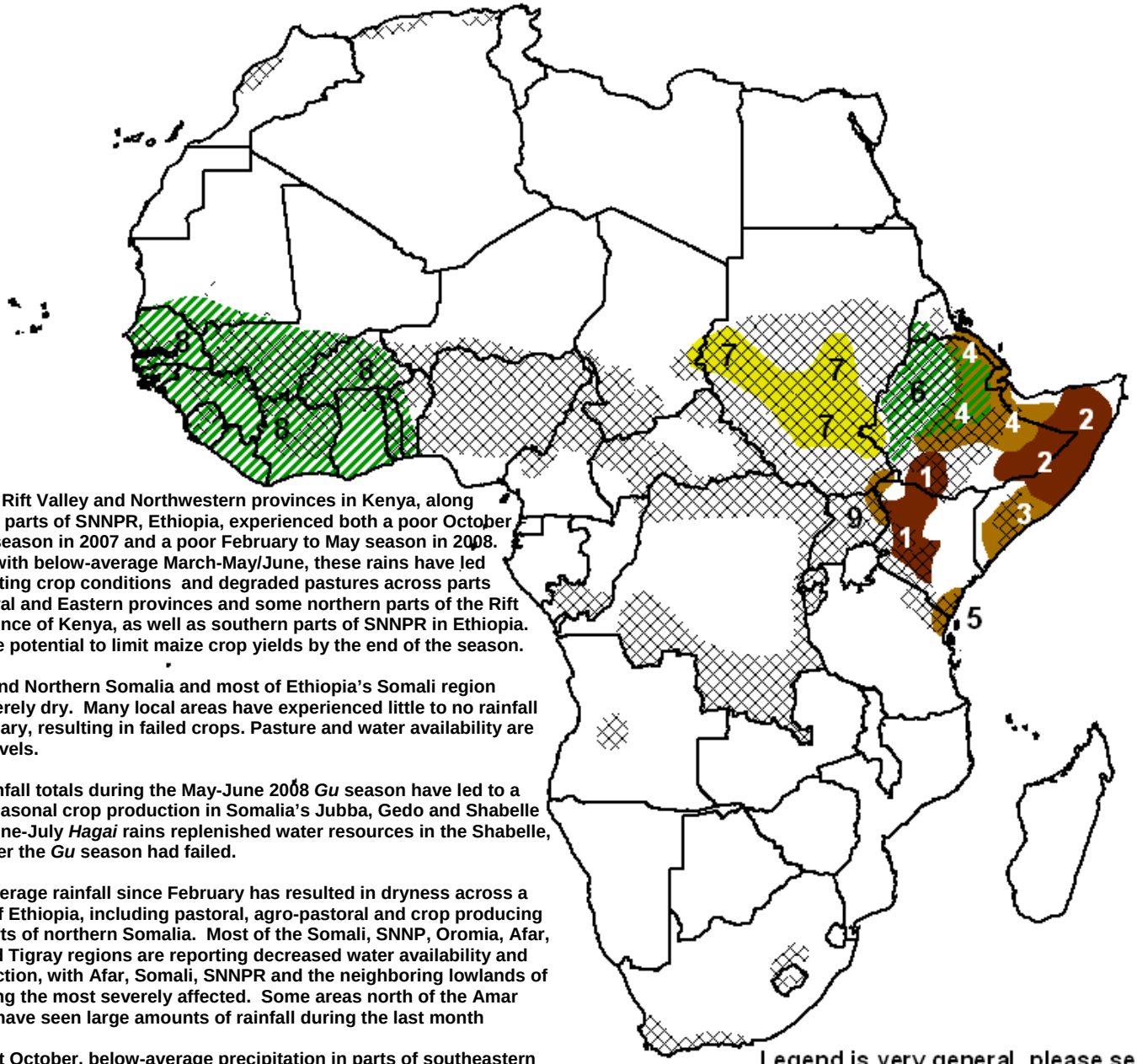
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa August 14 – 20, 2008

