A Vision 2030 Flagship Project

National Drought Management Authority
Samburu County
Drought Early Warning Bulletin for August 2025

AUGUST EWS PHASE

Drought Situation & EW Phase Classification
The drought situation was at normal phase and stable

Biophysical indicators
The county experienced moderate rains in August while the vegetation greenness as depicted by the VCI was normal to above normal greenness.

Socio Economic Indicators (Impact Indicators)

Production indicators
Livestock body condition for most livestock species was good while milk production was normal and stable.

Access indicators
Livestock prices remained above short-term average while cereal prices remained below the short-term average and stable.

Utilization indicators
About 47 percent of sampled children did not have acceptable food consumption score. Households were applying reduced food coping strategies in responding to food consumption gaps. Nutrition status was within the expected range across the county.

Early Warning Phase Classification

LIVELIHOOD ZONE		EW PHASE	TRENDS
PASTORAL		NORMAL	STABLE
AGRO- PASTORAL		NORMAL	STABLE
COUNTY		NORMAL	STABLE
Biophysical Indicators	**Value**	**LTA**	**Normal ranges**
Average rainfall %	122%	27mm	80-120%
VCI-3month	Normal vegetation greenness		Normal vegetation greenness
Percent of water in the pans	Pastoral	>50%	>80
	Agro-pastoral	>80%	
Production indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Livestock Migration Pattern		Normal	Normal
Livestock Body Condition (BCS)		Good	Good
Milk Production (Ltr /HH/Month)		1.6	>1.5
Livestock deaths (for drought)		No deaths	No deaths
Access Indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Terms of Trade (ToT)		68	≥56
Water trekking distance (km)		6	≤6.2
Grazing distance (km)		9	≤13
Cattle price in Kshs		28,300	21,400
Maize price (Kshs/kg)		67	81
Utilization indicators		**Value**	**Normal ranges**
Milk Consumption (Litres/HH/day)		1.4	≥1
Nutrition status by MUAC (% at risk)		23	≤26
CSI		Stressed	54%
		Crisis	27%
FCS		Acceptable	53%
		Borderline	45%
		Poor	2%

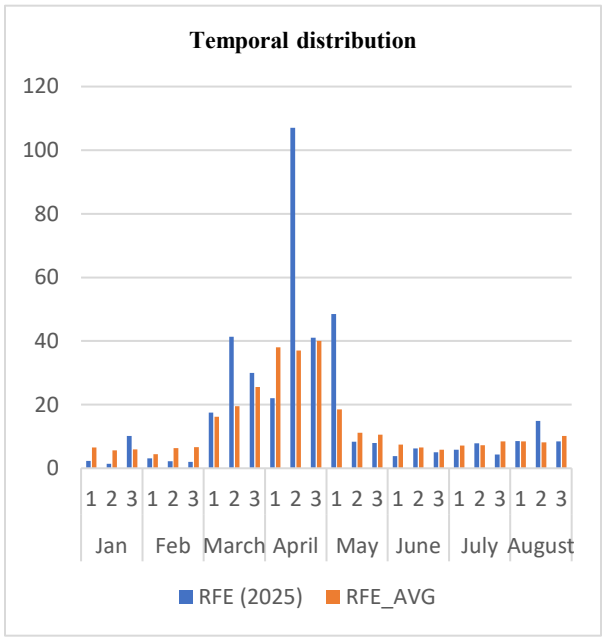
▪ Short rains harvests ▪ Short dry spell ▪ Reduced milk yields ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Land preparation			▪ Planting/Weeding ▪ Long rains ▪ High Calving Rate ▪ Milk Yields Increase			▪ Long rains harvests ▪ A long dry spell ▪ Land preparation ▪ Increased HH Food Stocks ▪ Kidding (Sept)			▪ Short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

1.0 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1.1 Rainfall performance

1.1.1 Amount of rainfall received and distribution

Light to moderate rains were observed during the month from the second dekad of August particularly within Samburu Central sub county while most parts in Samburu East and Samburu North sub counties received minimal rains of less than 20 mm (Figure 1). The total amount of rains received in August were slightly above the long-term average (LTA) but fell within the seasonal range at this time of the year (Figure 2).



