KEY MESSAGES

• From mid-June to mid-July, seasonal rainfall was average to above average across the northern and western sectors of East Africa. Seasonal rainfall has been generally beneficial for ongoing agricultural activities in these cropping zones. However, below-average rainfall was observed along the East African coastal strip and in northern Ethiopia, northwestern and central Kenya, and localized areas of northeastern Uganda.

• Persistent heavy rainfall led to flooding and mudslides in parts of eastern and western Uganda and in parts of western Sudan.

• The eastern sector of the Horn of Africa and Tanzania remained seasonally sunny and dry, causing gradual deterioration of rangeland resources.

• Through late July, moderate to heavy rainfall is forecast to continue in the western and northern sector of East Africa. In contrast, below average rainfall is forecast in parts of southeastern South Sudan, western and central Ethiopian highlands, eastern Sudan, northeastern Uganda (Karamoja), and Kenya’s central Rift Valley.

SEASONAL PROGRESS

Mid-June to early July rainfall performance was characterized by above average to average rainfall across Uganda, western Kenya, South Sudan, western Sudan, western and central Ethiopia, and northwestern Somalia (Figure 1). These rains have largely been beneficial to ongoing agricultural activities in these regions. However, persistent, heavy rainfall caused flooding in parts of eastern and western Uganda and high soil saturation with an elevated risk of flooding in South Sudan, eastern Sudan, and parts of northwestern Ethiopia. In contrast, localized areas of below-average rainfall were observed in parts of northeastern Uganda, central and northwestern Kenya, central-west and northern Ethiopia. Below-average rainfall was also observed on the East African coastal strip, including in Xagaa-receiving areas of south-central Somalia. Meanwhile, much of the eastern Horn and Tanzania remained seasonally sunny and dry.

According to the eMODIS/Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), vegetation conditions are exceptionally greener than normal in northeastern Tanzania, the Rift Valley regions of Kenya, parts of Uganda, north-central Ethiopia, and northern Somalia. Vegetation conditions are similarly greener-than-normal in parts of Sudan and South Sudan. These positive anomalies are driven by...
well above-average rainfall that occurred in late May to mid-June. In Tanzania and parts the eastern Horn, however, prevailing hot and dry conditions are driving the depletion of surface water and vegetation. As a result, vegetation conditions in these areas are mixed to below normal. Although localized drier-than-normal conditions are observed in south-central Sudan, these negative anomalies are expected to gradually improve due to current seasonal rainfall.

Cropping conditions in much of the northern and western sector have remained generally favorable and are at diverse phenological stages, due to delayed long rains/first season rainfall onset and planting in bimodal areas of the Horn as well as in unimodal western Kenya and northeastern Uganda. Meanwhile, at the peak period of the *kiremt* seasonal rains, cropping activities and crop development in *kiremt*-receiving areas of Ethiopia currently range from land preparation and planting to vegetative stages.

The following is a country-by-country update on recent seasonal progress to date:

- **In Somalia**, the April-June *Gu* seasonal rains were delayed. Cumulative rainfall was below average in southern Somalia, especially along the southern coastal strip and parts of the sorghum-growing belt. Field observations and satellite-derived observations and crop models are all indicative of below-average sorghum crop production. However, from June to early July, northern Somalia and localized areas of central Somalia received above average to average rainfall amounts, resulting in significantly greener-than-normal conditions across much of the North. The dry season began in July in most areas, with the exception of southern coastal Somalia, where the June-September Xagaa rains have been below average.

- **In Ethiopia**, the *Kiremt* seasonal rains are now fully established. Most early planted crops in western and central regions are in very good to good condition and in the vegetative to early reproduction phenological stages. This is in response to consistently above average to average rainfall performance since June. However, late planted crops in the northern Rift Valley regions are in emergence stage and only in fair condition. Overall, rangeland resources have remained generally favorable and greener-than-normal in northern and southwestern regions, though gradual declines are observed in parts of the southeast.