- **Precipitation across much of western Africa has been above average. This has resulted in favorable cropping and pasture conditions, as well as improved access to drinking water. Rains have been heavy at times, resulting in localized flooding.**

- **Rainfall continues to ease across much of Sudan, especially in the south. If dryness persists, it may begin impacting crops.**



1) Northern Rift Valley and Northwestern provinces in Kenya, along with nearby parts of SNNPR, Ethiopia, experienced both a poor October December season in 2007 and a poor February to May season in 2008. Combined with below-average March-May/June, these rains have led to deteriorating crop conditions and degraded pastures across parts of the Central and Eastern provinces and some northern parts of the Rift Valley province of Kenya, as well as southern parts of SNNPR in Ethiopia. This has the potential to limit maize crop yields by the end of the season.

2) Central and Northern Somalia and most of Ethiopia's Somali region remain severely dry. Many local areas have experienced little to no rainfall since February, resulting in failed crops. Pasture and water availability are at critical levels.

3) Poor rainfall totals during the May-June 2008 *Gu* season have led to a failure of seasonal crop production in Somalia's Jubba, Gedo and Shabelle regions. June-July *Hagai* rains replenished water resources in the Shabelle, but only after the *Gu* season had failed.

4) Below-average rainfall since February has resulted in dryness across a wide area of Ethiopia, including pastoral, agro-pastoral and crop producing areas in parts of northern Somalia. Most of the Somali, SNNP, Oromia, Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions are reporting decreased water availability and crop production, with Afar, Somali, SNNPR and the neighboring lowlands of Oromia being the most severely affected. Some areas north of the Amar Mountains have seen large amounts of rainfall during the last month

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 late March.

7) Rainfall has been slightly below-average across Sudan.

8) Above-average rainfall since the beginning of July has resulted in increased water resources and favorable crop conditions across much of western Africa. Cholera outbreaks have been reported in Senegal, and isolated flooding is likely elsewhere in the region

9) Poor March-September rainfall has led to deteriorated soil conditions and a failed crop season for localized areas of northeastern Uganda, and parts of Kenya and Sudan.

Seasonal rainfall accumulation has continued to drop in Sudan, raising concerns of water resources

Over the past month, negative rainfall totals have gradually deepened across Sudan. Though some areas continue to see sufficient rainfall for agriculture, many areas are beginning to show signs of crop stress. In northern Sudan, rainfall totals have been below-normal, with the start of seasonal rains in areas southwest and east of Khartoum at least two dekads late. The Darfur region continues to experience suppressed rainfall, and in southern Sudan, rainfall deficits continue to grow. These conditions are having an adverse effect on crops (**Figure 1**).

Given that seasonal rainfall is now approaching its northern-most extent, time for improvement in these areas is limited. Within the next couple of weeks, rainfall will begin to slowly withdraw, from north to south, across the region. If rainfall does not improve over the next one to two weeks in the northern-most areas, moisture deficits may not be able to recover.

