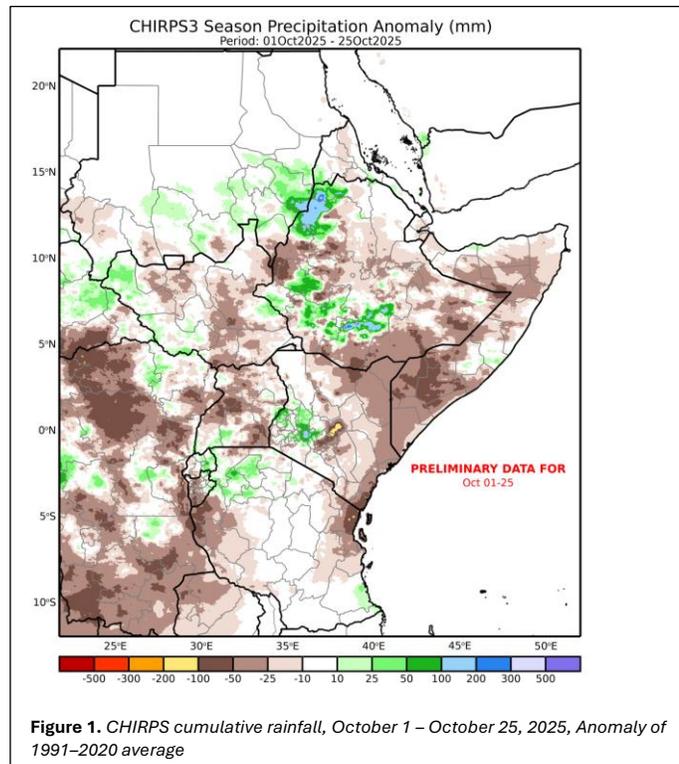


Delayed and Erratic Start to the October to December 2025 Rains Across the Eastern Horn of Africa

KEY MESSAGES

- Prolonged wet conditions in the **North Rift region of Kenya**, where rainfall has persisted continuously from March through October, posing a significant risk of post-harvest losses. However, average to above-average crop production is still expected.
- The June–September rainfall season across much of the eastern Horn of Africa concluded with generally mixed conditions following a delayed onset. Enhanced rainfall from late July supported vegetation recovery and alleviated seasonal deficits, it also led to localized flooding and landslides which caused significant damage in parts of **Sudan, South Sudan, and Ethiopia** leading to shortfalls in production.
- The October–December rainfall season has generally experienced a delayed onset across much of the eastern region as forecasted. However, in parts of **Kenya** including **south rift** and **central regions, southern Uganda, eastern Rwanda, and eastern Burundi**, the season has started on time, and in western Kenya, continued rains from the March–May and June–September seasons have allowed for early land preparation and planting.
- The October to early November rainfall has been variable and unevenly distributed in time and space. The eastern sector of the region has yet to experience an onset of the seasonal rains. High temperatures persist across most areas (Figure 1).



SEASONAL PROGRESS

MARCH – NOVEMBER

Context: *Between March and November, the following are the areas and names of the rainy seasons underway in parts of East Africa: Gu rains in Somalia; long rains in unimodal Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, and Rwanda; belg rains (mid-February to May) in Ethiopia, as well as the diraac/sugum rains in the northern pastoral areas and gu/genna rains in the southern and southeastern pastoral areas of Ethiopia; and the first season rains in the bimodal zones of southwestern Ethiopia, southwestern South Sudan, and northern Uganda. This also marks the start of the October–December season*

Harvesting is underway across the unimodal cropping zones in the **North Rift, Kenya**, and the **Karamoja region, Uganda**, and is expected to continue throughout November. In **Western Kenya**, continued rainfall has supported expanded cultivation of cereal crops during a season typically dominated by short cycle crops such as horticultural produce. However, in the **North Rift region**, prolonged rainfall poses a risk of unanticipated post-harvest losses. Overall, production prospects remain above average, primarily due to a favorable rainfall season.

JUNE – SEPTEMBER

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, Sitti and Fafan zones of Somali (Ethiopia) and the northern sector of Somalia; and second rains (July to November) in South Sudan bimodal zone.*

Across much of the eastern Horn of Africa, the June–September rainfall season has now concluded (Figure 2). Overall, the season was characterized by a delayed onset across most of the northern sector. The rains picked up in late July to early August and continued through September. Abundant rainfall has improved soil moisture, replenished water resources, and enhanced pasture conditions, which will be critical for sustaining livestock and supporting late-planted crops. Satellite-derived vegetation indicators confirm widespread pasture regeneration across western and northern regions (Figure 3). However, conflict-related constraints continue to limit access to farmland and agricultural inputs in Sudan and South Sudan.

