

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2019/15

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: September 21 - 30, 2019



Government of The Gambia

Produced and Published by The Gambia National Multidisciplinary Working Group

Focal Point: Department of Water Resources

TEL: (+220) 4227631 / 4224122 / 8905229 - FAX: (+220) 422 50 09

E-MAIL: dwr@mofwrnam.gov.gm / WEB: www.mofwrnam.gov.gm



1. SYNOPTIC SITUATION

The ITD has embarked on its southward retreat with its western axis oscillating over northern Senegal stretching across western Mali and then sloping on to southwestern Niger/Chad.

The regions to the north of the ITD experienced dry and stable atmosphere with dust haze observed over parts of Morocco and Algeria. To the south of the ITD however, rain and thunderstorms affected much of Sahel region and the Gulf of Guinea States.

1.1. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD (1ST - 10TH OCTOBER, 2019)

Generally warm with gradual decrease of humidity in the atmosphere will prevail which will consequently result to fewer and little precipitation during the period. The occurrence of rain showers and thunderstorms will be isolated in most cases, though occasionally associated with strong winds. The expected days of having little to moderate rains are in the evening of 03rd October into the night and then during the period from 05th to 08th October 2019.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION

The rainfall situation during the dekad was fairly good, most stations recorded significant rainfall at the beginning and towards the end of the dekad, although some few stations experienced some dry spells amounting to four days and above. In the Western third dekad total rainfall varied from 8.0mm over Banjul to 56.7mm over Yundum; whilst in the Middle third, it varied from 1.5mm over Sapu to 53.6mm recorded over Kaur. The highest dekad total countrywide was recorded over Basse, figure 1a, below.

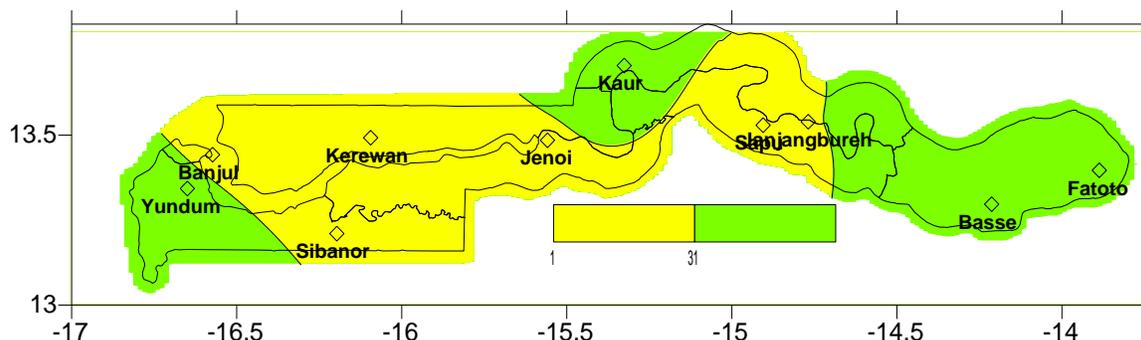


Figure 1a: Dekadal rainfall totals from 21st – 30th September, 2019

Table 1: Dekadal rainfall totals and rainfall extremes for the period 21st – 30th September, 2019.

Station Name	Dekadal Total (mm)	Daily rainfall extremes ≥ 50 mm	
		Amount in mm	Date Recorded
Western Third			
Yundum	56.7	-	
Banjul	8.0	-	
Sibanor	24.4	-	
Kerewan	18.6	-	
Middle Third			
Kaur	53.6	-	
Jenoi	25.9	-	
Janjanbureh	28.5	-	
Sapu	1.5	-	
Eastern Third			
Basse	61.5	53.4	21 st
Fatoto	34.2	-	-

Seasonal cumulative totals slightly improve; Sibanon and Kerewan both in the western third recorded the highest seasonal cumulative totals, 949.3mm and 902.5mm respectively, In the Middle Third, Sapu recorded the highest of about 778.6mm, whereas Fatoto in the eastern third recorded a seasonal total of 874.7mm, figure 1b, below.

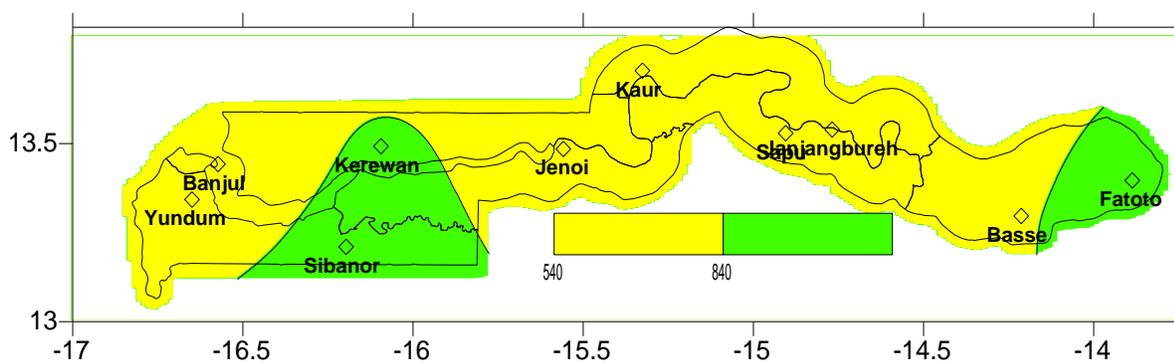


Figure 1b: Seasonal rainfall totals 1st May – 30th September 2019.

