

The rainy season continues normally in bimodal areas and expands gradually into the Sahel

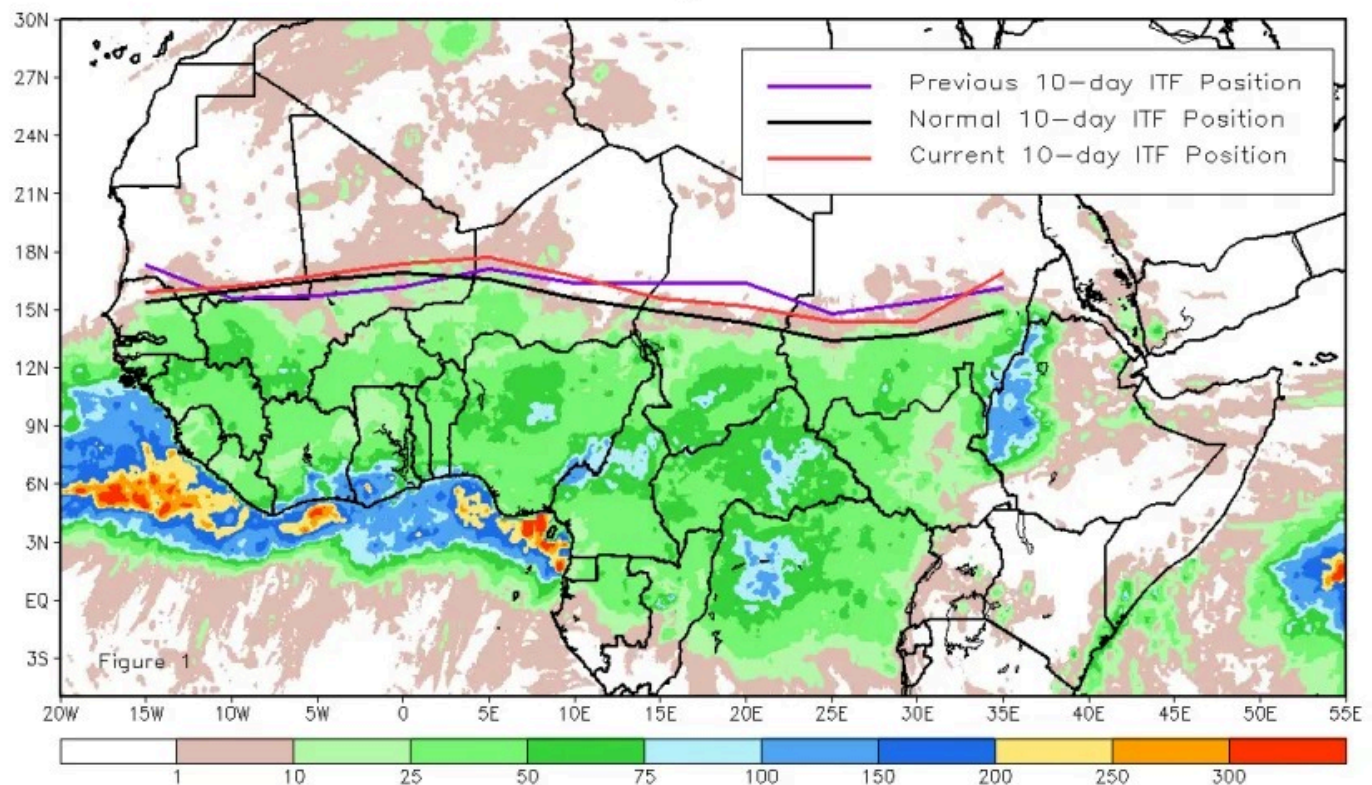
Key Messages

- The ITF (Intertropical Front) continued its northward ascent and is now north of its climatological position over the region.
- March through June total rainfall is mostly average to above-average in the bimodal areas of West Africa.
- The 2026 rainy season is gradually expanding into the Sahelian band under generally favorable rainfall, while temperatures and rainfall distribution require continued monitoring.
- Climate model forecasts indicate high chances of above-normal temperatures and mixed rainfall conditions across West Africa from July through October.

