

SOMALIA Rain Watch

May 4, 2011

FEWS NET will publish a Rain Watch for Somalia every dekad through the end of the current Gu (April-June) rainy season. The purpose of this document is to provide updated information on the progress of the Gu rains to facilitate contingency and response planning. This Somalia Rain Watch is valid through May 10, 2011 and is produced in collaboration with USGS, the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) Somalia, a number of other agencies, and several Somali NGOs.

Gu rains intensify in the south and parts of northwest

Moderate rains ranging from 20 – 40 mm were received in most parts of the south and some parts of the northwest region of the country (Figure 1). However, with the exception of some pockets in Bari and Sanaag regions, most of the northeast received light showers or remained dry during the third dekad of April (21 – 30). Similarly most of the central region received little rains.

In the north, most zones of Awdal and Waqoyi Gallbeed received moderate rains. Parts of Nugal valley and the Togdher agro-pastoral livelihood zones received good rains. Other areas, where moderate rains were received include parts of Sool Plateau and Karkaar-Dharoor of Northeaster zone. Similarly, although satellite derived rainfall estimation does not indicate substantial precipitation was received in North Mudug and Nugal regions of Northeast. For example, rain gauge station located in Garowe town recorded 25 mm with one rainy day. Water catchments and Berkads in parts of these localities were mostly refilled. However, field reports indicate that rains killed an unconfirmed number of small ruminants in parts Sool plateau of Qardho district. A comparison between the current and the long-term mean shows that the rainfall received in the northern regions during April are 20 – 300 mm percent of normal (Figure 2) .

In the drought prone central regions of Galgadud and Mudug, light to moderate rains were received in localized parts of the cowpea belt, Addun livelihood zone which is adjacent to the cowpea belt and the coastal *Deeh*. Furthermore, localized light showers in the Hawd and western parts of Addun pastoral are likely to partially refill water catchments and impact positively on pasture condition. Overall, these rains will reduce the water stress and also will likely bring much needed relief to the livestock although livestock body recovery will take much longer. On the other hand, Hiran region, with the exception of Jalalaqsi district which received moderate rains, most of the zones received sporadic light showers.

In the southern agricultural regions, although the intensity, duration, and coverage of the rainfall vary from one location to another and within the livelihoods, the overall rainfall performance is average. The rainfall performance was exceptionally good in most of Bay, Middle Jubba and parts of Bakol, Lower Juba, Middle Shabele and Gedo regions. Rain gauges from Baidoa and Qansahdhere stations (Bay) recorded 25 mm and 140 mm of rainfall with two and four rainy days respectively while that in Huddur (Bakol) recorded 39 mm of rainfall with two rainy days. The rainfall replenished many water catchments in pastoral and agro pastoral areas hence improving water availability and pasture condition. However, most of the coastal areas of Shabelle and Juba have experienced dry weather during this period. Rain gauge stations located in these areas recorded no rainfall.

Satellite-derived normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) shows that current vegetation conditions in many parts of the country are largely below normal (Figure 3). However, following recent rains, rangeland resources in terms of water supply, pasture and browse are expected to improve especially in the south and parts of the north. Meanwhile moderate rains of 20 – 50 mm (Figure 4) are expected in Gedo, Lower Juba, and most of the northern regions. In addition significant precipitations (50 -- 75mm) are likely in Shabele, parts of central and Bakol regions, while Bay region is expected to receive heavy rainfall of over 75 mm of rainfall.

The seven day rainfall forecast (Figure 4) indicates moderate rainfall amounts in southern Somalia and moderate flood risk in Juba river basin, however, the forecast shows decreased rainfall over Ethiopian highlands and therefore a decreasing likelihood for flooding along the Juba River.



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For more rain gauge data please contact hdro@faoswalim.org or visit <http://www.faoswalim.org>.
Figure 1. Rainfall estimate (mm), April 21-30, 2011