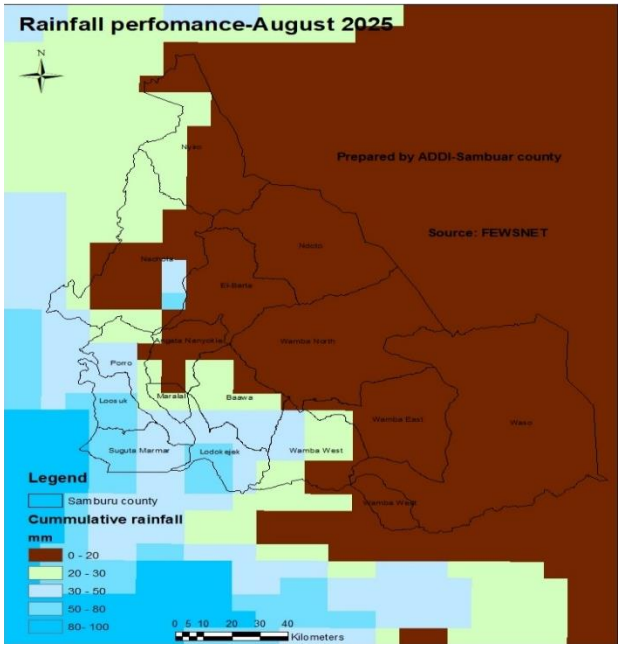


Figure 1: Rainfall performance

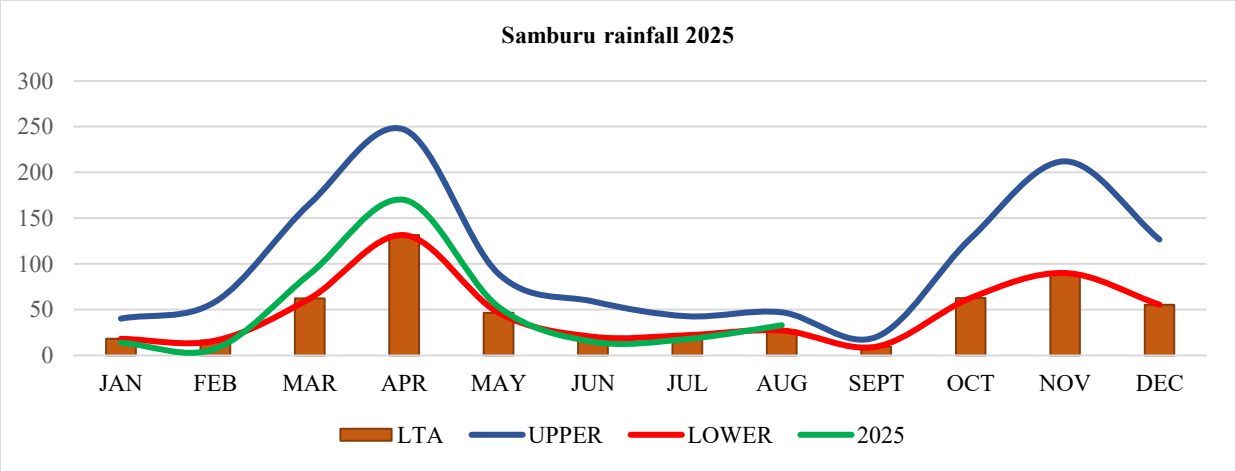


Figure 2: Seasonal trend

2.0 IMPACTS ON VEGETATION AND WATER

2.1 Vegetation condition

2.1.1 Vagetation condition by VCI and NDVI

The vegetation condition as depicted by the 3-month vegetation condition index (VCI) indicated normal to above normal conditions across the county (Figure 3). On the other hand, the vegetation condition as depicted by the natural differential vegetation index (NDVI) indicated over 100 percent of normal vegetation greenness across the county. The June-July-August (JJA) rains have contributed in enhancing vegetation conditions in the county.

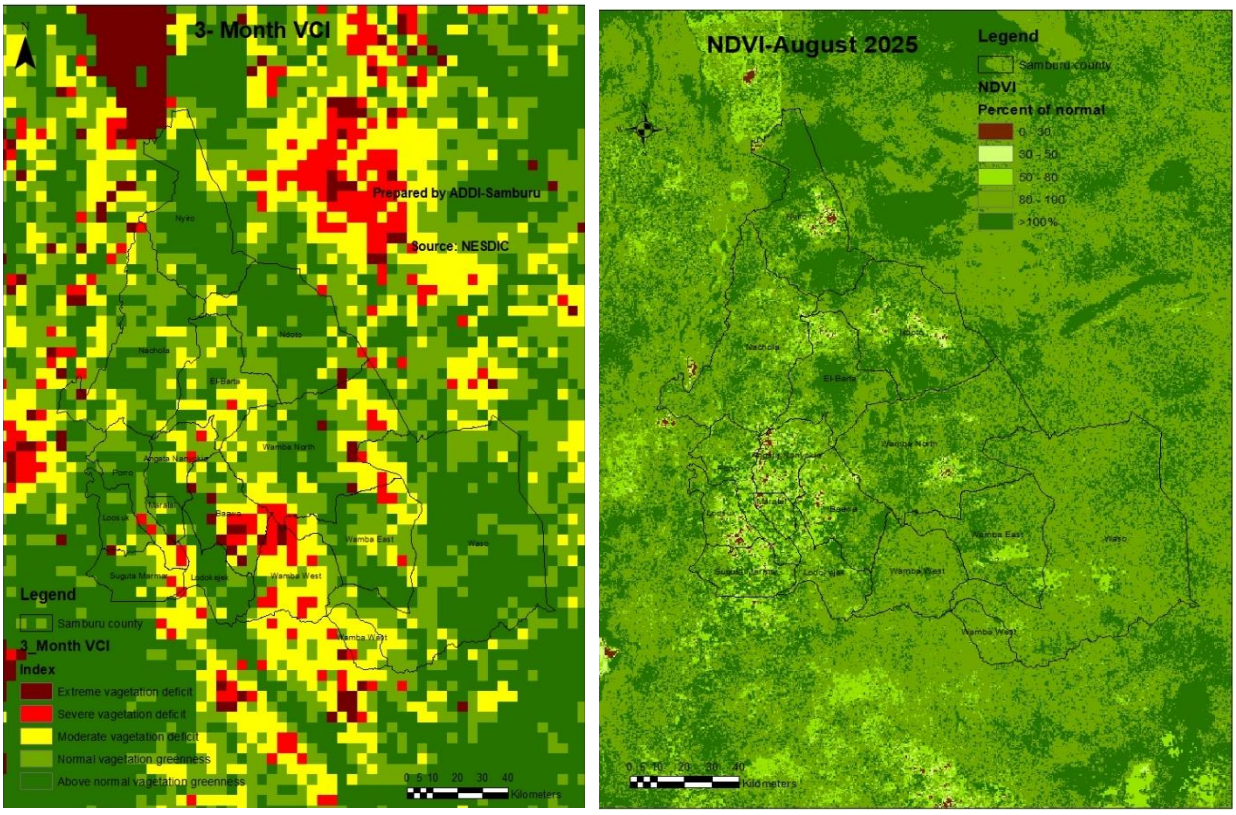


Figure 3: VCI and NDVI

2.1.2 Field observations (Pasture and browse conditions)

Quality and quantity

Pastures and browse were relatively in good conditions across the two main livelihood zones apart from some pockets in Wamba North, Wamba West, Wamba East and Waso wards whereby pasture regeneration was being affected by land degradation, presence of invasive species and poor grazing management practices (Figure 4). The pastures were expected to last for more than two months in most of the wards.

