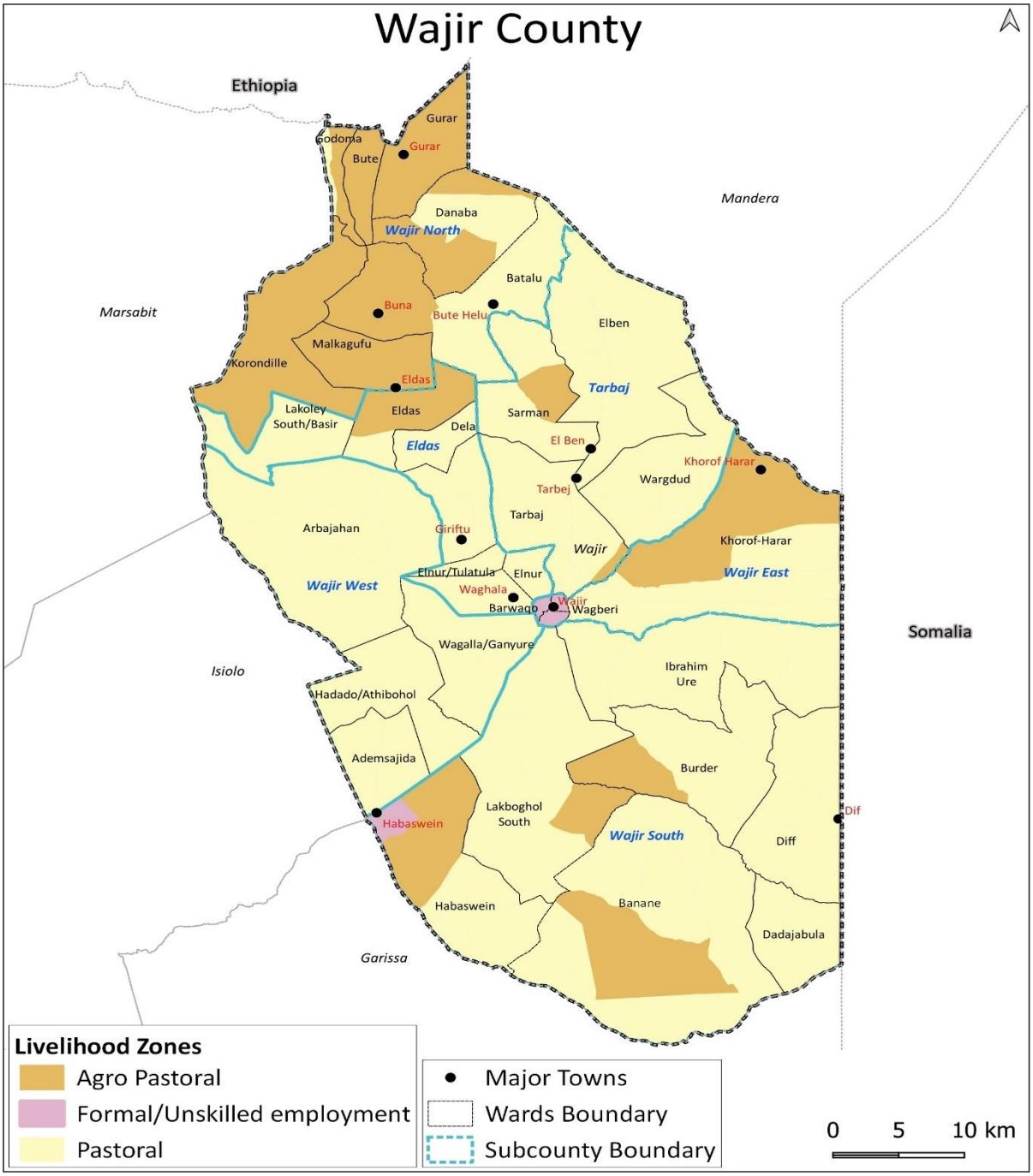
WAJIR COUNTY

2023 SHORT RAINS FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY ASSESSMENT REPORT



Report by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) and Wajir County Steering Group (CSG)

February 2024

Executive Summary

The 2023 October to December short rains food security assessment was conducted between 31st January to 9th February 2024 led by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) in conjunction with the County Steering Group (CSG). The overall objective of the assessment was to analyze and determine the impact of the 2023 short rains on food and nutrition security, taking into account the cumulative effects of previous seasons and making recommendations on possible response options. The assessment explored the impact of the season on food availability, access and utilization by looking at the contributing factors and outcomes, as well as how each sector was affected. The ultimate goal was to provide recommendations for possible response options based on the situation analysis. The assessment covered all the sub-counties of Wajir, with the unit of analysis being the livelihood zones.

The 2023 short rains were above average, occasioned with *El-Nino* condition, after a period of five consecutive failed rainfall seasons. Due to flash floods, an estimated 13,600 households (around 87,000 people) were affected, out of which 6,500 households were displaced. There were nine cases of human deaths due to drowning in stagnant water. Schools, health facilities, roads, farms and water sources were destroyed. There was upsurge of malaria from second week of November 2023 following enhanced rains as a result of *El Nino* phenomenon which resulted in flooding across the county. As of 31st January 2024, a total of 293 cases of malaria had been reported with three deaths. The cases are across the county, with majority (51 percent) from Wajir North Sub-County, followed by Eldas and Tarbaj sub-counties at 13 and 15 percent respectively. Outbreak of Rift Valley Fever has been confirmed, with two human cases reported in Wajir South in the first week of February 2024.

The browse and pasture condition generally remained very good, with most areas experiencing normal to above normal vegetation condition. The Vegetation Condition Index (VCI) for the month of January 2024 indicates above normal vegetation greenness across the County. There was poor performance in crop production due to flooding and water logging occasioned by the enhanced short rains in the Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zone. Livestock prices have significantly increased due to good livestock body condition. Milk production is on an improving trend due to increased birth rates and good livestock body condition.

The proportion of households having poor, borderline and acceptable food consumption scores stood at 22, 26 and 52 percent respectively in the month of January 2024. When compared to the same period last year, the number of households experiencing food consumption gaps greatly reduced. Milk consumption was below normal owing to lower production levels and higher prices. Households in Pastoral Livelihood Zone applied the most coping strategies at 9.8, while those in the Formal/Informal and Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zones employed coping strategy indices of 0.1 and 4.0 respectively. According to the NDMA January 2024 Drought Bulletin, an estimated 11.9 percent of children below the age of five years were at risk of malnutrition.

The current food security situation in the county is Stressed (Phase 2) and it's expected to largely remain the in the phase although the number of food insecure households may reduce due to improved household purchasing power. The County is still recovering from the negative impacts of previous droughts that resulted in significant loss of livestock and livelihoods.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 County Background

Wajir County is located in the Northeastern region of Kenya between latitudes 3° N 60'N and 0 20'N and Longitudes 39° E and 41° E and covers an area of 56,685.9 Km^2. It borders Somalia to the East, Ethiopia to the North, Mandera County to the North-East, Isiolo County to the South-West, Marsabit County to the West and Garissa County to the South. The County has a total projected population of 871,000 people (KNBS population projections for 20 23)). The County is divided into six constituencies, namely: Wajir North, Wajir South, Wajir West, Wajir East, Tarbaj and Eldas. The constituencies are further divided into 30 wards. The county has three livelihoods namely; pastoral, Agro-pastoral and Formal/Unskilled Employment with human population per livelihood zone being 60 percent, 30 percent and 10 percent respectively.

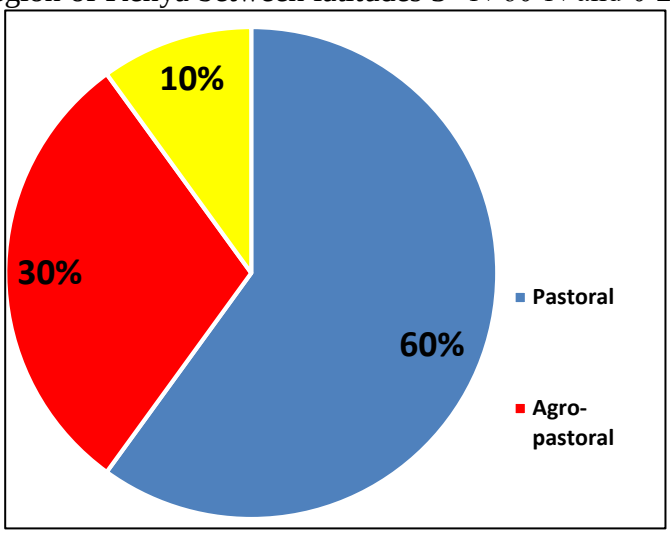

Figure 1: Wajir county livelihoods

Livestock production contributes 80 percent of household income in Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zones. Crop production contributes 30 percent of household income in Agro Pastoral and 15 percent in other livelihood zones.

