

mVAM Bulletin #20: Sep 2019

Key points



- ◆ The proportion of household with inadequate food consumption continues to decline because of the ongoing harvest.
- ◆ Abim, Amudat and Kaabong were the worse-off districts in the region with about 63-77 percent having inadequate food consumption in September 2019.
- ◆ Although food supplies are improving from the ongoing harvest, use of negative food-related coping strategies remains high.

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 1,619 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 12th September to 3rd October 2019.

Situation Update



Household food stock levels improved from 10 percent in July to 34 percent in September 2019. However, in Napak and Kotido, the percentage of households having some food stocks was below 5 percent.



In September 2019, households having inadequate food consumption were 41 percent compared to 50 percent in July 2019. There was an overall improvement in the consumption of dairy products, proteins and vegetables in September.



September 2019 data exhibited a falling trend in household application of negative food-related coping strategies since May 2019. However, more than 7 in 10 household used at least one coping strategy.



Although retail prices for key staples are falling, they are projected to remain high and above 2018 average levels. The purchasing power for pastoral households are improving as exhibited by the rising prices for goats caused by reduced supplies on the markets.

Key figures



1,619 Households surveyed



36 percent of the surveyed households were female headed



22 percent of the surveyed households were in the EVH programme



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



Average family size was 7



47 percent of the household heads had no formal education.



Household food stocks

The ongoing seasonal harvest in Karamoja improved household food stock levels from 10 percent in July 2019 to 34 percent in September 2019 (Fig 1). Although a similar rising trend was seen across all districts, the increase in the share of household having some stocks was significant in Nakapiripirit, Amudat and Abim (Fig 1). The September 2019 mVAM data also indicated low stock levels in Kotido (4 percent) and Napak (4 percent).

Figure 2 shows that the proportion of households with some food stocks was higher among male headed (39 percent) compared to female headed (25 percent). In addition, stock levels for households with disabled, elderly and chronically ill heads were below the regional average (Fig 2).

Available food stocks are projected to averagely last about one and half months (46 days). However, although the

harvest is still ongoing in most parts, there is need for close monitoring of the food security situation as some households will likely get stressed in meeting their food needs earlier than usual.

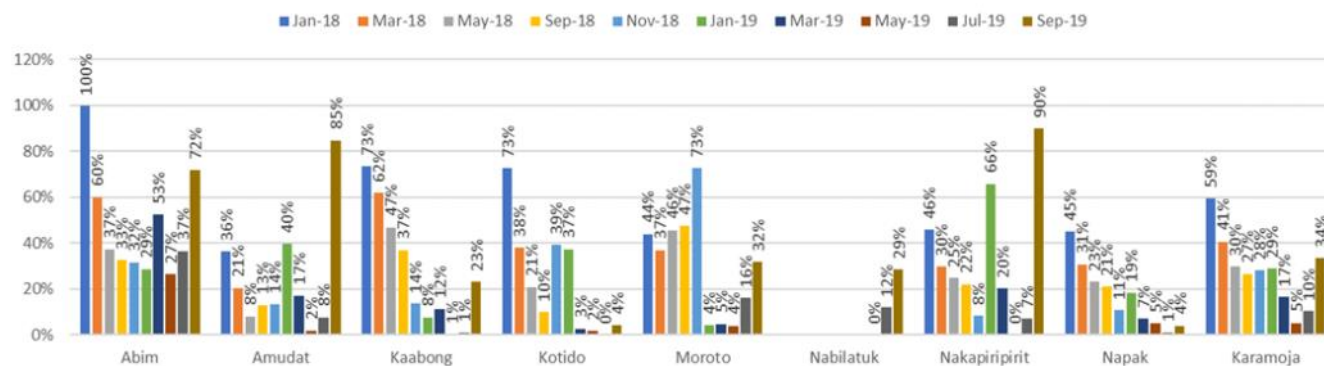
For the majority having no stocks at the time of the survey, it could entirely be due to high food prices and a delayed harvest. The September 2019 data indicated more than 6 in 10 households cited high food prices or floods/heavy rains/drought as contributing factors to their stress in meeting their food needs in 30 days preceding the survey (Fig 3).

