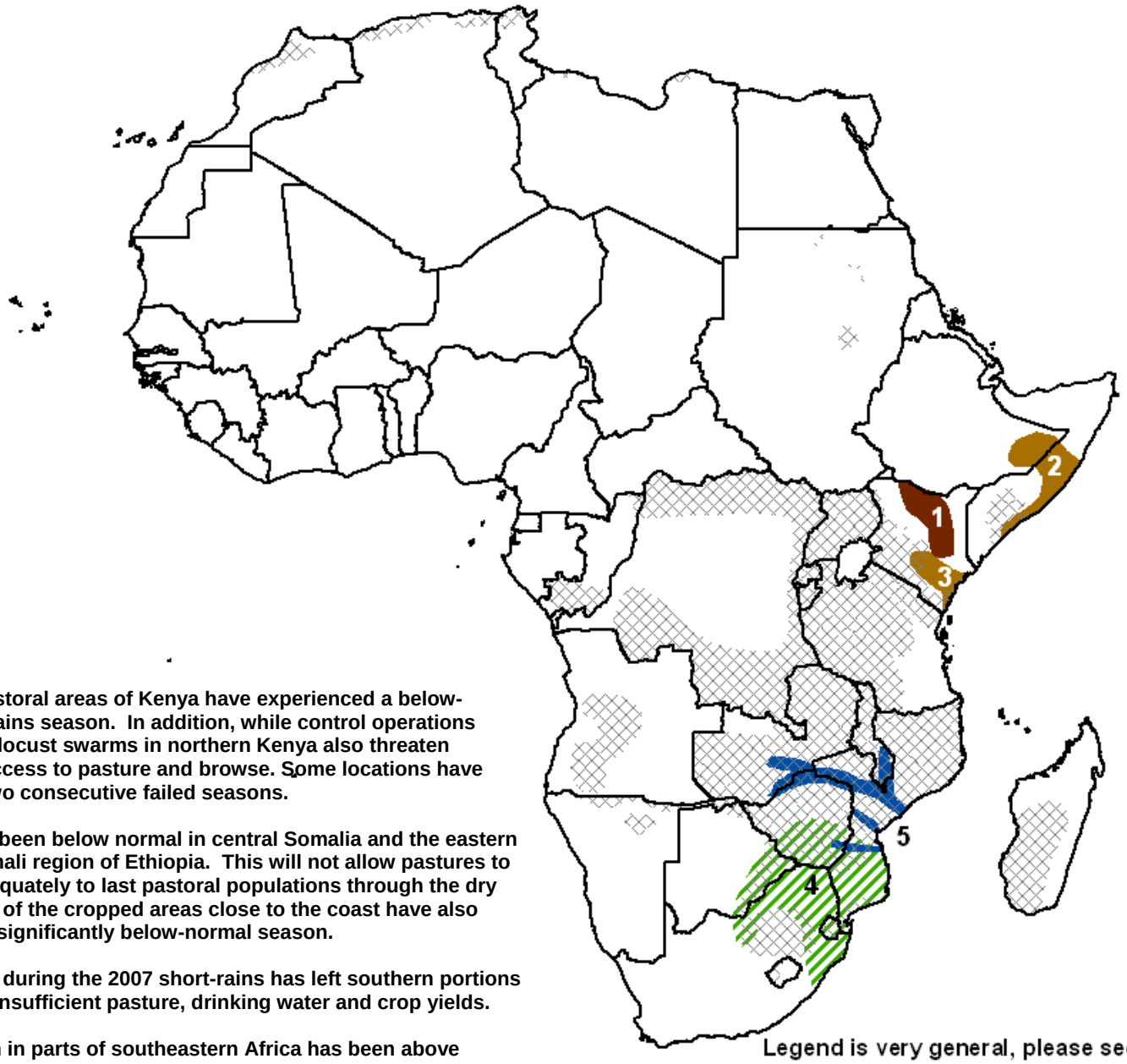
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa January 3 – 9, 2008

- **Long term implications of the poor 2007 short-rain and long-rain seasons in the Greater Horn area included pastures that were not able to regenerate, poor crop harvests and reduced drinking water availability. The most impacted areas include northern and central Kenya with impacts being felt in southern Kenya and portions of Somalia and Ethiopia.**