Figure 1

ITF position and RFE accumulated precipitation (mm), June 2026, Dekad 2

Current vs. Normal Dekadal ITF Position
and RFE Accumulated Precipitation (mm)
June 2026, Dekad 2



Source: NOAA CPC



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FEWS NET West Africa

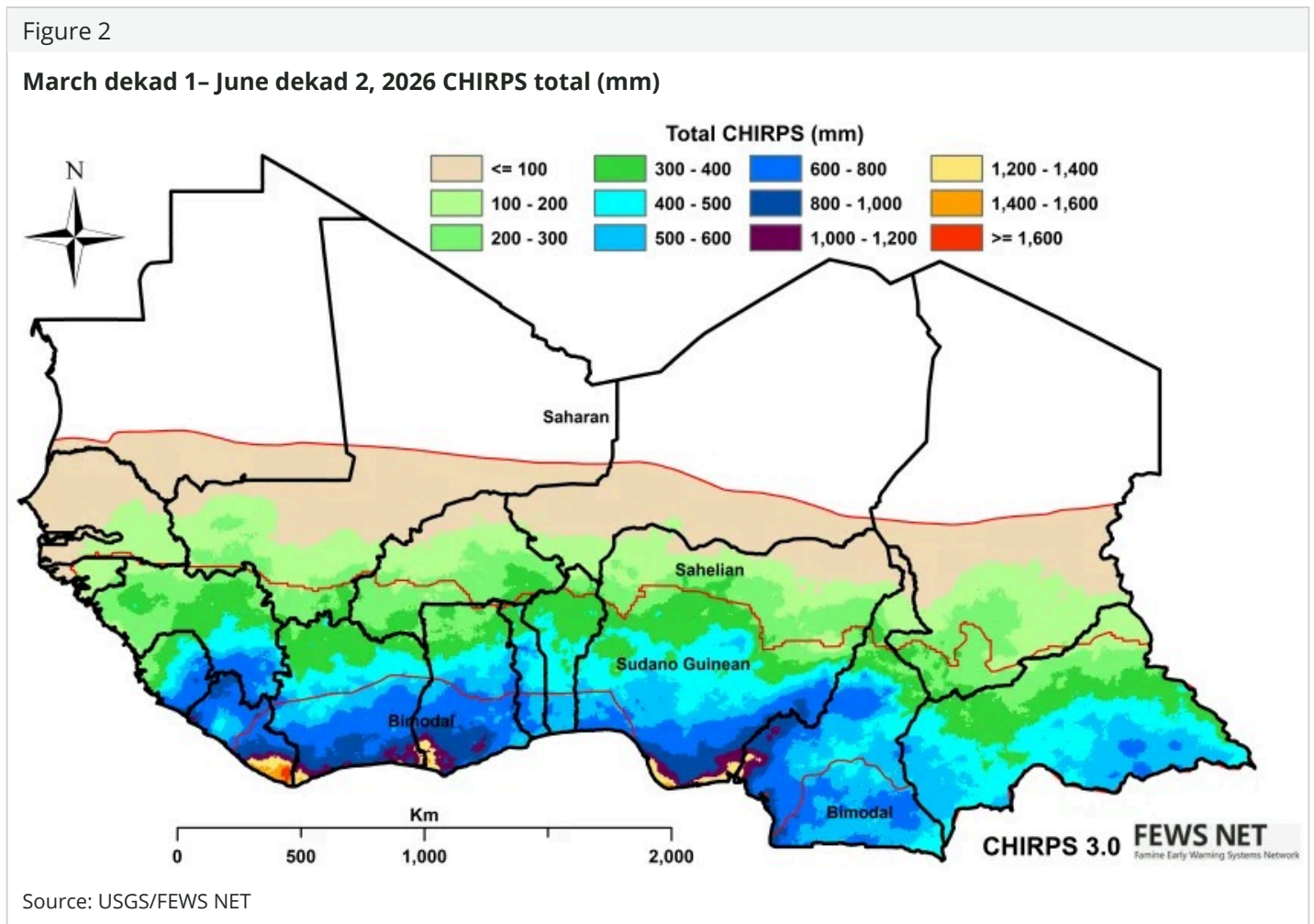
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Update on Seasonal Progress

The ITF northward migration began in early March and is now positioned between 15.2° and 17.0° north from the 11th to the 20th of June. This was approximately 0.7° to 1.1° north of its climatological average over the whole region. However, during the second dekad of June, the ITF shifted southward compared to its previous position in the eastern half of the region (**Figure 1**).

