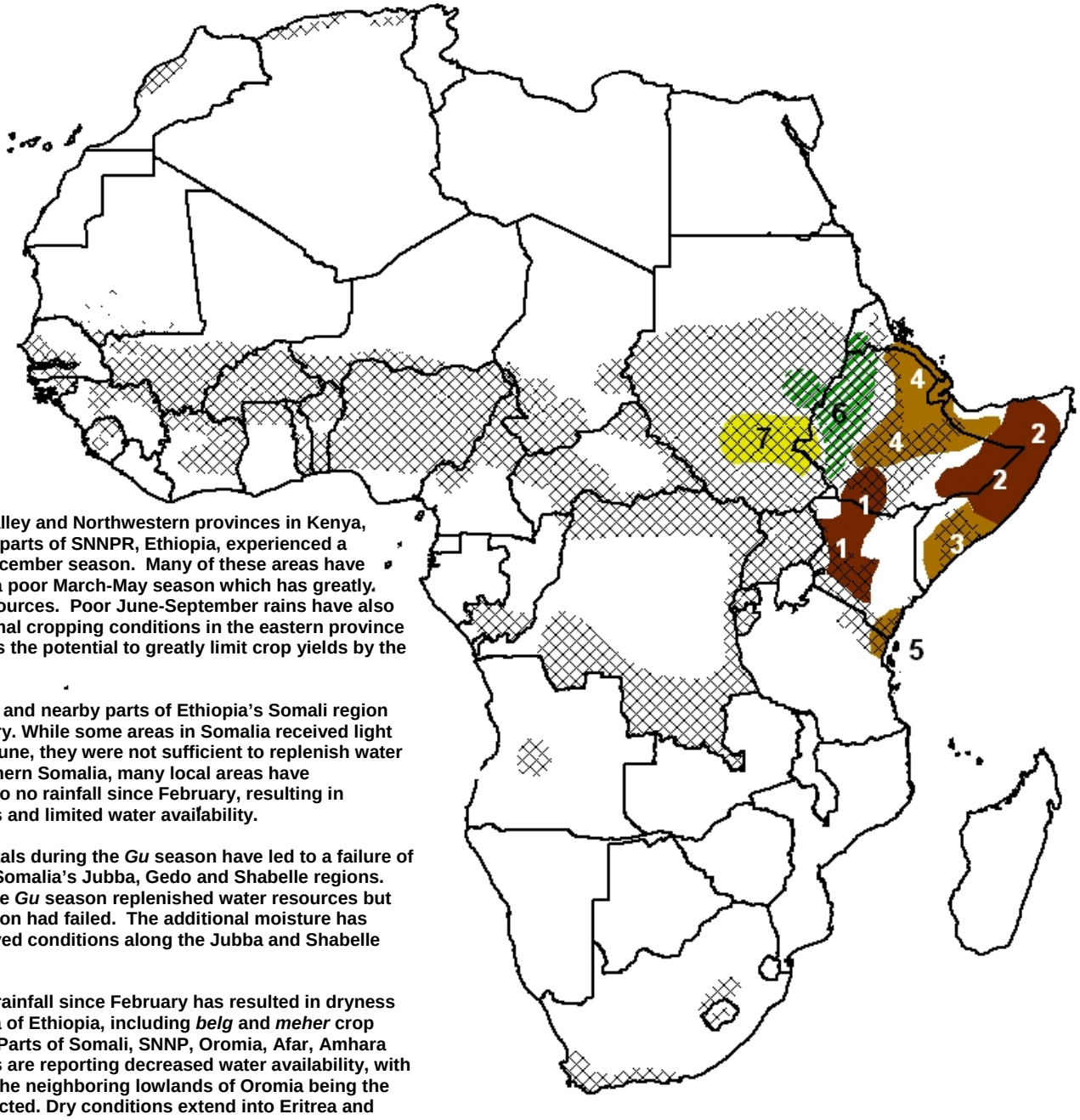
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
July 17 – 23, 2008

