Uganda

Karamoja Sub-Region mVAM Bulletin

WFP VAM | Food security analysis

World Food Programme

mVAM Bulletin #18: May 2019

Key points

May 2019 data shows an overall deterioration in the food security situation across Karamoja sub-region. The proportion of households reporting inadequate (poor and borderline) food consumption increased by 50 percent compared to May 2018. The current food consumption patterns correlates with low food stocks levels, driven by rising price trends for staple foods and 2018 poor harvest.

About mVAM

The mobile vulnerability analysis &mapping (mVAM) was first introduced in Karamoja in 2016 by WFP Uganda Country Office to provide real-time analysis of the performance of food security indicators. mVAM uses mobile voice technology for remote collection of household food security data to enable WFP monitor seasonal variations.

Survey Methodology

Live telephone interviews were conducted for households across 8 districts (Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit and Napak) of Karamoja, with a total of 1,305 households randomly chosen from a master list of respondents who accepted to be contacted via telephone during the face-to-face baseline. This bulletin is based on the data collected from 9th—24th May 2019.

Situation Update

Household food stock levels have continued to deteriorate. Only 5 percent of the surveyed households in May 2019 reportedly had some food stocks as compared to 30 percent around the same period in 2018. Stock level in all districts except Abim ranged between 0-5 percent.

Household food consumption deteriorated in May 2019 as more households (85 percent) reported having inadequate (poor and borderline) food consumption, showing a 50 percent increase compared to May 2018. May 2019 data shows Abim, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Nabilatuk as the worse off districts.

Households are highly stressed compared to same period in 2018. About 9 in 10 households used all food related coping strategies. All households in May 2019 either consumed less preferred foods, reduced number of meals or limited portion sizes.

Retail prices continue to exhibit a rising price trend. As of May 2019, prices for Sorghum (36 percent), maize grain (52 percent) and beans (27 percent) were above January 2019 levels. Prices for staple food surpassed May 2018 levels by 24-42 percent.

Key figures

1,305 Households surveyed

16 percent of the surveyed households were female headed

49 percent of the surveyed households were EVH

5 percent of the surveyed households had either disabled, elderly (>65yrs) or chronically ill heads.

Average family size was 7

41 percent of the household heads had no formal education.

Household food stocks

The overall household food stock levels have continued to deteriorate, with only 5 percent of the households reportedly having some food stocks as of May 2019 (**Fig 1**). At district level, May 2019 data revealed only 0-5 percent of households had some food stocks in almost all districts except Abim (**Fig 1**).

Results also indicated households with elderly heads were relatively better, this might be linked partly to government support through the social assistance grants for empowerment (SAGE) program (**Fig 2**).

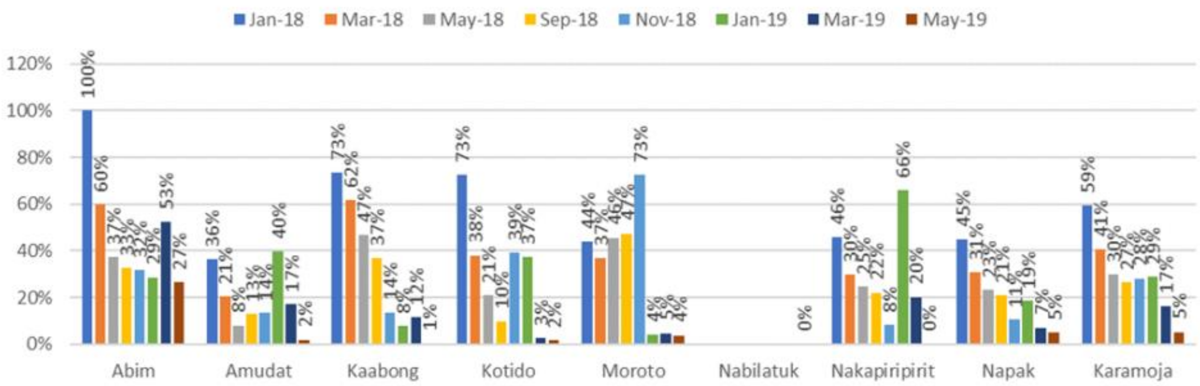
Compared to the same period in 2018, the overall stock levels as of May 2019 declined by 25 percent. The biggest deterioration in the share of households having some stocks was recorded in Kaabong (46 percent) and Moroto (42 percent).