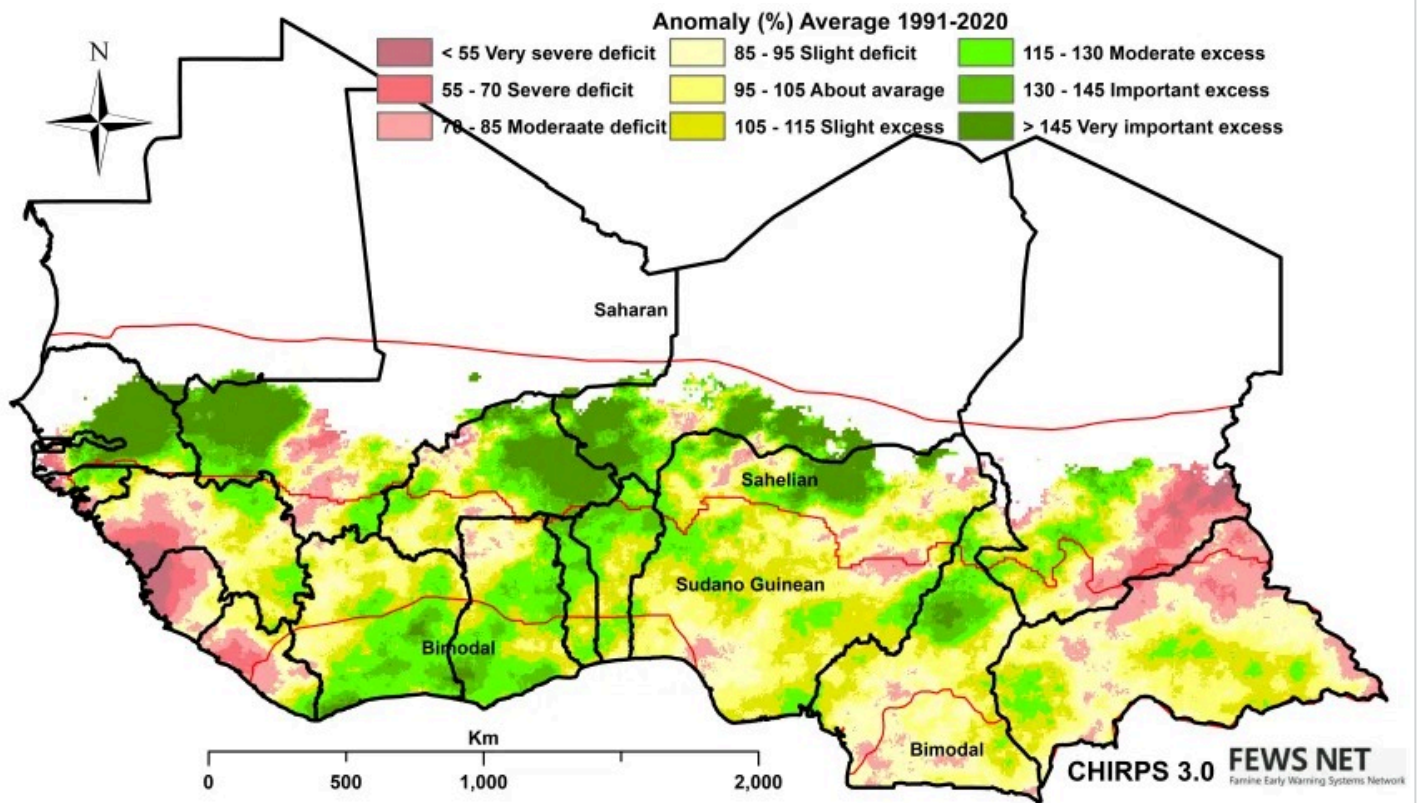
In the Gulf of Guinea countries, northern areas have generally received up to 400 mm of rainfall, while the bimodal zones (farther south) have accumulated between 400 mm and 1,200 mm. However, rainfall totals remain below 100 mm in the northern Sahel, where the season is not yet fully established (**Figures 2 and 3**).



