

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2010/10

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: August 1 - 10, 2010



Government of The Gambia

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1. PROGRESS OF 2010 RAINY SEASON

The mean surface position of the demarcating boundary between the dry and moist region over West Africa (Inter-Tropical Discontinuity - ITD) was located over Podor (Senegal), Tidjikta (Mauritania), Gao (Mali) and Agadez (Niger). Thus, the ITD maintained its position as in the last dekad.

Convective clouds development, moderate to heavy rain and thunderstorms (sometimes squally) characterized the weather to the south of the ITD, particularly in southern Sahel and northern part of the Gulf of Guinea States. However, to the north, warm, dry and sunny afternoons characterized the weather with occasional dusty/hazy conditions notably over northern Mauritania, Mali and Niger.

2. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR AUGUST 1 - 10, 2010

Warm, humid and variably cloudiness will prevail with slight to moderate rain and/or thunderstorm over most places during most part of the dekad.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad the average rainfall intensity has dropped to 65mm compared to 109mm during the previous dekad. The number of rainy days also reduced from a minimum of 4 during the preceding dekad to 1 in this dekad. This led to end-of-dekad totals to range from 1.3mm at Kerewan to 112.2mm at Serekunda both in the Western Third of the country.

Figure 1a shows the distribution of rainfall intensities during this dekad, with the southern part of the country recording more rainfall.

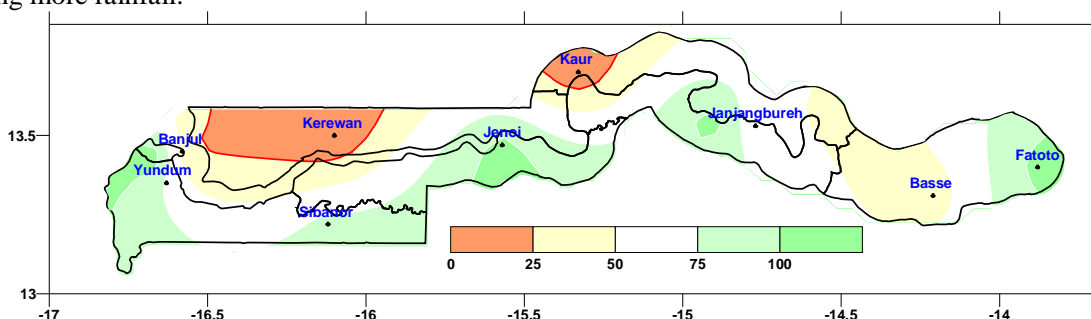


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during August 21 - 10, 2010

As at August 10 the seasonal total rainfall amount in the country ranged from 310.2mm at Kerewan to 714.9mm at Jenoi both in the Western Third of the country (Fig 1b). During the same period last year, the seasonal rainfall

ranged from 143.3 at Janjangbureh to 469.3mm at Sibanor in the Western Third of the country. This indicates surplus across the country ranging from 186mm to over 500mm, except for Serekunda that recorded a deficit.

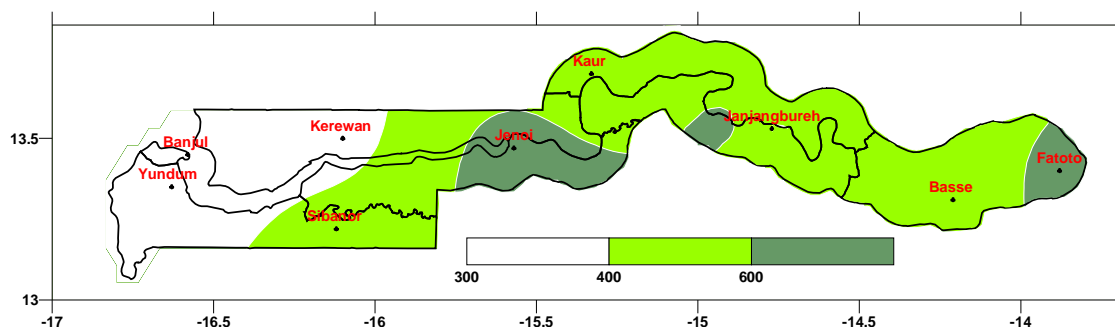


Figure 1b: Cumulative rainfall as at August 10, 2010

The country average as at August 10, 2010 rose to 470.0mm which is 11% above last year (425.0mm) 41% above the normal (332.7mm) during the same period.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

As in the previous dekads, temperatures remained high throughout the country especially in the central and eastern sectors. Compared to the preceding dekad, mean country temperatures increased slightly by 0.3 °C.