In comparison, this year’s country average as at 30th September 2019 stood at 760.6mm, which is 2.4% above last year same period (742.2mm), and 1.8% below the country average (1981_2010), which is 775.3mm.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

During this dekad, there was a slight increase in recorded temperatures compared to the last dekad. Recorded mean temperatures during this dekad varied between 25°C over Fatoto in the Eastern Third to 27°C over the rest of the country. Minimum temperature also varied between 17°C over the Eastern Third to 21°C in the western third rising to 23°C over the Middle third; whilst maximum temperature

was 29°C over Kerewan in the middle third and 33°C over the rest of the country. Extreme temperatures reached a minimum of 16°C in the Eastern Third and maximum temperatures of 36°C over the middle third of the country.

Winds were moderate and occasionally heavy during the dekad, with maximum wind gust of 64.4.km/h recorded over the Middle Third of the country. Average sunshine duration recorded during this dekad was 6 hours. Minimum Relative Humidity (RH %) recorded across the country was above 50%, whereas Maximum RH recorded was 90%. and above, there was a slight drop in RH compared to the last dekad indicating lesser moisture content during this dekad than the first and second dekads of September.

4. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The agricultural situation in the country continues to vary significantly, depending on the planting dates. Crops that were sown at the beginning of the season are performing well, unlike the ones that were lately sown which risk being affected by the rainfall situation especially during the last month of the rainy season. The prolonged dry spells encountered at the beginning of the season caused stunted growth in some fields and generally reduced the area cultivated, some farmers replanted due to germination failures whilst others never planted at all.

West Coast Region

In the WCR the, the agricultural situation varies. Up land rice and findi field are at maturity stage, and harvesting is in progress for some of the findi field which were planted early. Transplanting of low land is ongoing, and harvesting is in progress for early planted maize fields, whereas late planted field are at maturity stage. Harvesting of groundnuts for the early maturing varieties which were planted early is also in progress while the late maturing varieties which were planted lately are at maturity stage. Most early millet fields have reached maturity almost ready for harvesting. Presently farmer's major activities are transplanting of low land rice, repelling of birds from early millet fields and hand picking of weeds from groundnuts fields to make harvesting easy.



Figure 2: Matured Findi field in WCR

North Bank Region

In this region, there is also variations in the agricultural situation there is high hope that the major crop that were planted early will reach full maturity especially maize, millet and groundnuts crops. Most of the maize fields that were sown early are being harvested for consumption, while late planted fields are at maturity stage. Farmers who sown their groundnuts fields early are happy that the crops are performing well and almost at maturity, but are equally worried that they risk harvesting their crops while it is still raining, which may affect the quality of both the crops and the hay among other related problems. The late planted groundnuts are at pod formation, early millet field are at maturity stage. In the lowland fields, farmers are busy transplanting. The major activities presently are transplanting of low land rice, repelling of birds from early millet fields and hand picking of weeds from groundnuts fields to make harvesting easy.



Figure 3: Newly transplanted rice field in NBR

Lower River Region (LRR)

In this region, major field crops are promising though during the dry spell majority of farmers were desperate especially those who sow their groundnuts and it coincided with the dry spell, as groundnuts seeds are very expensive. Crops phenological phases in this region like in other regions vary, early planted maize are being harvested whilst late planted fields are at maturity stage. Groundnuts fields are performing well, but those who planted early may want to harvest but skeptical that the rains may affect their crops when harvested during the rains. Late planted groundnuts are at pegging stage, early millet fields are at maturity stage almost ready for harvesting, The main agricultural activity is transplanting low land rice, repelling of birds from early millet fields and hand picking of weeds from groundnuts fields to make harvesting easy.

Central River Region North

In this region, transplanting for low land rice is in progress and crops are promising, however, there is lesser hopes for up land rice particularly if the rains did not end well, the fields risk not reaching full

maturity. Groundnut fields which were planted early are at pod formation while late planted fields are at flowering stages, early millet, findi and sesame fields are at maturity stages, and doing well, some cowpea farmers have started harvesting. The area of land that used to be cultivated dropped in this cropping season due to the dry spell experienced, some farmers were skeptical in sowing their little available seeds particularly groundnuts which resulted to late sowing for some. Major field activities are transplanting of low land rice, repelling of birds from early millet fields and hand picking of weeds from groundnuts fields to make harvesting easy.



Figure 4: Early Millet at maturity stage , CRRn

Central River Region South

The agricultural situation in this region also varies, land preparation and transplanting of low land rice is in progress as low land rice is widely grown in this region, maize farmers have started harvesting their crops. Most upland rice and findi fields are at booting stages, while some late planted maize crops are at maturity stages. Groundnuts fields are at pod filling stage, and early millet fields are at maturity stage ready for harvesting. The area under production for field crops in this region generally decline this year due to the dry spell that affected most farmers.



