

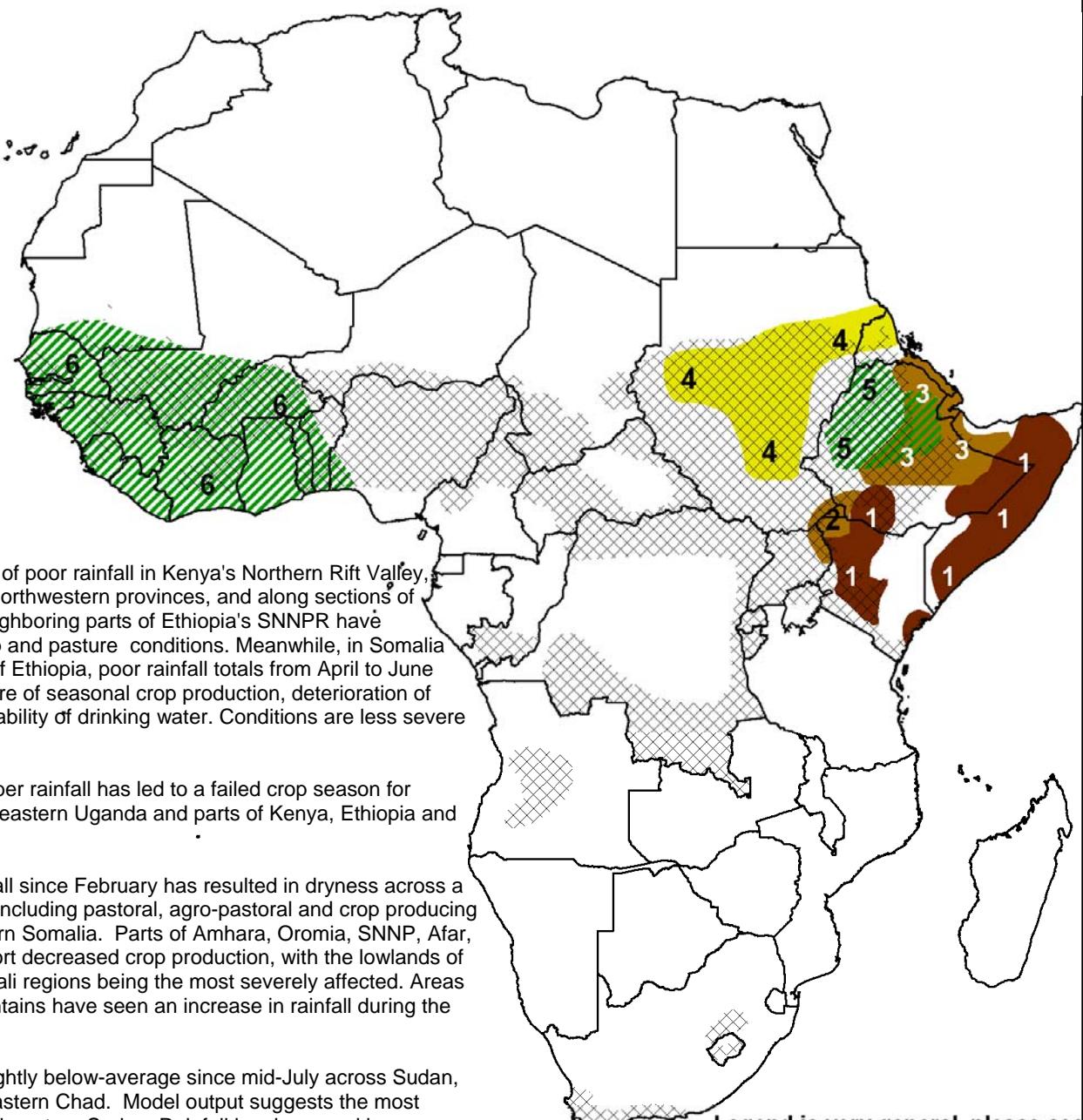


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The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa September 4 – 10, 2008

FEWS NET
FAMINE EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS NETWORK

- Above-average precipitation across western Africa has benefited crops, pastures and water resources; however, it has also resulted in localized flooding and flood-related damage to bridges, roads, railways, and other infrastructure.
- Precipitation remains slightly below normal in Sudan. The most impacted area is likely in the northeast, near Khartoum.



Legend is very general, please see numbered descriptions for details.

	Somewhat Favorable
	Flooding
	Short-Term Dryness
	Drought
	Severe Drought
	Improving Drought
	September Cropped Areas

Precipitation remains persistent across Western Ethiopia

Precipitation has remained heavy, as it has all season long across western Ethiopia. (**Figure 1**) That rainfall, however, has at times been excessive, with localized areas of flooding and in some cases severe flooding, as with what was the case two weeks ago in southwestern portions of the country. The good precipitation has also spread eastward, providing rainfall to areas of the country that had been anomalously dry. This region remains the only large region of the Horn of Africa that has remained significantly above average all season long for all of the 2008 rainy seasons thus far.

