While available food stocks are gradually depleting, majority of the households will heavily resort to market purchases even with the rising retail prices for staple foods across Karamoja. The increasing food prices due to an anticipated scarcity coupled with demand will limit household food access, indicating that, use of negative food coping strategies is expected to remain high in February through March.

Recommendations —

- There is a need to continue monitoring the food security situation, mainly in Moroto, Napak and Kaabong;
- Staple food prices need to be closely monitored, due to the gradual increase in prices;
- Communities have to be sensitized on food stock management, so that they can sparingly utilize the available stocks following a relatively below average harvest in 2018. This is specifically in Nakapiripirit.
January data indicates that majority (94 percent) of the households faced difficulty in meeting their food needs, with levels marginally higher among female headed households (Fig 1). Figure 4 indicates that food stock levels were fairly stable since May 2018.

Nakapiripirit (66 percent) and Amudat (40 percent) had higher stock levels (Fig 5). However, Moroto (4 percent) and Kaabong (8 percent) were worse off.

Male headed (31 percent) were relatively better than female headed households (23 percent). Stock levels among households with elderly and disabled heads were below the sub-regional average.

Comparing different consumption groups, only 13 and 21 percent of poor and borderline food consumption had food stocks, respectively (Fig 2).

Compared to January 2018, the overall stock levels in January 2019 reduced by 31 percent, due to a relatively below average harvest in 2018. The decline was significant in Abim (71 percent), Kaabong (66 percent) and Moroto (40 percent).

Own production (54 percent) and market purchase (42 percent) were the main sources of food stocks (Fig 3). Significant proportions of households in Amudat (75 percent), Kotido (92 percent) and Napak (58 percent) relied on markets.

“In my community, there is food in the stores, but very little and soon, we shall luck food. This is because the harvest was not favorable last season”, a male respondent from Losakucha, Kotido.

Figure 1: Faced difficulty in accessing food in the past 7 days

Figure 2: Food stock levels

Figure 3: Main sources of food stocks

Figure 4: Trends on food stocks, Karamoja (2018-2019)

Figure 5: Trends on households with food stocks, by district (2018-2019)
In January 2019, 44 percent of the households had acceptable food consumption, with about 56 percent having borderline and poor food consumption (Fig 6).

Figure 8 indicates Nakapiripirit (93 percent) and Moroto (53 percent) had the highest share of households with acceptable food consumption.

January 2019 data also revealed that female headed households and households whose heads were disabled were worse off (Fig 6).

Overall, the proportion of households reporting both borderline and poor food consumption were almost similar with November 2018 levels. Compared to the same period in 2018, there was a marginal increase by 7 percent (from 49 to 56 percent).

In January 2019, cereals, oil/fats and legumes were the most consumed food items. The consumption of fruits and milk remained low. January data also indicated that household consumption of vegetables was lower compared to both January 2018 and November 2018, by 15 percent.

“...people are resorting to gathering wild fruits and vegetables and additionally, our cattle from the neighboring Teso have been evacuated. So, life is hard with no food in my community”, a male respondent from Lochodemeu, Kotido

The overall use of negative food coping strategies marginally increased in January, compared to November 2018 (Fig 10), with majority of the households seemingly using food related coping strategies more frequently than usual.

In January, nearly all households reportedly consumed less preferred foods (99 percent), reduced number of meals (98 percent) and borrowed food (97 percent) (Fig 10).
The overall average reduced coping strategy index (rCSI) increased from 16 in November 2018 to 20 in January 2019 (Fig 12). The mean rCSI was marginally high among male (21) than female (19) headed households.

In January, about half (49 percent) of the overall households reportedly sold productive assets to buy food (Fig 11). The proportion was significant in Nakapiripirit (91 percent) and Kaabong (69 percent).

For male headed households (52 percent), the proportion of those that sold productive assets was above the sub-regional average. This is not surprising as men have more control over household assets, compared to their female counterparts.

Figure 12: Trends on the mean rCSI (Jan 2018-Jan 2019)

“Previously, there was food but as of now, we don’t have. People are now resorting to reducing the number of meals to at least one in a day”, a male respondent from Achegertolim, Nakapiripirit.

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.

Household Incomes

Figure 13 indicates almost all households had between 1 to 3 income earners.

In January 2019, households in Karamoja mainly earned from sale of food crops and remittances (14 percent each) (Fig 14). The proportions of households earning from agricultural wage labor was negligible as it is off season.

Figure 14 also reveals that the proportion of those earning from brewing local beer was above the sub-regional average among households with disabled (20 percent) and chronically ill (12 percent) heads.
Selling of crops was significantly higher in Nakapiripirit (92 percent) (Fig 15). Slightly more male (15 percent) than female (11 percent) headed households sold crops to earn incomes. Comparing different food groups, 28 percent of those with acceptable food consumption reportedly earned incomes from selling food crops.

Figure 14: Main income sources

**Other income sources encompasses:** Fishing/Hunting; Sale of Cash Crops; Agricultural wage labor; Non-agricultural wage labor; Sale of firewood and/or charcoal; Petty trade; Pensions, Government allowances; Salaried earners; Boda-Boda Ridding; Stone gravelling; and Sand mining.

January 2019 data reveals a marginal increase in the debt prevalence (from 54 percent in November to 58 percent in January 2019). The debt prevalence increased mainly in Moroto, Nakapiripirit, and Kotido by 30, 25, and 21 percent, respectively.

Female headed (62 percent) are slightly more in debt compared to males (57 percent). Similarly, households headed by chronically ill and elderly individuals had significant levels of debt (Fig 16).

Figure 19 indicates that the debt prevalence was above January 2019 levels in nearly all districts, more so in Nakapiripirit, Moroto and Kotido.

Households mainly borrowed to: buy food (47 percent), invest in business (16 percent) and cover health related expenses (15 percent) (Fig 17).

Figure 17 also indicates that among households headed by elderly (43 percent) and chronically ill (38 percent), borrowing was mainly to cover health related expenses.

Majority of the households in Nakapiripirit (77 percent) and Kaabong (64 percent) reportedly borrowed to buy food (Fig 18). Comparing different food consumption groups, the proportion of households borrowing to buy food was above the sub-regional average among those with poor food consumption (60 percent).

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, and to clear an outstanding debt.
In January, the overall average retail prices for maize grain and sorghum increased by 15 and 29 percent, respectively, compared to December 2018 due to scarcity coupled with demand. The increase was mainly in Kotido, Napak and Moroto.

Compared to January 2018, average retail prices for maize grain reduced by 7 percent, while sorghum price increased by 12 percent.

Generally, prices for cereals are expected to increase gradually in February and March due to scarcity following a relatively below average harvest in 2018. With the rising prices for staple foods in Karamoja, majority of the households will increasingly get stressed in meeting their foods.

WFP implements a Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) at Health Facilities. Village Health Teams (VHTs) identify moderately malnourished children under five 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.

In January 2019, total admissions of moderately malnourished children under five to SFP reduced by 8 percent (from 5,282 to 4,918), compared to November 2018. More females (3,128) than males (1,790) continue to be admitted to SFP. Similarly, there was a marginal deterioration compared to January 2018.
In spite of a minor decline in admissions of moderately malnourished individuals to SFP, total admissions in Kaabong (1,409) and Nakapiripirit (1,083) remained high in January 2019.

In January, admissions to SFP were lower than same period in 2018 in nearly all districts except Kotido. The decline was mainly in Moroto (45%) and Kaabong (10%). In Kotido, admissions increased by 26 percent (from 595 to 750).

Figure 22: Trends on admissions to SFP by district
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