Across the Sudano-Guinean region, rainfall conditions were largely average to above-average, providing adequate soil moisture for crop development. Moderate to severe rainfall deficits were observed in some western and eastern areas, including western Guinea, northwestern Sierra Leone, central-western Liberia, northern Central African Republic, southern Mali, southeastern Chad, and localized areas of eastern Nigeria where March 1 to June 20 rainfall is less than 55 to 75 percent of average (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3

March dekad 1- June dekad 2, 2026 CHIRPS total anomaly (% of average)

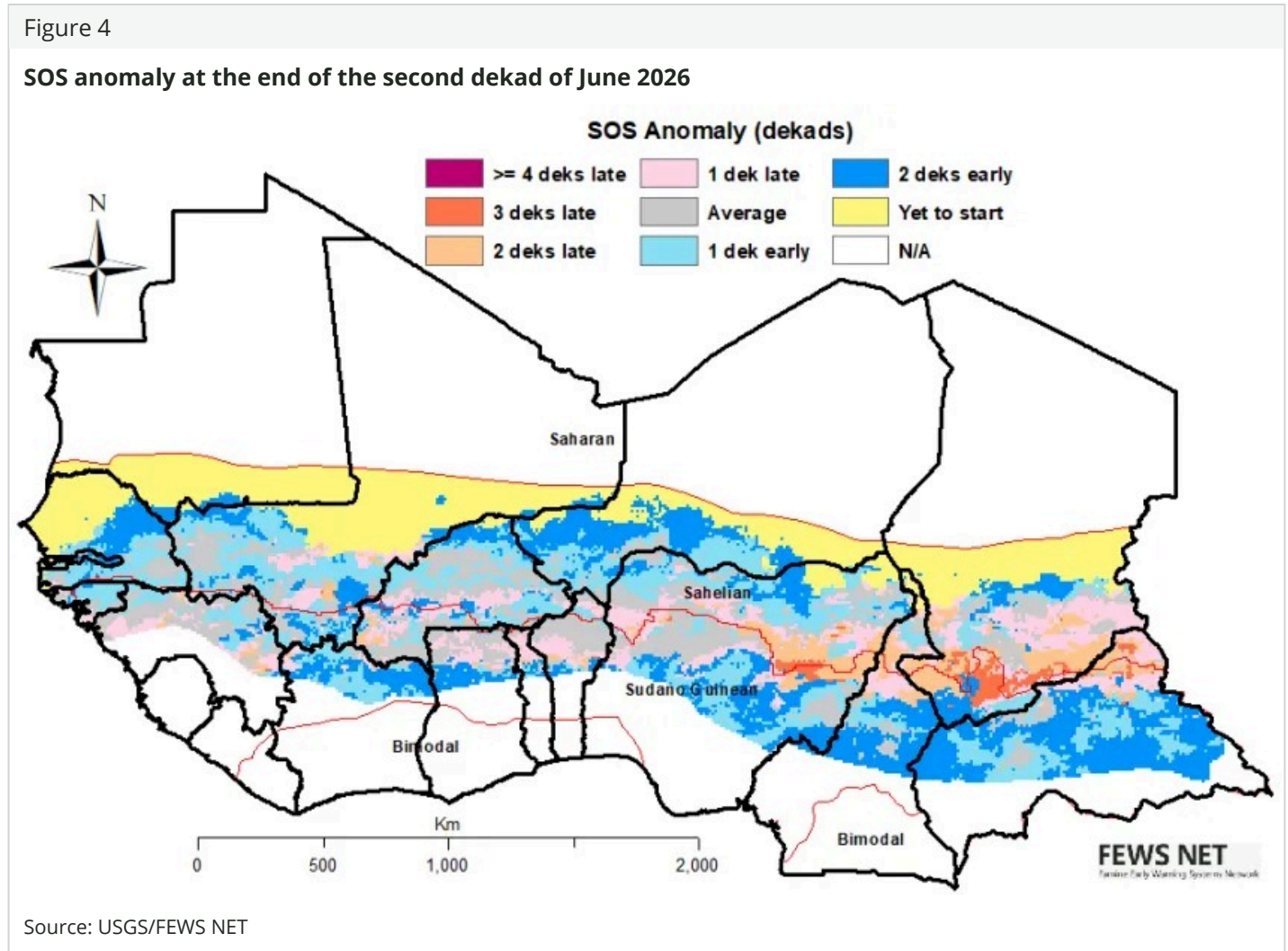


Source: USGS/FEWS NET

The start of the season has been mixed across the Sudano-Guinean zone and southern Sahelian band with both early and delayed onset observed. Seasonal rains began approximately one dekad late across northern Ghana, northern Togo, northern Benin, localized areas in central Nigeria, localized areas in northern Cameroon, localized areas in central Mali, southern Burkina Faso, and central Chad, and two to three dekads delay in central-eastern Nigeria, southeastern Chad, and northern Central African Republic (**Figure 4**). Rainfall was approximately two dekads early across eastern Senegal, northern Burkina Faso, southwestern Niger, central Cameroon and central Central African Republic.

Rainfall during June continued its expansion into the southern Sahel, bringing mixed conditions with surpluses observed across eastern Senegal, southern Mauritania, southwestern Niger and eastern Burkina Faso. Moderate to severe deficits are expected to persist in western Senegal, southwestern Mauritania, central and southeastern Mali, central and southeastern Niger, northeastern Nigeria and much of Chad based on **observations and a 15-day CHIRPS-GEFS forecast from June 26th, 2026**. In line with the observed rainfall deficits, vegetation conditions are below-average in these areas. In addition, the Water