

Slow Start to the June-September season in the Northern Sector

KEY MESSAGES

- The June through September season has been characterized by a slow start with dry conditions observed across the unimodal regions of Sudan, South Sudan, and parts of the Kiremt regions of northern Ethiopia.
- Despite a slow start to the Kiremt season, parts of western and central Ethiopia are experiencing favourable conditions.
- Flooding along the Omo River and around the Omo Delta in Southwestern Ethiopia has led to the displacement of over 8000 people.
- Northeastern Ethiopia, northwestern Somalia, and Yemen remain regions of concern with June rainfall deficits persisting (**Figure 1**), following severe rainfall deficits during the March–May period.
- Favourable pasture and water conditions have been observed across Kenya, and southern Somalia following an above-average March–May rainfall season. However, forecasts indicate above-average temperatures that could desiccate the current gains within a short period of time (see **Figure 2**).
- Crop conditions across the region remain better than average as the season comes to a timely end in bimodal areas of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania. In the unimodal areas of western Kenya and Karamoja regions of Uganda and much of western, central, and southern Ethiopia, crop conditions are also above-average.
- Moderate flood risk persists in South Sudan, western and central Ethiopia, and Sudan, given the higher-than-average river and lake levels across the Nile Basin along with forecast above-average rainfall in the northern sector despite the current delayed onset.

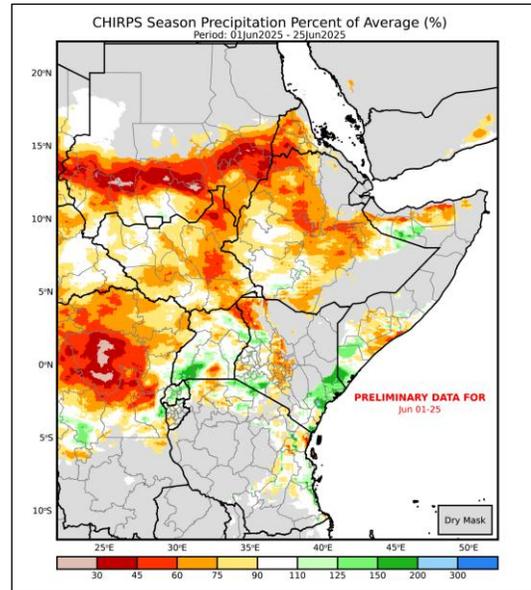


Figure 1. CHIRPS cumulative rainfall, June 1 – June 25, 2025, percent of 1991–2020 average

Context: *Between June and September, the following are the areas and names of the rainy seasons underway in parts of East Africa: Kiremt rains (June to September) in Western, Central, Northern, and Eastern Ethiopia; main rainy season (June to September) in the unimodal zones of South Sudan and Sudan; long rains in unimodal Uganda and Kenya; Karan/Karma rains (July to September) in northern pastoral areas of Ethiopia and Sitti and Fafan zones of Somali (Ethiopia) and northern sector of Somalia; and second rains (July to November) in South Sudan bimodal zone.*

SEASONAL PROGRESS

Early-season rainfall deficits have been observed in several areas, particularly in **southern Sudan, central and eastern South Sudan, and northern Ethiopia**, as indicated by the cumulative rainfall in late June (see **Figure 1**). This slow start could lead to reductions in cultivated area and delayed planting, and even shorten the growing periods. If dry conditions persist into July, there is a risk of reduced crop yields and poor pasture across the northern sector. However, most ensemble forecasts indicate high chances of increased rainfall in the coming weeks and a fully established June to September season.

While the onset of the June to September Kiremt rains was delayed in some areas, particularly in the northern regions, cumulative rainfall in **western and central Ethiopia** such as **Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, Gambella and Southern Ethiopia** regions have improved in recent weeks. These regions have received near-average rainfall as of June 25th which is likely to support crop development. Flooding incidents have been reported in South Oromo following the overflow of Lake Turkana and Omo river leading to displacement of approximately 8000 people in Dasenech District.

Significant rainfall deficits have been observed across **northeastern Ethiopia, northwestern Somalia, and Yemen** during the March to June period resulting in poor pasture and water conditions. In **Ethiopia and Somalia**, the Gu/Genna season was marked by a delayed onset followed by extended dry spells. In Yemen, rainfall during the first season was well below average, further straining already fragile conditions driven by conflict and socio-economic challenges. According to **UNOCHA**, **Yemen** generally experienced rainfall deficits of up to 10% of average, with only isolated areas showing slight positive anomalies.