Heavy rains during the June–September season led to localized flooding across **western and central Ethiopia**, **Sudan**, and **South Sudan**, especially along the **Sudd wetlands**, which led to a significant expansion of inundated areas. In Sudan, heavy rains in western and eastern regions resulted in a major landslide in Darfur state in August. In **east Sudan**, the collapse of a dam near **Port Sudan** and subsequent flooding in neighboring areas led to significant displacement and property loss. Recurrent flooding along major river

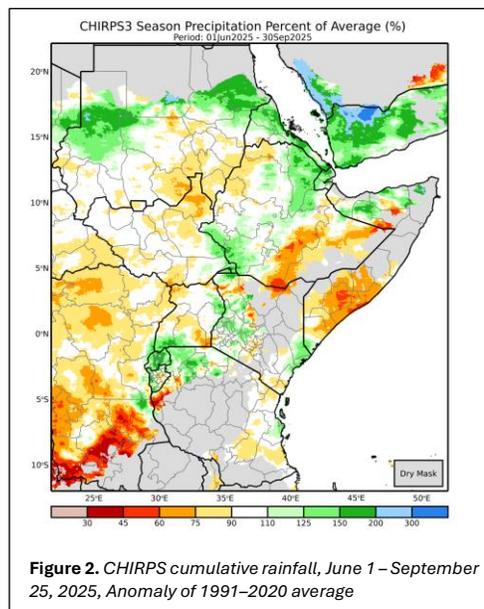


Figure 2. CHIRPS cumulative rainfall, June 1–September 25, 2025, Anomaly of 1991–2020 average

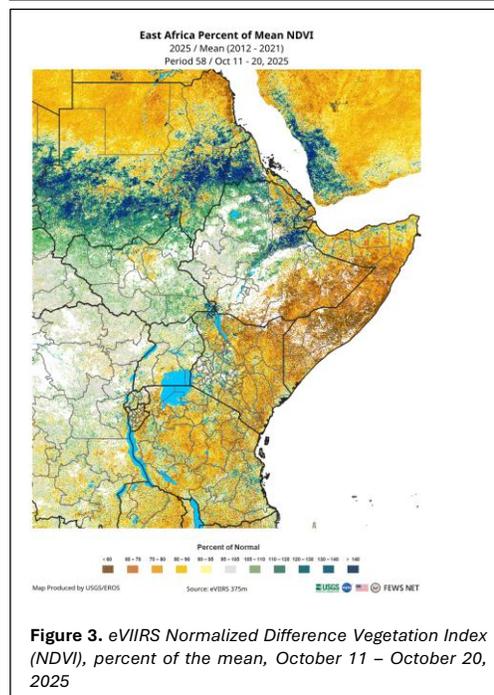


Figure 3. eVIIRS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), percent of the mean, October 11 – October 20, 2025

basins in **Kassala** and **Gedaref** further disrupted communities and agricultural activities, while rising Nile levels in the north inundated several riverside villages. Flash floods were also reported across parts of **Darfur**, **Al Jazirah**, and **Khartoum**. Although the impacts were severe, the overall extent of flooding in 2025 was less than that recorded in 2024. Overall, the rainfall season has been generally favorable in most parts of the country, though socioeconomic and conflict-related challenges continue to limit agricultural productivity. As rains migrate southward, the likelihood of further extreme rainfall remains low.

In **Ethiopia**, harvesting is underway in the northern half of the country. The June–September **kiremt rains** have been generally favorable (Figure 4), supporting near-average national production prospects despite delayed onset, localized flooding, hail, and intermittent dry spells. In **Tigray**, delayed rainfall and moisture deficits forced replanting of short-cycle crops such as teff and pulses, while hailstorms destroyed roughly **10,500 hectares** of cropland. Rainfall declined sharply in mid-September, raising concerns about the late-planted crops. In **Oromia**, the rains improved after a delayed start, though yields remain below average given the extended dry periods particularly over the East and West Hararghe administratives zones of eastern Oromia. Localized flooding and landslides were reported in **Sidama**, **Gedeo**, **South Ari**, and **Kefa** leading to population displacements of about **4,800 people** and causing **24 fatalities** in Gedeo. Nationally, the **meher harvest** is expected to be average, with localized production deficits resulting from the late onset and climate related crop damage. The **karan/karma rains** in **Afar region** began about a month late but improved in August and September, boosting pasture and water availability. However, extreme high temperatures could accelerate drying of pasture.