- **Steady May-September rains remain favorable for cropping activities across much of the Sahel and Gulf of Guinea countries. However, a lack of rainfall throughout many parts of central Nigeria in July may reduce water resources and impede the crop development.**
- **While many regions in the Greater Horn have been experiencing long-term drought conditions, parts of eastern Ethiopia and central Somalia saw an increase in precipitation in the last week, alleviating dryness and replenishing water resources.**



1) Northern Rift Valley and Northwestern provinces in Kenya, along with nearby parts of SNNPR, Ethiopia, experienced a poor October – December season. Many of these areas have also experienced a poor March-May season which has greatly reduced water resources. Poor June-September rains have also lead to below-normal cropping conditions in the eastern province of Kenya. This has the potential to greatly limit crop yields by the end of the season.

2) Central Somalia and nearby parts of Ethiopia's Somali region remain critically dry. While some areas in Somalia received light rains in May and June, they were not sufficient to replenish water resources. In northern Somalia, many local areas have experienced little to no rainfall since February, resulting in degraded pastures and limited water availability.

3) Poor rainfall totals during the *Gu* season have led to a failure of seasonal rains in Somalia's Jubba, Gedo and Shabelle regions. Light rains after the *Gu* season replenished water resources but only after the season had failed. The additional moisture has allowed for improved conditions along the Jubba and Shabelle Rivers.

4) Below-average rainfall since February has resulted in dryness across a wide area of Ethiopia, including *belg* and *meher* crop producing areas. Parts of Somali, SNNP, Oromia, Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions are reporting decreased water availability, with Afar, Somali, and the neighboring lowlands of Oromia being the most severely affected. Dry conditions extend into Eritrea and Djibouti as well.

5) Since last October, below-average precipitation in parts of southeastern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania has resulted in poor soil conditions and crop development along the coast.

6) Western Ethiopia, in contrast to much of the Horn of Africa, has experienced abundant and well-distributed rainfall since the season began, in late March.

7) Despite receiving regular rainfall throughout July, many parts of southern Sudan are 50 percent below their average for the June-October seasonal rain totals.

Legend is very general, please see numbered descriptions for details.

- Cropped Areas
- Somewhat Favorable
- Short-Term Dryness
- Drought
- Severe Drought

Lingering Nigeria dryness amidst a wet Sahel.

During the last observation period, heavy rainfall amounts (50-75 mm) were observed across much of the Sahel, with the largest precipitation totals (> 75 mm) concentrated across southern Mali and in local areas of Burkina Faso. While lesser weekly rain amounts were observed for Gulf of Guinea countries, many parts of the Ivory Coast, Ghana Togo, Benin, and southern Nigeria already range between 120 and 200 percent of their average rainfall for the May-September season (**Figure 1**). These above-average rain totals continue to provide favorable conditions for the development of millet, maize and sorghum crops.

In Nigeria, precipitation totals have been marginal in June and early July. While moderate rainfall in the Kano, Jigawa, Yobe and Borno states of northern Nigeria helped reduce seasonal precipitation deficits in the last week, some local areas along the Nigeria / Niger border still remain below-average. Further south, many local areas in the Kaduna, Plateau and Bauchi states did not see much rainfall in the last week, and are experiencing moderate deficits in seasonal precipitation. Below-average rainfall may likely to lead to reduced water resources and limited sorghum and millet harvests by August and September.

Precipitation forecasts over the next seven days show an increase in rainfall across much of the Sahel with heavy totals (> 50 mm) expected for much of Burkina Faso, Mali and northern Nigeria. While there is also an increased chance for enhanced rainfall in Nigeria, the spatial extent of this projected precipitation remains uncertain.

Much-needed rainfall observed in drought-stricken parts of Ethiopia and Somalia. Increasing dryness in central Sudan.