- **In Kenya**, western Kenya and parts of the Rift Valley continued to experience average to above average rainfall, which has significantly improved cropping conditions in key maize production zones. Currently, maize crops are at varied phenological stages, ranging from the reproductive stages in parts of the west and to vegetative stages in northern and central-Rift regions. Overall, crops are in very good condition with favorable production prospects. Meanwhile, most eastern, northern, and southern areas have been seasonally hot and dry since June, with declining vegetation and surface water conditions. The coastal strip is expected to experience light to moderate rains, however, its overall cropping conditions are generally below average and are unlikely to improve significantly in the coming weeks.

- **In Sudan**, exceptional greener-than-normal vegetation and favorable cropping conditions are observed in much of the eastern, southern, and western regions due to on-going above average rains. However, persistent above-average rainfall amounts in western Darfur and forecast heavy rains over the western Ethiopian highlands bordering Sudan have led to an elevated risk of flooding in parts of the East. Currently, there is evidence of drier-than-normal vegetation conditions between southern Kordofan and southern Darfur, but this is expected to improve with forecast moderate rains in July.

- **In South Sudan**, rainfall has been average to above average since June. These rains have largely led to above-average vegetation conditions across the country. Crop models are also indicative of very good cropping conditions, except in extreme southeastern regions on the border with Karamoja in Uganda and Turkana of Kenya.

- **In Uganda**, rainfall in June and early July was generally above average and unevenly distributed, causing flooding in its eastern regions. These rains have helped to ease early season crop-water-stress at crops’ critical reproductive stages, especially in parts of Central and Western regions. Meanwhile, crops in eastern and northern districts are mostly in the early vegetative stages, while crops in the southwest are in the late maturity to harvesting stages. Due to the past months’ rainfall performance, there is also marked improvement of rangeland resources across much of the country. Overall, there is an increased likelihood for mixed agricultural production prospects, ranging from below average to average depending on the region.

- **In Rwanda and Burundi**, crops are currently in the late reproductive to maturity stages. Localized yield shortfalls are expected in eastern Rwanda and Burundi but national production is expected to be above average due to sufficiently
consistent rainfall distribution. Meanwhile, rangeland conditions are generally near average in both countries.

- **In Tanzania**, sunny and dry conditions prevail. Eastern coastal regions experienced below-average rainfall amounts in June into July. Although there are good agricultural production prospects in southern and parts of central Tanzania, its northern bi-modal cropping zones are likely to realize below-average yields due to rainfall deficits in the long rains season.

- **In Yemen**, localized light to moderate rainfall during the past month continued over the western highlands, resulting in greener-than-normal vegetation conditions including the western coastal regions. These conditions are expected to prevail for the rest of July.

**FORECAST**

The rainfall forecast through July 24th indicates moderate to locally very heavy rainfall in western and central Ethiopia, southern Sudan, South Sudan, most of Uganda, and western Kenya. There is elevated risk of flooding over western Darfur in Sudan due to persistent above-average rains since June. Coastal regions in northeastern Tanzania, Kenya, and southern Somalia are forecast to experience light to moderately heavy rains (Figure 3). The rainfall outlook is favorable for *Kiremt* crops in Ethiopia, given moderate to heavy rains expected in northern and western areas of the country.

The rest of the eastern Horn is expected to remain generally sunny and dry. These weather conditions are likely to cause further deterioration in rangeland resources, especially in areas that recently experienced below-average March-May rainfall.

Based on current rainfall totals and the two-week forecast for July 1st-25th, cumulative rainfall is likely to remain above average in much of Uganda and around the Lake Victoria basin in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (Figure 4). Conversely, below-average rainfall is possible in parts of southeastern South Sudan, western and central Ethiopian highlands, eastern Sudan, northeastern Uganda (Karamoja), and Kenya’s central Rift Valley. Karamoja often experiences dry spells during this period.