High food prices as a result of scarcity coupled with the rising demand remain a major contributing factor to this trend. In May 2019, result showed about 9 in 10 households reportedly experienced either high food prices or floods, heavy rains or drought as a major shock (**Fig 3**).

In May 2019, about 9 in 10 households having some food stocks reportedly sourced either from *markets* or *own production* (**Fig 4**).

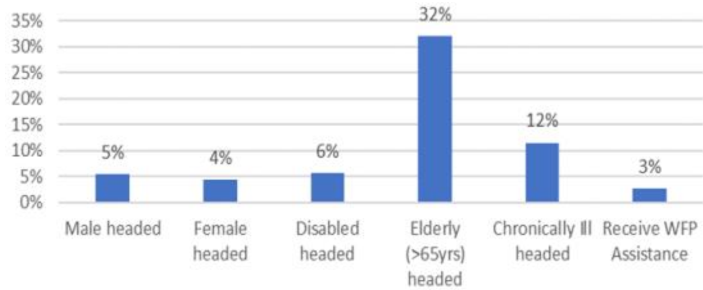
> *"We don't have what to eat, we survive on wild vegetables, where we look for plant leaves"*
> a male respondent in Aninata, Abim

Fig. 1: Trends on households with food stocks (2018-2019)



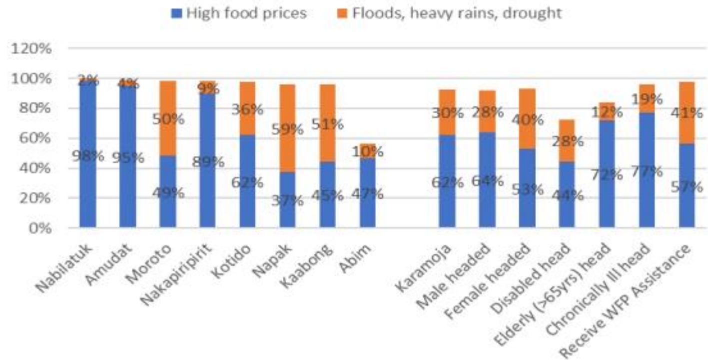
Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

Fig. 2: Food stock levels by vulnerability of households



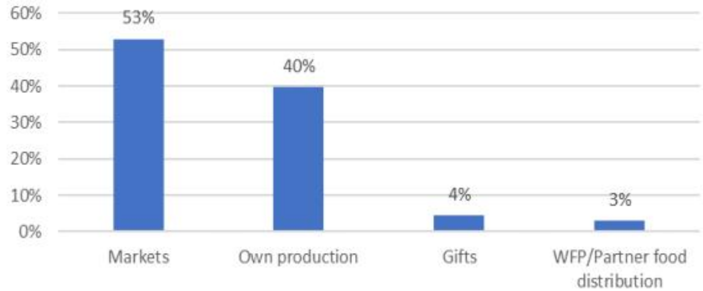
Source: mVAM May 2019

Fig. 3: Top two shocks experienced



Source: mVAM May 2019

Fig. 4: Food stock sources



Source: mVAM May 2019

Household food consumption

In May 2019, data revealed a deterioration in the overall household food consumption patterns compared to March 2019 and same period in 2018. Only 15 percent of the surveyed households reported having adequate food consumption, while 85 percent had inadequate food consumption (20 percent poor and 65 percent borderline).