The long rains were significantly above average across much of **Kenya, southern Somalia, Burundi, and Tanzania**. This has contributed to the widespread improvements of crops, rangeland, and water availability. In Ethiopia, most western, central, and southern regions short-cycled crops, such as teff and maize, are currently under cultivation, while long-cycled crops are in their normal development phases. In **Kenya**, most ASAL regions, such as Turkana, Wajir, Marsabit, and parts of Garissa, have reported enhanced water access for both human and livestock. The same can be mentioned for both the Lower and Middle Juba as well as Gedo districts in **Somalia**. Crops across **Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya and southern Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Bimodal South Sudan** are at the reproductive stage, and most are between average to above average. Deficits can be observed in **southwestern Uganda and eastern Rwanda**, as well as parts of **central and eastern South Sudan**, following a delayed onset and dry spells within the season

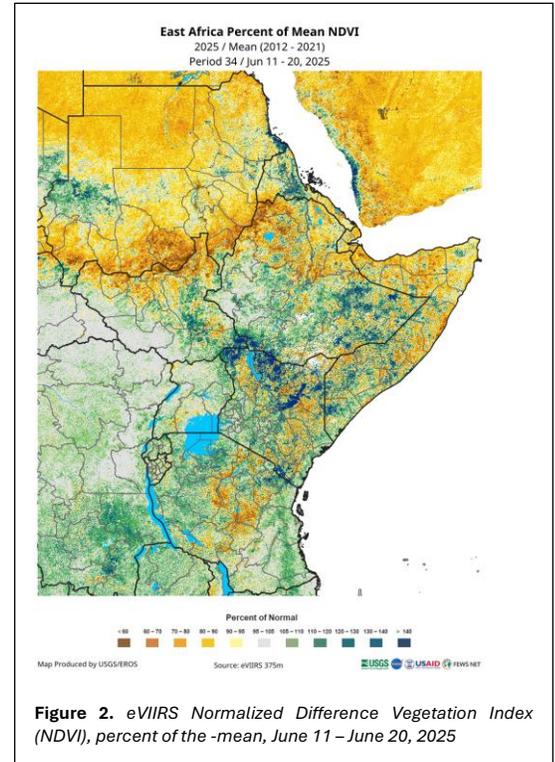


Figure 2. eVIIRS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), percent of the -mean, June 11 – June 20, 2025

