

*Below-average and erratic seasonal rains continue over parts of the eastern Horn*

## KEY MESSAGES

- Below-average and poorly distributed October to November seasonal rains have resulted in poor cropping conditions over parts of eastern Horn.
- Continued well above-average rains and localized flooding constrained maize harvesting and on-going short-rains cropping activities over the western sector of the region.
- Forecasts for December indicate an increased likelihood for widespread seasonal rains over the region with increased risk of flooding in flood-prone areas of East Africa.

## SEASONAL PROGRESS

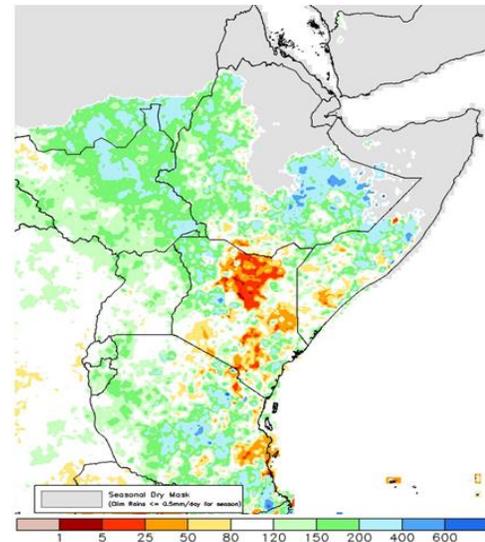
October to November rains were well below average (less than 50 percent of average) with erratic distribution, over parts of the eastern Horn (Figure 1). Rainfall performance was worst in the Marsabit, Wajir, Isiolo, Garissa, Kitui, Makueni, Taita-Taveta districts of Kenya, and in the neighboring Arusha and Moshi regions of northern Tanzania. Field reports confirm significant delays of almost a month (2-3 dekads) for the cropping areas of the eastern lowlands and coastal areas of Kenya, southern Somalia and northeastern Tanzania, which rely heavily on these seasonal rains. The late onset and erratic rains have increased concerns of another mediocre or poor cropping season in these regions, since the mild to moderate El-Ninos of 2009 and 2006.

Rangeland resources have improved in eastern Ethiopia, northern and central Somalia, southeastern South Sudan and the neighboring Karamoja and Turkana regions of Uganda and Kenya due to the continued well above-average rains and vegetation conditions in these areas (Figure 2). Expansive pastoral and agro-pastoral areas over eastern Kenya, southern Somalia and parts of northeastern Tanzania, indicate much-drier-than-normal vegetation conditions (Figure 2). However, some improvement is expected with the on-going December rains.

Cropping conditions have remained favorable for much of western Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda. Localized flooding and flood risks continue over the Lake Victoria basin and the flood-prone areas of Mt. Elgon on the Kenya/Uganda border regions, together with Rwanda and Burundi are expected to constrain current cropping conditions as moderate to heavy rains are forecast to continue during the month of December. In

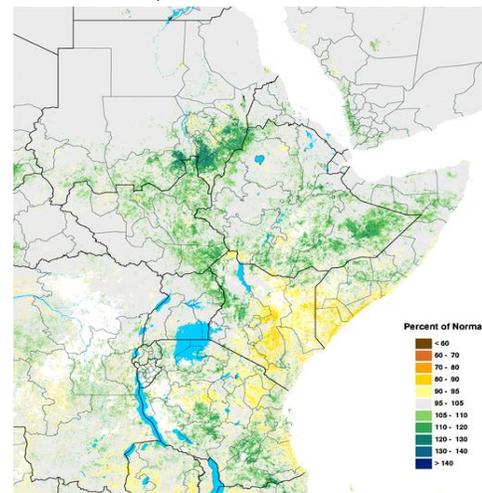
Please see [http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/african\\_desk/cpc\\_intl/](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/african_desk/cpc_intl/) and <http://earlywarning.usgs.gov/?l=en> for more information on remote sensing.

**Figure 1.** RFE anomalies in millimeters (mm) from the 1983 to 2009 mean: October 1 to November 30, 2014



Source: [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](http://www.noaa.gov)/[National Weather Service \(NWS\)](http://www.weather.gov)/[Climate Prediction Center \(CPC\)](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov)

**Figure 2.** eMODIS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) as a percent of the 2001 to 2010 mean: as of 25 November, 2014



Source: [U.S. Geological Survey \(USGS\)](http://www.usgs.gov)/FEWS NET

Sudan, the sorghum cropping conditions are exceptional this season for Kassala, and favorable in Qadriif and Gezira regions. Roughly 10 percent of southern Sinar sorghum region was affected by floods.

Although cropping conditions remained favorable in South Sudan, Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity states area planted declined by 25 to 30 percent due to conflict and population displacement. The October to December, cropping season for southern Ethiopia has generally remained favorable with near-average yield prospects. Harvest prospects are poor for the southeastern and coastal areas of Kenya, together with southern Somalia and northeastern Tanzania, unless the short-rains intensify and continue into early 2015.

## FORECAST

The short-term rainfall forecasts for the next two weeks suggest widespread moderate to heavy rains (Figure 3) in parts of southeastern Ethiopia, southern and central Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, western and eastern Kenya, and western and coastal Tanzania.

There are imminent flood risks over the East Africa coastal strip due to expected very heavy rains over the southern Somalia coastal strip and the surrounding areas. Rainfall is expected to help ease the current cumulative rainfall deficits and continue to replenish rangeland resources and cropping in southern Somalia, and the eastern and southeastern lowlands of Kenya.

However, localized episodic very heavy rains are very likely over this region and could result in flash floods in the coming weeks, especially over eastern Kenya, southern Somalia and parts of the Somali region of Ethiopia.

**Figure 3.** Week GFS-Rainfall forecast (mm), December 1 to 13, 2014

