

The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa April 2 - 8, 2009



- Lingering impacts from flood waters that caused fatalities, displaced people, and damaged infrastructure, and crops in portions of Namibia, Angola, and Botswana.
- Minor localized flooding occurred in Malawi and Mozambique. The Zambezi and Punge basins are the most affected, but conditions are improving as river levels have begun to drop.
- Preseason, and early season dryness has continued over portions of the Belg-producing areas of Ethiopia, most of Kenya, and nearby portions of Uganda and Tanzania.



Moisture Deficits deepen across the Horn

Across sections of Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Tanzania, and most of Kenya, precipitation has been sparse during the start of the current season. This comes after the previous season, in all of these areas were significantly below-normal or a failure. The exception is Uganda, where minor dryness had little to no impact.

In Ethiopia, the belg-producing areas should have begun receiving preseason rainfall in late February or early March, with more intense rainfall starting shortly thereafter. Instead, light occasional showers moved across the country, with the heaviest rainfall restricted to the southwestern portion of the country. During the last week of March, precipitation did increase nationwide; however, that rainfall has been insufficient to reduce the current deficits. Rainfall is now one month late in many locations, some of which have experienced no rainfall.

The October to December rainfall was well below-average in Kenya and southern Somalia. There have now been four consecutive seasons of insufficient moisture. The current season has continued the trend. This season, however, has encroached upon areas near Lake Victoria, which typically resist drought better than the rest of the country. Satellite estimated rainfall has been as much as 50% below-average in this area. More severe deficits exist further east in central parts of Kenya and deficits continue to rise in much of southern Somalia. Rainfall during the past week did provide relief along the coast of Kenya, near Mount Kenya and in southern Somalia. Unfortunately, the precipitation was well below what is typical for this time of year.

Uganda does not have the history of failed cropping seasons that the rest of the region does. Last season ended with a slight amount of dryness along the Kenya border. This caused little, to no impact on crops. Currently, northeastern Uganda is experiencing dryness similar to that of the other areas. This region has received less than half its average precipitation by this point in the season, with some areas having received less than five percent of average. The last week did bring some very light rainfall to this area. No precipitation fell in the most critically dry areas along the Kenya border.

Tanzania's *Vuli* rains (October to December) were poor, and while not an important cropping season, this appears to have been a precursor to additional dryness during the more critical growing season. Rainfall along the immediate coast has been reasonable, although further inland, satellites have estimated significant and growing rainfall deficits.

The outlook for the coming week shows only light rainfall near most of the drier areas. Ethiopia's pastoral region, in the southeast of the country, may pick up some heavier rainfall.







Figure 2: Unseasonably dry weather extends from Djibouti through Ethiopia and Kenya and into nearby portions of Uganda, Tanzania and Somalia. **Source: FEWS-NET / NOAA**



not received enough moisture to sustain cropping activities. Source: FEWS-NET/USGS

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