Figure 5: Rice seedlings in the lowlands

Upper River Region

In this region, harvesting of maize is in progress, but farmers did not have good harvest from their maize fields due to fall army worm that attacked these crops during the dry spells at the beginning of the season. Most early millet and groundnut fields are at maturity stages. Due to poor germination in some groundnut fields, farmers affected resorted to sowing cowpea as a substitute. Sorghum and late millet fields are at maturing stage. Major agricultural activities in this region are land preparation and transplanting of low land rice, repelling of birds from early millet fields and hand picking of weeds from groundnuts fields to make harvesting easy.



Figure 6: Sorghum at booting stage in URR

5. HYDROLOGICAL SITUATION

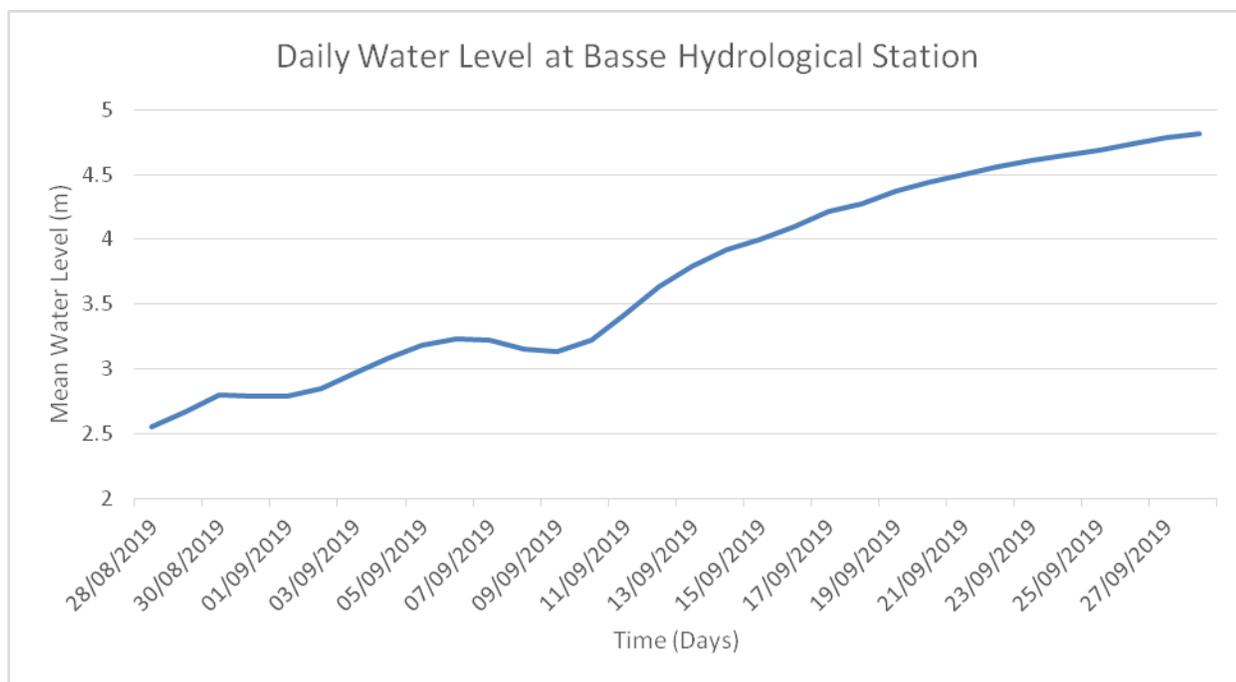
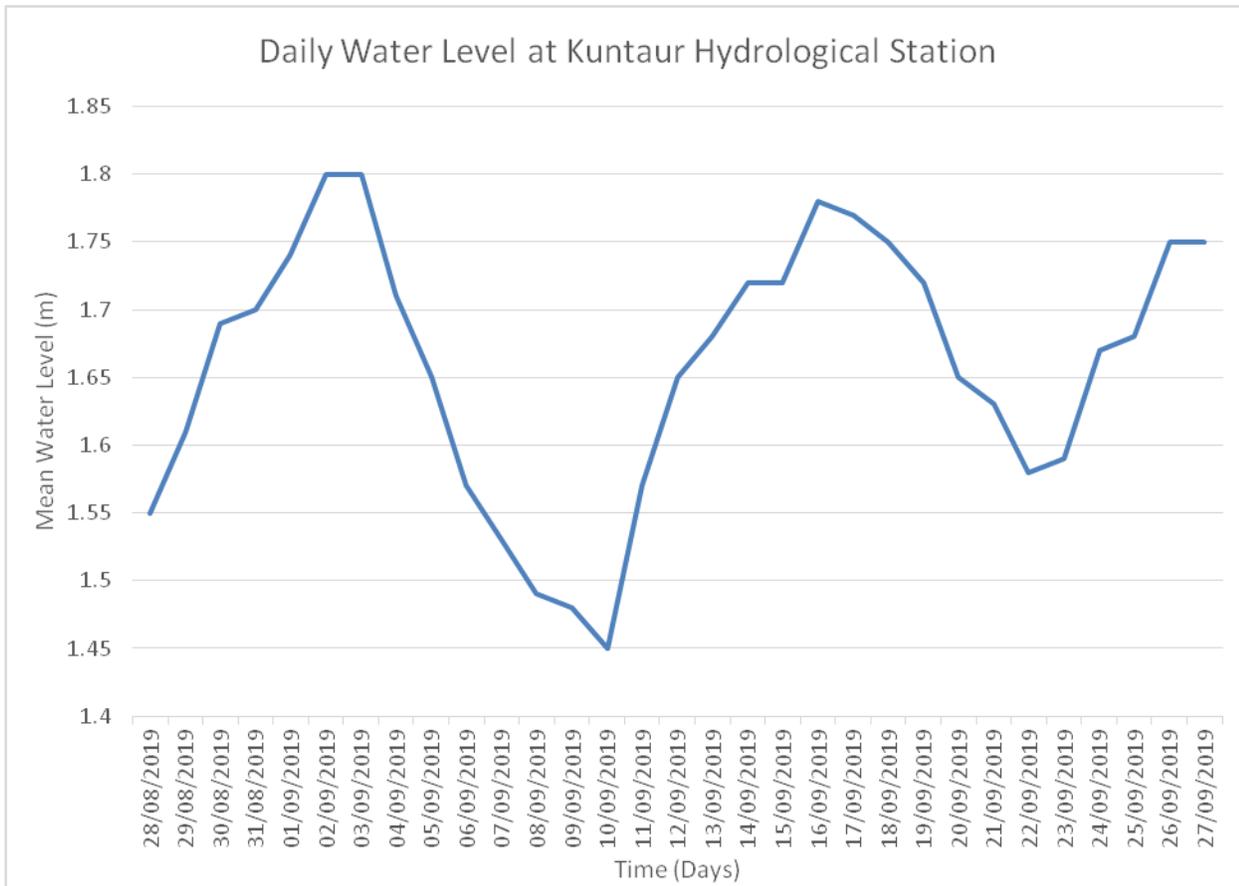
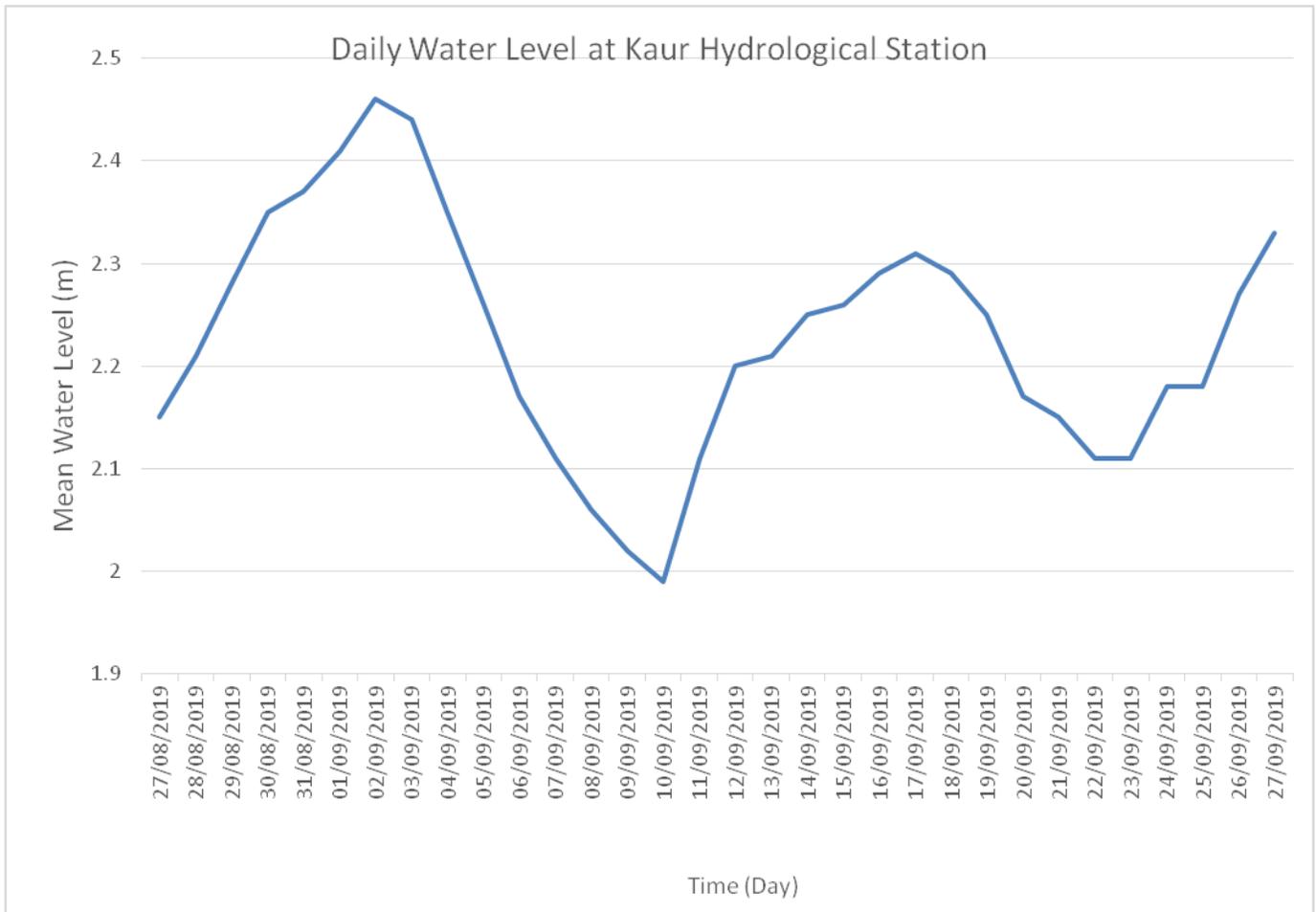