1.2 Methodology and Approach

The overall objective of the assessment was to develop an objective, evidence-based and transparent food security situation analysis following the 2023 short rains season, taking into account the cumulative effect of the previous seasons and to provide recommendations on possible response options based on the situation analysis.

The assessment processes and methodologies were coordinated and developed by the County Steering Group (CSG) in collaboration with the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG). The county team collected secondary data (livelihood zone baseline data, drought monitoring information, monthly nutrition surveillance data, price data and satellite imagery) while additional information and data was provided by the CSG members from various departments through sector-specific checklists. A transect drive across the County was conducted from 1st February to 3rd February 2024 to collect information from the community and households using community interview guides in each sector. The teams also visited health facilities, markets and watering points to gather relevant information.

The field data was collated, reviewed, analyzed and triangulated to verify its validity. After the field drive and analysis of field data, the CSG was debriefed to verify the report from the field. The results from sampled areas, along with outcomes of discussions with the larger CSG and secondary data analysis were used to draw inferences for non-visited areas situated in similar livelihood zones. The findings and recommendations were made and shared for planning purposes. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC Version 3.0) protocols were used in classifying severity of food insecurity.

2.0 DRIVERS OF FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN THE COUNTY

2.1 Rainfall Performance

According to the Kenya Meteorological Department, the start of the seasonal rains (onset) was realized during the second to third week of October 2023 over most parts of Wajir County. The rainfall distribution both in time and space was good in October and November and generally poor in December.

The total amount received during the season was 384mm, against a long-term mean (LTM) of 123mm. The rains in most parts of the county were 200 percent above average apart from small sections in Wajir West and Wajir South sub-counties towards the county's border with Isiolo and Garissa counties. The cessation was early in the first week of December 2023.

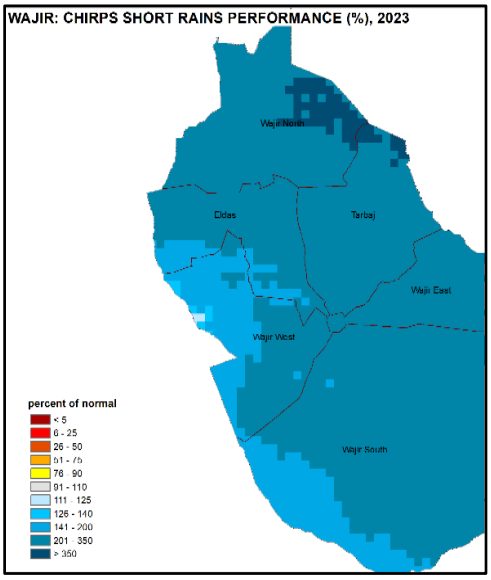

Figure 2: Rainfall Performance

2.2 Rift Valley Fever (RVF)

An outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, both in human and livestock, was reported across the county. There were two confirmed human cases in Wajir South Sub-County as of February 8th 2024. Ongoing health response activities include; issuance of an RVF Alert, sensitization of community and service providers, case management and routine monitoring.

2.3 African Migratory Locusts

An assessment triggered by alerts from residents of Eldas and Wajir North sub-counties confirmed presence of the African migratory locusts, primarily in their 4th or 5th instars, predominantly as hoppers. The dense vegetation and grasslands resulting from favourable rainfall across the county facilitated their spread. Consequently, immediate control measures are recommended.

2.4 Flash floods

From the floods assessment report, an estimated 13,600 households (around 87,000 people) were affected, out of which 6,500 households were displaced. There were nine (9) cases of human deaths which occurred after drowning in stagnant water. Schools, health facilities, roads, farms and water sources were destroyed. The flash floods resulted in a destruction of the Wajir-Garissa Road and other key roads within the county. This led to several areas including Wajir town, Habaswein, Buna and Eldas being temporarily cutoff leading to unprecedented spike in the prices of basic food commodities. Some of the interventions undertaken include cash transfer, distribution of food and non-food items and risk communication.

2.5 Bush Fires

Outbreak of wild/bush fires have been reported in various parts of the county. The high daytime temperatures being recorded across the County have resulted in drying up of the available pasture, hence increasing the risks for bush fires. There is the need to sustain targeted community sensitization on bush fires control and prevention.

3.0 IMPACTS OF DRIVERS ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

3.1 Availability

3.1.1 Crops Production

Crop production in Wajir County is mainly practiced along the drainage lines and Wajir North highlands, among other isolated parts of the County. The short rains contribute approximately 30 percent of the annual food produced in the county. The area under rain-fed crops during the period under review was approximately 3,314 hectares compared to the long-term average of 1,251 hectares while the total arable land in the County is 102,406 hectares. The main crops produced in Wajir are maize, sorghum, cow peas, beans and green grams, watermelon, simsim, tomatoes, kales, spinach, onions, capsicum and fruit trees (mangoes, pawpaw, citrus and lemon). By and large, livestock production remains the single most important food security driver in the county.

During the season under review, the county received above average rains in most parts of the county. This resulted in flooding, water logging and disruption of established settlement systems with adverse effects on crops. However, farmers still took advantage of the rains to open up more land for crop production. An estimated 50 percent of the established crops were destroyed by floods, with the surviving crops getting very little attention by farmers as they had been displaced by floods. The overall implication of this was relatively low crop production despite having enhanced rains in areas heavily affected by floods. Another factor affecting the season was lack of timely access to appropriate certified seeds as well as an upsurge of pests and diseases.

a) Rain-fed Crop Production

Table 1: Rain-fed crop production

Crop	Area planted during 2023 Short Rains season (Ha)	LTA (5yrs) area planted during the Short Rains Season (Ha)	2023 Short Rains Season projected production (90 kg bags) Actual	LTA production during the Short Rains Season (90 kg bags)
1.Maize	972	288	12,150	4,963
2.Sorghum	1469	635	14,650	6501
3. Pulses/Beans	873	328	6,547	425
Totals	**3,314**	**1,251**	**33,347**	**11,889**

The main crops grown under rain-fed agriculture include maize, pulses/beans and sorghum. The areas under maize, sorghum and pulses/beans increased by 238, 131 and 166 percent respectively. Harvesting period has just commenced and is expected to end in the next three weeks, with production likely to be more than 180 percent of the long-term average. However, the final figures for actual production may only be 40 to70 percent of the projections due to the impacts of the floods, early cessation of the rains, late control of pests and diseases, premature drying up of crops due to high temperatures and post-harvest related loses.

b) Irrigated Crop Production

Table 2: Irrigated Crops

Crop	Area planted during the 2023 short rains season (ha)	STA (3 years) area planted during short rains season (ha)	2023 short rains season projected production (90 kg bags/MT) actual	STA (3 years) production short rains season (90 kg bags/MT)
1. Watermelon	103	61	1067	691
2. Tomatoes	83	33	330	288
3. Kales	143	77	2502	1231
Total	**329**	**171**	**3899**	**2210**

The main crops grown under irrigated agriculture include were watermelons, tomatoes and kales. The area under irrigated crop production cumulatively increased by 92 percent of the long-term average. Area under watermelon, tomatoes and kales was 69 percent, 151 percent and 85 percent respectively above the long-term average. Production for watermelon, tomatoes and kales was 54 percent, 14 percent and 103 percent respectively above the long-term average. This was attributed to the adequate availability of water for irrigation. The presence of adequate pasture significantly minimized incidences of livestock and wildlife intrusion into farms hence reducing human-wildlife conflicts. However, the excessive moisture resulted in upsurge of crop pests and diseases.