Extreme temperatures recorded were 35.0 °C at Kerewan in the Western Third, 34.4 °C at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third and 37.5 °C at Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country.

Maximum relative humidity (RH) continued to remain above 90% throughout the country.

Winds across the country were generally light to moderate in speed. However, a line squall producing a wind gust of 50km/hr was recorded on the 2nd August 2010.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

5.1 General situation

Phenological development of crops continued to vary across the country, which is attributed to the different dates of sowing, caused by varying rainfall onsets in June and July. Meanwhile, the general crop performance is quite satisfactory across the country.

5.2 Crop development

Millet: In some parts of Western (North Bank Region) and Middle (Central River Region) Thirds of the country, the phenological development stage of early millet ranged from shooting to booting/heading. However, the crop is at tillering stages in the Eastern (Kantora, Gimara and Fuladu districts) Thirds of the country. Late millet which is widely grown in the Western Third (Western Region) is at stages ranging between seedling and tiling.

Maize: This crop is at tasseling stage in the Western (North Bank and Lower River Regions), Middle (Central River Region) and the Eastern Thirds of the country and stem elongation in the other parts of the Western Third.

Sorghum: The crop is at vegetative stage in the Central River and Upper River Regions where is it mostly grown.

Groundnut: Groundnut is at advanced vegetative stage in almost all the regions. The early maturing Philippine pink is at flowering stage.

Rice: Up-land rice across the country is at vegetative stage and weeding is largely in progress. In the lowlands fields, ploughing has started and nursery weeding is ongoing.

5.3 Pest Situation

No serious pest infestation was reported during the period.

6. MARKET PRICES

The food situation is satisfactory and is characterized by a general availability of stocks in households. A large quantity of imported rice is evident in both retail and weekly markets all over the country.

Average prices at the cereal markets continued to fluctuate depending on the volume of the commodities supplied and demand at the markets. As compared to the previous dekad the price of cereals remained virtually unchanged.

The price of millet is above D55.00/kg at Brikama, whilst at Brikama Ba, the crop is costing about D22.00/kg (fig. 2). The price of other cereals (maize and sorghum) were also highest at Brikama due to the demand.

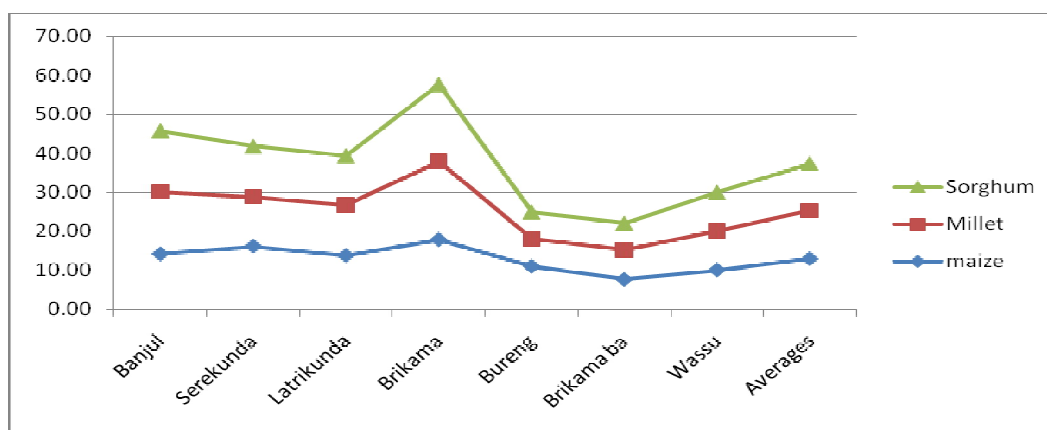


Figure 2: *Evolution of cereal prices (Source: Planning Services)*

<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>
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