In the last seven days, persistent showers and isolated rainfall totals exceeding 50 mm were observed over some significantly dry areas of central and eastern regions of Ethiopia as well as parts of central Somalia (**Figure 2**). Along the Ahmar mountain range in Ethiopia, observed rain amounts ranging from 30-50 mm are expected to help replenish water resources for the long-season *Meher* cropping areas. The Ogaden region of Ethiopia observed slightly lesser totals (15 - 40 mm) over the last week; however, this should help to alleviate long-term dryness in the region.

With the *Gu* (main) rainy season ended in Somalia, additional offshore rains during the last week are expected to replenish water resources as well as improve pastures along the Shabelle river basin to the Madug and Nugaal regions of Somalia. Moisture index analyses indicate a moderate improvement (approximately from 5 to 40 percent) in these regions since last week (**Figure 3**).

Further west, a lack of July rainfall has resulted in a below-average June-September rains season for many local areas in central and southern Sudan. Despite many of these areas experiencing a wetter-than-average June, continued dryness will likely lead to depleted soil moisture and limited crop harvests.

Satellite-Derived Percent of Average Rainfall (%)
May 1st – July 14th, 2008

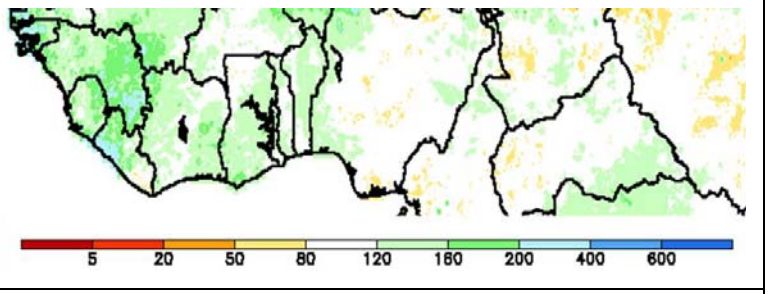


Figure 1

Source: NOAA/FEWS NET

Satellite-Derived Total Rainfall (mm)
July 8th- July 14th, 2008

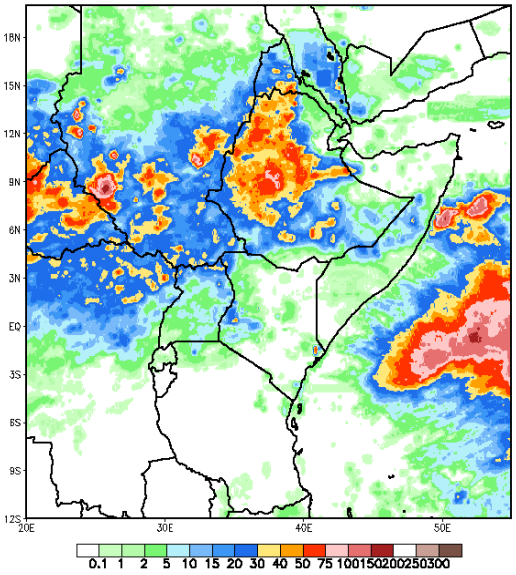


Figure 2

Source: NOAA/FEWS NET

10-Day Moving Moisture Index (MI)
As of July 12th , 2008

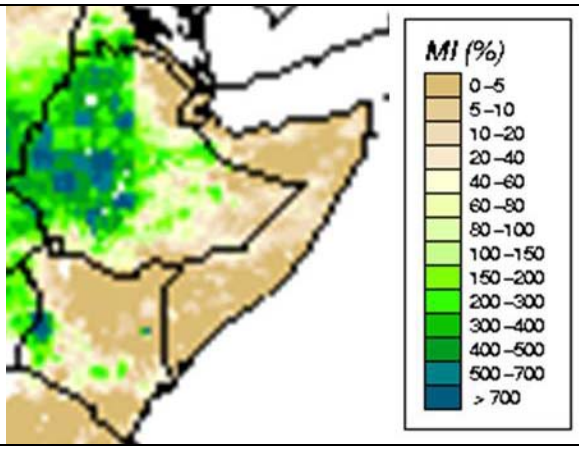


Figure 3

Source: USGS/FEWS NET