Cereals stock

Table 3: Quantities held currently (90-kg bags)

Commodity	Maize		Rice		Sorghum		Green gram/pulses		TOTAL	
	Current	LTA	Current	LTA	Current	LTA	Current	LTA	Current	LTA
Farmers	4715	1130	0	0	6473	1200	900	1150	12,088	3480
Traders	14,700	12,900	17,100	15,300	800	700	650	580	33,800	32,480
Millers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food Aid/ NCPB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**19415**				**7873**		**5678**		**79,005**	**35,960**

The available stocks of maize, rice, sorghum and green grams held by traders were 14, 12, 14 and 12 percent respectively above the long-term average. Stocks held by traders are largely sourced from external markets and are replenished based on demand. Maize and sorghums stocks held by farmers were 300 and 440 percent respectively above the long-term average. The significant improvement was attributed to the above average performance of crop production during the short rains and the long rains. However, green gram stocks held by farmers, reduced by more than 20 percent attributed destruction of

the crop through water logging. The current available stock will take the households for an average period of one month although the farmers as per the projections, will add 1,800 MT more to the food basket. This will play a great role in enhancing households' food security in the agro-pastoral livelihood zone.

3.1.2 Livestock Production

Livestock production is the main livelihood in the county where main livestock species kept include camel, goat, cattle, sheep and donkey. Livestock production employs about 75 percent of the rural population and contributes 61 and 66 percent of cash income in the Agro-Pastoral and Pastoral Livelihood Zones respectively. It also accounts for 70 percent of household food source. Recurrent droughts, flash floods, resource-based conflicts, livestock pests and diseases and wildlife-livestock conflicts are some of the hazards that affect livestock production in the county.

The above average rains recorded during the 2023 OND season enhanced the regeneration of pasture and browse across the county. Outbreak of wild/bush fires have been reported in various parts of the county. The county is currently experiencing isolated cases of African Migratory locusts. These were reported in Eldas and Wajir North sub counties. Swarms of locusts are threat not only to the rangelands but also crop lands. The County Government and the State Department of Crops through the Division of Crop Pests Control have partnered in active locust surveillance and control. During the season, the Director of Veterinary Services through the Zoonotic Disease Unit issued an advisory on possibility of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) outbreak owing to the predisposing factors of increased population of biting flies (mosquitoes).

Pasture and Browse

Pasture and browse condition across the livelihood zones ranged from good to excellent and on a stable condition. The above average rains received during the 2023 OND season resulted in significant regeneration of forage across the county. The quality and quantity of pasture and browse has continued to improve significantly. The available pasture is expected to last for the next three to four months. However, reported cases of bush fires and African migratory locusts pose serious risk to the availability of pasture. The Department of Livestock and Veterinary Services and partners have mainstreamed sensitization of communities on bush fire management as a priority activity. There are currently no limiting factors on access to both pasture and browse.

Table 4: Pasture and Browse Condition

Livelihood zone	Pasture					Browse				
	Condition		How long to last (Months)		Factors Limiting access	Condition		How long to last (Months)		Factors Limiting access
	Current	Normal	Current	Normal		Current	Normal	Current	Normal	
Pastoral	Good to Excellent	Good to Fair	>4 months	2-3 Months	None	Good	Good to fair	>4 months	3-4 Months	None
Agro-Pastoral	Good	Good to fair	>4 months	3-4 months	None	Good	Good to Fair	>4 months	3-4 Months	None

The invasive species such as *Prosopis juviflora* (commonly known as Mathenge) and other non-palatable species has significantly increased owing to the conducive environment provided by the enhanced short rains. It is approximated that the area under the invasive species increased from 320ha to 410ha in Habaswein, Khorof-Harar, Hadado/Athibohol, Laghbogol South, Malkagufu, Buna/Batalu, Korondille, Bute and Gurar wards. Efforts being put in place to control the spread of the invasive species include removal of the species from the grazing fields.

Table 5: Baled hay status

Sub County	No. of Hay Stores	Storage Capacity (Total number of bales)	No. of Bales currently being held	Average Weight per bale (in Kgs)	Average price per bale (Kshs.)	Comments – E.g percentage held by farmers and other Institutions
Wajir East	5	84,000	28,000	18	400	100% Farmers
Wajir West	4	30,000	12,000	18	400	100% Farmers
Eldas	1	8,000	3,000	18	400	100% Farmers
Wajir North	4	60,000	25,000	18	400	100% Farmers
Wajir South	3	24,000	12,000	18	400	100% Farmers
Tarbaj	2	12,000	8,000	18	400	100% Farmers

The increased hay bales stored across the county is attributed to rain-fed production during the season and reduced utilization as most farmers/pastoralists are using the naturally growing pasture. Some fodder farmers are harvesting hay grown in their farms and sell as green cut fodder loosely tied as bundles and/or baled into hay for storage. The sales are mainly in major urban centres such as Wajir and Habaswein and target the lactating herds left at the households.

The conservation and utilization of conserved pasture and other supplementary feeds are limited by low production levels (at farms), lack of mechanization of farm operations, low access to farm inputs (such as certified seeds) and equipment, distance, transport costs, among others.

Pasture/fodder conservation in the county has been instrumental in stabilizing forage fluctuations and offer smallholder farmers reprieve in accessing feeds.

This season, crop residue will play a pivotal role as livestock feed compared to normal situation as more acreage of land was put under crop production. Sorghum and maize stalks, simsim and beans are likely to contribute about 12 percent of the feed. However, not all farmers have access to crop residues due to the long distance in accessing it. The areas where crop residues will contribute significantly to livestock feed resources include Bute, Godoma, Korondille, Batalu, Danaba, Eldas, Arbajahan, Ademasajida, Habaswein, Banane, Tarbaj and Sarman wards.

Livestock Productivity
Livestock body condition

Table 6: Livestock body condition

Livelihood zone	Cattle		Sheep		Goat		Camel	
	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal
Pastoral	BCS4-5	BCS5	BCS4-5	BCS4	BCS5	BCS5	BCS5	BCS5
Agro-pastoral	BCS4-5	BCS5	BCS4-5	BCS4	BCS5	BCS5	BCS5	BCS5

Note: BCS – Livestock Body Condition Score
BCS 1–Very Poor (Emaciated) BCS 2–Poor BCS 3–Fair BCS 4–Good BCS 5-Very Good

The livestock body condition for both grazers and browsers ranges from good (BCS 4) to very good (BCS 5) and on a stable trend across the livelihood zones. This is attributed to the good availability of forage and water at short distances.

It is projected that the livestock body condition is likely to improve further owing to the adequate availability of rangeland resources in the next three months (Feb to May 2024) and thereafter continue to stay stable during the MAM 2024 rainfall season. The improved livestock body condition has led to improvement in milk production and consumption at household level. The improved body condition also resulted in increased market prices, thus enhanced household income and food. Livestock prices have hit a record high for all species in the county due to high demand and low supply.

Birth rate

The birth rates in both Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral livelihood zones were normal in all species. This was attributed to the improved livestock body condition occasioned by the availability of forage and water resources. There is significant improvement in birth rates, especially among the goat and sheep.

Tropical Livestock Units

The average livestock tropical livestock units (TLUs) per household in the Pastoral Livelihood Zone were four and seven compared to a normal of eight and eighteen for poor and medium income households respectively. The same was noted for the Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zone where the TLUs

averaged four and six compared to a normal of six and eight for the poor and medium income households respectively.

This reduction in TLUs is attributed to either asset stripping to meet household food requirement and/or loss due to drought before the MAM 2023 season. Households rebuilding their herds still face challenges of high demand, thus escalated prices. The high prices have therefore hindered the poor and middle-income households from improving their TLUs.

Reduced TLUs means lower milk production and low coping mechanisms at household level, thus increased food and nutrition insecurity. It is projected that the TLUs per household will increase as more households are building confidence in owning livestock due to availability of pasture, browse and water resources brought about by the above normal performance of the last two rainy seasons.

