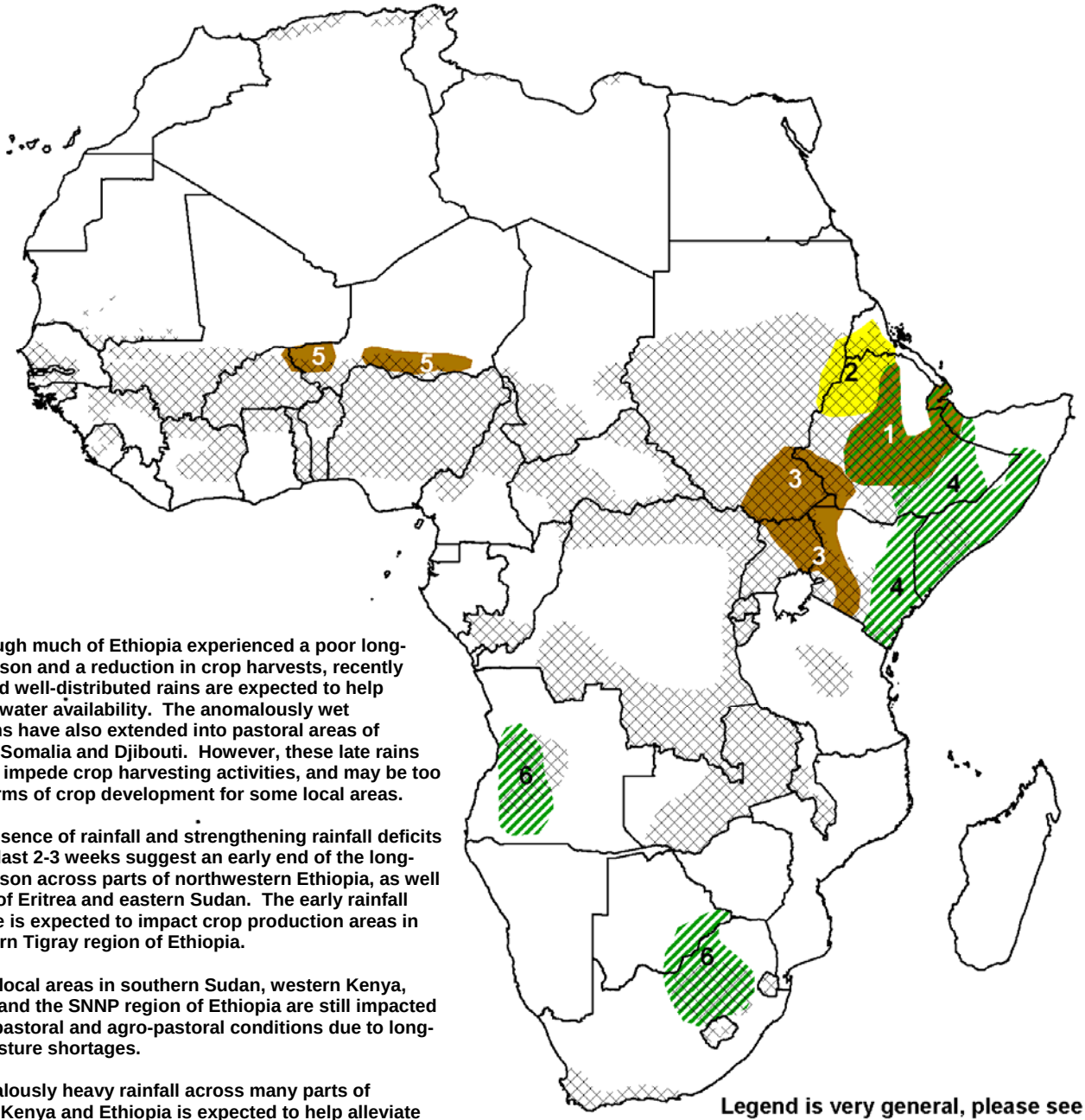
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
October 29 – November 4, 2009

- **High amounts of rainfall continue over many parts of Somalia, Kenya and eastern Ethiopia. The persistence of anomalously wet conditions suggests a favorable October-December rains season in East Africa.**



1) Although much of Ethiopia experienced a poor long-rains season and a reduction in crop harvests, recently heavy and well-distributed rains are expected to help increase water availability. The anomalously wet conditions have also extended into pastoral areas of northern Somalia and Djibouti. However, these late rains may also impede crop harvesting activities, and may be too late in terms of crop development for some local areas.

2) The absence of rainfall and strengthening rainfall deficits over the last 2-3 weeks suggest an early end of the long-rains season across parts of northwestern Ethiopia, as well as parts of Eritrea and eastern Sudan. The early rainfall departure is expected to impact crop production areas in the eastern Tigray region of Ethiopia.

3) Many local areas in southern Sudan, western Kenya, Uganda, and the SNNP region of Ethiopia are still impacted by poor pastoral and agro-pastoral conditions due to long-term moisture shortages.

4) Anomalously heavy rainfall across many parts of Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia is expected to help alleviate many areas impacted by long-term drought. With favorable rainfall expected to continue, land preparation and planting are currently underway for many cropping areas.

5) Below-average rainfall in June, intermittent periods of rain, and an early end to rains season in September has resulted in poor crop conditions and a reduction of crop harvests for a number of local areas across southern Niger.

6) This month, early season wetness has the potential to lead to favorable ground conditions and increased water availability for a number of local areas. However, this anomalously positive rainfall does not imply a beneficial season at present.