Figure 4 shows majority (74 percent) of the households sourced their stocks from own production and about 25 percent said they sourced through market purchase. There was a notable decline in household reliance on markets for food.

“For some families, there is shortage of money for buying food because their crops were destroyed by heavy water in the gardens - a male in Amudat.

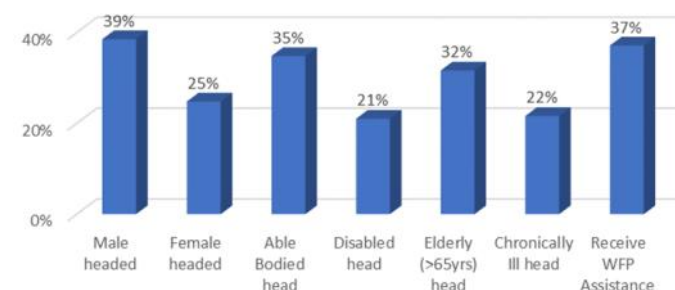
*“Food accessibility remains challenging due to a delayed harvest”
- a female in Kotido*

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



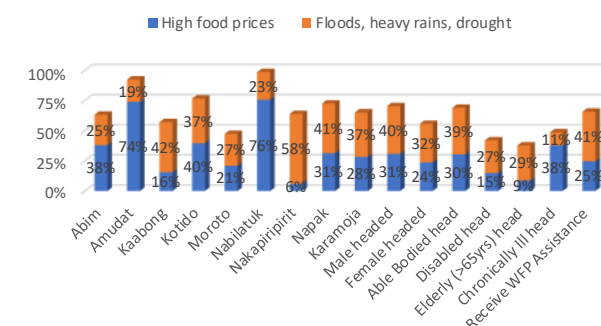
Source: mVAM January 2018—Sep 2019

Fig. 2: Food stock levels by vulnerability of households



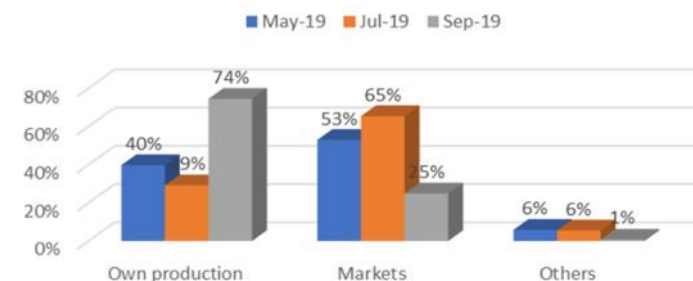
Source: mVAM Sep 2019

Fig. 3: Top two shocks experienced



Source: mVAM Sep 2019

Fig. 4: Food stock sources



Source: mVAM Sep 2019



Household food consumption

The percentage of households having inadequate food consumption continues to decline because of the ongoing seasonal harvest. In September 2019, about 4 in 10 households had inadequate food consumption (14 percent Poor FCS and 27 percent Borderline FCS) (**Fig 5**). The share of households with significant levels of inadequate food consumption was observed in Abim, Amudat and Kaabong.

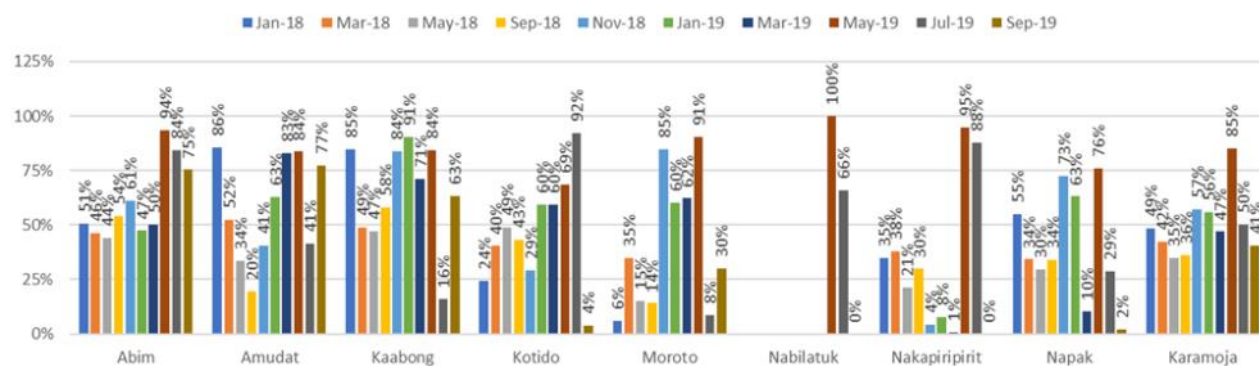
Compared to September 2018, the increase in percentage of households with inadequate food consumption was high in Abim (21 percent), Amudat (57 percent) and Moroto (16 percent), in part as a result the rising food prices in 2019. However, Kotido, Nakapiripirit and Napak observed declines by 30-40 percent.