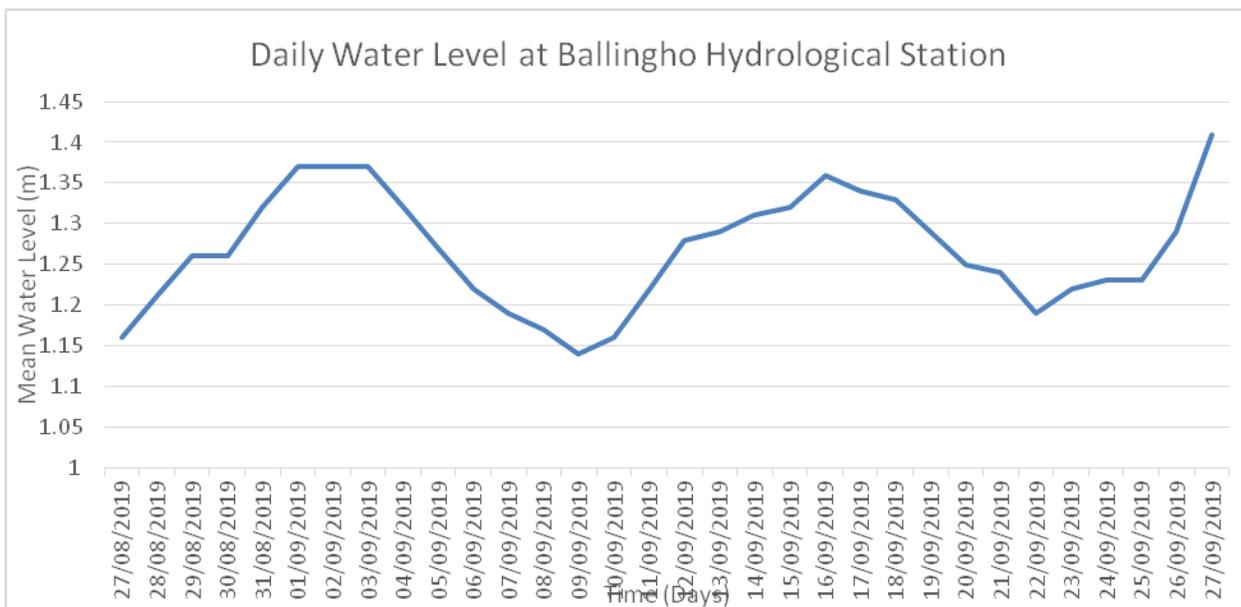
Diagram above shows the daily water level at Basse Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 28th September. The highest water level was recorded on the 28th September, 2019 and the lowest water level was recorded on the 28th August, 2019. The records shows that water level continue to rise during the month. By the 15th day of September, water level in Basse had already reached threshold flood alert zone and river banks busted to cause riverine floods. The overflows have continued as the water level continued to rise.



The diagram above shows the water level recorded at Kuntaur Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 27th September, 2019. The highest water level for the month was recorded on the 2nd and 3rd September, 2019 and the lowest water level was also recorded on the 10th September, 2019. The threshold flood alert mark was reached on two occasions but for only a short while then water levels dropped.