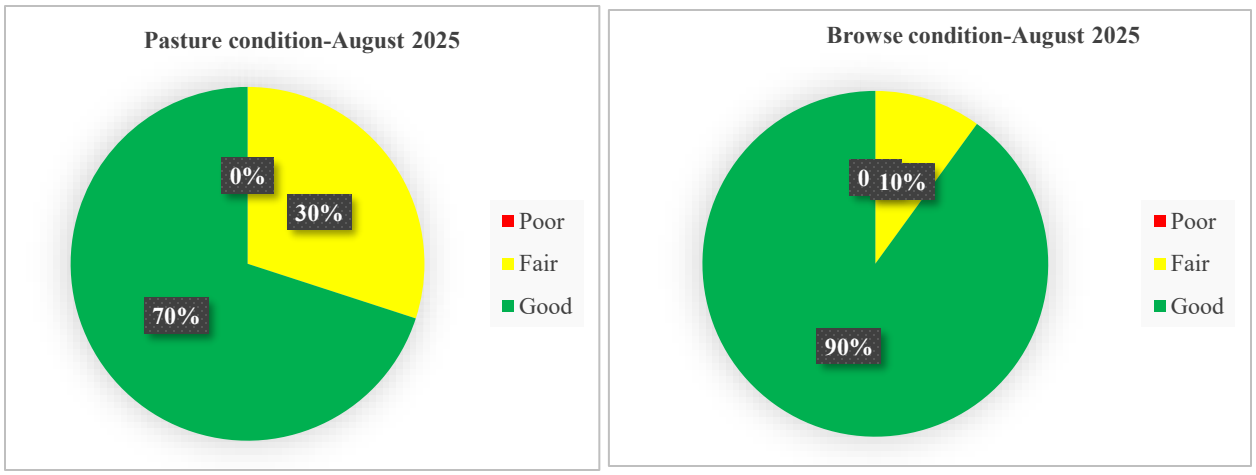


Figure 4: Forage conditions

2.2 Water resource

2.2.1 Main water sources

The main water sources that were being used during the month under review were traditional river wells, boreholes, water pans and some springs in Samburu North sub county (Figure 5). Most of the seasonal rivers in the county were well recharged by the rains received in March-April-May (MAM) and June-July-August (JJA) seasons hence being the most relied source of water through sand scooping in accessing water stored under the sand. Most water pans in Agro-pastoral livelihood zone were more than 80 percent full while those found in Pastoral areas were 50-70 percent full. Most of the water pans were most likely to last for at least two months.

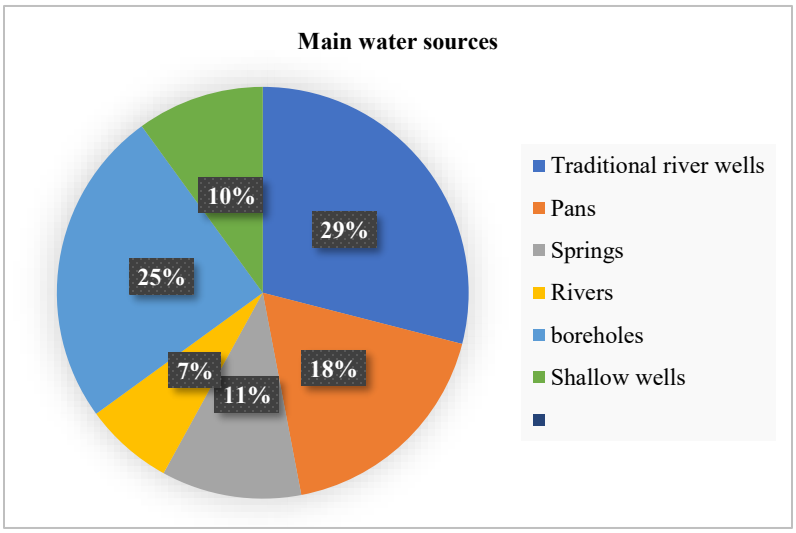


Figure 5: Main water sources

2.2.2 Household access and utilization

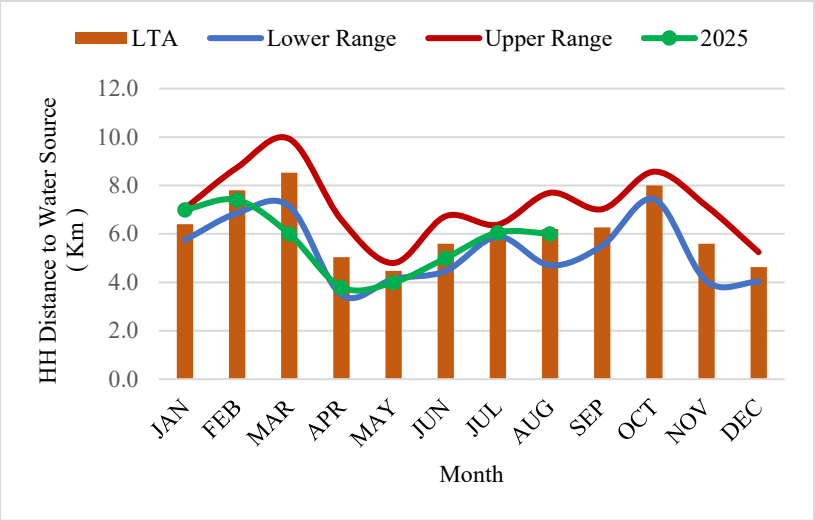


Figure 6: Household Trekking distances to water sources

The average two-way return distances from households to watering points remained stable at six kilometers when compared to the previous month of July (Figure 6). The return distances were almost the same as the LTA and were within the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest distances were observed in Pastoral livelihood zone at an average of seven kilometers while the least return distances were observed in Agro-pastoral livelihood zone at an average of two kilometers. Some of the pans in Wamba North ward that had no water last month had received some water as a result of the August rains.