Slightly more female headed (44 percent) than male headed (38 percent) reported having inadequate food consumption in September 2019 (**Fig 6**). Furthermore, the percentage was significant for

households with disabled, elderly and chronically ill heads.

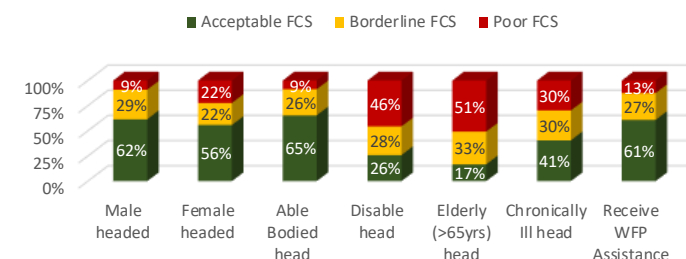
In September 2019, the mostly consumed foods were cereals, vegetable and legumes (**Fig 7**). Overall, in terms of diversity, September data showed an improvement in the consumption of dairy products, proteins and vegetables.

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



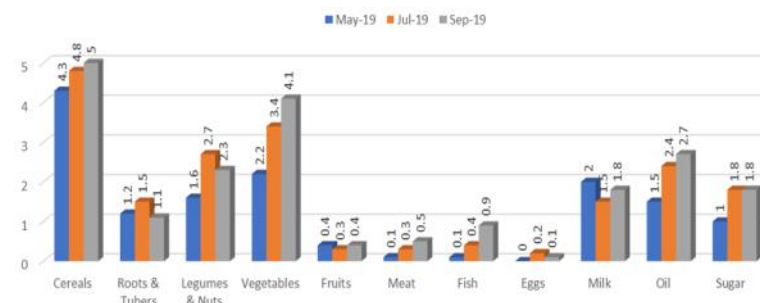
Source: mVAM January 2018—Sep 2019

Fig. 6: Household food consumption by vulnerability



Source: mVAM Sep 2019

Fig. 7: Mean household dietary diversity



Source: mVAM May—Sep 2019

“We don’t have enough food to eat, we mainly eat greens and sometimes food like sorghum because its expensive to eat daily” – a female in Abim

“Most people have started harvesting foods such as maize, millet, groundnut, simsim and other—and so, they have food to eat” – a male in Abim



Household food coping

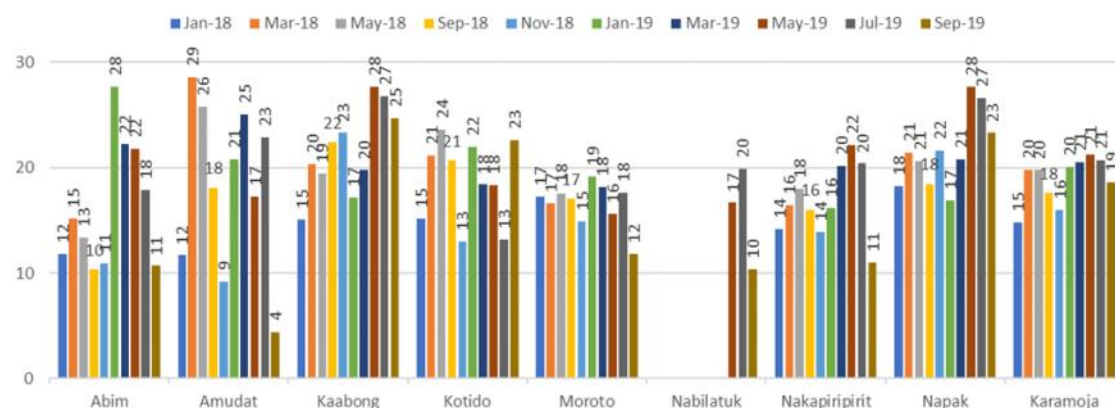
In September 2019, the overall reduced coping strategy index reduced to 19 from 21 in July 2019 (Fig 8). The highest mean rCSI reported was observed in Kaabong (25), Kotido (23) and Napak (23).