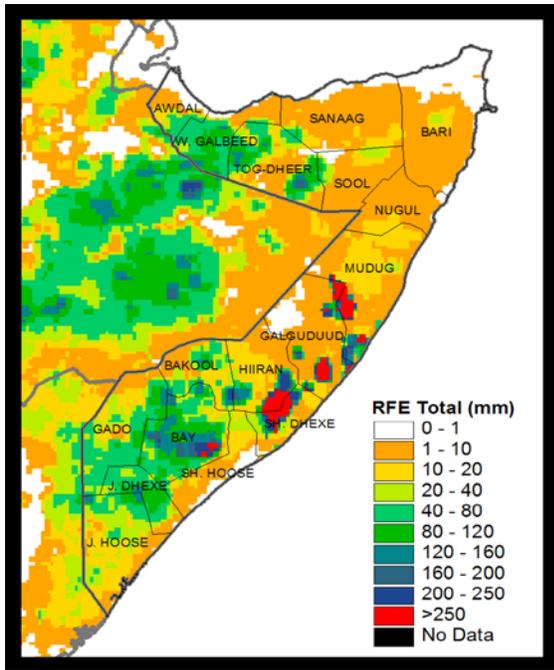


Figure 2. Percent of normal rainfall April 21-30, 2011

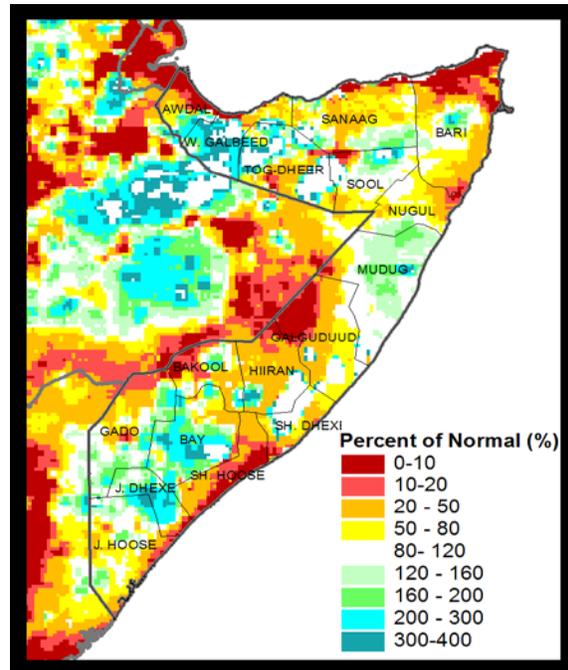


Figure 3. Spot NDVI Anomaly, April 21-30, 2011

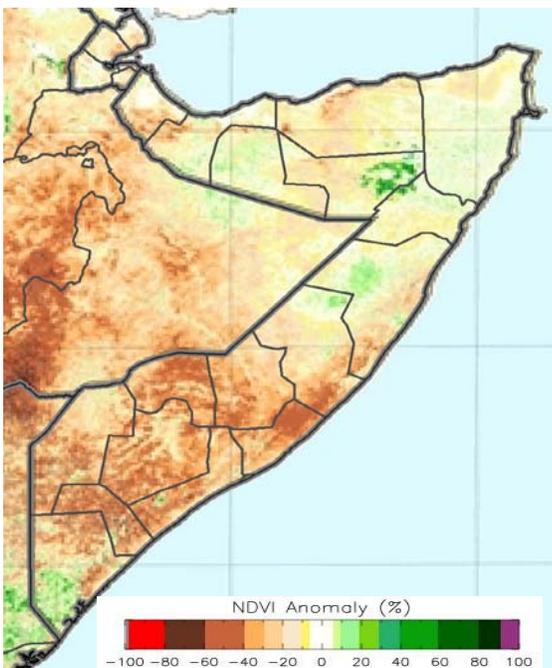
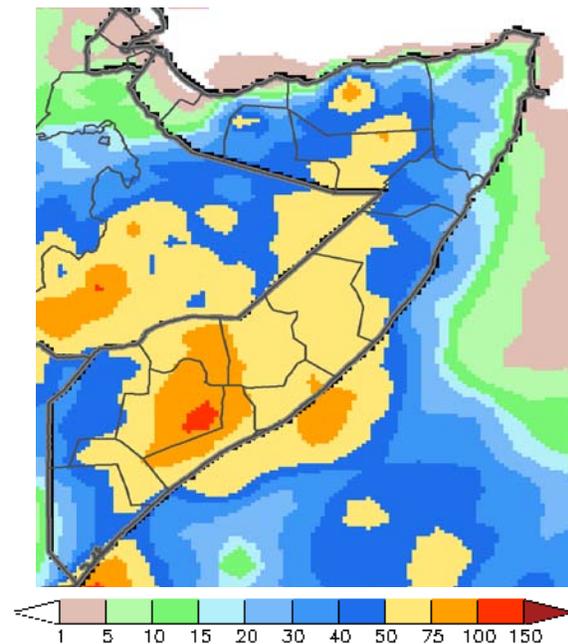


Figure 4. Seven-day precipitation forecast valid up to May 10, 2011



Sources: FEWS NET/NOAA/ CPC

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FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the view of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.