Table 7: Tropical Livestock Units

Livelihood zone	Poor income households		Medium income households	
	Current	Normal	Current	Normal
Pastoral	4	8	7	18
Agro-pastoral	4	6	6	8

Milk availability

Table 8: Milk availability and consumption

Livelihood zone	Milk Production (Litres)/Household		Milk consumption (Litres) per Household		Prices (Kshs)/Litre	
	Current	LTA	Current	LTA	Current	LTA
Pastoral	4	5	2.8	3	120	60
Agro-pastoral	3.5	4	2.2	3	120	60

Household milk production across livelihood zones was lower than the long-term average despite improved livestock body condition and birth rates. This is attributed to the reduced TLUs as majority of households are currently rebuilding their herds. Household milk consumption is also still below normal owing to lower production levels and higher prices. However, milk production and consumption at household level are on an increasing trend and expected to improve further due to projected improved birth rates in the next three to six months.

Water for Livestock

Table 9: Water availability and access

Livelihood zone	Sources		Return average distances (km)		Expected duration to last (months) for each source	
	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal
Pastoral	Water pans	Boreholes Water pans Shallow wells	5-9	5	Water pans 3 month	3

Agro-pastoral	Water pans	Boreholes Water pans Shallow wells	5-9	6	Water pans 3 month	3-4

Livestock relied on water pans as their main source of water. Water availability in most water pans across the livelihoods will last an average of three to four months. The return trekking distance across the livelihood zones is between five to eight kilometers which was within the seasonal range. The watering frequency for cattle, sheep and goats was three days compared to 3-4 during a normal period. Watering frequency for camel was once in a week.

Table 10: Watering frequency (no. of days per week)

Livelihood zone	Cattle		Camels		Goats		Sheep	
	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal
Pastoral	3	3-4	1	1	3	3-4	3	3-4
Agro-pastoral	3	3-4	1	2	3	3-4	3	3-4

Migration

There was minimal migration of livestock within and outside the county. Livestock migrated to their traditional wet grazing areas occasioned by the above average regeneration of pasture and browse in all livelihood zones. There are reported cases of increased internal migration of pastoralists migrating from areas affected by an upsurge in vectors such as tse flies. However, the current migration pattern was normal and within the seasonal trends.

Livestock Diseases and Mortalities

There were cases of Rift Valley Fever in Wajir South, Wajir North, Wajir West and Eldas sub-counties. Suspected cases of endemic livestock diseases such as Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP), Contagious caprine pleuropneumonia (CCPP), Peste des petit ruminants (PPR) and tick paralysis all were reported across the county.

The Department of Livestock Development and Veterinary Services and sector partners initiated a number of interventions including community sensitization, training of community disease reporters, active and passive surveillance, vaccination and treatment. The employment of one-health approach played a key role in these initiatives.

There were no unusual livestock deaths due to disease. However, some of the pastoralists lost their livestock during the OND 2023 rainfall season due to flooding and drowning. This impacted negatively on food security due to reduced TLUs at household level.

3.2 Access

3.2.1 Market Operations

Major markets in the county are Wajir town in the Formal/Informal Livelihood Zone and Griftu, Buna, Eldas, Tarbaj, Dagahley and Habaswein in the Pastoral Livelihood Zones. The main products traded in

the markets are all livestock species and their products, crop produce and other household items sourced from local and external markets within Kenya or across the border in Somalia and Ethiopia.

Most markets were operational although some of the markets were disrupted in November and early parts of December due to the OND 2023 short rains that rendered the roads completely impassable. These disruptions significantly reduced access to food. However, the markets are now operational with no reported disruptions.

Maize Prices

The average price of maize per kilogram traded at Kshs. 97 in the month of January 2024, compared to a normal price of Kshs. 64. Maize prices consistently remained high for the last one year, with a sharp spike reported in November 2023 due to floods that rendered the roads completely impassable as shown in (Figure 3). The current prices are 52 percent above the long-term average price and eight percent lower than the previous year's price. The product is largely sourced from external markets. These high prices have impacted negatively on food security through reduced access to maize. Harvests realized from rain-fed agriculture normally have marginal impact on maize market prices as production is always below normal.

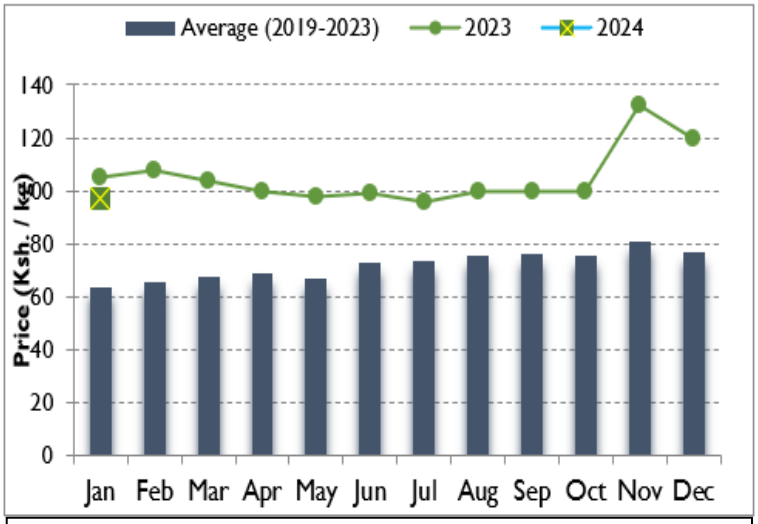

Figure 3: Maize Prices

Goat Prices

The average price of a medium-size goat in January 2024 recorded more improvements by reaching an all-time high of KES. 7,800. The current prices are over 150 percent above the long-term average. When compared to the same period last year, the prices significantly increased by more than 200 percent as detailed in Figure 4. These high prices were attributed to increased demand in both local and export markets occasioned by their improved body condition.

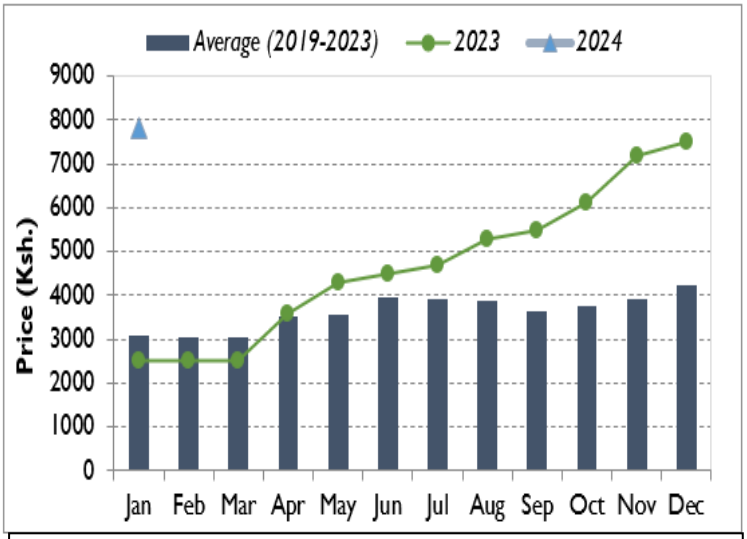

Figure 4: Goat Prices

3.2.2 Terms of Trade (ToT)

The Terms of Trade (ToT) in January 2024 remained highly favorable for the pastoral households, whereby they could access 77 kilograms of maize from the sale a medium-size goat, compared to a normal of 54 kilograms.

The current Terms of Trade are therefore 43 percent above the long-term. This substantial improvement is due to increased goat's prices. This therefore means that the household purchasing power improved following the increased livestock productivity.