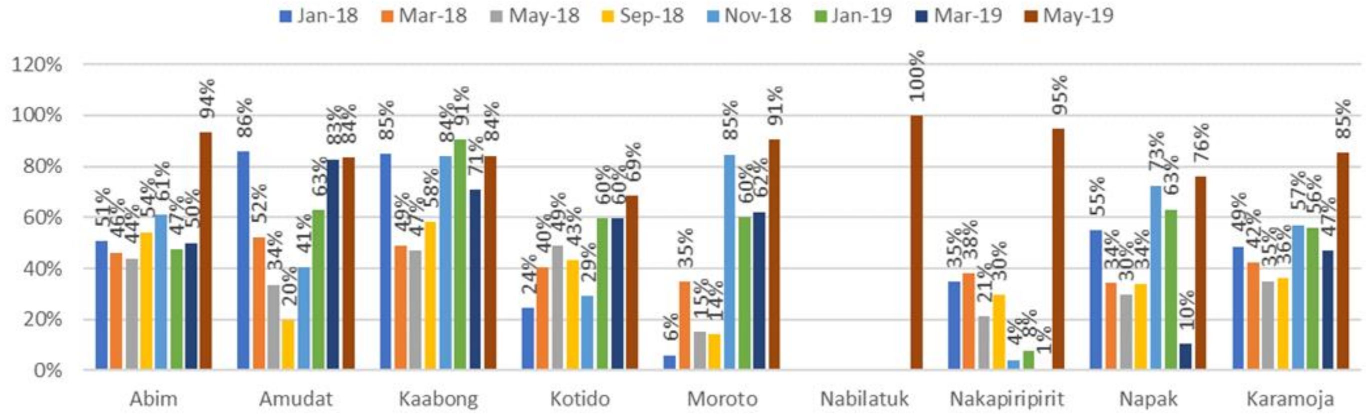
Compared to March 2019, data shows an overall increase in the share of households having inadequate food consumption (poor and borderline) by 38 percent, Nakapiripirit (94 percent), Napak (66 percent) and Abim (44 percent) had the highest (**Fig 5**).

Figure 5 also shows a 50 percent increase in the overall share of households reporting inadequate food consumption as compared to same period in 2018, more so in Moroto and Nakapiripirit.

Households with female, chronically ill and disabled heads are worse off (**Fig 6**).

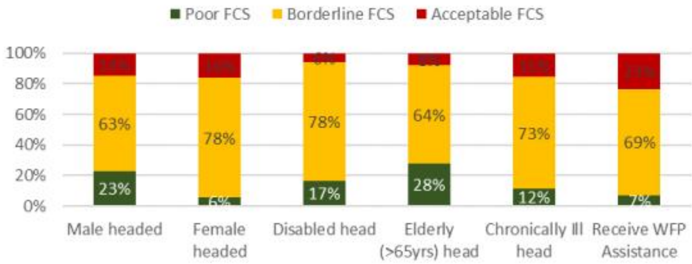
The mainly consumed foods were *cereals* and *vegetables* (**Fig 7**). The consumption of protein rich foods was generally low in May 2019 as compared to March 2019 and same period last year.

Fig. 5: Trends of households with poor or borderline food consumption (2018—2019)



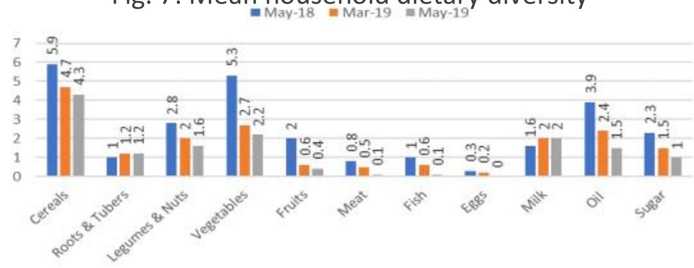
Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