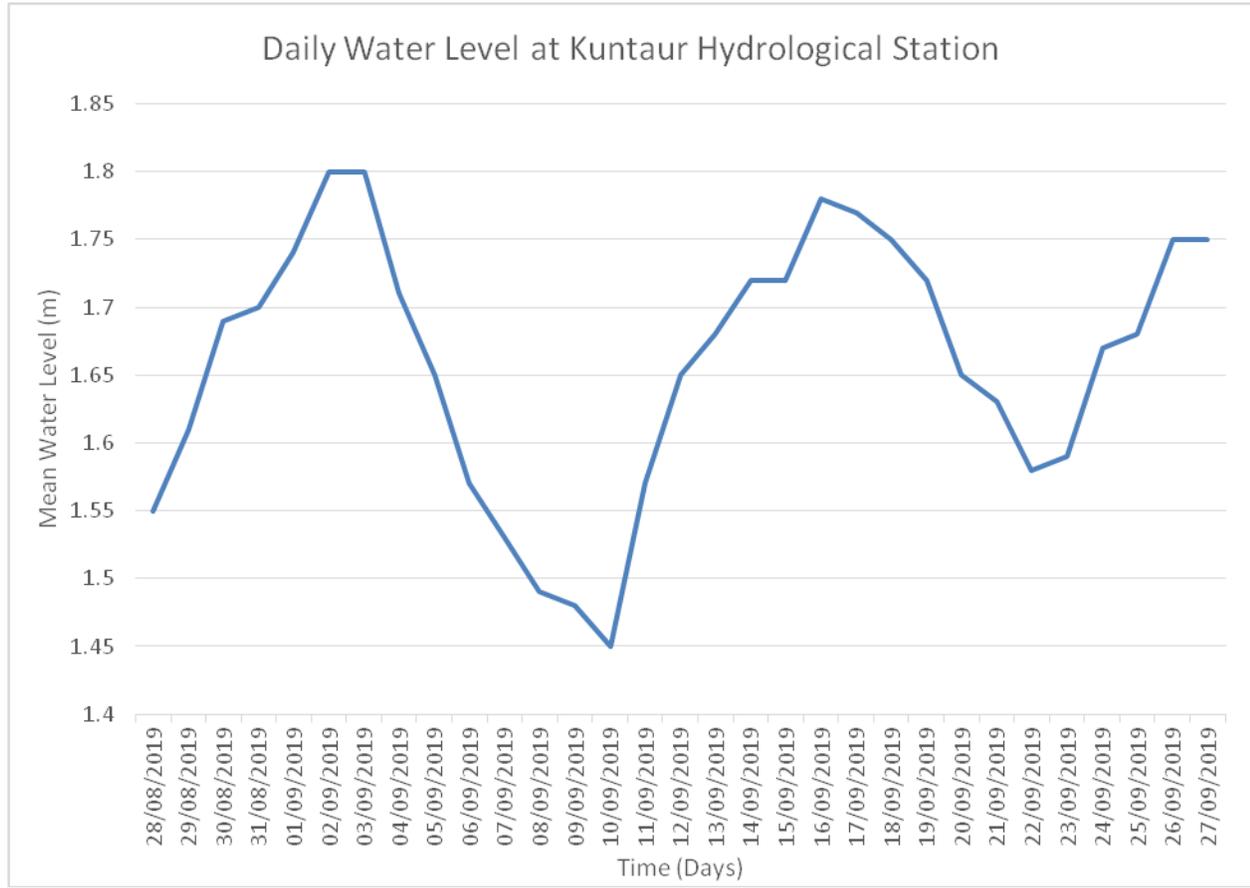
The diagram above shows the water level recorded at Kaur Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 27th September, 2019. The highest water level for the month was recorded on the 2nd September, 2019 and the lowest water level was also recorded on the 10th September, 2019. There has not been any major threat of riverine flooding over this period.



