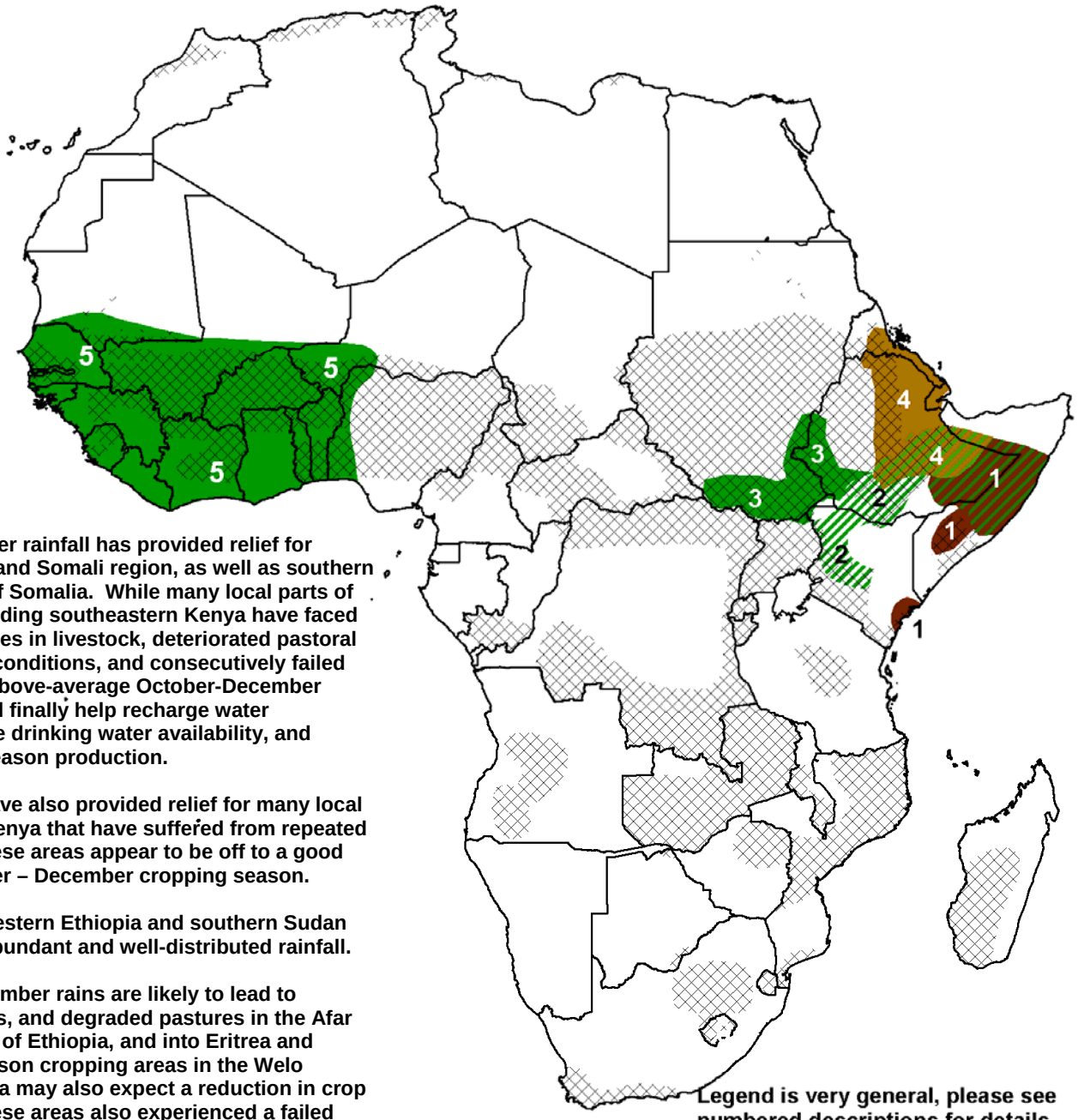
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa November 6 – 12, 2008

- **The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warns that areas in northern Kenya currently experiencing rains may be at risk for Rift Valley Fever. The last outbreak claimed the lives of both humans and livestock in 2006.**
- **Human fatalities were reported during the last week of October in eastern Upper Nile state in Maban County, Sudan after floods impacted many localized areas. Potable water availability has also been impacted, 25 people died after drinking from a pond.**



1) Abundant October rainfall has provided relief for Ethiopia's SNNPR and Somali region, as well as southern and central parts of Somalia. While many local parts of these regions including southeastern Kenya have faced unrecoverable losses in livestock, deteriorated pastoral and agro-pastoral conditions, and consecutively failed crop seasons, an above-average October-December rains season would finally help recharge water resources, increase drinking water availability, and promote second season production.

2) October rains have also provided relief for many local areas in western Kenya that have suffered from repeated failed seasons. These areas appear to be off to a good start for the October – December cropping season.

3) Much of southwestern Ethiopia and southern Sudan has experienced abundant and well-distributed rainfall.

4) Poor June-September rains are likely to lead to reduced crop yields, and degraded pastures in the Afar and Tigray regions of Ethiopia, and into Eritrea and Djibouti. Long-season cropping areas in the Welo province of Ethiopia may also expect a reduction in crop yields. Many of these areas also experienced a failed March-May rains season. Much of this dryness extends southward into the Oromia, Somali, and SNNP regions of Ethiopia, however ample October rainfall is expected to help saturate soils and promote the development of maize and sorghum crops in these regions.