Precipitation deficits in Sudan remain, but also stay relatively low

Since mid-July, rainfall has slowly tapered off across portions of Sudan. (**Figure 1**) This has resulted in deficits of up to 50 percent in some areas, mainly in the northern cropped regions. The cause of these negative anomalies is not an abrupt end to the rains, but instead poor rainfall totals. If precipitation remains in place across Sudan until the normal end of the rains in October and November, then it is unlikely that there will be dryness that has impacts beyond the local scale. However, if the wet season ends early, or if there is a break in the rains, a more serious impact could result.

During the last two weeks, precipitation has increased over many areas of Sudan. While this has not relieved the deficit, it has prevented further spreading of the dryness.

Precipitation remains plentiful in the western Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea regions, improvement further east

An area spanning from Mauritania and Senegal to Sierra Leone to Togo has experienced abundant and generally well-distributed rainfall. This has benefited crops, pastures, and drinking water supplies throughout the region. In addition, rainfall has returned to areas that had dried out slightly across Niger, Nigeria and western Chad. The return of heavier rainfall has caused localized flooding; however, it has also alleviated any concerns of dryness.

Despite the many benefits of abundant rains (**Figure 2**), there have also been reports of infrastructure damage and increased incidence of water-borne disease in western Africa. According to the World Health Organization, flooding has caused damage to roads, bridges, railways, and other vital infrastructure in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin and western Chad. There are reports from Senegal about outbreaks of cholera.

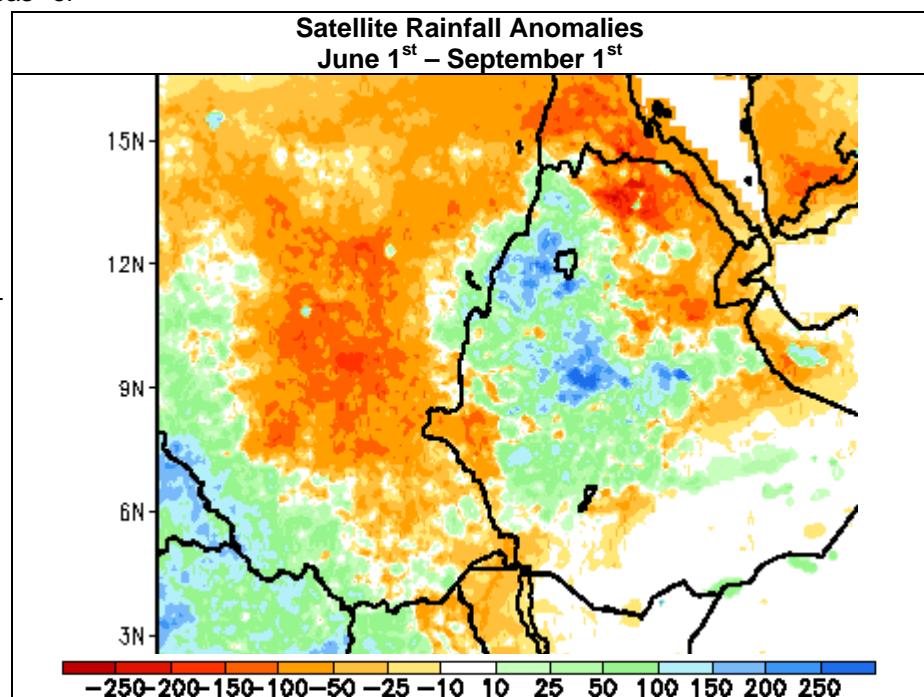


Figure 1: There is a clear dipole between the very wet areas of western Ethiopia and the drier areas to the north and west.

Source: FEWS/NOAA

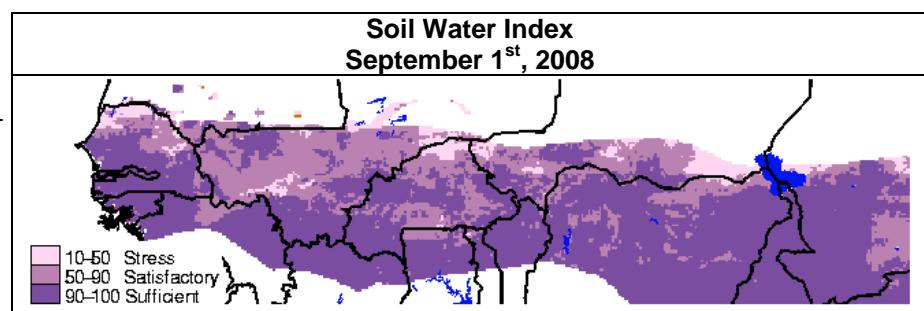


Figure 2: Rainfall has kept soils sufficiently saturated across much of West Africa. Also clear are the improving soil water conditions in Niger, Nigeria and Chad.

Source: FEWS/USGS