2.2.3 Livestock access (Grazing distances to water points)

The average two-way return distances from watering points to grazing fields declined by 25 percent in comparison to the previous month of July and this was attributed to the JJA rains that have boosted pasture regeneration across the county (Figure 7). The grazing distances were less than the LTA by 31 percent and were contained within the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest grazing distances were observed in Pastoral areas at an average of nine kilometers while Agro-pastoral areas had the least grazing distances at an average of eight kilometers. Insecurity issues (Tensions/fear) continued to be the main limiting factor in pasture access in Agro-pastoral areas hence contributing to the high grazing distances. There are a number of fields that contain high quality pastures in Poro, Suguta and Loosuk wards that are out of access due to insecurity issues

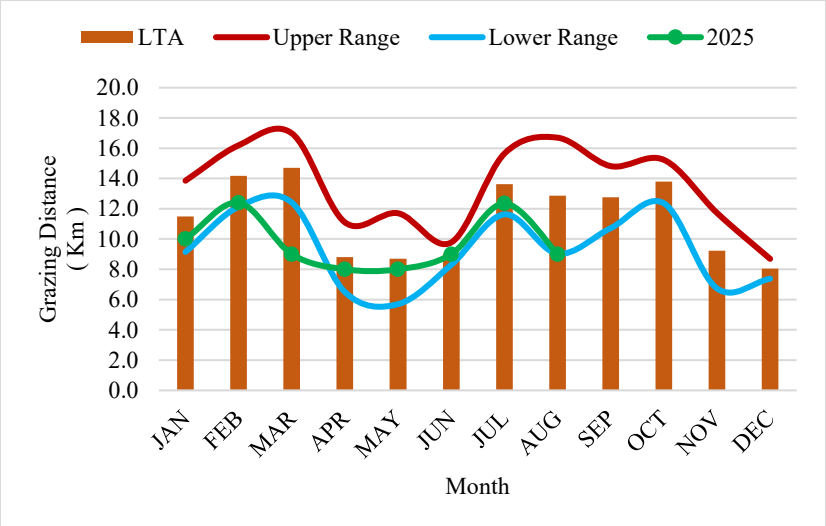


Figure 7: Grazing distances

3.0 PRODUCTION INDICATORS

3.1 Livestock production

3.1.1 Livestock body condition

Livestock body condition for the small stocks was good while for the large stock, the body condition ranged from fair to good (Figure 8). The prevailing good pastures contributed to the improved body condition across the county. However, incidents of livestock diseases particularly foot and mouth (FMD) were hampering improvement in body condition for cattle.

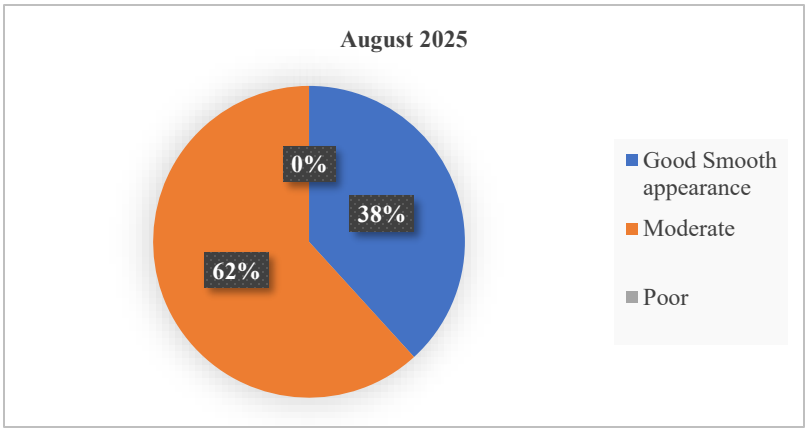


Figure 8: Livestock body condition-Cattle

3.1.2 Livestock diseases and deaths

Incidents of foot and mouth disease were still being reported across the county. Other diseases that were being reported include pest de petit ruminants (PPR) in shoat, contagious caprine pleuropneumonia (CCPP) in goats.

3.1.3 Milk production

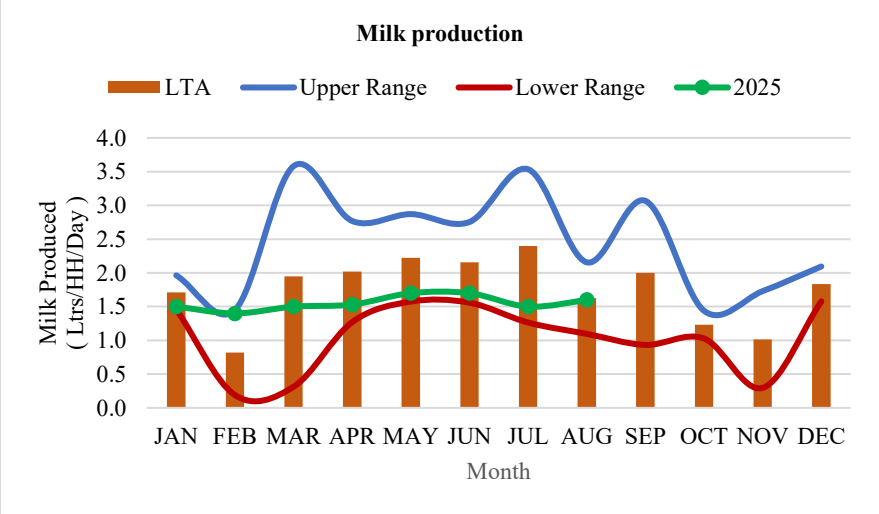


Figure 9: Milk production

The average household milk production remained stable at 1.6 litres/household/day when compared to the previous month (Figure 9). The current production rate was at per with the LTA and was contained within the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest production rate was observed in Agro-pastoral areas at an average of three litres/household/day while Pastoral areas had the least production rate at an average of 1.5 litres/household/day. About 24 percent of the sampled households reported milk production compared to 35 percent in the previous month.

3.2 Rain fed crop production

3.2.1 Stage and condition of food crops

The maize crop that was planted in good time was at tussling to harvesting stage. However, a number of farms reported fall army worm infestation which is likely to affect 10 percent of the expected maize yield. Some farmers did late planting of maize crop and most of it is likely to fail as the MAM rains ended when the crop was in critical need of water. The exacted maize yield from the MAM season is projected to be above LTA.

4.0 MARKET PERFORMANCE

4.1 Livestock Prices

4.1.1 Cattle Prices

The average cattle price for a medium sized animal declined by 10 percent to retail at Kshs 28,300 when compared to the previous month (Figure 10). The price was above the short-term average (STA) by 32 percent though it still fell outside the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest price was registered in Agro-pastoral livelihood zone at an average of Kshs 36,000/head while Pastoral areas had the least price at an average of Kshs 26,000/head. The decline in prices could be attributed to impacts of livestock diseases which are impacting negatively on market functionality.

