With a gradual decline in the share of households with acceptable food consumption since May, the food security situation is expected to deteriorate in December through January. Household reliance on markets for food will increase in spite of the rising retail prices for staple foods across major markets in Karamoja. Similarly, with the anticipated low harvest following heavy rains, employment of negative food coping strategies is likely to remain stable or slightly increase.

**Recommendations**

- There is a need to closely monitor the food security situation across Karamoja, more so in Moroto, Napak and Abim;
- With increasing prices for staple foods, there is need to continue to monitor commodity markets and food supplies on markets.
In November, the overall food stock level was at 28% (Fig 1). The food stock level was above the sub-regional average in Moroto (73%), Kotido (39%) and Abim (32%). Among male headed households, the proportion of households with food stock was slightly higher compared to their female counterparts (Fig 1).

Compared to 2017, the overall food stock level was below by 42%, with a reduction noted in nearly all districts, more so in Kaabong (83%), Abim (68%) and Nakapiripirit (61%). Food stock levels decreased due to a relatively low harvest. However, Moroto observed an increase in the food stock levels by 23%.

Figure 2 reveals that 87% of the households had difficulty in accessing food, the proportion was slightly higher for female headed households. Similarly, households with chronically ill and disabled heads had had more difficulties in accessing food.

Available stocks are expected to last for about 21 days, which implies majority of the households will highly depend on markets for food.

Overall, households purchased their food stocks from markets (59%) and own production (39%) (Fig 3). Market purchase was the main source of food stocks for households in Kotido (100%) and Moroto (91%), while in Abim, Amudat, Kaabong and Napak, own production was the main source.

“Too much rain destroyed food and the sun as well now we depend on food from the market mainly”, a female respondent from Aninatar, Abim.

Figure 1: Food stock levels

Figure 2: Faced difficulty in accessing food in the past 7 days

Figure 3: Main sources of food stocks

Figure 4: Trends on households with food stocks (2017-2018)
Overall, 43 percent of the households had acceptable food consumption in November, while 30% and 27% had poor and borderline food consumption, respectively (Fig 5). Nakapiripirit (96%) and Kotido (71%) had the highest proportion of households with acceptable food consumption. Compared to September, Moroto observed a significant decline in the share of households with acceptable food consumption, possibly due to a low harvest.

Male and female headed households had almost similar proportions of households with acceptable food consumption (Fig 5). The proportion among households with disabled and chronically ill heads was below the sub-regional average.

Compared to November 2017, the overall proportion of households with acceptable food consumption fell by 35%, but markedly in Moroto (78%), Kaabong (48%) and Abim (47%). This is attributed to a relatively low harvest following heavy rains.

The main consumed foods by households in November were cereals, legumes and oil (Fig 6). There was a marked decline in the consumption of cereals, vegetables and oil during the month, compared to September. Results also show that consumption of fruits; milk and dairy products and fish continue to be low.

The share of households that were reportedly highly coping was above the sub-regional average among households on EVH programme and those receiving WFP assistance (Fig 8).
Employment of negative food coping strategies remained high, with the common food coping strategies adopted by households in November being consuming less preferred or less expensive foods (92%), reducing the number of meals eaten in a day (90%) and limiting portion sizes at meals (88%) (Fig 9).

In November, 39 percent of households sold productive assets to meet their food needs (Fig 10). Nakapiripirit (89%) and Kotido (71%) had significant shares. Sale of productive assets was slightly higher among female headed households. Results in November also revealed that, sale of productive assets was significant among households enrolled in EVH programme and among those with elderly heads.

In November, majority (88 percent) of the households had at least 1 to 3 income earners, and only 6 percent reportedly had no income earner (Fig 12).

Households mainly earned from – Agricultural wage labor (15%) and brewing (12%). The proportion of agricultural wage labor earnings was higher in Abim (74 percent), while the proportion of brewing earnings was highest in Moroto (44 percent) (Fig 13).

“The little people harvested, they ended up selling it to buy other things in the house causing hunger after some months”, a male respondent from Oyaro, Abim.

**The Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI) measures food insecurity by considering the activities undertaken by households to manage food shortages. More information on rCSI can be found at [http://resources.vam.wfp.org/node/6](http://resources.vam.wfp.org/node/6).**
The share of households selling food crops to earn incomes was significant in Nakapiripirit, Kotido and Amudat (Fig 14). Sale of food crops was higher among male headed households, compared to their female counter-parts.

Other income sources encompass: Fishing/Hunting; Food Assistance; Salary; Income derived from sale of Livestock and/or animal products; Remittances; Food crop production/Sale; Pensions, Government allowances; Gifts/begging; Cash crop production/ Sales and Handicrafts

Household Debt Prevalence

The overall debt prevalence was 54 percent in November. The debt prevalence was significantly high in Abim (75%) and Kaabong (70%). Compared to September, there was a decline in the overall debt prevalence by 19%. The decrease was significant in Moroto (37%) and Napak (34%).

In November, the debt prevalence among female headed households was above the sub-region average (Fig 15). Similarly, households with chronically ill and elderly heads had a higher debt prevalence.

Figure 15 also reveals that the debt prevalence for households with poor and borderline food consumption was above the sub-region average.

The main reason for debt was — to buy food (40%) and pay school and/or educational costs (29%) (Fig 17). Household reliance on debt for food was high in Nakapiripirit, Moroto and Amudat (Fig 16). The share of households borrowing to meet their food needs was more among male headed households compared to their female counter-parts.

Agricultural wage labor remains the top most income source for female headed households.

Other reasons for debt include: cover health expenses; buy agricultural inputs, buy or rent land, buy or rent animals, buy or rent or renovate a flat/house, pay for social events/ ceremonies, vehicle purchase & settling court case.
In November, the average retail price for maize grain and sorghum were above October average levels by 14% and 16%, respectively (Fig 19). The price increase was driven by reduced supplies on markets following a relatively low harvest.

Overall, the average retail prices for cereals continued to be below 2017 and the long-term average levels.

However, the ongoing harvest is projected to be lower compared to the 2017 seasonal harvest, which will likely result to a gradual increase in the prices for cereals in December through January.

The gradual increase in the retail prices for staple foods will have a significant impact on household access to food, particularly among female headed households due to high dependence on agricultural wage labor. In November, data showed that 24% of female headed households reportedly derived their incomes from agricultural wage labor.

“Food is very expensive and scare because the sun affected the productivity”, a Female respondent from Otalabar, Abim

WFP implements a Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) at Health Facilities. Village Health Teams (VHTs) identify moderately malnourished individuals whom they refer to Health Centers for both treatment and enrolment to SFP. These individuals receive nutritious foods. Admissions to SFP provide an indication of the levels of malnutrition in the region.

The total admissions of moderately malnourished individuals to SFP increased from 4,601 in September to 5,324 in November (Fig 20). More females (3,444) than males were admitted to SFP in November. SFP total admissions compared to the same period in 2017 were above by 13%.
In November, Kaabong (1,421) and Nakapiripirit (1,163) had the highest admissions of moderately malnourished individuals to SFP. Abim (321) and Moroto (181) continued to have the least admissions.

Overall, total admissions to SFP were above 2017 levels by 13 percent. The increase was significant in Abim (79%), Kaabong (47%) and Kotido (45%), and this is driven by a low harvest in 2018 compared to 2017 seasonal harvest. However, Moroto and Napak observed reductions in SFP.

Figure 21: Trends on admissions to SFP by district
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