Requirement Satisfaction Index for millet, as of the second dekad of June 2026, indicates below-average to average conditions in these areas. Similarly, the **NMME-based root-zone soil moisture forecasts** highlight below-normal conditions through September 2026. Sowing and planting activities are expected to expand into the northern Sahel band in the next 2–3 weeks, where the season typically begins in July.

Forecasts



El Niño conditions are rapidly strengthening in the Pacific Ocean. This will likely be a high-impact event due to its early onset in June 2026 and strong or very strong conditions by September to November 2026 (84% chance). In November 2026-January 2027, there is a 63% chance of a very strong El Niño according to the [June 2026 NOAA CPC ENSO outlook](#).

Historically, El Niño events are associated with elevated chances of below-normal June through September (JJAS) rainfall across the Sahel. Forecasts from the [WMO \(Figure 5\)](#) and [C3S](#) multimodel ensembles indicate below-average rainfall from July through October (JAS and ASO) in western and eastern Sahel, including northern Central African Republic. Average to above-average rainfall is expected across the Gulf of Guinea countries, northern, central and southern Cameroon, and western and southern Central African Republic. In contrast, for the same period, the [NMME precipitation forecasts](#) indicates above-average rainfall over some central and eastern Sahel areas. Close monitoring of the season is needed, as El Niño conditions may influence seasonal rainfall and temperature patterns over the Sahel. Forecast abnormally high temperatures are likely to exacerbate moisture loss especially in rainfall deficit agropastoral areas.

Across the region, climate models ([NMME](#), [WMO](#), [C3S](#)) confidently project above-normal JAS and ASO temperatures in 2026. Continued monitoring of conditions will be essential, as persistent hot and dry weather may heighten the risk of heat stress on crops.