Fig. 6: Household food consumption by vulnerability



Source: mVAM May 2019

Fig. 7: Mean household dietary diversity



Source: mVAM May 2019

Household food coping

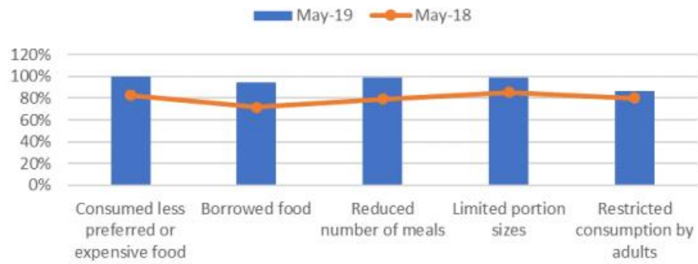
May 2019 data shows households are highly stressed compared to the same period in 2018. About 9 in 10 households employed all food related coping strategies (**Fig 8**).

Overall, all households in May 2019 either *consumed less preferred foods*, *reduced number of meals eaten* or *limited portion sizes*.

The overall average rCSI in May 2019 remained almost at similar levels as March, but slightly above 2018 levels (**Fig 9**). At district level, the mean rCSI in May 2019 was far above the sub-regional average in Amudat (28) and Kaabong (28) (**Fig 9**).

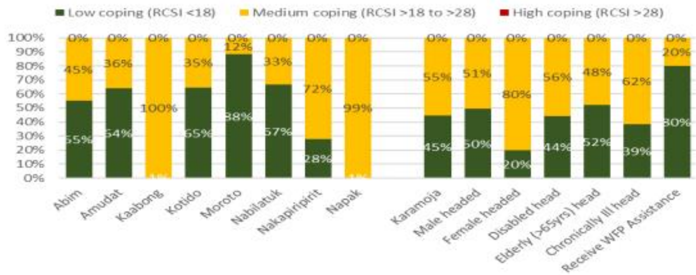
In addition, May 2019 data indicated about 2 in 4 households are classified under medium coping (**Fig 10**), with significant shares of households noted in Kaabong, Napak and Nakapiripirit.

Fig. 8: Applied food coping strategies



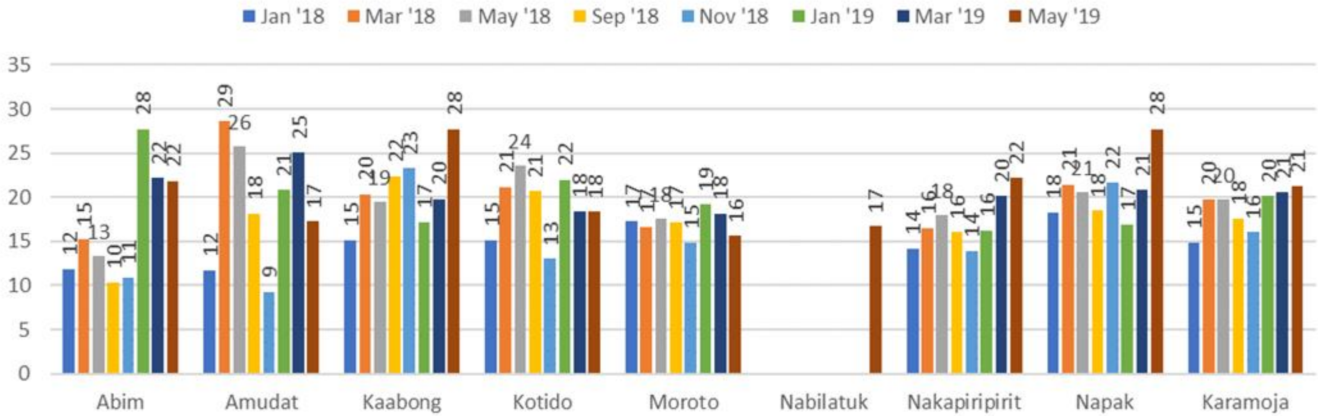
Source: mVAM May 2019

Fig. 10: Household food coping



Source: mVAM May 2019

Fig. 9: Trends on the mean rCSI (2018-2019)



Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

"We don't have food to eat and most times we spend days without eating", a male respondent in Katabok East, Abim.