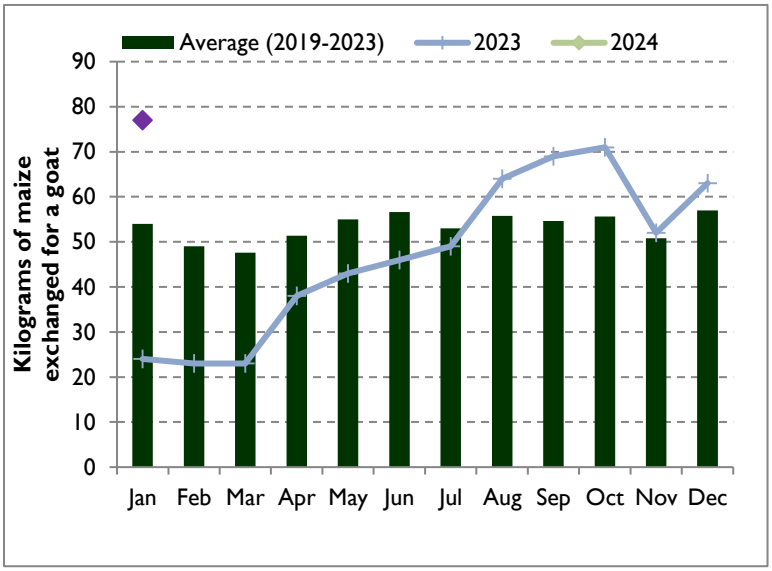

Figure 5: Terms of Trade

3.2.3 Income Sources

Livestock and crop production, which are the main sources of income in the County, contribute an estimated 60 and 30 percent of household incomes respectively. Livestock production contributes 70 percent of household income in Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zones. Crop production contributes 30 percent of household income in Agro Pastoral and 15 percent in other livelihood zones. Other sources of income include casual waged labor, sale of charcoal, petty trade, remittances and the sale of firewood.

3.2.4 Water access and availability

Major sources of water

Wajir County has three main water sources, namely; boreholes, water pans and shallow wells. There is also water trucking in which water is provided to settlements with no definite water sources. The county has 354 boreholes, 18 mega pans, 622 water pans and over 20,000 shallow wells. The surface water sources and shallow wells were well replenished to about 98-100 percent during the short rains season across all sub-counties. This replenishment of the surface water sources and shallow wells have improved the water security in the county.

Approximately 20 percent of the boreholes are currently operational and in use, especially in Wajir South Sub-Counties. It is worth noting that as much as the short rains improved the water situation in the county, it also caused great damages to the water infrastructure due to flooding. The major damages incurred from the floods include the following: collapse of boreholes and shallow wells, destruction of pump-houses, troughs, fences and other water works, pump malfunction, faulty gensets and washed away vital borehole equipment and accessories.

The flash flood affected 115 boreholes, 85 water pans and 7,000 shallow wells. These non-operational water sources are found across all the sub-counties. Contamination of shallow wells and other open

water sources was also noted. The current surface water sources, especially water pans are projected to last for three to four months.

Distance to water sources

Generally, the return trekking distance for both Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Livelihood Zones was less than five kilometers, and thus below the normal range. This decrease in distances could be attributed to replenishment of all surface water sources following the above average performance of the OND 2023 short rains.

Waiting time at the Source

Waiting time at the source significantly reduced across all the livelihood zones, with most of the areas recording no waiting time due to water availability at the water pans. There were no variations per livelihood zones as the distribution of the OND 2023 rains was good in space and time.

Cost of water

The average cost of water per 20-litre Jerrican across all the livelihood zones remained normal at between Ksh.2.00 and 5.00. Preference of accessing water from open water sources by majority of the households has been the major factor driving the current stability in prices.

Wajir town, which had persistent shortage of water and used to be a good market for water vendors, has since improved in terms of water accessibility due to adequate recharge of shallow wells following the OND 2023 rains. This significantly reduced the cost of water from Ksh.25 per 20 litre jerrican to less than Ksh.10 per 20 litre jerrican for some households, and no cost for others.

Water Consumption Rate

The per capita water consumption rate is above the normal range of 17.5 litres/person/day following the enhanced recharge of all the water sources. The drop in the cost of water also enabled the pastoral households to access adequate water for their domestic use.

Table 11: Distance to water sources, cost & consumption

Livelihood zone	Return Distance to Water for Domestic Use (Km)		Waiting Time at Water Source (Minutes)		Cost of Water at Source (Kshs. Per 20 litres)		Average Water Consumption (Litres/person/day)	
	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal	Current	Normal
Pastoral	<5	5	0-5	30	2-5	2-5	>20	15-20
Agro-Pastoral	<5	5	0-5	20	2-5	2-5	>20	15-20

3.2.5 Food Consumption

Food Consumption Score

An estimated 22 percent of the population in Wajir County are currently experiencing food consumption gaps.

In terms of livelihood variations, around 32 percent of households in the Pastoral Livelihood Zone registered poor food consumption score. This was attributed to the impact of the recurring droughts that resulted in significant livestock deaths. However, the situation improved when compared to the same period last year when the drought was its peak.

Food consumptions and dietary diversity have been on an improving trend since the start of the 2023 MAM long rains season when the rains were above average.

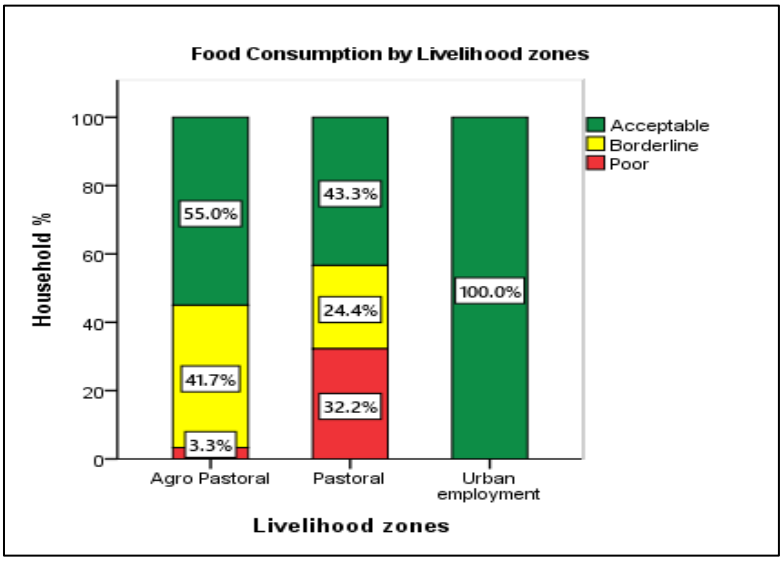

Figure 6: FCS by Livelihood zones

Milk Consumption

Although there was a slight increase in milk production, the average milk consumption per household per day remained unchanged in January 2024. This could be attributed to increased amounts sold by pastoralist to the market in order to acquire grains or other food products.

The current milk consumption is above the long-term year average consumption by more than 38 percent. The trends in milk consumption are likely to improve as the calving season for camels draws nearer. This is in turn expected to have positive multiplier effect on nutrition and dietary diversity, especially for children and pregnant and lactating mothers.

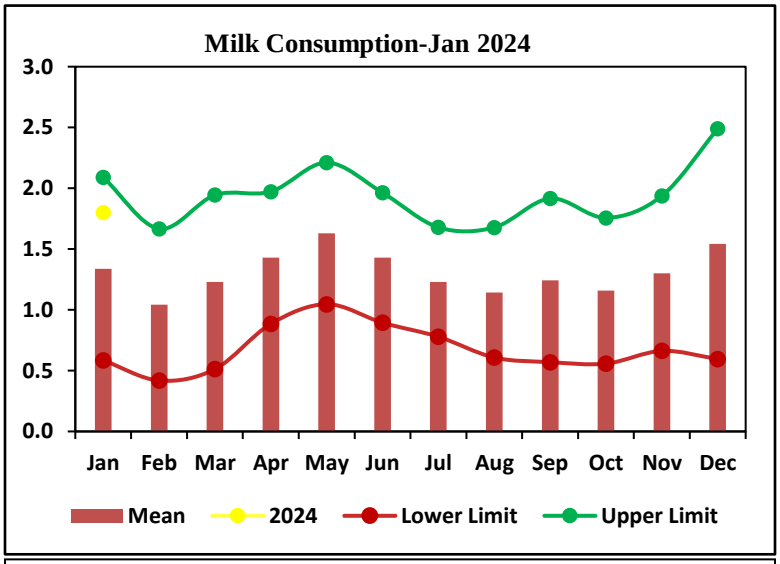

Figure 7: Milk Consumption

3.2.6 Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)

In January 2024, the overall reduced Coping Strategy Index reduced to 8.5; from 8.7 in December 2023. The highest mean rCSI was observed in Pastoral Livelihood Zone while the least was reported in Agro-Pastoral (Fig 8).

The slight decrease in coping mechanisms was as a result of the improved household purchasing power occasioned by increased livestock prices and productivity.