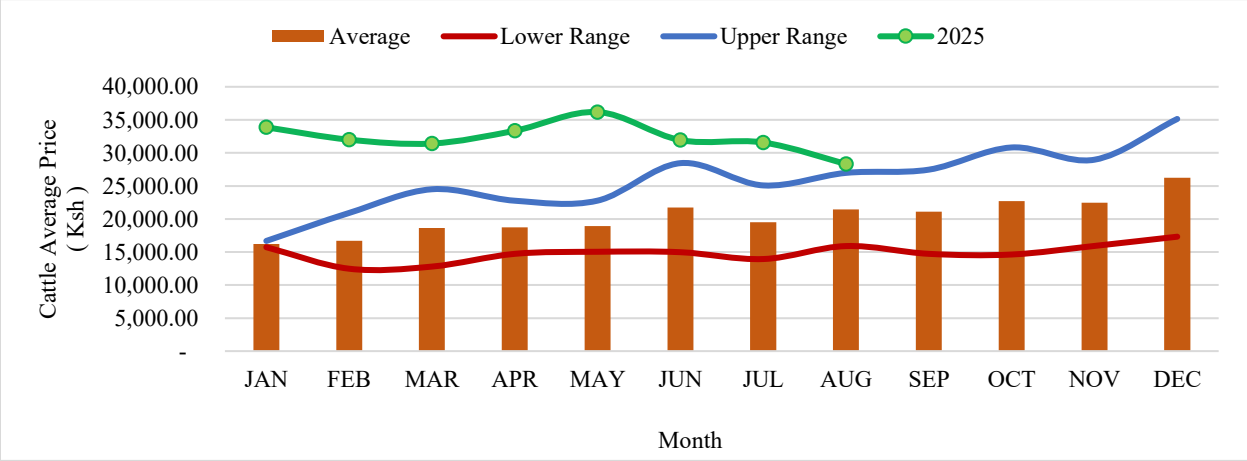


Figure 10: Cattle price

4.1.2 Goat Prices

The average goat price for a medium sized animal declined by six percent in comparison to the previous month to retail at an average of Kshs 4,535 (Figure 11). The current price was above the STA by 13 percent and fell within the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest price was observed in Agro-pastoral areas at an average of Kshs 6,500/head while Pastoral areas had the least price at an average of Kshs 4,100.

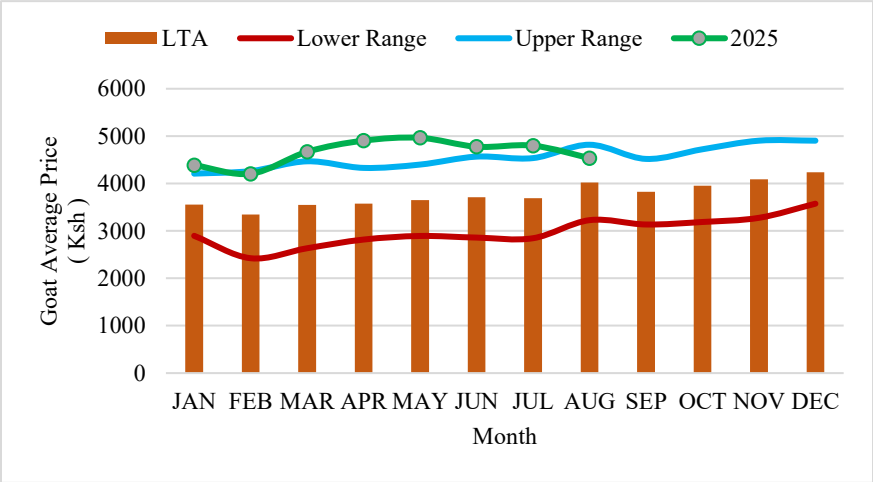


Figure 11: Goat price

4.2 Crop Prices

4.2.1 Maize

The average maize price rose marginally by three percent to retail at an average of Kshs 67/kg in comprison to the previous month of July (Figure 12). The price was 17 percent below the STA and fell within the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest price was observed in Pastoral areas at an average of Kshs 67/kg while the Agro-pastoral areas had lower prices at an average of Kshs 65/kg. The stability in maize prices was attributted to the ongoing maize harvest that was taking place both within the county as well as in the neighbouring counties.

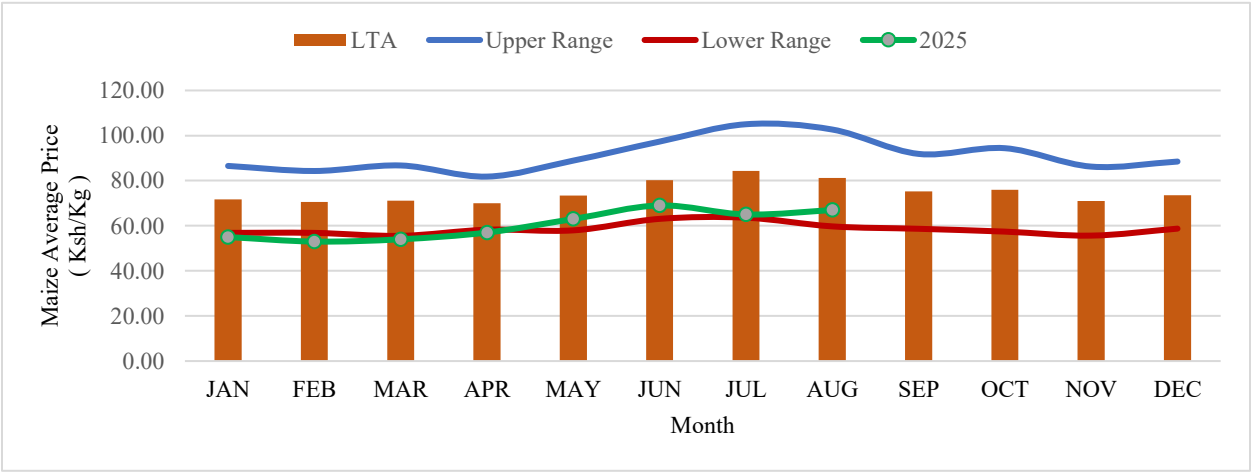


Figure 12: Maize price

4.3 Terms of trade (ToTs)

The terms of trade declined by 17 percent in comparison to the previous month of July whereby a farmer was able to access about 68 kgs of maize in August in exchange for one goat (Figure 13). The terms of trade were above the LTA by 21 percent and fell within the seasonal range at this time of the year. The highest TOTs were observed in Agro-pastoral areas at 100 while the Pastoral areas had the least ToTs at 61. The slight decline in ToTs could be attributed to reduction in goat prices in August.