Household debt prevalence

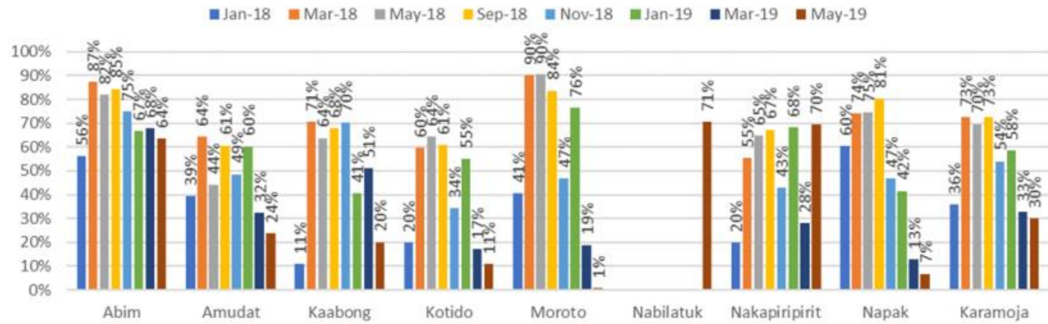
May 2019 data shows the overall debt prevalence was 30 percent (**Fig 11**). Nabilatuk (71 percent), Nakapiripirit (71 percent) and Abim (64 percent) had significant levels of debt.

In addition, male headed households (31 percent) were more in debt as compared to female headed households (23 percent) (**Fig 12**). Data also shows the debt prevalence among households with elderly and chronically ill heads was above the sub-regional average.

Slightly more than half (56 percent) of the surveyed households borrowed to meet their food requirements (**Fig 13**), revealing an increase from 49 percent in March 2019 and from 35 percent around same period in 2018.

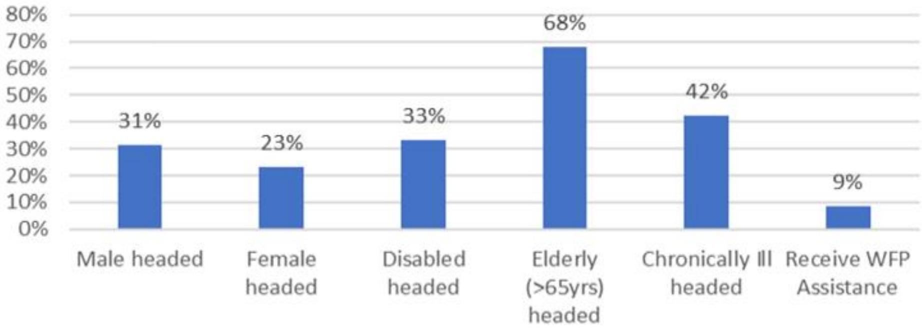
At district level, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Kaabong recorded the highest share of households borrowing to meet their food needs (**Fig 13**).

Fig. 11: Trends on the debt prevalence (2018-2019)



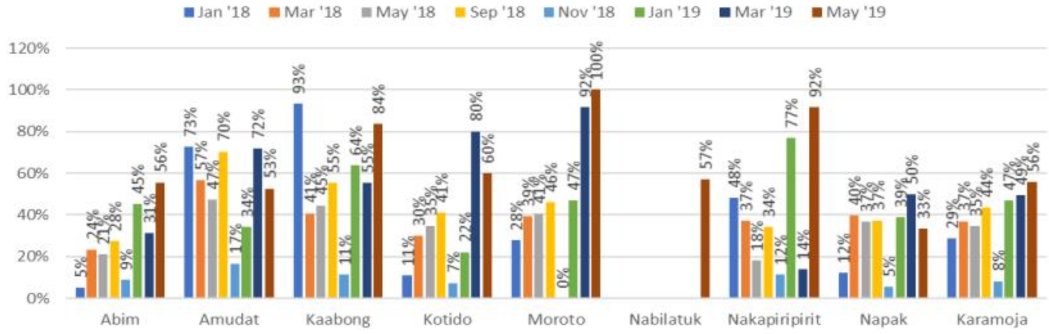
Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