The most reported consumption related coping strategy across the livelihood zones was reliance on less preferred food and reducing the number of meals per day.

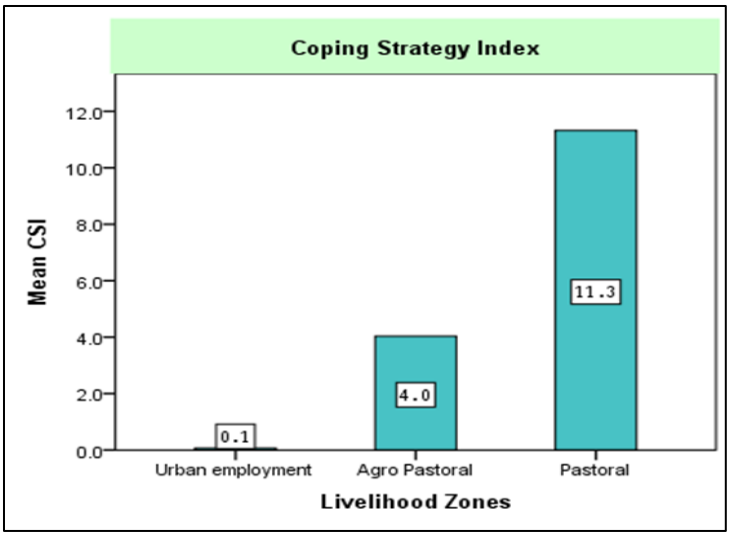

Figure 8: Coping Strategy Index

3.3.1 Morbidity and mortality patterns

Upper respiratory tract infections (URTI), diarrhea and pneumonia were the top three causes of morbidity for children under five years of age. The cases were within the seasonal trend as shown in figure 9.

The peak observed in November 2023 for both URTI and diarrhea are attributed to the cold weather and access to unsafe drinking water. Whereas malaria is not endemic in Wajir, an upsurge of malaria in November 2023 was recorded attributed to increased moisture and stagnant water in areas prone to flooding. Towards the end of January 2024, a total of 293 cases of malaria had been reported with three deaths. The cases were prevalent in all parts of the county, with majority (51 percent) recorded in Wajir North sub-county, followed by Eldas and Tarbaj sub-counties at 13 and 15 percent respectively. There is confirmed outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, with two human cases reported in Wajir South in the first week of February.

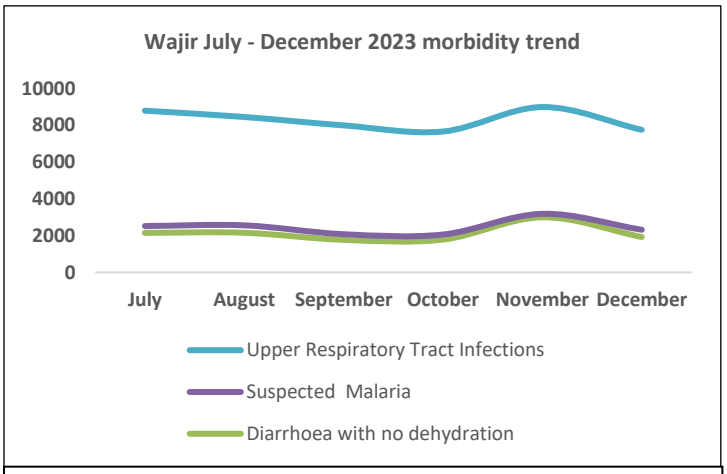

Figure 9: Morbidity and Mortality patterns

3.3.2 Immunization and Vitamin A Supplementation Coverage

According to KHIS data (as of 6th February 2024), immunization overages for BCG, OPV3, Measles Rubella 1 for July–December 2023 was at 75.7, 85.4, and 77.9 percent respectively. In January 2024, the County carried out Polio Campaign which was initially postponed in October as a result of the rains. Immunization is still sub-optimal due to the vastness of the county, nomadic lifestyle and infrastructural challenges. Vitamin A coverage for children aged 6 – 59 months in semester II of 2023 was 81.7 percent

for children aged 6-59 months. The high coverage observed can be attributed to scale up supplementation during *Malezi Bora* Campaign.

3.3.3 Nutrition and Food Security Situation

According to the last Nutrition Survey carried out in June 2023, the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) was at 19 percent. The Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) stood at 2.2 percent as illustrated in figure 10 and has remained above the 15 percent (WHO threshold) in the last five years.

According to the sentinel data by the National Drought Management Authority, the proportion of children at risk of malnutrition (MUAC<13.5) in Janaury 2024 was 11.9 percent. However, the nutrition situation has been on an improving trend in the last four months.

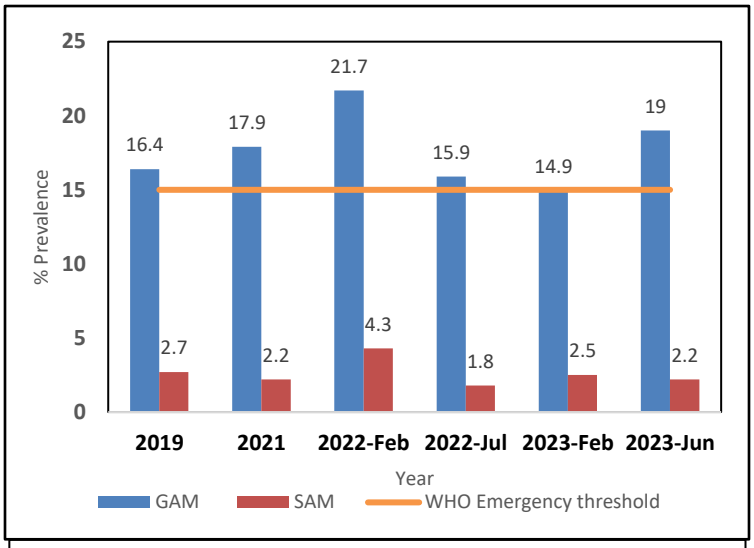

Figure 10: SAM and GAM

Admission of children with severe and moderate acute malnutrition increased in the month of December 2023 in both programs as illustrated in figure 11. This was attributed to an upsurge of diarrheal cases in November 2023 following the above average rains received across the County.

The decline in admissions in November was attributed to suspension of outreach services due to poor access to outreach sites.

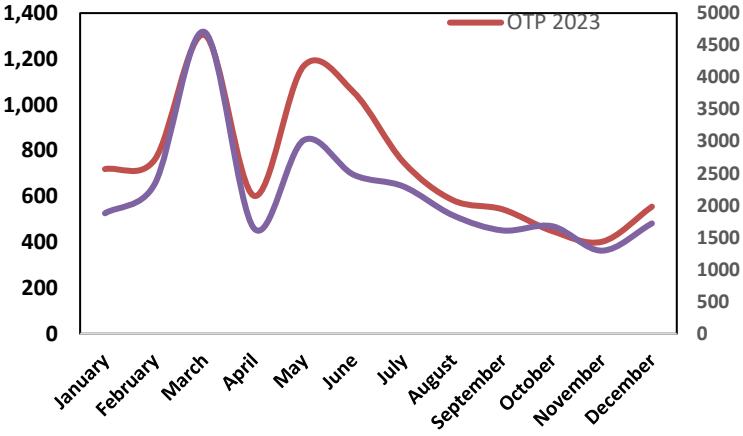

Figure 11: Acute Malnutrition

3.3.4 Sanitation and Hygiene

Sub-optimal sanitation practices encompass open defecation, inadequate hygiene practices and drinking untreated water. Poor sanitation conditions provide a favorable environment for the transmission of infectious diseases, such as diarrhea. Majority (70.8 percent) of the households in Wajir drink untreated water (SMART Survey June 2023). The situation was exacerbated by the massive flooding in November 2023 which contaminated major open water sources such as water pans, ponds, laggas and natural depressions. Consumption of contaminated water is partly attributed to recorded upsurge in diarrheal cases in November and December 2023.