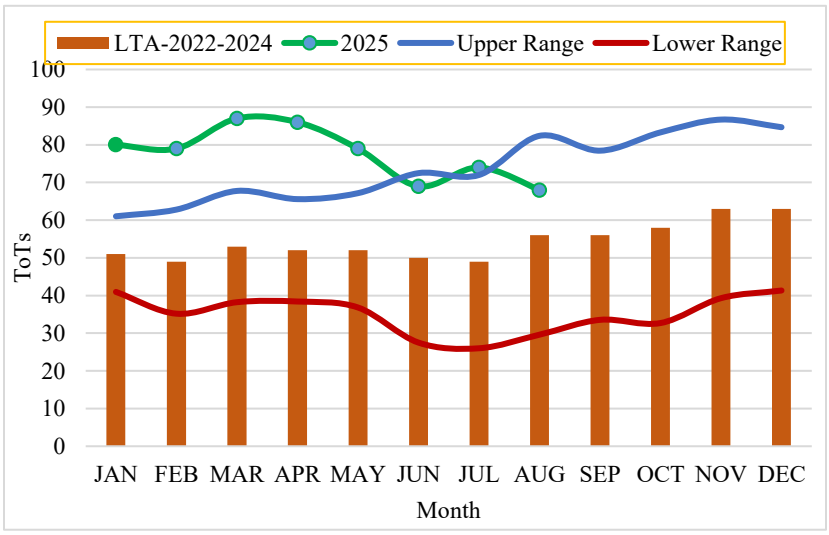


Figure 13: Terms of trade

5.0 FOOD CONSUMPTION AND NUTRITION STATUS

5.1 Milk consumption

There was a slight improvement of about eight percent in milk consumption at the household level when compared to the previous month whereby about 1.4 litres of milk was consumed per household/day (Figure 14). The consumption rate was above the LTA by 40 percent and fell outside the seasonal range at this time of the year.

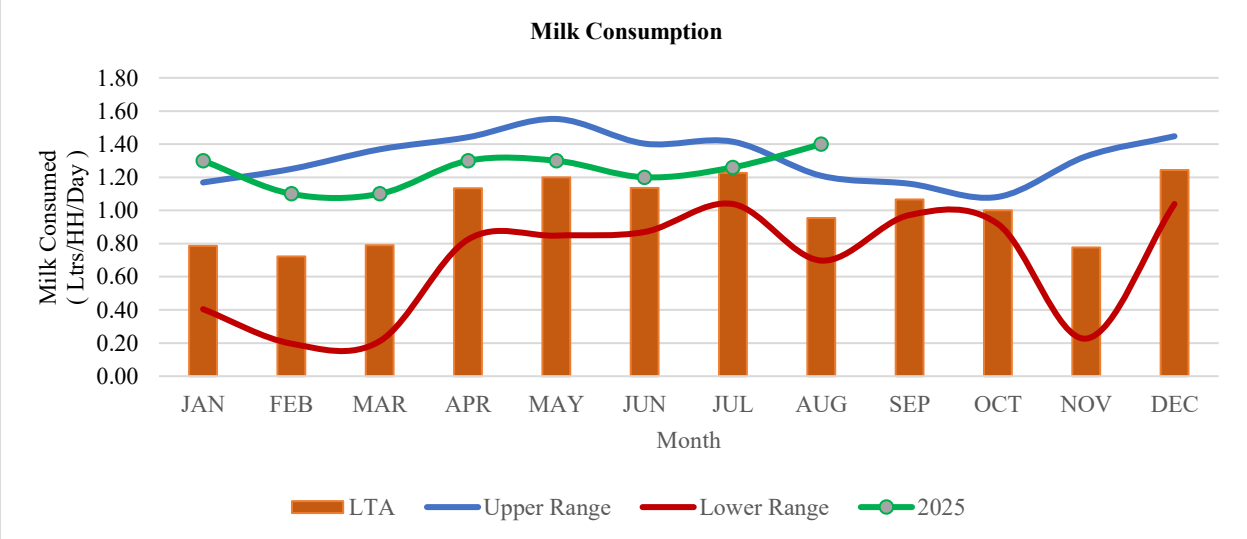


Figure 14: Milk consumption

5.2 Food consumption

5.2.1 Food consumption score

Food consumption score is a composite score based on dietary diversity, food frequency and relative nutrition importance of different food groups based on a seven-day recall of food consumed at household level (World Food Program Vulnerability Analysis & Mapping). Acceptable food consumption indicates consumption of staples and vegetables everyday accompanied with meat or dairy products while borderline food consumption indicates consumption of diet that consist of staples and vegetables and rarely do consume meat or dairy products. Poor food consumption means that households are consuming staples and vegetables every day and never or very seldom are consuming protein rich food such as meat and dairy.

By August 2025, about 53, 45 and two percent of the sampled households had acceptable, borderline and poor food consumption scores respectively. By livelihood analysis (Figure 15), about 53, 44 and three percent of the sampled households in Pastoral areas had acceptable, borderline and poor food consumption scores respectively. In Agro-pastoral zone, 50 percent of the sampled households had borderline food consumption score.