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

- October Cropped Areas
- Favorable
- Somewhat Favorable
- Flooding
- Short-term Dryness
- Drought
- Severe Drought
- Improving Drought

Beneficial rains continue to promote planting, and mitigate long-term drought in East Africa.

Another week of moderate to high amounts of rainfall was received across much of East Africa. A robust distribution of precipitation ranging between 30-50 mm were observed over the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, with heavier amounts in excess of 50mm observed over southern and central Somalia. In Kenya, heavy and more isolated rainfall was observed over the Madera, Wajir and Garissa provinces, as much of this ample moisture extended into the pastoral areas in the northwest (**Figure 1**). Many parts of western and northwestern Ethiopia saw a return of moderate shower activity to break a dry spell that was observed over the last 2-3 weeks.

The second consecutive week of anomalously heavy rainfall suggests a favorable start and progression of the October-December rains season in East Africa. Positive precipitation anomalies continue to strengthen across the Rift Valley of Ethiopia, with surpluses ranging between 50 -150 mm over the last 30 days. In Somalia, precipitation anomalies greater than 100mm continue to be seen throughout the Shabelle, Juba and Gedo regions. Although the magnitude of these anomalies point to the potential for inundated river basins, there have not yet been any reported cases of flooding in Somalia.

The combination of continuously heavy rainfall and additional water availability is expected to mitigate the impacts of long-term drought. Land preparation and planting are currently underway for a number of cropping areas in Kenya and Somalia, as crop requirement analyses indicate a large distribution of favorable conditions for the development of maize and sorghum. The increase in ground moisture is also expected to improve degraded pasture conditions in Somalia and Ethiopia.

Precipitation forecast suggest rains to continue across Kenya and Somalia. Rainfall amounts greater than 50 mm are expected for central Kenya, with the possibility of heavier, isolated rains in southern Somalia. However, this high rainfall potential does suggest the possibility for localized flooding, particularly over the Juba River Basin of Somalia in the next seven days.

Rains decreases in Uganda, southern Sudan, and parts of western Kenya.

In the two weeks, relatively low rainfall totals were observed in northern Uganda and in areas along the Lake Victoria basin. Although many parts of Uganda had experienced an increase in rainfall throughout September to eliminate many of stronger deficits observed throughout the season, precipitation accumulations range between 50 – 70 percent below average in the last 30 days. These short term deficits have resulted in below-average soil water conditions in southern Sudan, Uganda, and the western and Rift Valley regions of Kenya (**Figure 3**). This recent shortage in ground moisture is likely to impede the development of crop, and potentially reduce harvests at the end of the season.

Satellite Estimated Rainfall Totals (mm) for East Africa
18th October – 24th October 2009

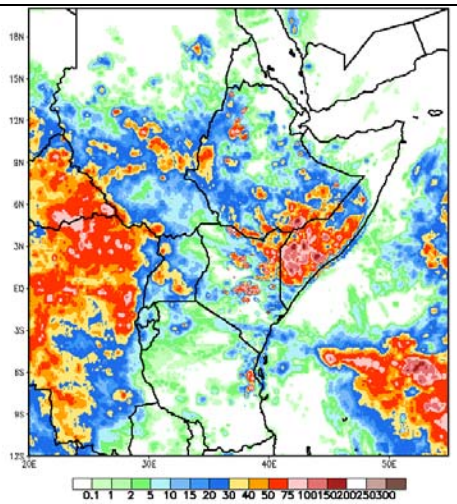


Figure 1
Source: NOAA/CPC

Water Requirement Satisfaction Index
As of 2nd Dekad of October, 2009

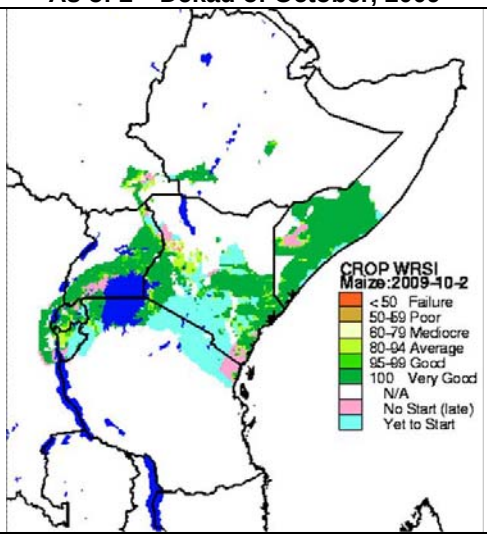


Figure 2:
Source: USGS/FEWS-NET

10-Day Soil Water Index Anomaly (mm)
As of 2nd Dekad of October, 2009

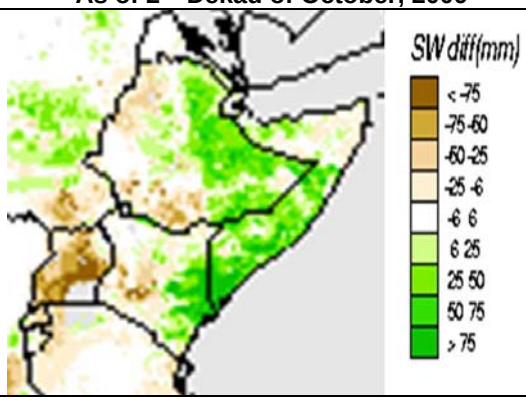


Figure 3:
Source: USGS/FEWS-NET