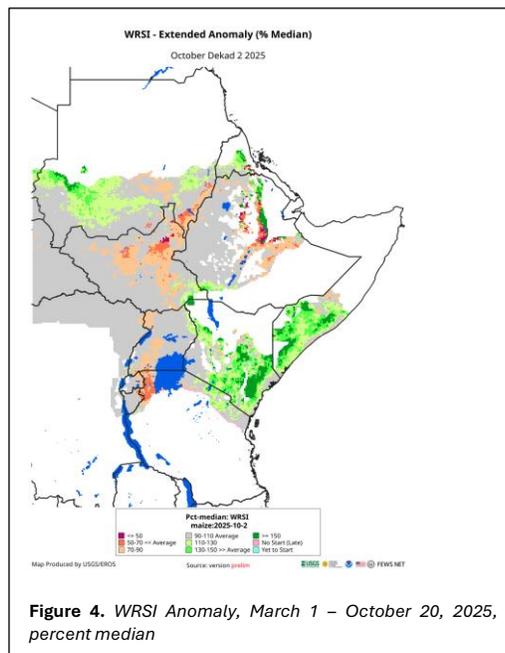


Figure 4. WRSI Anomaly, March 1 – October 20, 2025, percent median

In **South Sudan**, the June–September rainfall season was marked by a delayed onset and localized flooding that limited agricultural activity. These seasonal constraints combined with socioeconomic challenges including localized conflicts, limited input availability, and reduced access to arable land could result in reductions of cropped area across the country. Heavy rains caused flooding in **Jonglei**, **Upper Nile**, and **Unity** states, inundating cropland and displacing households. Despite the improvements in rainfall distribution later in the season, floods and reduced cultivated area are expected to limit the total cereal production nationally.

OCTOBER – DECEMBER

Context: *Between October and December, the following are the areas and names of the rainy seasons underway in parts of East Africa: Short rains (October to December) in Northern, Northeastern, Southern and Coastal Kenya; Burundi; Rwanda; Northern, Eastern, Central, Western and Southern Uganda; Deyr rains in Somalia; Deyr/Hageya rains in Southern and Southeastern Ethiopia.*

Prior concerns of a below-average October to December rainfall season continue across much of the eastern Horn of Africa. The current season has been characterized by a delayed onset in most of the region, particularly across **eastern Kenya**, **southern Somalia**, and **southern and southeastern Ethiopia**. These delays can be attributed to the prolonged presence of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) over northern areas, and ongoing weak La Niña and negative Indian Ocean Dipole conditions.

In the western parts of the region, a mix of a timely to a slightly delayed onset of rains has been observed in **Narok** and **West Pokot** counties in **Kenya**, as well as in most parts of **southern Uganda**, **eastern Rwanda**, and **eastern Burundi**, where planting and cultivation are underway. Meanwhile, rains have persisted in the **North Rift** and **Western Kenya** from the previous season, supporting land preparation and planting activities in **western Kenya**.

In the last week of October, heavy rains were reported in parts of **central Somalia**, **northeastern**, **central** and **coastal Kenya** which is mostly influenced by a recently active Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) and the development of a low-pressure system in the Indian Ocean. However, the rainfall will not have significant impacts given the current extremely poor conditions followed by below-average short term forecast (Figure 5). Rainfall remains highly variable and poorly distributed, and conditions have not yet fully established to indicate a good start of the season in the eastern sector. Also temperatures remain significantly high across the region limiting rapid gains in vegetation and water resources.

AGROCLIMATIC OUTLOOK

Most ensemble models converge around the fact that the remainder of the season is likely to experience below-average rainfall. This is mainly due to both the La Niña event and a persistently negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) which remain in place. Historically, this combination suppresses moisture transport inland, typically resulting in below-average rainfall and drier-than-normal conditions across the eastern Horn. Given the current observations, despite recent localized heavy rainfall, the overall outlook for the OND season remains below average, raising continued concern especially across the eastern sector of the region given the already poor conditions from the previous seasons. This is likely to lead to the development of drought conditions across eastern East Africa region.