Water Requirements Satisfaction Index Anomaly for Grains
August 10, 2008

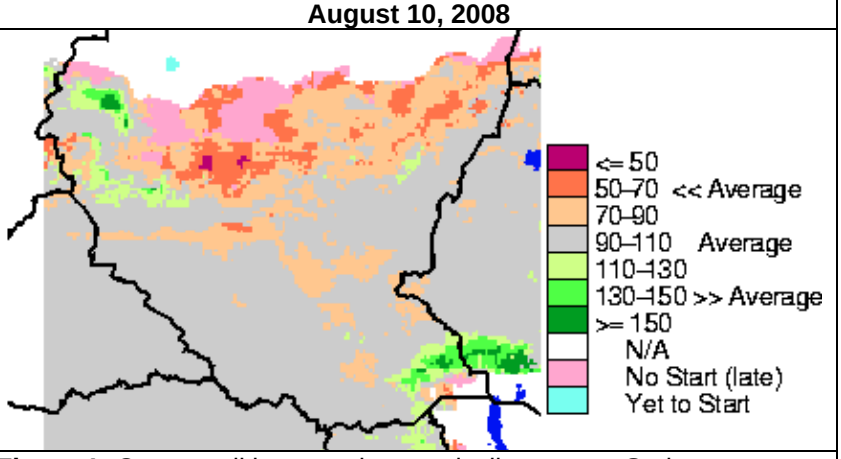


Figure 1: Crop conditions continue to decline across Sudan.
Source: USGS

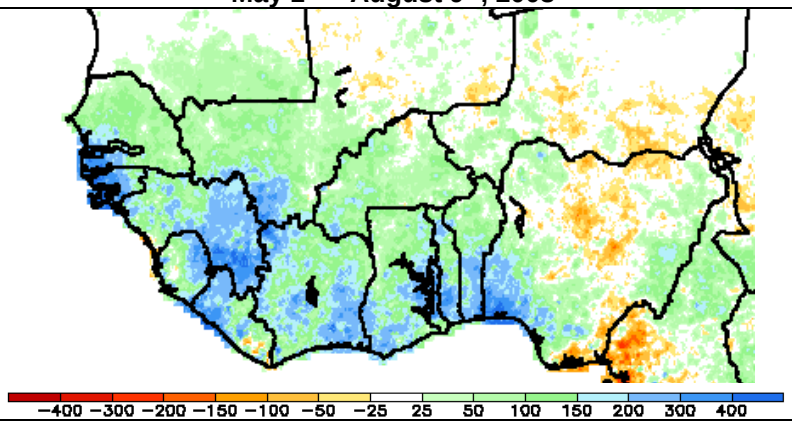
Increased rains in West Africa continue to favor healthy cropping conditions.

In many areas across western Africa, excessive and frequent rains during July have led to an above-average May-September season. Although Niger observed a decrease in rainfall in early August, seasonal rainfall accumulation in other areas remains as much as twice the average. (**Figures 2 and 3**). These positive precipitation anomalies are expected to provide favorable conditions for the development of maize, sorghum and millet, as most of these crops are at the peak of their development. Pasture and drinking water resources are also improving as a result of the heavy rains.

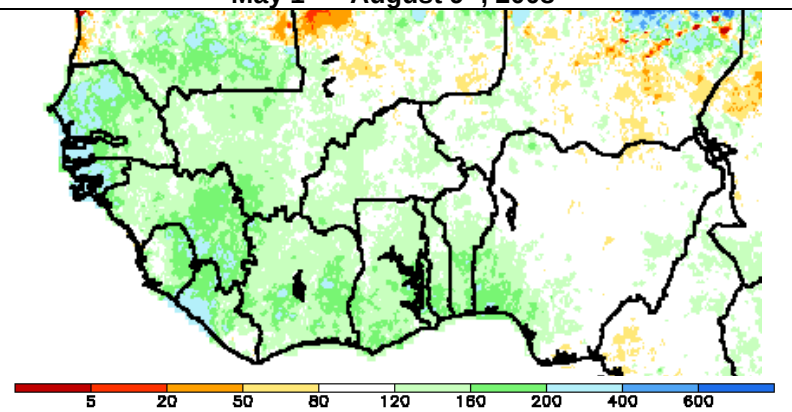
For areas in southern Burkina Faso and northern Ivory Coast and Ghana that experienced a two to three dekad late start to the May-September season, satellite-derived crop analyses show generally healthy crop conditions due to the abundant rainfall in July. Rainfall has also been favorable for crops and pastures across Senegal, Guinea and Mauritania. In Niger and Mali, significantly high river levels are reported along the Niger River, as well as cases of isolated flooding. Recently Niger has since been drier, potentially raising some concerns about the remainder of the season. Some isolated locations in northern Nigeria have also been drier than average.

Above average rainfall is expected to continue during the next week across much of the Gulf of Guinea and Sahel regions.

Satellite Estimated Rainfall Anomaly
May 1st – August 9th, 2008



Satellite Estimated Percent of Average
May 1st – August 9th, 2008



Figures 2 and 3: Rainfall has been abundant in western parts of the Gulf of Guinea and Sahel regions.
Source: NOAA/CPC