- **Rainfall continues to benefit many areas of southern Africa. This is increasing water available for drinking, softening the earth for sowing of seeds and regenerating pastures. Flooding has been, and continues to be a localized problem along the Magoye, Buzi, Pungue, Zambezi and Shire Rivers. In recent weeks rainfall has eased over South Africa.**



1) Northern pastoral areas of Kenya have experienced a below-normal short-rains season. In addition, while control operations are underway, locust swarms in northern Kenya also threaten pastoralists' access to pasture and browse. Some locations have experienced two consecutive failed seasons.

2) Rainfall has been below normal in central Somalia and the eastern part of the Somali region of Ethiopia. This will not allow pastures to regenerate adequately to last pastoral populations through the dry season. Some of the cropped areas close to the coast have also experienced a significantly below-normal season.

3) Poor rainfall during the 2007 short-rains has left southern portions of Kenya with insufficient pasture, drinking water and crop yields.

4) Precipitation in parts of southeastern Africa has been above normal, benefiting early season cropping activities, regenerating pastures and increasing water supplies. Much of the rest of southern Africa is off to a normal start to the season.

5) Heavy rainfall this season began causing flooding in Zimbabwe in mid-December. The heavy rainfall is expected to continue and has the potential to cause flooding along the Buzi, Pungue, Zambezi and Shire Rivers. The Magoye, Buzi, Pungue, Save, and Zambezi rivers are all above alert levels, while the Save and the Licungo rivers are below alert levels. Cyclone Elnus may cause highly localized flooding along the western Madagascar coast.

Rainfall Threatens Flooding, Provides Benefit in Southern Africa

Flooding alerts remain in place in central Mozambique as heavy rainfall continues across much of the country as well as up stream in Zimbabwe and Zambia. The potential for flooding is mainly along rivers and in low lying areas. Flooding incidences have and are expected to remain local. Rivers that are at alert level include the Magoye, Zambezi, Pungue, Save, and Buzi Rivers. The areas that are considered most at risk for flooding include Grudja, Estaquinha, Dombe, Goonda and Vila do Buzi.

In Zimbabwe two districts near the Save River have experienced flooding. In Machanga and Govuro the Save River rose by 4 meters on December 31st and that water is expected to continue moving downstream towards Mozambique.

Precipitation in most other areas is significantly above normal; however rainfall has not been as excessive in these areas. The above normal moisture is benefiting drinking water supplies, pastures, crops, and softening the ground for field work from Tanzania to Cape Town.

Recent trends in the Maize Triangle have been towards drier conditions. This has likely been beneficial in most areas, by facilitating field work and providing additional sunlight after some locations went for as long as 3 weeks with steady rains. This brief dry spell may have lightly stressed crops, however rains are expected to return to the Maize Triangle during the coming week.

Poor Short Rains Come to a Close in the Horn, Locust a Continued Threat

Rainfall was poor in many areas of the Greater Horn during the 2007 short-rains season. This followed on the heels of what had been a poor 2007 long-rains season. Some areas did manage a reasonable year, but many did not. The two countries most impacted by the poor rains have been Somalia and Kenya. The current locust infestation in the region has further complicated the situation.

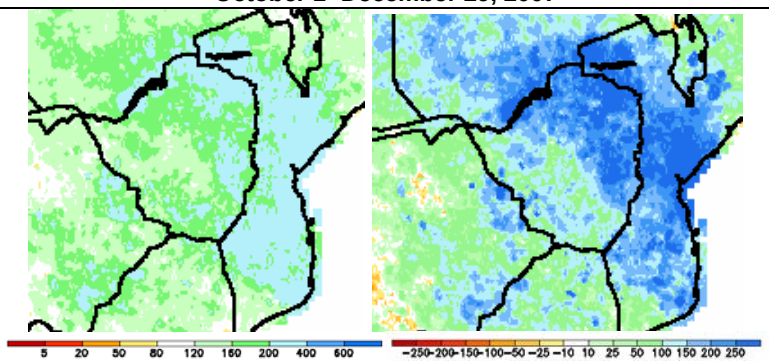
In Somalia, the southern cropped areas had a poor first season, but a reasonable second season, with the exception of a strip of land along the coast. In the central pastoral areas, rainfall was barely evident this season.