The mean rCSI for female headed households (21) was above the sub-region average as compared to male headed households (17). In addition, households with disabled (26), elderly (23) and chronically ill (18) heads also had high mean rCSI.

Although there is an overall gradual decline in the percentage of households employing negative food-related coping since May 2019, more than 7 in 10 households in September 2019 employed at least all coping strategies (Fig 9).

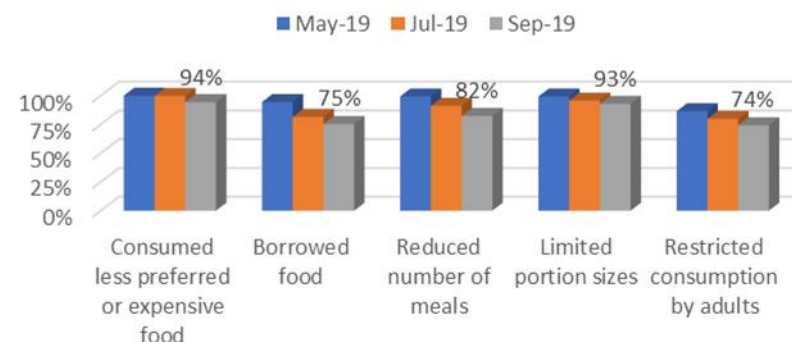
In September 2019, 55 percent of the households were classified as low coping while 40 and 5 percent were medium and high coping, respectively (Fig 10). The share of households that were highly coping was above the sub-regional average among households with female, disabled and elderly heads.

Fig. 8: Trends on the mean rCSI (2018-2019)



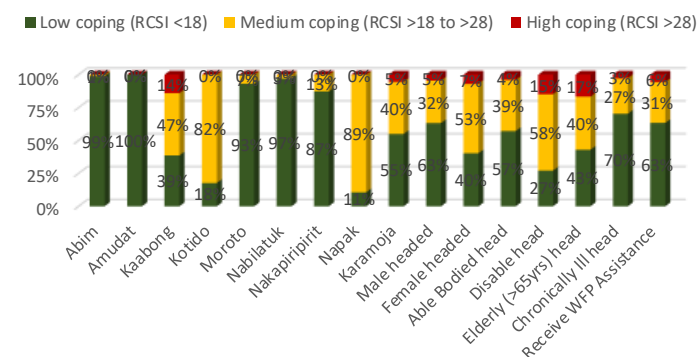
Source: mVAM Jan 2018—Sep 2019

Fig. 9: Applied food coping strategies



Source: mVAM Sep 2019

Fig. 10: Household food coping



Source: mVAM Sep 2019



Household Livelihood Coping

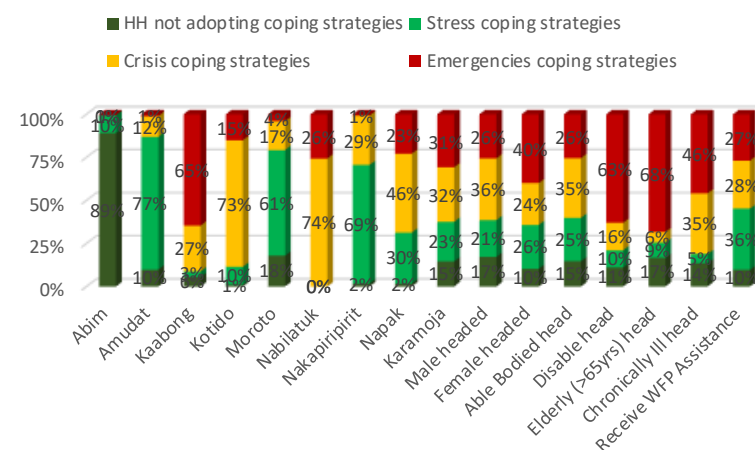
In September 2019, about 15 percent of the households did not adopt any livelihood coping strategies (**Fig 11**) and about 3 in 10 households (31 percent) adopted emergency livelihood coping strategies. The highest percentage of households that used emergency livelihood coping strategies was seen in Kaabong, Nabilatuk and Napak.