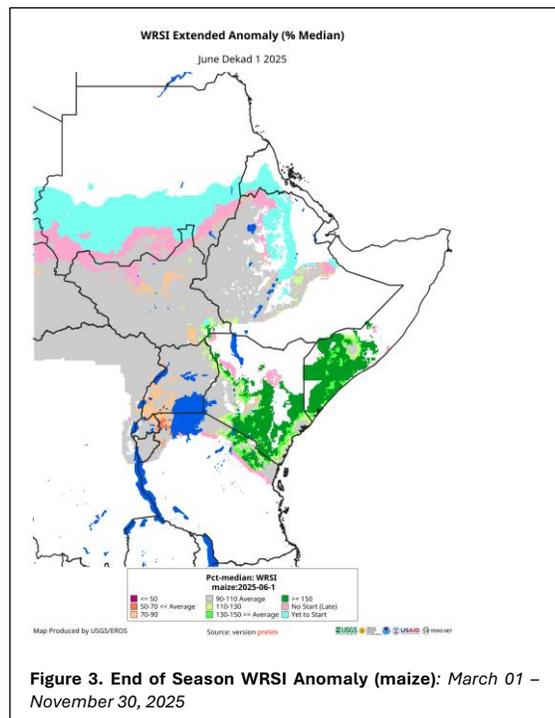


Figure 3. End of Season WRSI Anomaly (maize): March 01 – November 30, 2025

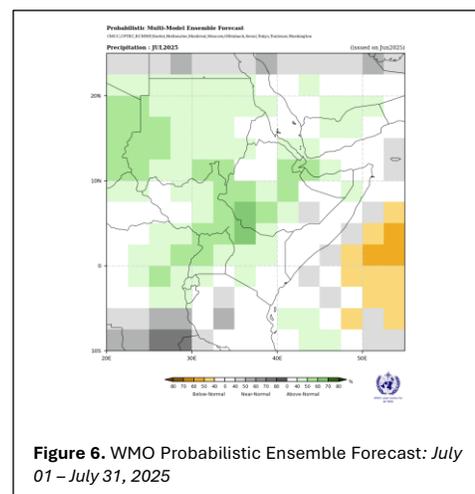
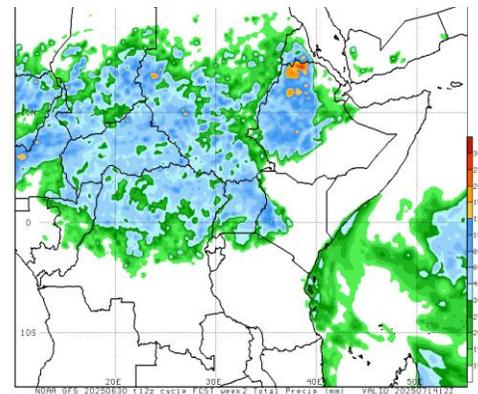
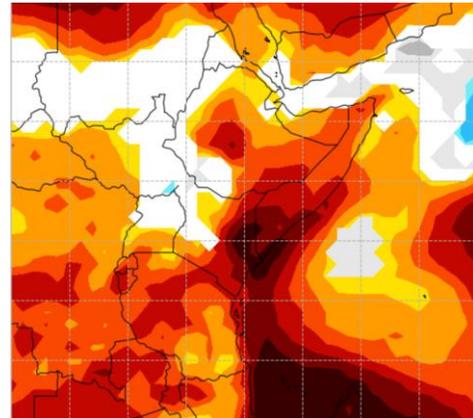
(Figure 3). The favorable conditions are likely to continue specifically for the unimodal regions of **Kenya** and **Karamoja** region in **Uganda** following an above-average rainfall forecast.

AGROCLIMATIC OUTLOOK

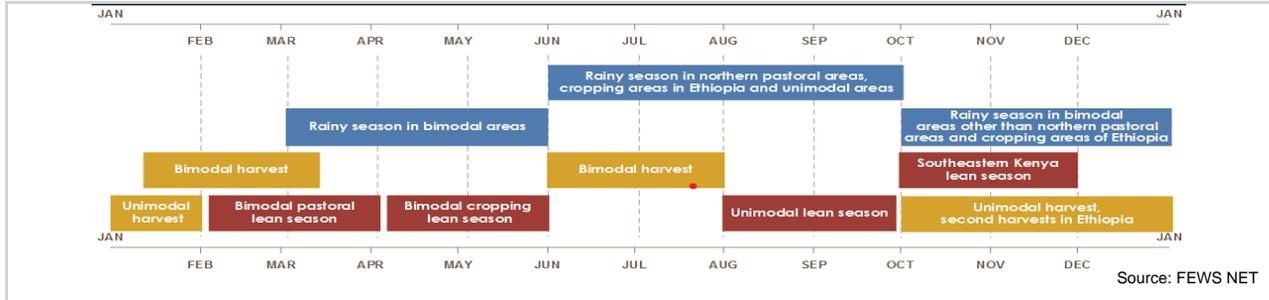
Forecasts for July through September indicate above-average temperatures across the Horn, with extreme heat expected particularly in the eastern half of **Kenya**, most of **Somalia** and **eastern Ethiopia**. These temperatures are likely to increase evapotranspiration, which might lead to rapid depletion of recent gains for pasture, water and even crops (see **Figure 4**).

Although the June to September season has been marked by a slow onset and dry conditions across much of the northern sector, these areas are likely to get a reprieve in the coming 1 or 2 weeks as indicated by the short-term GFS forecast (see **Figure 5**)

Streamflow models indicate above-average river levels of between 0.5 meter – 1 meter along different sections of River Nile such as Fangak, Juba and Malakal sections. In addition, NASA altimetry data indicate Lake Kyoga, Lake Albert and Lake Victoria levels have remained historically high, enhancing the risk of flooding further downstream. The current rainfall forecasts indicate above-average rainfall expected across the Western sector of the region which heightens the chances of flooding given that soil moisture in regions such as eastern **South Sudan** are already saturated and the Sudd wetlands extent is larger compared to the same period last year (2024) which was categorized as a flood year (see **Figure 6**).



Seasonal Calendar for a Typical Year



Recommended citation: FEWS NET. East Africa Seasonal Monitor June 2025: Slow Start to the June – September season in the Northern Sector