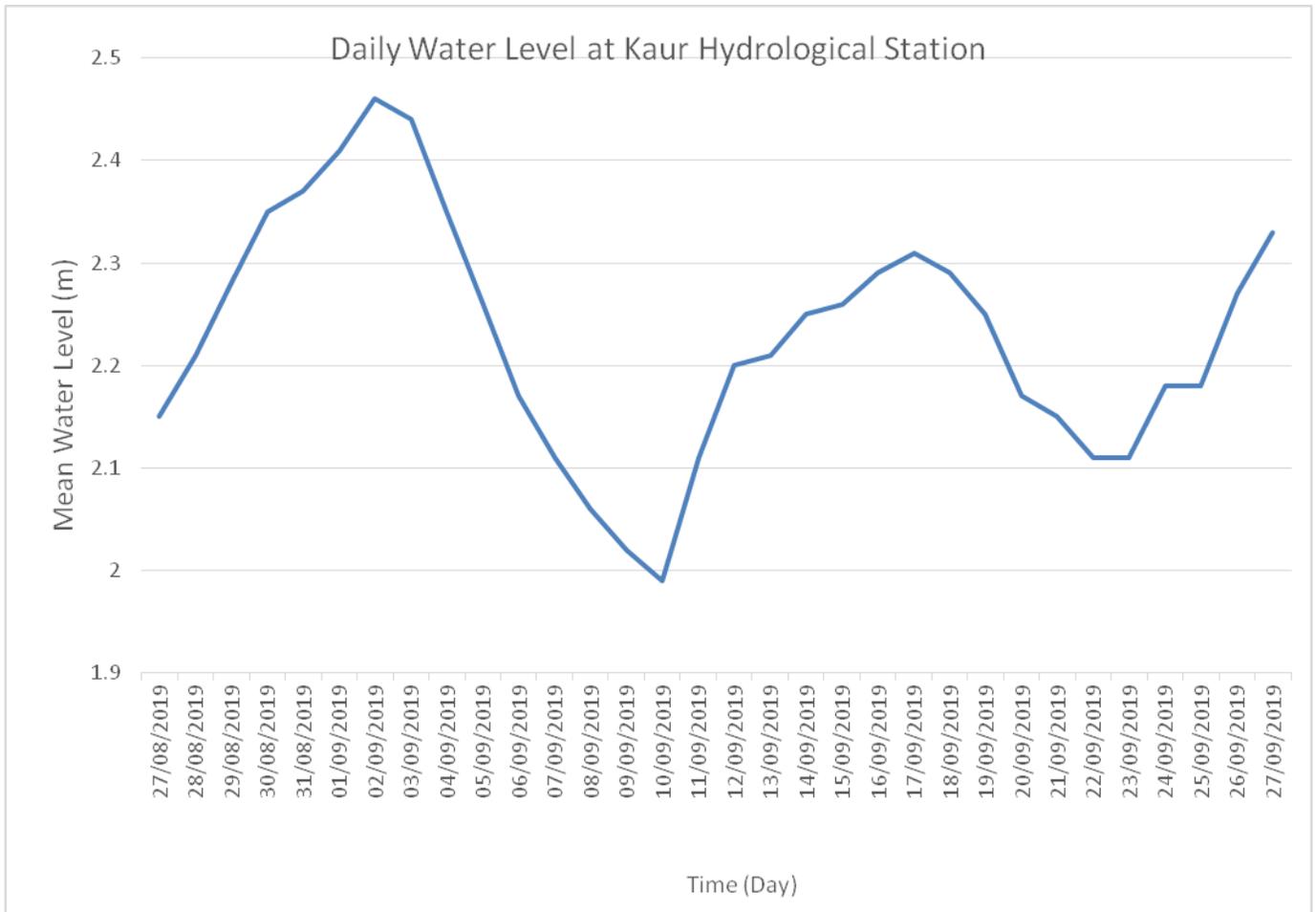
The diagram above shows the water level recorded at Ballingho Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 27th September, 2019. The highest water level for the month was recorded on the 27th September, 2019 and the lowest water level was also recorded on the 9th September, 2019. Between the 30th August and 4th September and 14th September to 18th September, there were overflows in Ballingho. Again from the 26th September the water level have started rising causing overflows as well.

Due to bi-tidal nature of the river, water levels will continue to rise and drop in Ballingho, Kaur and Kuntaur.

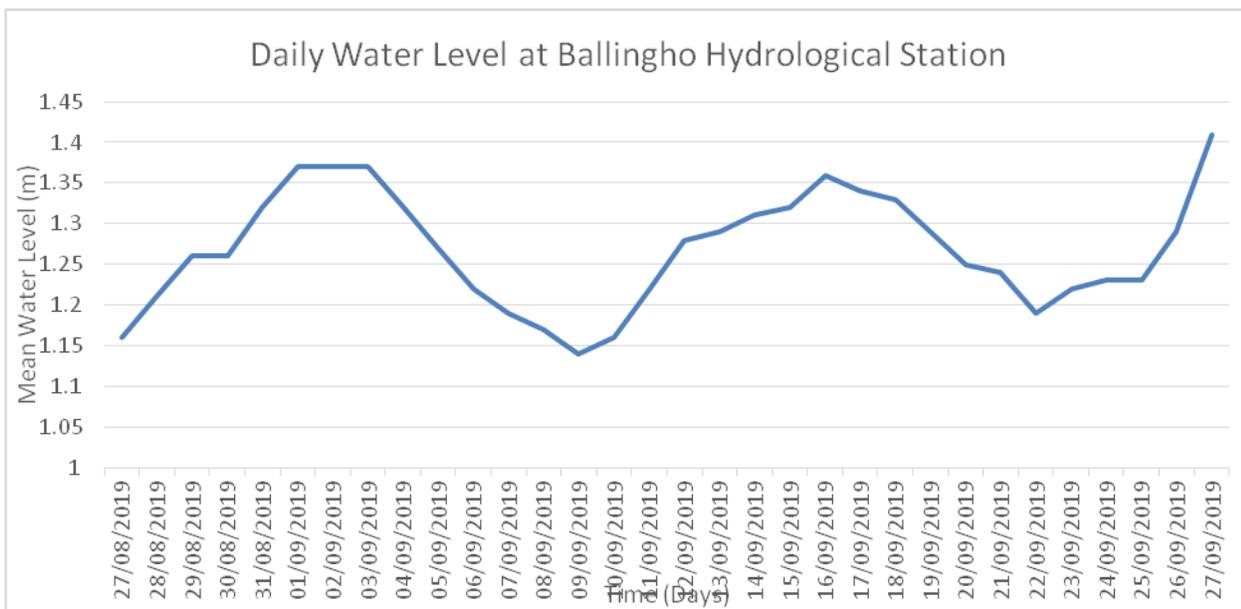
Diagram above shows the daily water level at Basse Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 28th September. The highest water level was recorded on the 28th September, 2019 and the lowest water level was recorded on the 28th August, 2019. The records shows that water level continue to rise during the month.