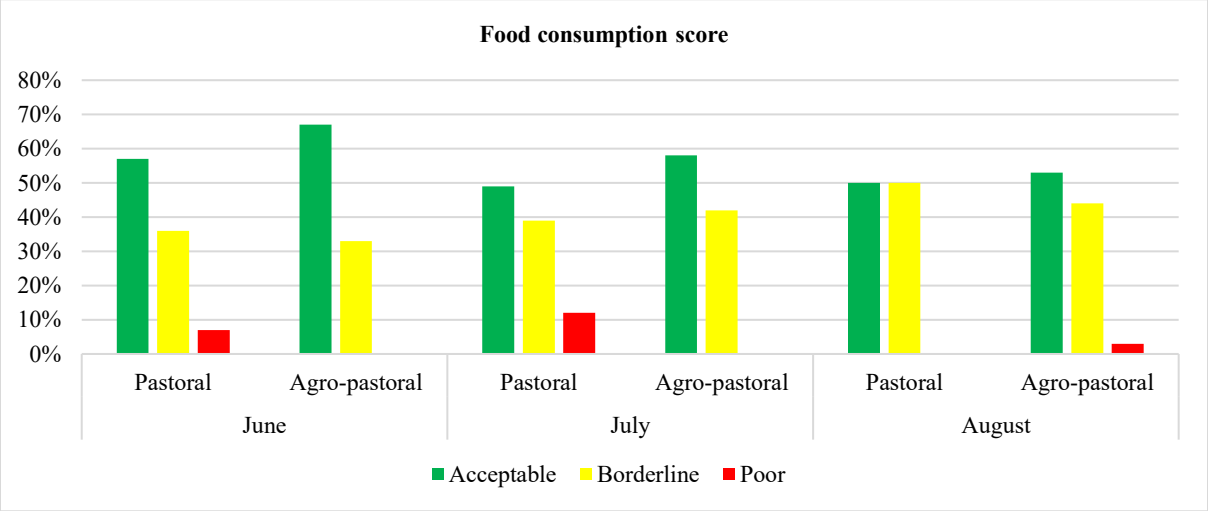


Figure 15: Food consumption score

5.3 Health and Nutrition Status

5.3.1 Health

Incidents of upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) were reported across the county and this was associated with the prevailing cold spells during the JJA season.

5.3.1 Mid upper-arm circumference (MUAC 125-134 mm)

The proportion of children at risk of malnutrition remained almost the same at 23 percent in comparison to the previous month (Figure 16). The current rate of malnutrition was less than LTA by 12 percent and was contained within the seasonal range at this time of the year. Most of these cases were found in Pastoral livelihood zone. The stability in nutrition status was attributed to improved food consumption at the household level whereby households were consuming milk, cereals and assorted green vegetables.

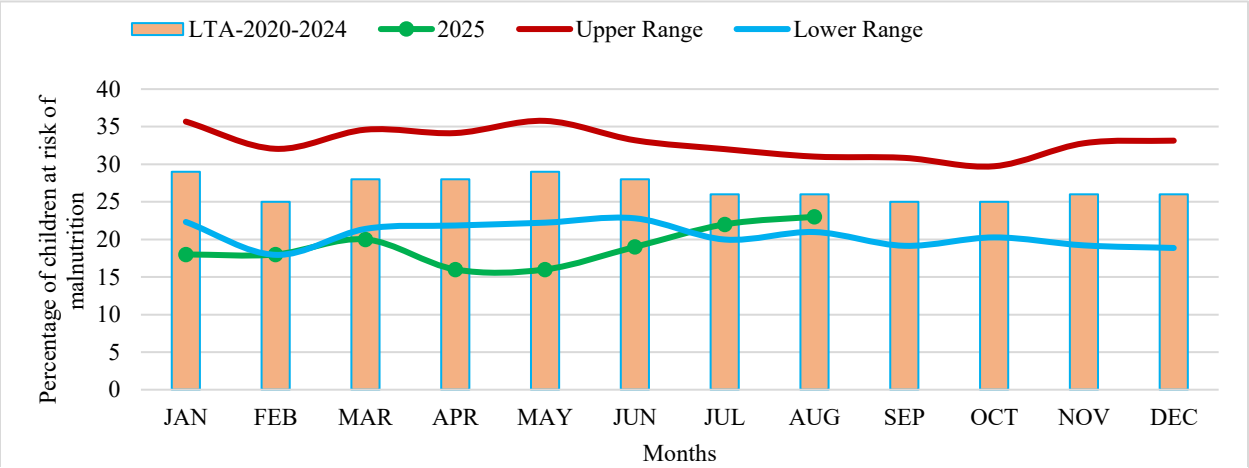


Figure 16: Nutrition status by MUAC

5.4 Coping strategy

5.4.1 Reduced coping strategy index (rCSI)

The coping strategy index measures the frequency and severity of the food consumption behaviors the households engage in due to food shortage in the seven days recall period. During the month under review, about 40, 44 and 16 percent of the sampled households in the county were applying none/minimal, stressed and crisis coping strategies respectively. By livelihood analysis (Figure 17), about 27, 54 and 19 percent of the sampled households in Pastoral livelihood zone applied none-coping, stressed and crisis coping strategies respectively. Similarly, nealy all the sampled households in Agro-pastoral livelihood zone were not applying any coping strategy (None-coping).

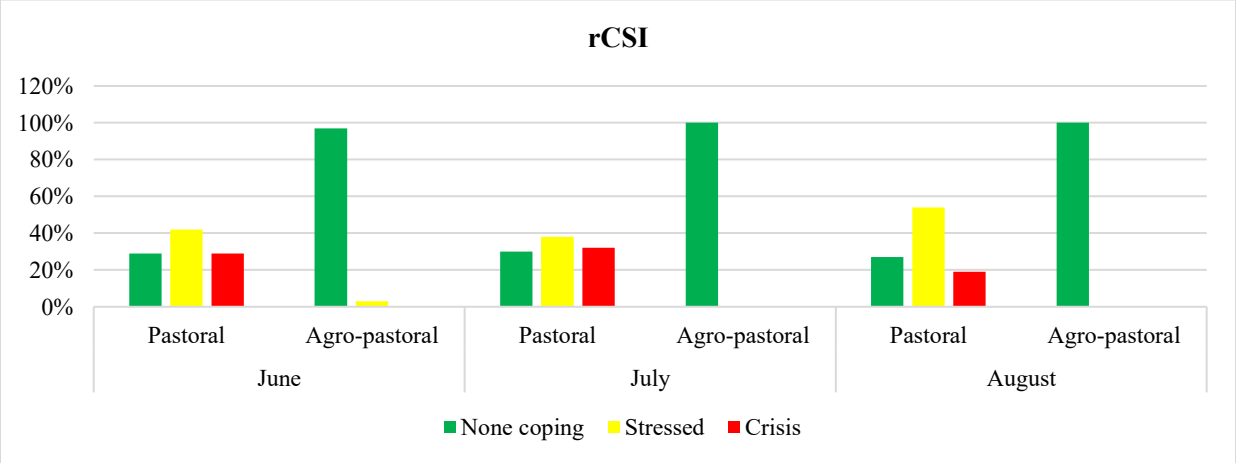


Figure 17: Reduced coping strategies

5.4.2 Livelihood coping strategy (LCS)

Livelihood coping strategies are strategies that households use when they are not able to sufficiently access food and/or income to purchase food. By August 2025, about 82 percent of the sampled households in the county were not applying any livelihood coping strategies (Figure 18). About five and 13 percent of the sampled households were applying stressed and crisis livelihood coping strategies respectively some of which include spending of savings and borrowing money to buy food.