5) An above-average May – September rainy season has resulted in increased water availability and favorable crop production across much of western Africa. Rangelands should continue to flourish through November.

Rainfall totals continue to improve in Eastern Africa

As the eastern Africa October – December rainfall season progresses it's also bringing about positive implications for the current cropping season. Though starting off below-normal, rains in the past three weeks have reversed negative anomalies I many areas and are expected to continue improving them in the weeks to come. The "short rains" season is looking favorable in most areas and where it is showing a delay of season it is expected to change over by the end of the 2nd Dekad of November. **(Figure 1)**

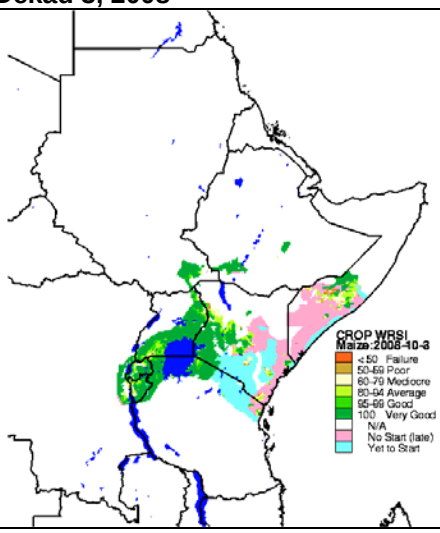
A delayed start of season for cropping regions in South Africa. Season outlook

Since abundant rains were observed in early October, there are parts of the eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal regions of South Africa that are now beginning to experience a delayed start of season. Satellite-derived rainfall analyses indicate seasonal rain deficits have been increasing gradually over the past two weeks (**Figure 2**). While rainfall totals are currently below-average for this time of year, this has not thwarted early season cropping activities as ground moisture analyses remain near normal. **(**See Maize Water Requirement Satisfaction Index **Figure 3)**

According to the Twelfth Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum, western coastal South Africa, Namibia, western coastal and northern Angola, DRC, greater part of Zambia, a large portion of Zimbabwe, the eastern tip of Botswana, a major part of Mozambique, central and southern Malawi, and eastern parts of Tanzania area all expected to experience increased chances of normal to above-normal rainfall during the October – December period. While in southern Angola, much of Namibia, Botswana, south-western Zambia, western Zimbabwe, most of South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, the southern tip of Mozambique, most of Tanzania, northern Malawi, northeastern and southwestern Zambia, and the southern half of Madagascar are all expected to experience an increased chance of normal to below-normal rainfall. Though October rainfall totals were low for the October 15 – October 26 period, the distribution of rains has been improving. The peak cropping period in southern Africa occurs in late-December and into January. Farmers are able to plant from October to December opting for shorter-cycle crops where sufficient rainfall totals do not exist. Insufficient rains become a problem in January at the peak of growth for the southern Africa region.

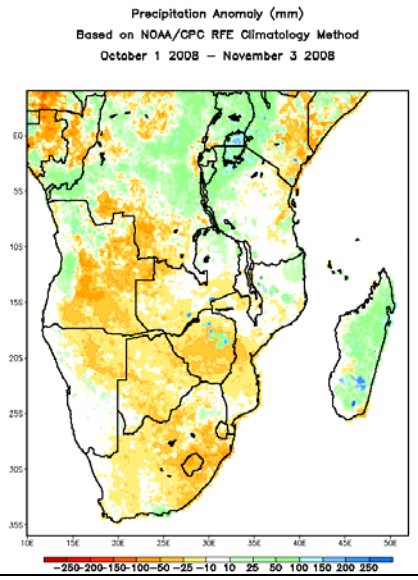
For the January to March period of 2009 the western half of southern Africa, from DRC to the entire southern half of South Africa are expected to experience an increased chance of normal to below-normal rainfall, Madagascar also. Elsewhere in southern Africa, there will be an increased chance of normal to above-normal rainfall.

Figure 1: Maize Water Requirement Satisfaction Index As of October Dekad 3, 2008



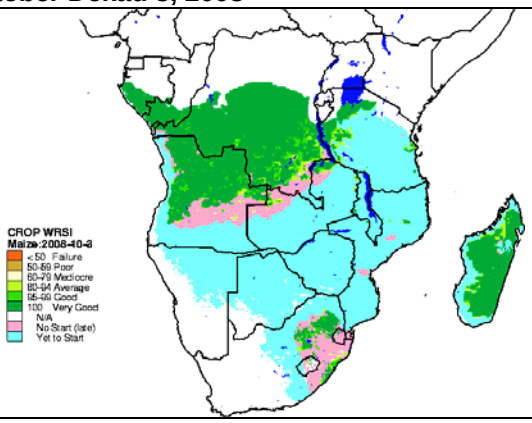
Source: FEWS/USGS

Figure 2: October – December Rainy Season Anomalies As of November 3, 2008



Source: FEWS/NOAA

Figure 3: Maize Water Requirement Satisfaction Index As of October Dekad 3, 2008



Source: FEWS/USGS