Female headed households were worse off with about 40 percent reporting having applied emergency livelihood coping strategies. Furthermore, households with disabled, elderly and chronically ill heads had remarkable levels

of those that applied emergency coping strategies in September.

Comparing food consumption patterns, the share of households that employed emergency livelihood coping strategies was significant among households with poor food consumption (74 percent) as compared to those with acceptable food consumption (21 percent). Similarly, the percentage was high for households with no food stocks (34 percent) than those with some stocks (25 percent).

Fig. 11: Livelihood coping strategies



Source: mVAM Sep 2019



Household debt prevalence

The debt prevalence dropped from 44 percent in July 2019 to 36 percent in September 2019 (**Fig 12**). Figure 12 further shows the debt prevalence was above the sub-regional average in Moroto, Amudat, Nakapiripirit and Abim.

Slightly more female headed (39 percent) households were in debt compared to their male counterparts (35 percent) (**Fig 13**). Interestingly, the debt prevalence was notable among households that reported having received assistance from WFP (**Fig 13**).

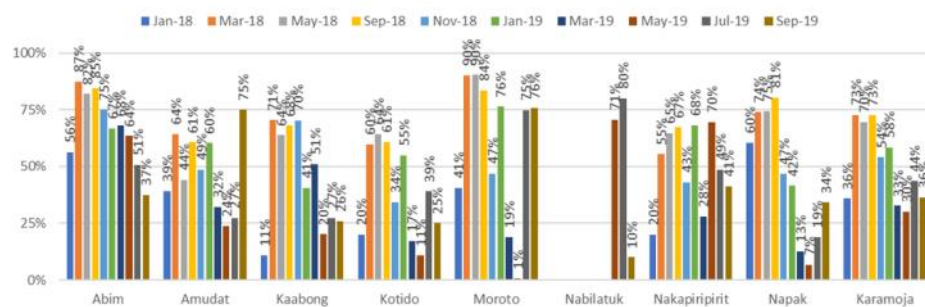
The main reasons for borrowing were: *buy food* (44 percent), *meet education costs* (24 percent), and *invest in other business* (14 percent). Majority (about 8 in 10) of the households in Kaabong and Kotido borrowed to buy food, which is not surprising because September data

revealed that both districts had the least proportion of households reporting having some food stocks.

Compared to September 2018, the proportion of households that borrowed to meet their food needs reduced by 15-54 percent in Abim, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Amudat in September 2019. However, high food prices following an overall poor harvest in 2018 resulted to an increase in the percentage of those borrowing for food in the remaining districts.

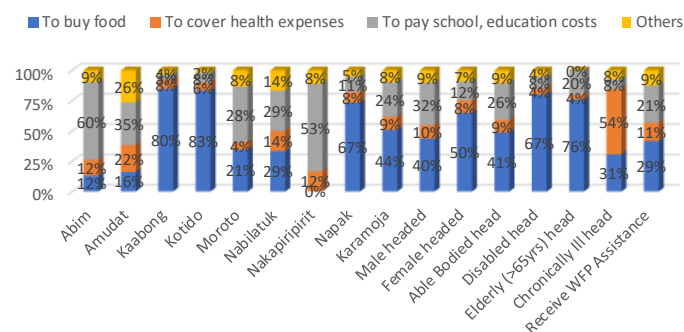
"Lack of farm labor makes people to go borrow money for renting of which this money would have helped in other basic need, mostly household consumption" - a female in Amudat.