Figure 5

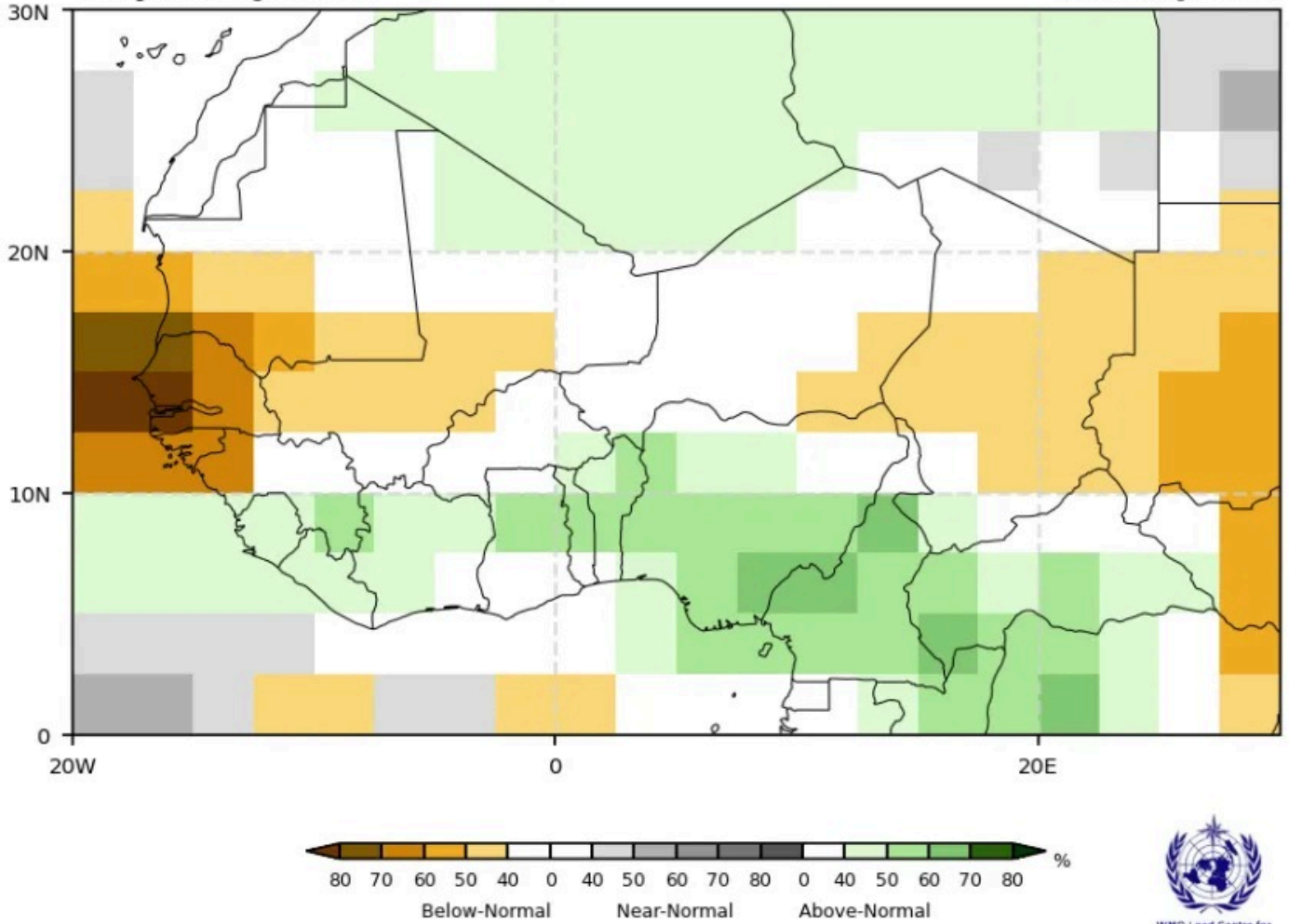
Cumulative JASO 2026 precipitation forecasts (WMO)