The diagram above shows the water level recorded at Kuntaur Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 27th September, 2019. The highest water level for the month was recorded on the 2nd and 3rd September, 2019 and the lowest water level was also recorded on the 10th September, 2019.



The diagram above shows the water level recorded at Kaur Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 27th September, 2019. The highest water level for the month was recorded on the 2nd September, 2019 and the lowest water level was also recorded on the 10th September, 2019.



The diagram above shows the water level recorded at Kaur Hydrological Station for the period between 28th August and 27th September, 2019. The highest water level for the month was recorded on the 27th September, 2019 and the lowest water level was also recorded on the 9th September, 2019.

6. PESTS AND DISEASES SITUATION

Having toured the length and breadth of the country as an active member of the Multi-Disciplinary Working Group, the pest situation generally does not pose a threat to food security in the country.

In the North Bank Region, there was no report of a major pest outbreak according to the Subject Matter Specialist (SMS) Plant Protection, Mr. Lamin MJ Sanyang). A maize farm along the highway was surveyed by the trekking team but no significant pest was found. An early millet farm which was nearing maturity was also surveyed and only the suspected damage of the insect pest *Rahguva spp* was observed but the actual pest was not found. Most of the crops (maize, early millet, groundnut) looked healthy and were on the verge of maturity.

In the Central River Region North, according to Mr. Essa Mendy, the officer deputizing the Regional Director, there have been reports of Fall Army Worm (*Spodoptera furgiperda*) on maize and Blister beetles (*Psalydollyta fusca*) early millet but these reports were not alarming at all. Otherwise the general crops situation is satisfactory.



FAW larva

During a meeting with the Regional Agriculture Director Mr. Minteh, he amongst other things explained that there has been report of Fall Armyworms on maize in the region especially during the dry spell when the plants were much younger but with the resumption of the rains, the infestation is minimal

In Central River Region South, Mr Lamin Jawara deputizing for the director gave a detailed report on the cropping situation with statistical data but said that they haven't receive any major pest outbreak during the season.

In the Lower River Region, a particular pest was reported that in.. that has been attacking young cereals especially during the dry spell. The pest according to research is a Chrysomilidae beetle *Lema deturaphila* which seems to be very destructive especially to young plants as both larva

7. LIVESTOCK SITUATION

The livestock situation in the country is good, there is enough pasture and water points. There are no major diseases encountered as at now, even though the national CBBP campaign was carried out. In

the CRRn plans are underway to improve the rangers with expected support from FAO. In the URR, a total of 58,000 cattle were vaccinated during a national vaccination campaign against CBPP, 10,000 small ruminants were also vaccinated against Pest de Petite Ruminants (PPR) and 5000 poultry were also vaccinated against new castle disease (NCD)

8. MARKET SITUATION

Average Price in Dalasi per kilo

Commodities	Serrekunda	Bakau	Banjul	Brikama	Basse	Soma	Farafenni	Brikamaba	Wassu
Cereals									
Maize	26.00	28.00	28.00	25.00	25.00	22.80	20.00	15.00	16.00
Early Millet	30.00	32.00	34.00	25.00	25.00	23.00	22.00	14.00	18.00
Late Millet	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25.00	N/A	N/A	15.00	16.50
Sorghum	35.00	N/A	40.00	25.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.00	20.00
Imp. Rice	24.00	24.00	24.00	25.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00
Lograin Rice	26.00	26.00	26.00	26.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00
Local Rice			28.00	28.00	32.00	28.00	N/A	20.00	20.00
Findo	100.00	125.00	100.00	125.00	100.00	125.00	125.00	N/A	N/A
Cash Crops									
Dec. G/Nut	45.75	48.45	45.00	40.00	40.00	34.00	32.00	44.00	40.00
Undec. G/Nut	35.00	34.00	30.00	26.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	24.80	22.00
Beans	50.00	50.00	50.00	45.00	45.00	60.00	50.00	45.00	50.00
Imp. Onion	40.00	40.00	40.00	50.00	50.00	45.00	45.00	50.00	50.00
Irish Potato	40.00	40.00	40.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
Livestock Products									
Meat & Bone	220.00	220.00	200.00	220.00	200.00	175.00	175.00	150.00	175.00
Beef Steak	250.00	250.00	250.00	240.00	250.00	225.00	225.00	170.00	225.00
Mutton	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	170.00	250.00

Source: Planning Services Unit (PSU), Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) Reporting period: 26th September to 02nd October 2019

Banjul, October 02, 2019.

National MWG of The Gambia

<p>Composition of MWG: Department of Water Resources Planning Services - Department of Agriculture (DOA) Communication, Extension & Education Services - DOA Animal Health & Production Services - DOA Plant Protection Services - DOA National Environment Agency</p>	<p>Direct your comments and questions to: The Director Department of Water Resources 7 Marina Parade, Banjul The Gambia Tel: (+ 220) 422 76 31 / 422 41 22 / 890 52 29 Email: dwr@mofwrnam.gov.gm</p>
---	---