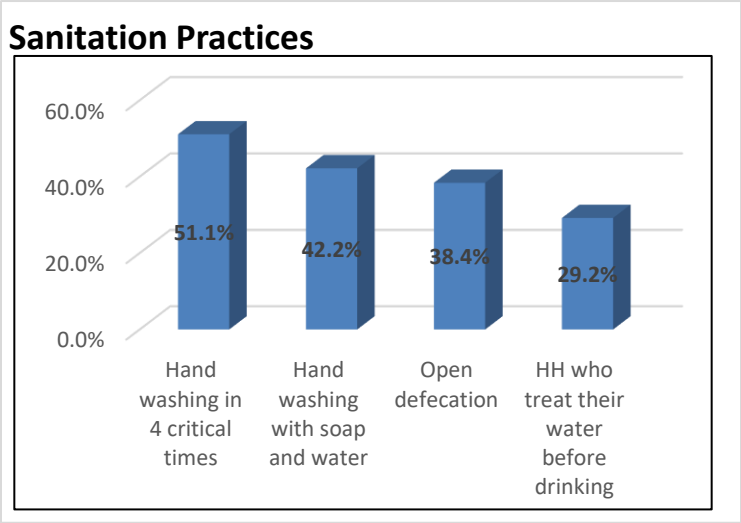

Figure 12: Sanitation Prices

3.4 Trends of key food security indicators

Table 12: Trends of key food security indicators

Indicator	LRA, July 2023	SRA, Feb. 2024
% of maize stocks held by traders	4 percent above the LTA	317 percent above the LTA
Livestock body condition	Good to Very Good	Good to Very Good
Water consumption(litres/day/person)	>20	17.5 litres
Price of maize (per kg)	96	97
Terms of Trade	49	77
Distance to grazing	<5	<5
Copying Stragey Index	Agro-Pastoral=4.2 Pastoral=7.5	Agro-Pastoral=6.9 Pastoral=13.4
Food Consumption Score	Poor= 16.7% Borderline= 44.1% Acceptable= 39.2%	Poor= 22% Borderline= 26% Acceptable= 52%

3.5 Education

3.5.1 Access–Enrollment

The comparison of the current enrolment (Term I 2024) with that of the previous term (Term III 2023) shows a noticeable increase at all the four levels of learning across the County. The increased enrolment is attributed to;

- Opening of new centres and schools. There are 14 new ECDE centres, 8 primary schools and 7 secondary schools.
- There are a number of students repeating in examination classes.

- Transfer of some students into the county from outside, especially in secondary schools. Some learners who initially enrolled in form one in others parts of the country are transferring back to schools in the county.
- There are a number of pastoralists who lost their livestock and resettled in villages and towns, hence enrolling their children in school.
- There is an enrolment drive by UNICEF, through Save the children, and in collaboration with National Government.
- Provision of bursaries and school fees by CDF and Wajir County Government.

Table 13: Enrollment

	No. of schools	**Term I 2024 (current)**			**Term III 2023 (previous)**		
Level		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
ECDE	327	13,808	10,940	**24,748**	13735	10713	**24448**
Primary	320	67.960	52,053	**120,013**	55544	45166	**100710**
Junior Secondary	191	3,633	2,825	**6,458**	-	-	-
Secondary	69	16,318	10,507	**26,825**	15244	10023	**25267**

3.5.2 Effects of the 2023 short rain season on schools

1. Attendance

The above average performance of the rains for the last two immediate rainy seasons resulted in reduced migration and movement of pastoralists in search of water and pasture for their livestock. This in turn led to improved attendance, hence increase in enrolment in all the levels of learning (ECDE, primary and secondary) as shown in the table below;

Table 14: increase in Attendance

Level	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**
ECDE	73	227	**300**
Primary	12,416	6,887	**19,303**
Secondary	1,074	484	**1,558**

2. Availability of water and sanitation facilities

The water and sanitation situation in schools are very poor. An estimated 80 percent of the schools have no access to permanent source of water. This has resulted in low productivity and illnesses in schools where learners are exposed to unsafe water. Majority of the schools, estimated at 70 percent, do not have enough functional latrines and hence do not meet the recommended latrine student ratio.

This situation has been worsened by the effects of the flash floods which destroyed toilet facilities in a number of schools. Almost all the water pans across the county were refilled during the short rains season. Although water availability is currently not an issue, the water in the water pans are tabard, not treated and expose the learners to some dangers.

3. Effects of the season on learning continuity during the season

School closures /interruptions of learning

No learning was interrupted during the short rain season since the schools were on recess due to the December school holiday. The heavy downpour and flash-flood interrupted administration of national exams (KEPSEA, KCPE and KCSE), especially in rural schools. The roads were made completely impassable forcing KNEC and the Ministry of Education officials to use helicopters to deliver and collect exam papers to and from the examination centres.

4. Malnutrition and other illness

Young learners are exposed to malnutrition and other illness due to poor milk consumption and lack of dietary diversity by majority of families. This is further compounded by the low purchasing power of households who lost their livelihood to prolong drought.

5. Damages on school infrastructure

Over eighty (80) schools across the county were affected by either flash-flood or heavy down pours. The flood damaged infrastructure in these schools. The damages include cracks in the walls, sinking pit latrines, destruction of learning materials and boarding facilities. The flood also disrupted national examinations in these schools.

6. Lack of school fees

Fees payment is an issue since most of the parents lost their livestock during the drought in the previous seasons. However, the good performance of the 2023 short rains resulted in improved market price for the remaining livestock.

3.5.3 School Meals Programme

The primary schools and ECDE centres in the County normally receive the in-kind school meal programme provided by the Ministry of Education and Wajir County Government respectively. The school feeding programme is currently running in all primary schools. However, there are no ongoing school feeding programme for ECDE centres. The World Food Programme is supplementing provision of school meals in primary schools.

The major challenges to the provision of school meals are the long procurement process, especially for ECD centres in which the meal is provided by the County Government. Other notable challenges include delay in transportation and distribution of food items, lack of permanent and safe water sources and inconsistency of the programme

3.5.4 Cross-cutting issues

Dignity kits for school girls

Girls in upper primary and secondary schools benefited from distribution of dignity kits made by the County Government of Wajir in June 2023. There was also distribution of dignity kits in February 2024 to girls in the 17 secondary schools in Wajir East Sub-County through the Siyad Foundation.

4.0 FOOD SECURITY PROGNOSIS

4.1 Prognosis Assumptions

- According to the Kenya Meteorological Department, the outlook for the next three months indicates that most parts of the county are likely to experience sunny and dry weather conditions throughout the forecast period. Temperatures are expected to be warmer than average.
- Condition of pasture and browse are likely to remain good as regeneration has been significant following the above average performance of the rains in the last two seasons. The MAM 2024 long rains are expected to further improve the forage condition in the county.
- The livestock body condition for all species is expected to remain good with a likelihood of significant improvement due to the conducive condition of rangeland resources.
- Livestock prices are projected to improve and remain above average during the project period improving due to increased demand in the market.
- Milk availability and consumption will likely improve due to increased birth rates, with the anticipated camel calving season (From April 2024) expected to further increase milk availability.
- Food consumption and dietary diversity is expected to improve considering the favourable market prices for livestock which is the main source of income for majority of the population.
- The number of children at risk of malnutrition will likely decrease due to increased milk production and consumption.
- The reported outbreak of RVF in human may increase the risk of food insecurity unless stringent preventive measures are put in place.

4.2 Food security outlook for the next six months

Food Security outlook from February to April 2024

The browse and pasture condition will remain good and on a stable trend. The number of households experiencing food consumption gaps is expected to drastically reduce following the increased livestock prices occasioned by the availability of adequate rangeland resources. Pastoral households are likely to employ lesser coping strategies due to improved household purchasing power. The number of children at risk of malnutrition is likely to decline further due to increased food availability and access. The above average performance of the OND 2023 short rains season provides a conducive environment for the continued recovery process after the devastating impacts of the 2021-22 prolonged drought.

Food Security outlook from April to July 2024

The MAM 2024 long rains season is expected to contribute to a significant build-up of the pasture stocks available. The number of households experiencing food consumption gaps will likely reduce due to increased livestock productivity. Households are expected to apply lesser coping strategies due to food availability and access. The number of children with moderate and severe malnutrition is expected to reduce due to increased milk availability and consumption. The locust invasions and reported outbreak of Rift Valley fever (RVF) both in human and livestock will likely affect the overall food security situation in the County. Although the number of food insecure households will likely reduce due to increased access to food and income, the food security situation in Wajir County is expected to remain Stressed (IPC 2).