Short term forecasts indicate extreme rainfall deficits across the region (Figure 6).

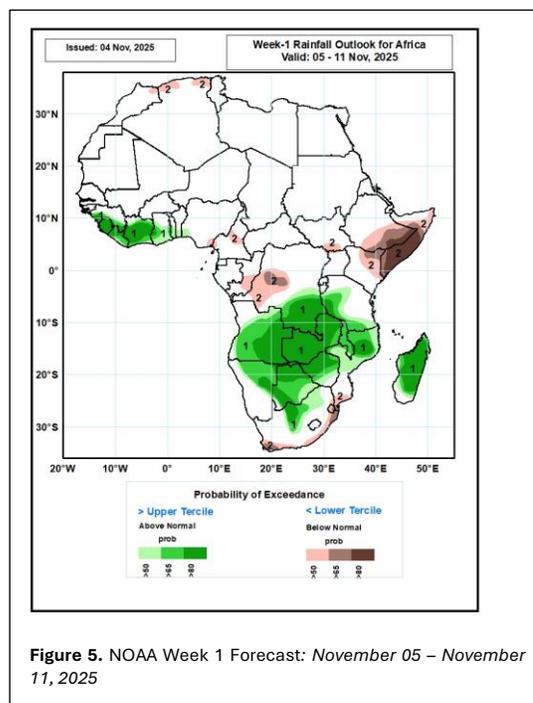


Figure 5. NOAA Week 1 Forecast: November 05 – November 11, 2025

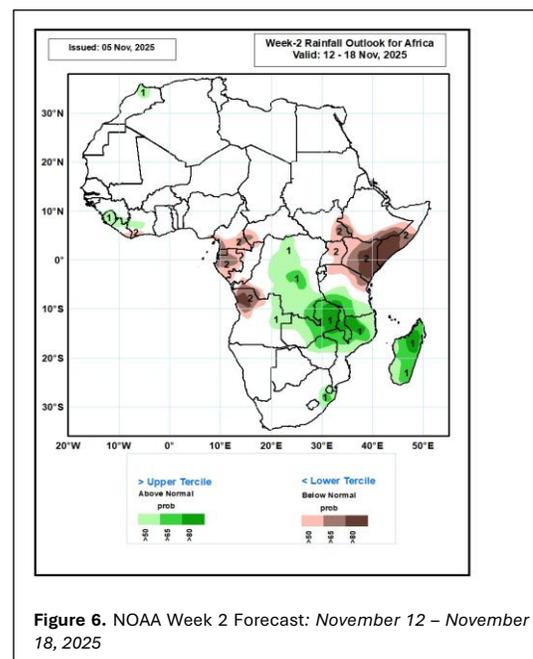
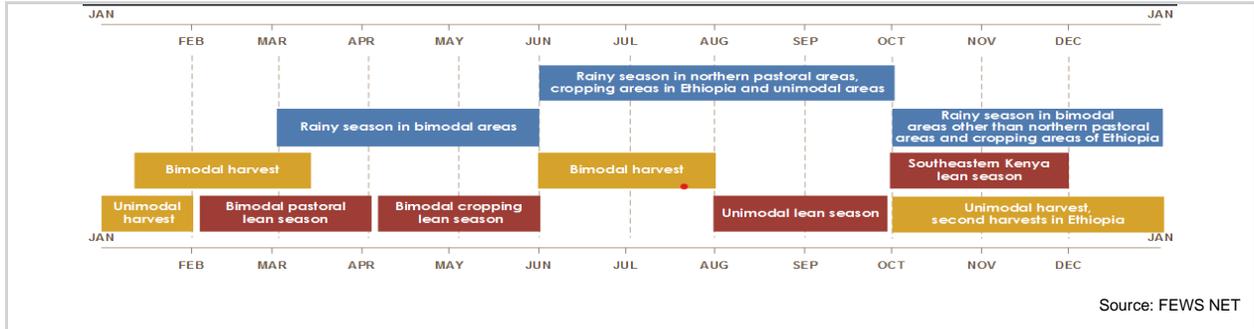


Figure 6. NOAA Week 2 Forecast: November 12 – November 18, 2025

Seasonal Calendar for a Typical Year



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