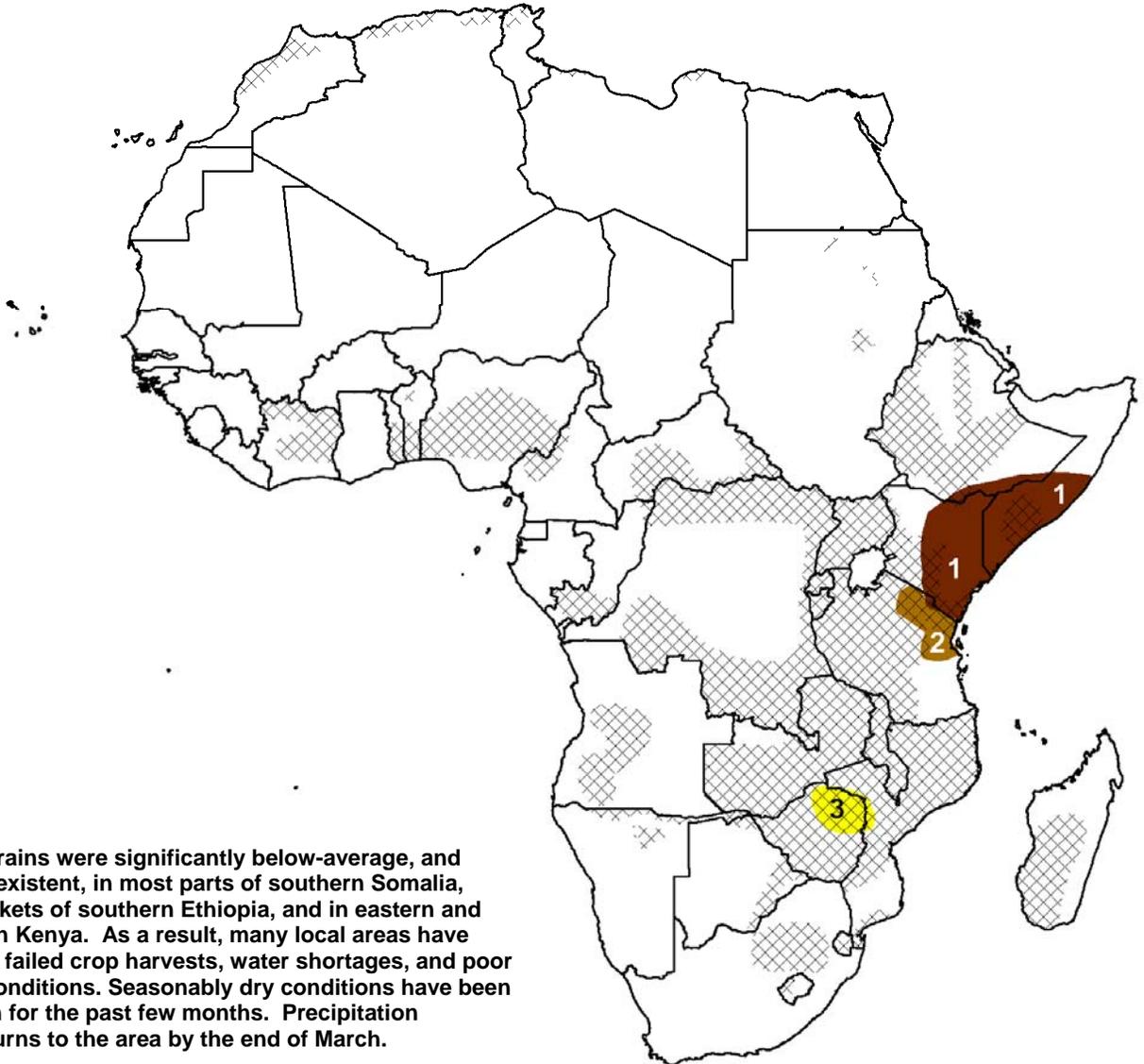


- Heavy rainfall from February 27th through March 1st causes flooding around Lake Tanganyika. Crops, livestock and infrastructure have all been negatively impacted. Precipitation is not expected to be as heavy during the coming period.
- Rainfall has returned across central Mozambique and much of Zimbabwe, easing fears of a dry spell. Additional rainfall is still needed in northeastern Zimbabwe to complete the areas recovery.



1) The *Deyr* rains were significantly below-average, and almost non-existent, in most parts of southern Somalia, isolated pockets of southern Ethiopia, and in eastern and southeastern Kenya. As a result, many local areas have experienced failed crop harvests, water shortages, and poor rangeland conditions. Seasonably dry conditions have been in the region for the past few months. Precipitation typically returns to the area by the end of March.

2) The *Vuli* rains were below-average leading to the failure of bimodal crops in northeastern Tanzania. Moderate rains since mid February have improved grazing lands and water availability along the coast. The more important rainy season usually begins during March.

3) Late January and most of February was marked by a below-average rainfall in eastern Zimbabwe and parts of central Mozambique. During the last week, heavy rainfall brought relief to most areas.

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



Improvement continues across central Mozambique and eastern Zimbabwe

During November 2008, central Mozambique and eastern Zimbabwe suffered from dryness as a result of the late start of seasonal rains. Rainfall then rapidly intensified, leading to flooding along the Zambezi River. In early February, another reversal occurred and the region once again began experiencing below-normal rainfall. Ground reports indicated that if additional rainfall did not occur in the near future, permanent wilting could occur in areas with low water holding capacity and high evapotranspiration rates. Other reports stated that the rainy season needed to extend through March to compensate for the late start of rains.

Rainfall has since returned to the region. During the last week of February, the atmospheric mechanism that had prevented rainfall in the area, began breaking down. This has allowed seasonal precipitation to return to the region. Seasonal rainfall totals are near-normal for central Mozambique, but still remain slightly below-average in northeastern Zimbabwe (Figure 1). Model forecasts indicate continued improvement across the region during the coming week.

Heavy rainfall triggers flooding around Lake Tanganyika

Beginning on February 27th and lasting until early March 1st heavy rainfall throughout the region caused localized flooding near Lake Tanganyika. Most of the heavy rainfall occurred in Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, although both Burundi and far northern Zambia also received heavy rainfall (Figure 2). Early reports from the area describe localized pockets of flooding across the region, with the most impacted areas being western Tanzania.

Flooding in the area has damaged crops and infrastructure and killed livestock. These incidences however have all been localized.

Belg Season Update

During the month of January, pre-season Belg rains provided pastures with an unusually opportunity to replenish. However, these rains came to a close by the middle of February. A recent report from North Wollo and South Wollo, have shown that ground conditions in this area, even with the pre-seasonal rains, remain poor (Figure 3). The Wollo and Shewa zones account for nearly 50 percent of Belg harvests. Typically the Belg season begins in late February and harvest activities begin in June.

FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity whose purpose is to provide objective information about food security conditions. Its views are not necessarily reflective of those of USAID or the U.S. Government. The FEWS NET weather hazards assessment process and products include participation by FEWS NET field and home offices, NOAA-CPC, USGS, USDA, NASA, and a number of other national and regional organizations in the countries concerned. Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7566. Questions about the USAID FEWSNET activity may be directed to Gary Eilerts, USAID Program Manager for FEWSNET, 1-202-219-0500 or geilerts@usaid.gov.