5.0 CONCLUSION AND INTERVENTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

5.1.1 Phase classification

The current food security situation in the county is Stressed (Phase 2) and it's expected to largely remain the same although the number of food insecure households may reduce due to improved household purchasing power. The County is still recovering from the negative impacts of previous droughts that resulted in significant loss of livestock.

5.1.2 Summary of the Findings

Wajir County received enhanced rains during the OND 2023 short rains season. The distribution was good in space and time. Consequently, the browse and pasture condition remained good. Livestock prices have significantly increased following their improved body condition. The Terms of Trade is above the long-term average. There is an active outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, with two confirmed human cases as February 8th 2024. Food consumptions and dietary diversity have been on an improving trend since the start of the 2023 MAM long rains season when the rains were above average. Households are also employing lesser coping strategies when compared to the same period last year.

5.1.3 Sub- County Ranking

Table 15: sub-county ranking in terms of food insecurity

Sub County	Predominant livelihood	Food security rank	Main Food Security Threats/Contributing factors
Wajir North	Agro-Pastoral	3	Locust invasion, RVF outbreak, increased livestock diseases, flood, bush fires
Wajir East	Pastoral/Formal & Informal Employment	3	Locust invasion, RVF outbreak, increased livestock diseases, flood, bush fires
Wajir West	Pastoral	3	Locust invasion, RVF outbreak, increased livestock diseases, flood, bush fires
Tarbaj	Pastoral	3	Locust invasion, RVF outbreak, increased livestock diseases, flood, bush fires
Eldas	Pastoral	3	Locust invasion, RVF outbreak, increased livestock diseases, flood, bush fires
Wajir South	Pastoral	3	Locust invasion, RVF outbreak, increased livestock diseases, flood, bush fires
Very Good (5-6)	***Good (4)***	***Fair (3)***	***Poor (1-2)***

5.2 Ongoing Interventions

5.2.1 Food Interventions

During the season under review, there were a number of cash transfer and relief food interventions undertaken by the two levels of Government and partners. Most of these interventions were undertaken done as part of the flood mitigation measures.

Table 16: On-going food interventions

Organisation	Intervention type	Location	No of beneficiaries	Amount
National Government	Relief food	Tarbaj & Khorof-Harar sub-counties		
Save the Children	Cash transfer	Wajir North, West, South, Eldas and Tarbaj	1,594 HHs	13,200 per HH
UNICEF	Cash transfer	Wajir West and Wajir South	2,500	3,000
Christian Aid	Cash transfer	Wajir South and North	494 HHs	8,000 per HH
Islamic Relief	Cash transfer	Wajir East, North, Eldas and Tarbaj	1,700 HHs	12,000 per HH
DRC	Cash transfer	Diif and Khorof-Harar sub-counties	800 HHs	18,100 per month for 3 cycles

5.2.2 Non-food Interventions

Table 17: On-going non-food interventions

County	Sub County	Intervention	No. of BFs	Implementing agencies	Objective	Cost (Ksh.)	Time Frame
Livestock sector							
Wajir	All	Livestock treatment and vaccination	County wide	CWG-DALF, partners	Prevent & mitigate the spread of diseases	5M	Ongoing
	All	RVF surveillance and monitoring	County wide	CWG-DALF	Prevent & mitigate the spread of diseases	3M	Continuous
Agriculture sector							
Wajir	All	Extension services	3,000 HH	CGW (DALF)	Improve food production	1.5M	Feb-May 2024
Wajir	All	Support in irrigation infrastructure	500 HH	CGW (DALF)	Improve food production	3M	Feb-May 2024

Wajir	All	Provision of certified seeds and farm tools	1,000 HH	CGW (DALF) and partners	Improve food production	5M	Feb-May 2024
		Capacity building of farmers	500 farmers	CGW (DALF) and partners	Improve food production		Feb 2024
Wajir	All	Relief food distribution	20,000 HH	NG, CGW, partners	Improve HH food security	20M	Feb. 2024
Health and sanitation sector							
Wajir	All	Mass screening	All health facilities	CGW (Health), partners	Enhanced coverage and health services delivery	3M	Feb 2024
	All	Integrated outreach programs	180 centres	CGW (Health), partners	Enhanced coverage and health services delivery	5M	Feb-May 2024
	All	Distribution of essential drugs, NFIs and nutrition commodities	All health facilities	CGW (Health), partners	Enhanced coverage and health services delivery	5M	Feb-May 2024
	All	Disease surveillance and monitoring	All health facilities	CGW, partners	Reduce child malnutrition	1M	Continuous
	All	Malaria control and treatment	All health facilities	CGW, partners	Reduce the upsurge in malaria	3M	Feb 2024
	All	Polio vaccination	All health facilities	CGW, partners	Up-scale polio vaccination level	5M	Jan-Feb 2024
Water sector							
Wajir	All	Distribution of water treatment chemicals	All sub-counties	CGW, partners	Reduce outbreak of water borne diseases	2M	Feb-may 2024
		Solarization and drilling of boreholes	Wajir West	UNICEF, IRK	Increase access to water	5M	Feb 2024

Wajir	All	Repair and rehabilitation of water sources destroyed by floods	All sub-counties	CGW, partners	Restoration of water sources	5M	Feb 2024
		Distribution of water storage facilities		SCI, ALDEF	Increase access to water	3M	Feb 2024
Education sector							
Wajir	All	Enhanced school enrolment drive	All sub-counties	SCI, UNICEF, GoK	Increase school enrolment rate	3M	Feb 2024
		Provision of bursary	All sub-counties	CDF, WCG	Increase school enrolment rate	50M	Feb 2024
		Distribution of learning materials	All sub-counties	SCI, GoK	Increase school enrolment rate	10M	Feb 2024
		Repair and rehabilitation of flood damaged school infrastructure	All sub-counties	GoK, partners	Increase school enrolment rate	5M	Feb 2024

5.3 Recommended Interventions

5.3.1 Food Interventions

Table 18: Recommended food interventions

Sub County	Intervention	No. of BF	Implementers	Required Resources	Available Resources	Time Frame
All	Cash transfer	3,000 HH	Gov't/Partners	300M	00	Feb-May 2024
All	Relief food distribution	10,000 HH	Gov't/Partners	100M	00	Feb-May 2024

5.3.2 Non-Food Interventions

Table 19: Recommended non-food interventions

Sector	Intervention	Location	Time-frame	Implementers
Agriculture/ Food Security	Cash transfer/relief food distribution for food insecure HHs	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, NG, Partners
	Targeted assistance to farmers whose farms were destroyed by floods	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	

	Support to farmers during harvesting	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, NG, Partners
	Distribution of seeds and other farm inputs for irrigated agriculture	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, NG, Partners
	Up-scaled extension and tractor services	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, NG, partners
	Pest control & management	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, NG, partners
Livestock	Restocking	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW-DALF and partners
	Prepositioning of RVF and other essential vaccines	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW-DALF and partners
	Disease surveillance and monitoring, especially RVF outbreak	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW-DALF & partners
	Targeted vaccinations	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW-DALF and partners
Health	Scale up disease surveillance	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW (health), partners
	Scale up wash interventions and public health promotion	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW (health), partners
	Mass screening	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW (health), partners
	Provision of treated mosquito nets	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
	Strengthening & scale up of IMAM surge	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
	Mapping of high- risk health facilities in case of El-Nino	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
	Prepositioning of medical supplies and nutritional commodities	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
	Intensify integrated health and nutrition outreaches	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
Water	Provision of storage tanks	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW (Water) & partners
	Repair and rehabilitation of destroyed boreholes	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW (Water) & partners
	Provision of water treatment chemicals	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW (Water) & partners
	Water supply management and coordination	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
	Repair and rehabilitation of flood damaged water sources	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	CGW, partners
Education	Repair and rehabilitation of destroyed school infrastructure	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	MoE, CGW, partners
	School enrolment drive	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	MoE, CGW, partners
	Provision of dignity kits	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	MoE, CGW, partners
	Provision of water storage facilities	All sub-counties	Feb-June 2024	MoE, CGW, partners