



Rainfall Outlook – Gu 2013

Issued: 28th February, 2013

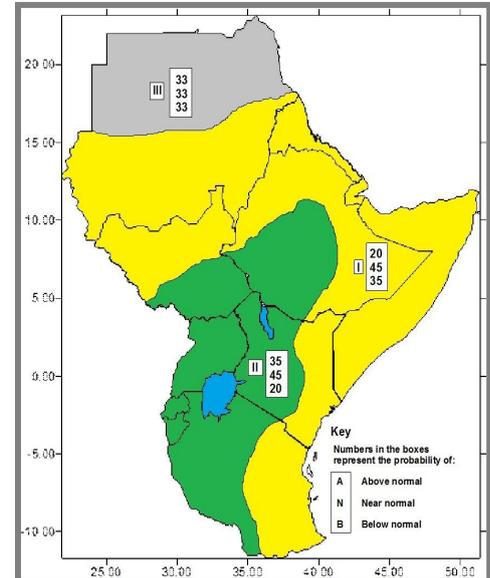


Near normal to below normal rains are expected during Gu 2013 rainy season

The recently issued seasonal climate forecast for the Greater Horn of Africa (Figure 3), indicates that, the 2013 Gu rainy season (March to May) in Somalia there is likely to be near normal to below normal (Zone I in Figure—1), with 45% probability of experiencing normal rains and 35% probability of below normal rains in most parts of the country. For more information about the climate outlook methodology and statement visit: http://www.icpac.net/Forecasts/GHACOF33/GHACOF33_statement.pdf.

However, this is a consensus forecast designed for a regional audience that addresses the rainfall totals summed over the three-month period from March to May 2013. SWALIM and other technical partners will keep updating this forecast and monitoring performance of the rains for shorter time periods and will update you throughout the Gu season via regular bulletins.

Figure 1: Rainfall Outlook for March to May 2013



Expected impacts of the rainfall outlook for different sectors

1. Agriculture, Food Security and Livestock

Below normal rains will highly interfere with agricultural activities in most of the areas, therefore, for optimum crop harvest farmers are advised to plant drought resistant crops given the forecast. Foliage and pasture conditions in the pastoral areas are expected to deteriorate as a result of poor rainfall performance during the season. Mobility in search of water sources and greener pastures may trigger conflict among pastoralists.

2. Environment

The anticipated depressed rainfall is likely to result in land degradation through wilting of vegetation including drying up of grass, exposing the top soils to erosion. It is thus advisable to assist the communities to enhance soil conservation measures to minimize environmental degradation due to soil erosion, especially in riparian areas along rivers and streams. In areas expecting normal rains, communities could engage in tree planting to maximise on the rains.

3. Disaster Management

Problems related to water scarcity are likely to occur in the pastoral areas especially in the northern parts of the country where the previous Deyr rainy season was below normal. There is also potential for human-livestock conflicts over limited water resources in these areas. Close monitoring of the situation and contingency measures are necessary in order to adequately cope with the situation. Flash floods cannot be ruled out as well as river line flooding due to weak river embankments and artificial river bank breakages for irrigation purposes.

4. Health

Diseases associated with water scarcity and poor sanitation such as typhoid and cholera may emerge in various parts of the country that are expected to receive depressed rainfall. The health sector should therefore be on the lookout for such cases and hospitals should be equipped with necessary drugs to be able to deal with situations as they arise.

5. Water Resources

Increased water supply is expected in areas where normal rains will be experienced. In such cases, communities should take advantage of the normal rains to harvest rain-water for future use. On the other hand, in case of depressed rains replenishing of the surface water points may be minimal and therefore communities should use the available resources sparingly.

Summary of Gu rainfall characteristics in Somalia

Somalia has two distinct rainy seasons, *Gu* and *Deyr*, with varied timings across the country. The first main rainy season (*Gu*) occurs in the period between March and June and the second (*Deyr*) from October to November. The *Gu* season dominates over the *Deyr* in quantity and reliability of rainfall and is thus the primary cropping season. The season starts and ends at different times throughout the country as seen in Table - 1 for selected areas in the country. In the areas bordering Kenya, Middle Juba, northern parts of Middle Shabelle and the northwest corner of the country, the *Gu* rains start as early as the second half of March. The rains then intensify in April all over the country. The length of the season also varies across the country from year to year. Table—1 gives estimated number of days and dekads in brackets for the *Gu* season at selected stations derived from the long term observations.

The north eastern coastline receives the least amount of rainfall during this season while the southern parts receive the highest amount of cumulative rains in the season (Figure - 2).

Rainfall ceases in June in most parts of the country except for the southern coastline which continues to receive little but significant rains in the months of July and August (*Hagga rains*). In the north western parts of the country the rains extend to combine with the *Deyr* rains (locally known as the *Karan*) which start in September thus exposing the area to an apparent long continuous rainy season.

The long term average rainfall for the *Gu* season in Somalia are given in Figure - 2.

Table 1: Average start and length of Gu season for selected areas

Figure—2: Long term average Gu rainfall in Somalia

Name	Start of Season	Length of Season (days/ dekads)
AFGOI	Mid April	76 (8)
AFMADOW	Mid April	60 (6)
BARDERA	Late March	47 (5)
BELET-UEN	Mid April	39 (4)
BERBERA	Mid April	No distinct season
BORAMA	Mid April	86 (9)
BOSASO	Mid April	No distinct season
BULO-BURTI	Mid April	37 (4)
BURAO	Mid April	Continues to next season
ERIGAVO	Mid April	45 (5)
GALCAYO	Mid April	45 (5)
GEBILEY	Mid April	90 (9)
GENALE	Early April	122 (12)
JOWHAR	Early April	62 (6)
HARGEISA	Mid April	Continues to next season
HUDDUR	Early April	38 (4)
BAIDOA	Late March	64 (7)
JILIB	Early April	102 (11)
KHISMAIO	Early May	81 (9)
LAS-ANOD	Mid April	45 (5)
LUUQ	Mid April	47 (5)
MOGADISCIO	Early May	82 (9)
SABLAALE	Early April	102 (11)
ISCUSCIUBAN	Mid April	45 (5)