Probabilistic Multi-Model Ensemble Forecast

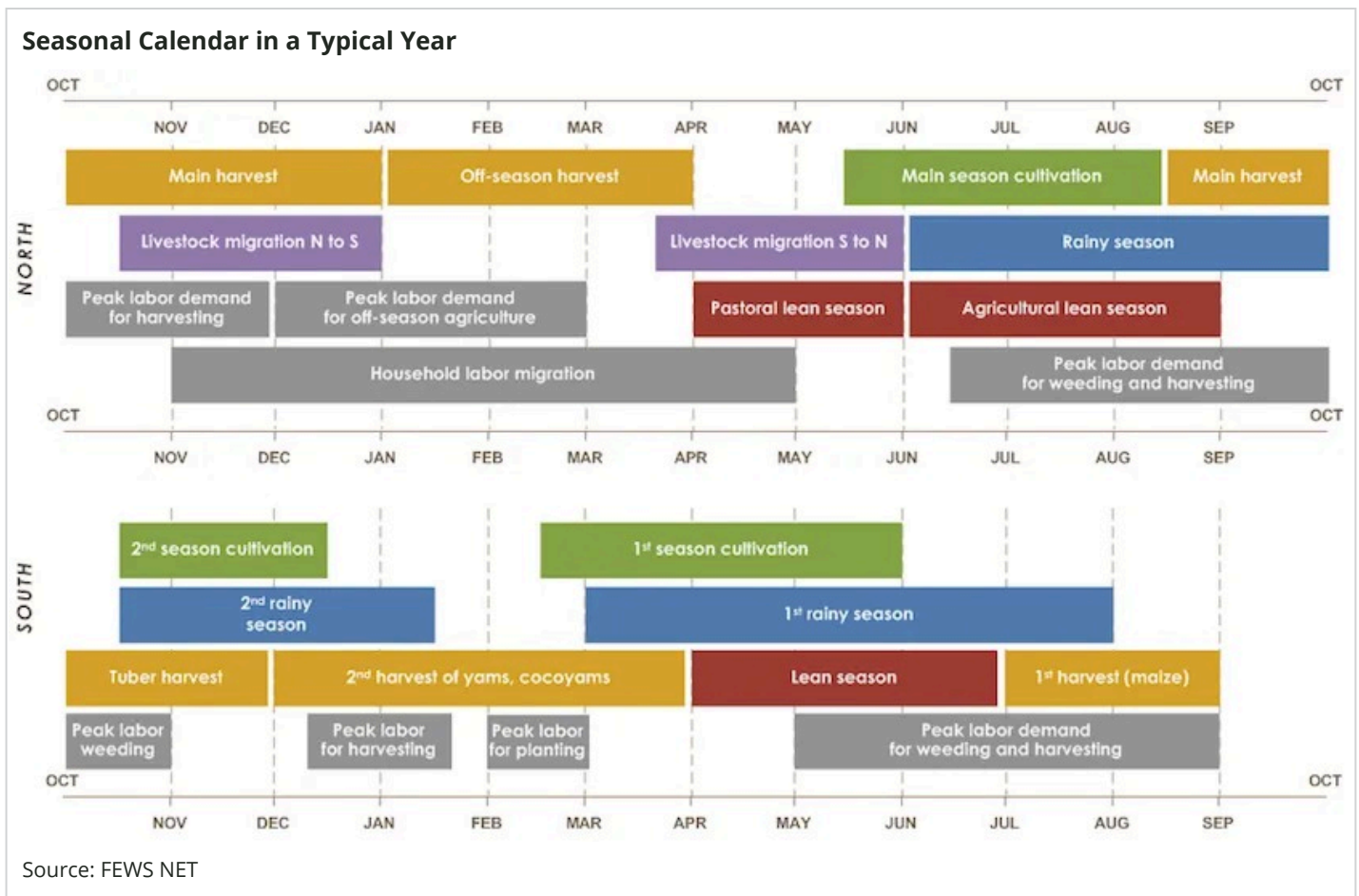
CMCC, CPTEC, ECMWF, Exeter, Melbourne, Montreal, Offenbach, Seoul, Tokyo, Toulouse, Washington

Precipitation : JASO2026

(issued on Jun2026)



Source: WMO



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Seasonal Monitor

FEWS NET's Seasonal Monitor reports are produced for Central America and the Caribbean, West Africa, East Africa, Central Asia, and Somalia every 10-to-30 days during the region's respective rainy season(s). Seasonal Monitors report updates on weather events (e.g., rainfall patterns) and associated impacts on ground conditions (e.g., cropping conditions, pasture and water availability), as well as the short-term rainfall forecast. Find more remote sensing information [here](#).