Fig. 12: Debt prevalence by vulnerability



Source: mVAM May 2019

Fig. 13: Trends of household dependence on debt for food (2018-2019)



Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

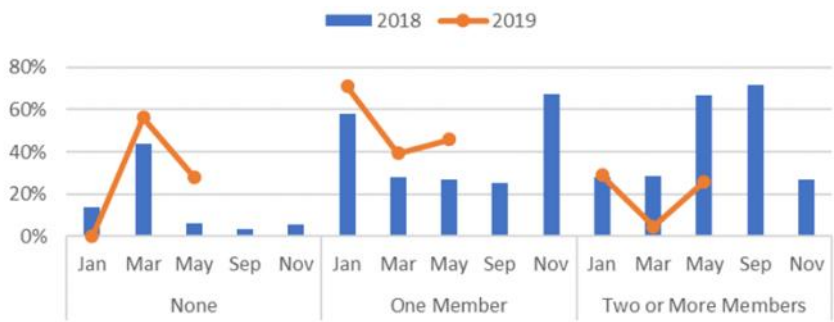
Household incomes

In May 2019, about 3 in 10 households reportedly had no income earner (**Fig 14**). However, data shows a 28 percent reduction in the share of households reporting no income earner from 56 percent in March 2019.

Figure 15 indicates households majorly earned from *sale of food crops* (21 percent), *agricultural wage labor* (19 percent) and *sale of firewood or charcoal* (15 percent). The proportion of households earning from agricultural labor increased by 16 percent (from 6 percent in March 2019).

Comparing genders, female headed households mainly derived income from brewing (52 percent), whereas their male counterparts earned from sale of food crops (24 percent) (**Fig 15**).

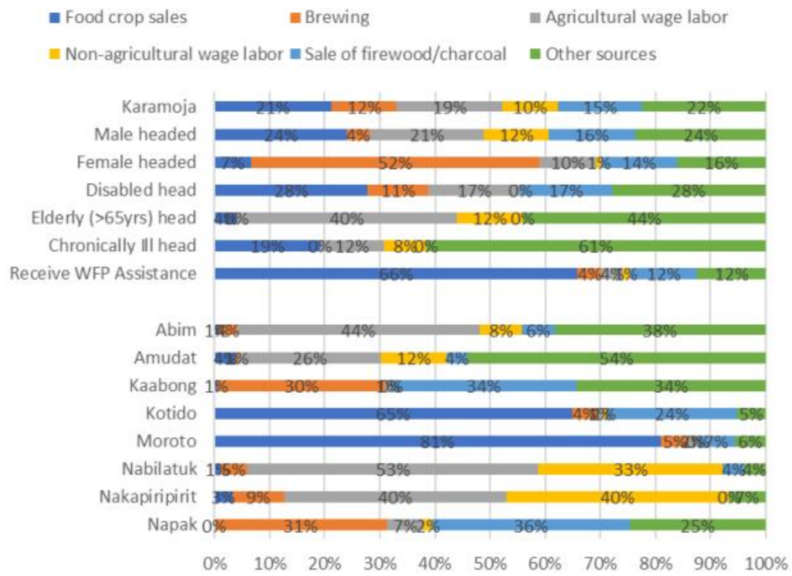
Fig. 14: Trends of household income earners



Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

"Our wages are low due to no labor opportunities. As a result, we can't afford to buy enough food for the family", a male respondent in Kalakala, Abim.

