

The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa February 7 – February 13, 2008



- Rainfall forecast models indicate heavy totals are expected in southern Tanzania and northern Madagascar during the
 observation period of February 7 13, 2008. Those areas are suffering minor rainfall deficits; however, this rain has the
 potential to further recent flooding in northern Madagascar associated with Tropical Cyclone Fame.
- Flooding continues in parts of southern Africa. Rains are expected to weaken during the coming observation period, providing some relief to those affected by flooding.
- The second consecutive failed short-rains season has negatively impacted crop conditions, pasture generation and water supply for much of Kenya. The impacts of the long-term dryness will be felt for some time, at least until the start of the March to May season.

: As & 1) Pastoral and crop growing areas in much of Kenya and northern Tanzania have experienced a failed shortrains season resulting in significant crop losses. insufficient water resources, and poor pasture replenishment. It is likely that many households in Kenya will suffer food deficits in 2008. 2) Rainfall has been below-normal for the short rains season in east Africa. In the Somali region of Ethiopia through central Somalia poor pasture conditions and limited water availability are expected to affect pastoral and agro-pastoral populations during the dry season months of January to April. In southern Somalia, crops suffered from the low rainfall totals, which could limit food availability until the next harvest season in March. 3) Moderate rains continued during the last observation period. Above-normal rainfall so far this season has caused flooding in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and the Caprivi Strip. In the coming observation period heavier rains are expected to remain north of Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and northern Mozambigue, providing some relief to the flooding along the Zambezi, Licongo, Shire and Buzi Legend is very general, please see Rivers. At present, the Zambezi basin remains above numbered descriptions for details. alert level. 🞗 Cropped Areas 4) Throughout southern Africa, and outside flooded areas, crop conditions are faring well. In southeastern Somewhat Favorable Botswana into parts of the maize triangle crop Flooding conditions are exceptional for this time of year and are expected to continue as long as the remainder of the Short-Term Dryness season is normal. Drought

Severe Drought

Flourishing conditions in southern Africa, forecasted yields are above 8 year trend

Much of southern Africa started the rainy season early, especially in South Africa and Mozambique, where start-of-season anomalies were up to three dekads early. In a few areas there was a late start to the rainy season, but it has not been a hindrance to the growth of crops during this very important long-rains season which spans the months of October to May. At present, crops are doing well and are expected to have a good yield. In southeastern Botswana and into the western portions of the maize triangle in South Africa, crop monitors state that forecasted yields for this region are expected to be above the 8-year trend as long as the remainder of the season remains normal. (See **Figures 1** and **2**)

On the other hand, there is the potential for too much rain to cause problems in southern Africa. Crop yields can go down in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi due to excess nitrogen leaching and water logging. The maize triangle region has not reached that point of concern yet, so favorable yields are still expected. However, if February and March rains do become significantly excessive yields will drop. At present, favorable conditions are expected to continue, but this is an additional factor that may lead to food insecurity.





Source: USGS

Flooding continues along river basins in the south

While the early start of season in parts of southern Africa has been beneficial for the region, it has also led to some flooding along river basins in Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In recent weeks, thousands of people have been rescued in Mozambique as rains in surrounding countries caused flooding along its rivers. It is feared that the situation there could worsen dramatically if the Cahora Bassa Lake is incapable of holding back water from neighboring Zambia and Zimbabwe along the Zambezi River. During the last few days of January, the Cahora Bassa Dam has had a discharge rate of 5,900 cubic meters per second with an in-flow rate of nearly 10,400 cubic meters per second. Officials are scheduled to open flood gates of the Kariba Dam located along the Zimbabwe-Zambia border on February 11th. This has the potential to send a surge of water down the Zambezi River into the Cahora Bassa Dam, exacerbating the situation there. The rainy season in Mozambique typically peaks in mid-February.



Second consecutive failed short-rains season in Kenya

The failure of October to December rains of 2007 in Kenya, preceded by the failed regional rains during March to May and the locally poor rains in June to September, has led to long-term dryness as well as food shortages for the country. Crops and pastoral areas suffered greatly over a significant portion of the country, as a result of the rains' inability to enable recovery from the prior periods' deficits. There is little hope for improvement in the near future since the next rainy season does not kick off until March.

The failure of rains also had an impact in the Somali region of Ethiopia as well as central Somalia, where pastoral areas were damaged. In southern Somalia, dryness caused crop losses.

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