Fig. 12: Trends on the debt prevalence (2018-2019)



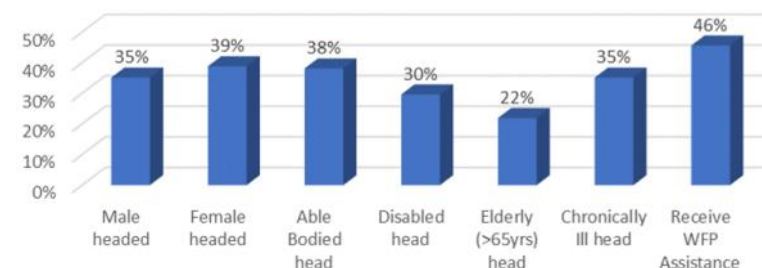
Source: mVAM January 2018—Sep 2019

Fig. 14: Major reasons for debt



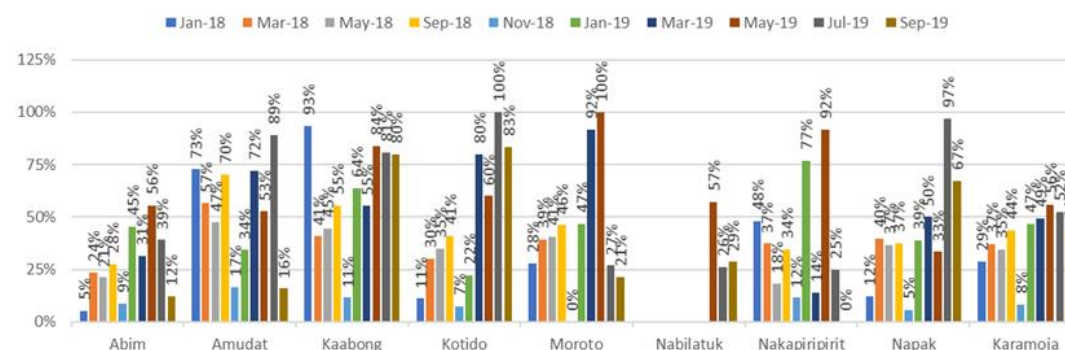
Source: mVAM Sep 2019

Fig. 13: Debt prevalence by vulnerability



Source: mVAM Sep 2019

Fig. 15: Trends of household dependence on debt for food (2018-2019)



Source: mVAM January 2018—Sep 2019



Household incomes

Whilst the agricultural season ends, the percentage of households reporting no income earner increased from 7 percent in July to 29 percent in September 2019 (Fig 16) because of the declining number of opportunities in the sector.

Figure 16 also shows a declining trend in the proportion of households having at least one income earner.

Comparing different food consumption patterns, about 31-35 percent of households with inadequate food consumption had no income earner as compared to 21 percent for those having adequate food consumption.

In September 2019, the data showed majority of the households continue to earn their incomes from unsustainable income sources. The main income sources reported by households are: *food crop sales* (21 percent); *firewood or charcoal sales* (18 percent) and *agricultural wage labor* (17 percent) (Fig 17). About 70-88 percent of the households in Nabilatuk and Amudut sold their food to earn incomes.

In addition, most households in Moroto earned from brewing (35 percent) whilst about 26-28 percent of the households derived their incomes from sale of firewood or charcoal in Kotido, Kaabong and Napak.

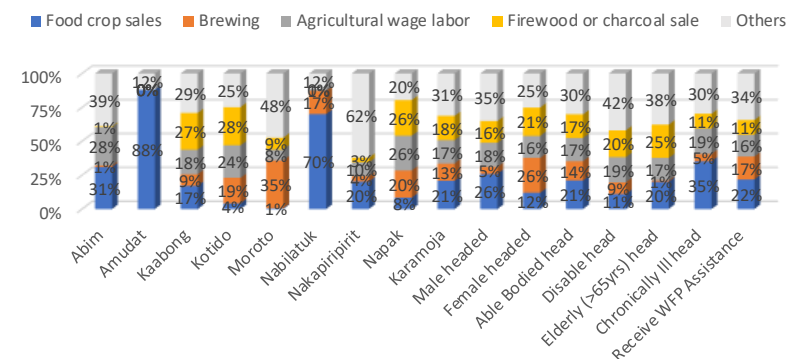
Fig. 16: Trends of household income earners



