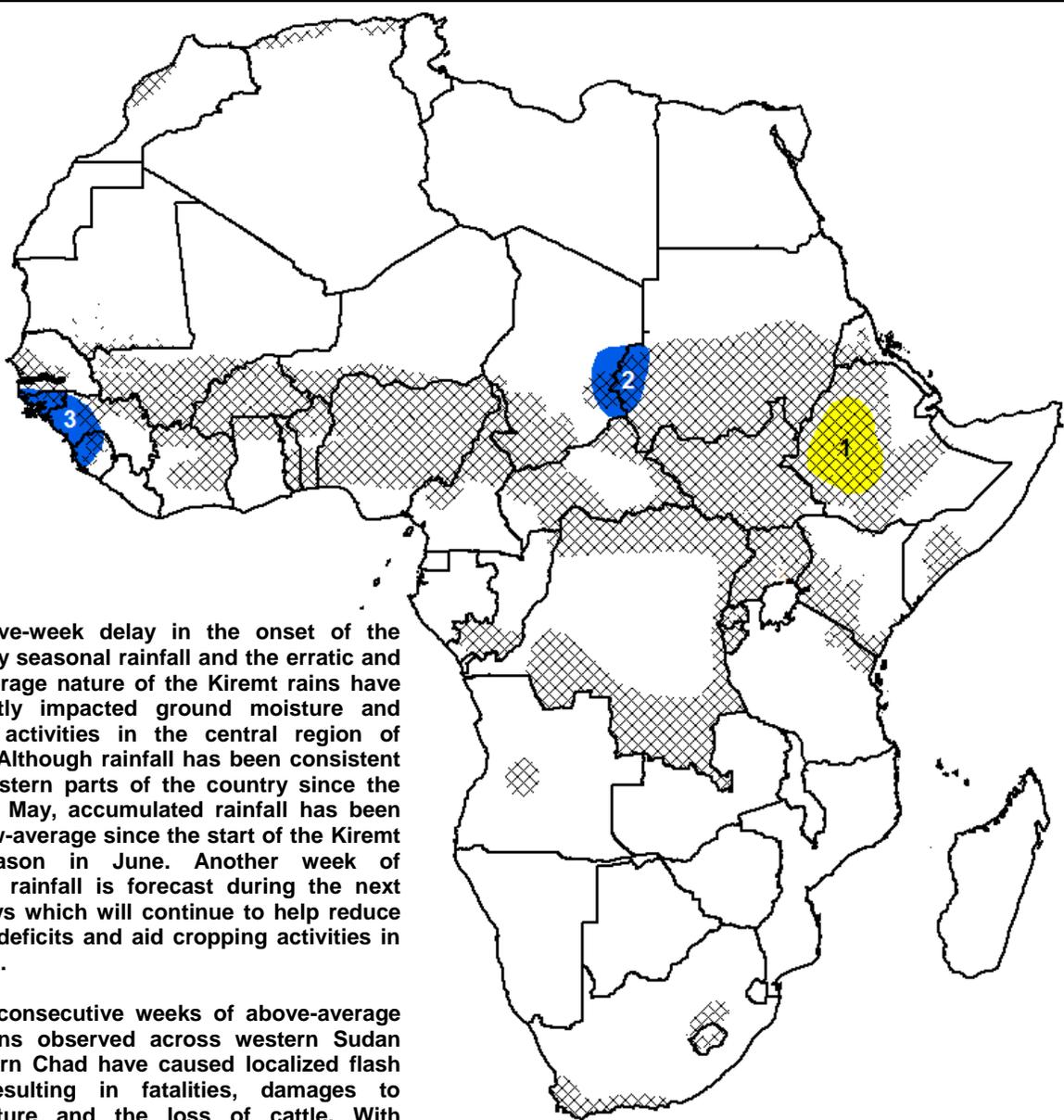


## Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET July 19 – July 25, 2012

- Above-average weekly rains continued to increase rainfall surpluses across West Africa.
- Drier-than-average conditions persist in western Niger.



1) The five-week delay in the onset of the March-May seasonal rainfall and the erratic and below-average nature of the Kiremt rains have significantly impacted ground moisture and cropping activities in the central region of Ethiopia. Although rainfall has been consistent in the western parts of the country since the middle of May, accumulated rainfall has been well below-average since the start of the Kiremt rainy season in June. Another week of increased rainfall is forecast during the next seven days which will continue to help reduce moisture deficits and aid cropping activities in the region.

2) Three consecutive weeks of above-average heavy rains observed across western Sudan and eastern Chad have caused localized flash floods resulting in fatalities, damages to infrastructure and the loss of cattle. With additional heavy rain forecast for the next week, flash flooding risks will be elevated.

3) Torrential coastal rain showers across far western West Africa have resulted in flash flooding in Sierra Leone. With several easterly waves forecast, there is an increased chance for flooding during the next week.

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



## Widespread heavy rain continues across West Africa.

During the past week, widespread heavy rains (>50mm) were observed across West Africa for a fourth consecutive week. The heaviest rains (>75mm) were recorded across saturated portions of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone where flooding had occurred in previous weeks. Abundant rains (>75mm) also were observed across southern Mali, western Burkina Faso and central Nigeria. Moderate to locally heavy rain (>30mm) which has fallen across coastal and southwest Nigeria during the past several weeks has caused extensive flooding and damages to infrastructure. Farther north, moderate rains (10-40mm) in northwest Nigeria and western Niger have provided relief from drier conditions. In contrast, light rains (<10mm) were observed across bi-modal regions of West Africa (Figure 1). Elsewhere, the anomalously northern position of the ITF since May could lead to favorable conditions for the breeding and migration of desert locusts into the Sahel region.

GTS gauge reports from western Niger at Niamey have indicated a delayed start to rains during the past 90 days with several extended dry spells over the past thirty days. As such, rainfall has been 73.5 mm below-average (Figure 2) during this time, heightening dryness concerns in the region. The infrequent and erratic nature of the rains could negatively impact cropping activities. Even though rainfall has been moderate during the past several weeks, additional consistent rainfall in both quantity and frequency are needed to erode the existing seasonal deficits.

Another week of heavy rains (>75mm) are forecast for Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone which could cause additional flash flooding. Elsewhere, above-average, heavy rain (>40mm) is forecast for drier portions of northwest Nigeria and western Niger, reducing seasonal deficits. Heavy rains (>40mm) are also expected in Mali and western Burkina Faso. Meanwhile, light rains (<10mm) are forecast across bi-modal West Africa.

## Seasonal rainfall deficits decrease across Ethiopia.

A second week of widespread heavy rains (>50mm) occurred across Sudan, South Sudan Republic and western/northern Ethiopia during the past week. The above-average rains in Sudan continued to saturate ground conditions and to cause localized flooding with thirty-day rainfall surpluses > 50mm. Farther east, high precipitation totals (>75mm) over western/northern Ethiopia have helped to reduce Kiremt seasonal rainfall deficits; though deficits >50mm continue in the Oromiya region. The increase in rain during the end of June and beginning of July has led to improving vegetation conditions across Ethiopia during the first dekad of July. However, poor ground conditions, as shown by an analysis of vegetative conditions, still exist across western/northern Ethiopia (Figure 3) due to the well-below average start to the Kiremt rainy season. For the next week, heavy rains (>50mm) are expected across Ethiopia and western Sudan/eastern Chad while below-average rains (5-30mm total) are forecast across central/eastern Sudan.

**Note: The hazards outlook map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.**

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