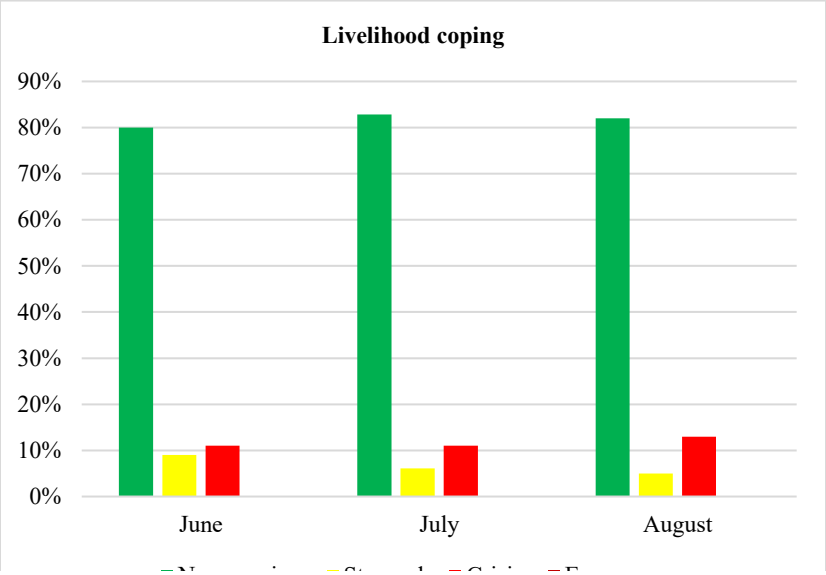


Figure 18: Livelihood coping strategies

6.0 EMERGING ISSUES

6.1 Insecurity/Conflict/Human Displacement.

The county was relatively calm with no incidents of active conflict being reported in August. However, the existing tension in conflict prone areas continued to be the major limiting factor in accessing some pastures and water in parts of Samburu Central and Samburu North sub counties.

6.2 Migration

There were minimal internal livestock migration towards the wet grazing areas across the county. Animals were moving towards Logorate, Longewan, Lolmolog, Loosuk, Pura, Lokeek Sapuki, Loibor Ngare, and Kirisia forest in Agro Agro-pastoral livelihood zone. In Pastoral areas, animals were moving to Ndoto, Nyiro Ngilai mountains, Mathew ranges and Laon.

6.3 Food security prognosis

The J.J.A rains are expected to have some positive impact on forage resources particularly in Agro-pastoral livelihood zone which received some significant rains in August. The forage condition is therefore expected to improve due to the ongoing regeneration hence enhancing feed availability for livestock. Grazing distances are therefore expected to remain stable and below the LTA for the next one month. Livestock body condition is expected to remain mostly in good condition for all livestock species apart from those that have been affected by outbreak of livestock diseases. Milk production is expected to remain stable particularly for those households that are milking the small stocks like goats. Food availability especially for cereals (maize) and green vegetables is expected to be enhanced more so in Agro-pastoral livelihood zone due to the ongoing crop harvesting.
The rains are also expected to have some relief on water sources hence enhancing water availability for household and livestock consumption. Trekking distances to watering points from households are expected to remain stable and within the expected range in the next one month.

6.4 Livestock Prices

Livestock prices are expected to remain stable and above the short-term average for the next one month as a result of the prevailing good livestock body condition while cereal prices particularly for maize may come down due to the expected increase in cereal stocks emanating from the ongoing harvesting. Terms of trade are likely to improve for Pastoral households due to the expected decline in cereal prices.

Food consumption at the household level especially in Agro-pastoral areas is expected to improve in the next one month as a result of improved dietary diversity given the ongoing harvesting of various crops including maize and green vegetables. Moreover, reduced food prices within the local markets will ease food access in Pastoral areas hence allowing more access to a variety of nutritious food stuffs. Majority of the households are expected not to apply distress coping strategies as they are expected to have minimal food consumption gaps. Nutrition status of household members is expected to remain within the seasonal range in the next one month.

7.0 ONGOING INTERVENTIONS

Sector	Drought Intervention	Targeted Beneficiaries	Estimated Cost (KES)	Implementer	Sub county/Wards
Social safety nets/food aid	HSNP cash transfer	8,011 HHs each getting Ksh 2,700	21,629,700	NDMA, KCB Bank	County wide
Agriculture					
Livestock	Livestock restoking	2,810 gala goats distributed to vulnerable households		National government in collaboration with County government	Countywide
	Livestock insurance	6000 HHs		Samburu county government	
Water	Repair and Rehabilitation of boreholes	1670		Samburu county government	Samburu West (Suguta) Nkusoro borehole
		670		Samburu county government	Samburu West (Loosuk) Loirangai borehole
		2100		Samburu county government	Samburu West (Lodokejek) Ljoro Lelera

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Sector	Recommended Interventions	Sub county/ Wards
Water	• Enhance rain water harvesting for both households and institutions	Countywide
Agriculture	• Enhance pest control activities especially for Fall army worms which have attacked maize crops • Enhance soil and water conservation initiatives	Countywide
Livestock	• Rehabilitation of degraded rangeland and utilization and management of invasive species (certified pasture seeds provision, Clearance of invasive species 100000acres • Management of Livestock diseases and outbreaks (FMD, CCPP, PPR). • Enhance pasture establishment and harvesting initiatives	Countywide
Security	• Enhanced security patrols in hot spot areas	Samburu North, Samburu Central
Drought Risk Management	• Review and updating of drought contingency plans • Investment in resilience building activities	Countywide