Fig. 15: Household main income sources



Source: mVAM May 2019)

Admissions to feeding programmes

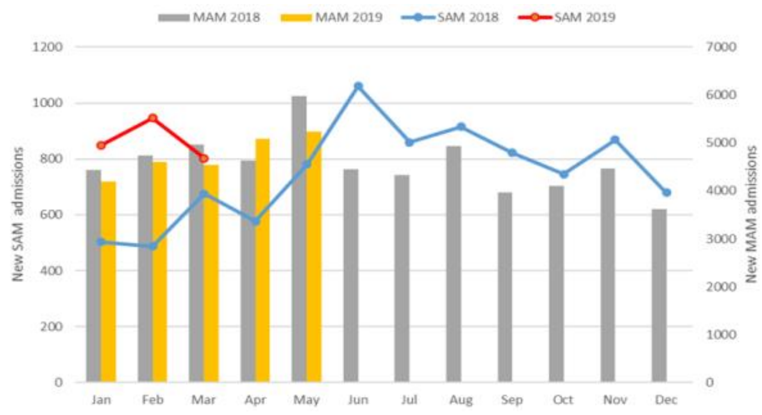
WFP implements Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) and Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) Programme at Health Facilities in Karamoja region. Moderately malnourished children under five, and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) are identified by village health teams (VHTs) and referred to health centers for enrolment in SFP. These individuals receive specialized nutritious foods (SNF).

Since December 2018, total MAM admissions in Karamoja exhibited a gradually rising trend (**Fig 16**). May 2019 data shows a 25 percent increase in MAM admissions (from 4,189 to 5,240) as compared to January 2019. However, MAM admissions in May 2019 remained below same period in 2018 by 12 percent (**Fig 16**). More females (2,992) were admitted in May 2019 compared to males (2,248).

In addition, SAM admissions in the first quarter of 2019 remained above 2018 levels (**Fig 16**).

Generally, the rising trend of SAM and MAM admissions is due to a poor harvest in 2018 which has limited household food access.

Fig. 16: Trends on MAM new admissions in Karamoja



Source: HMIS & WFP ProMIS January 2018— May 2019

Market prices for staple foods

Retail prices for staple foods continue to exhibit a rising price trend resulting from an overall poor harvest in 2018 which has had adverse effects on supplies. May 2019 price data indicate retail prices for sorghum (36 percent), maize grain (52 percent) and beans (27 percent) had significantly increased as compared to January 2019 (**Fig 17**).

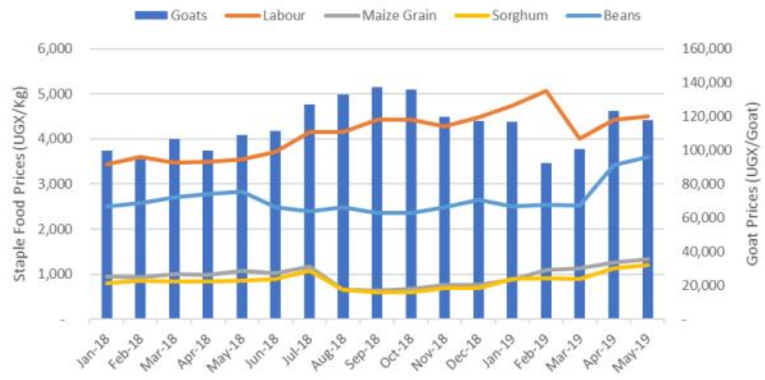
In addition, the overall retail prices for staple foods (sorghum, maize grain and beans) surpassed same period in 2018 by 24-42 percent.

Generally, the anticipated below normal harvest this year coupled with high demand are likely to keep prices high at levels above 2018 and the long term (2014-2018) average.

The high food prices in May 2019 shows a correlation with household major shocks experienced in the past 30 days preceding the survey, with about 6 in 10 households reporting high food prices as a major shock.

"The food is very scarce and what is available on markets is also too expensive" a female respondent in Iriiri, Napak

Fig. 17: Trends on staple food prices in Karamoja



Source: mVAM January 2018—May 2019

For further information

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mVAM Resources:

Website: http://vam.wfp.org/sites/mvam_monitoring/

Blog: mvam.org

Toolkit: http://resources.vam.wfp.org/mVAM