Meanwhile in Kenya, the north central region of the country has experienced two consecutive dry seasons. Areas along the coast needed additional precipitation this month to bring ground conditions back to normal. These rains appear unlikely to materialize during the next few weeks. Closer to Lake Victoria, conditions have been normal for both seasons. See image at right for current modeled maize conditions.

Ethiopia has not been impacted on a large scale, but in the Somali region there is an area adjacent to central Somalia that shared similar conditions to those on the other side of the border. Rainfall was very sparse during the rains that normally fall in October and November, and there was little in terms of improvement during December.

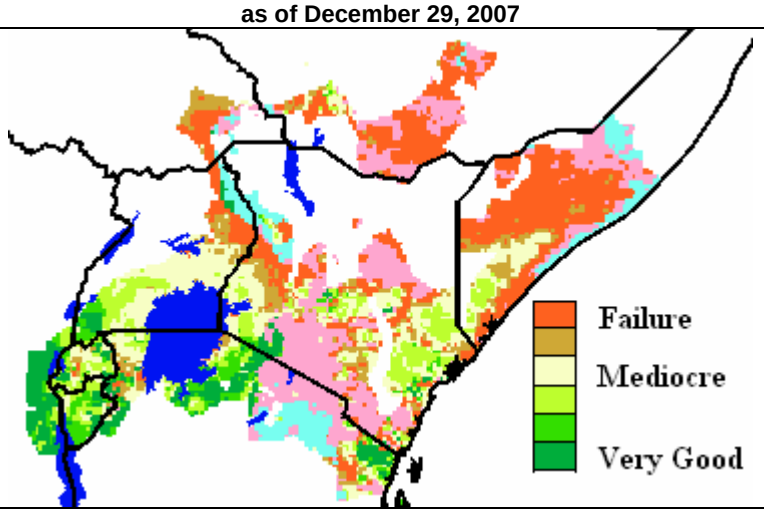
Locusts have added an additional layer of complexity to the situation in Kenya. One of the first outbreaks in several decades has moved into the northern portion of the country. There have been no recent updates by the FAO, however as of December 21st, hopper bands were expected to continue to move into Kenya from along the Somalia-Ethiopia border. Although considered unlikely these bands may move as far as Tanzania and Uganda by the end of January.

Rainfall Anomalies
October 1- December 29, 2007



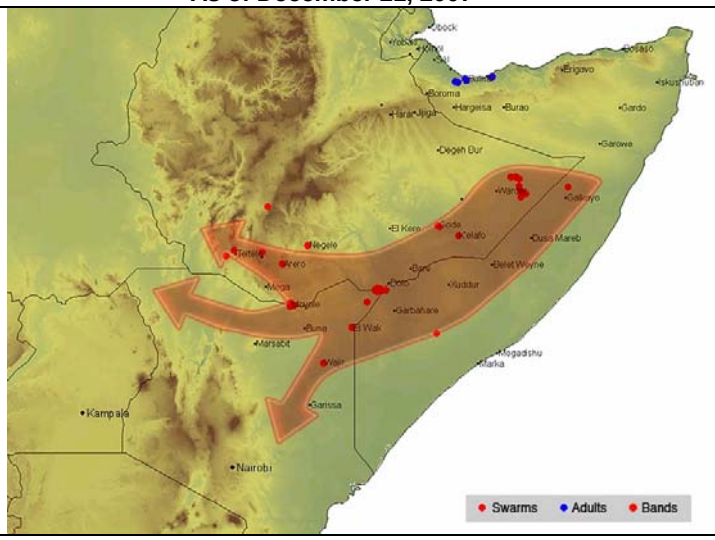
Source: NOAA

Water Satisfaction Requirements Index for Maize
as of December 29, 2007



Source: USGS

Infestation of Desert Locusts in East Africa
As of December 21, 2007



Source: FAO