Source: mVAM Jan 2018 — Sep 2019

“The floods due to heavy rains destroyed our crops—now, the only way of survival is selling firewood to earn some money to buy food.” - a female in Kaabong

Fig. 17: Household main income sources



Source: mVAM Sep 2019



Admissions to feeding programmes

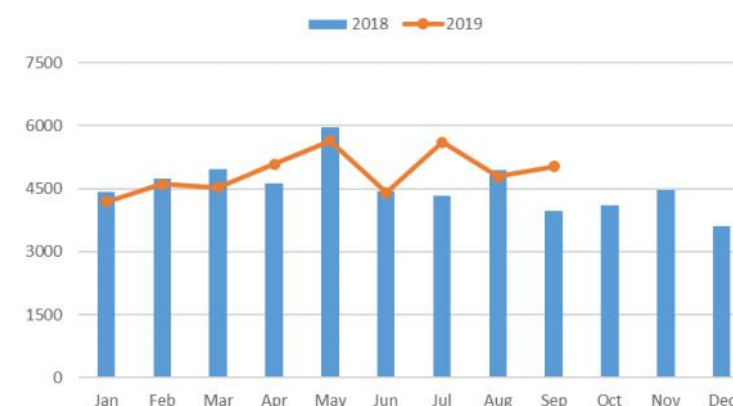
WFP implements Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) and Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) Programme at Health Facilities in Karamoja region. Moderately malnourished children under five, and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) are identified by village health teams (VHTs) and referred to health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

Since May 2019, total MAM admissions have exhibited a fluctuating trend. In September, there was reduction in total MAM admissions by 10 percent as compared to

July 2019 (from 5,603 to 5,025). Admissions in September remained above same period in 2018 by 26 percent (Fig 18).

The ongoing harvest across the region is expected to keep MAM admissions stable although they are likely to be higher than 2018.

Fig. 18: Trends on MAM new admissions in Karamoja



Source: WFP ProMIS January 2018 — Sep 2019



Market prices for staple foods

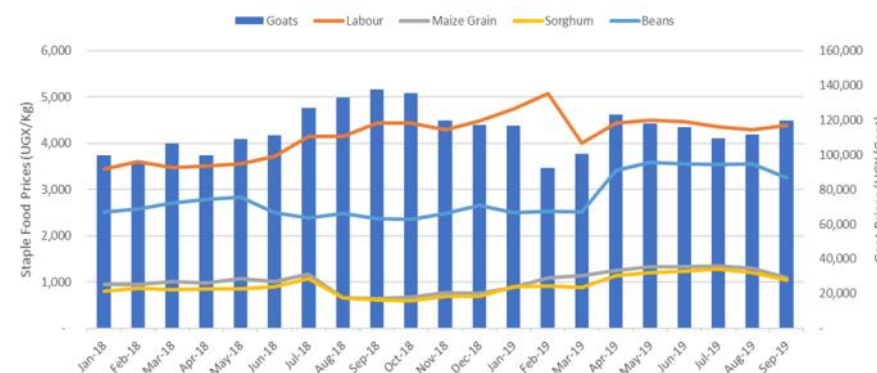
The retail prices for key staples in Karamoja exhibited a declining trend in September 2019 largely due to the ongoing harvest in Karamoja coupled with improved supplies from bimodal areas across the country.

However, retail prices for beans, maize grain and sorghum in September 2019 remained well-above 2018 average levels by 38-71 percent due to scarcity coupled with demand following an overall below-average harvest in 2018.

Low supplies on markets sustained a rising trend in goat prices in Karamoja since July 2019 revealing improving purchasing power for pastoral households. Goat price, however, fell below September 2018 average levels by 13 percent

Key staple prices are projected to continue following seasonal decreasing trends through November and December 2019 but will remain well above 2018 average levels.

Fig. 19: Trends on staple food prices in Karamoja



Source: mVAM January 2018—Sep 2019

“Since the start of the harvest, food prices are steadily falling” – a male in Kotido

“Prices of food have currently gone down especially maize, beans and sorghum and there are plenty of greens currently both wild and domestic.” – a female in Moroto



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>

