

# EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

Nº. 2012/14

**IN THE GAMBIA**

Period: September 11 - 20, 2012



Government of The Gambia

Produced and Published by the Multidisciplinary Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional Programme

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

## 1. SYNOPTIC SITUATION

The ITD stretched through Mauritania rising slightly over Central Mali and sloped southwards over Niger.

The intensification of the St. Helena High Pressure Centre over South West Africa with a mean core value of 1030 hectopascal supported and maintained persistent inflow of moisture in to the West African Sub-region giving rise to massive convective cloud development. As a consequence, moderate rains to heavy thunderstorm with occasionally squally occurrences were mostly wide spread over the entire country.

By contrast, north of the ITD experienced rather dry and stable weather with occasional patches of dust haze over places in northern Mauritania and most of North Africa, as the Azores High Pressure System over north West Atlantic maintained a centre value of 1020 hectopascal.

## 2. RAINFALL SITUATION

Rainfall during this dekad has slightly reduced both in terms of quantity and frequency as compared to the previous one (September 1 - 10). The number of rainy days dropped from a maximum of 8 in the previous dekad to 6 days during this dekad. Highest daily rainfalls registered were 70.5mm at Kerewan in the Western Third, 32.5mm at Sapu in the Middle Third and 19.2mm at Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country. Thus resulting to dekedal totals to vary from a minimum of 19.7mm at Basse in the Eastern Third to a maximum of 140.4mm recorded at Kerewan in the Western Third of the country (fig. 1a).

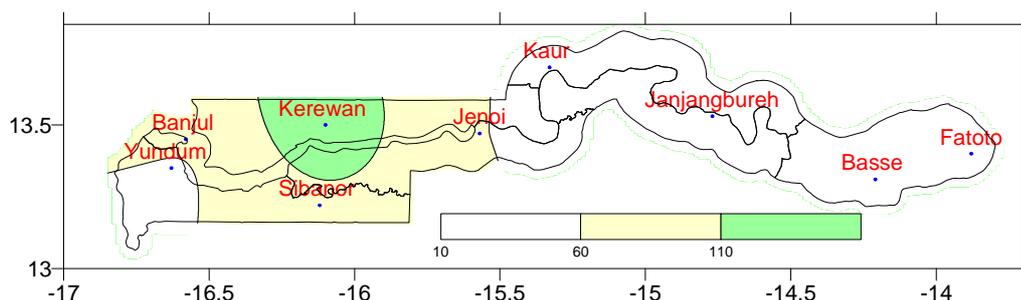
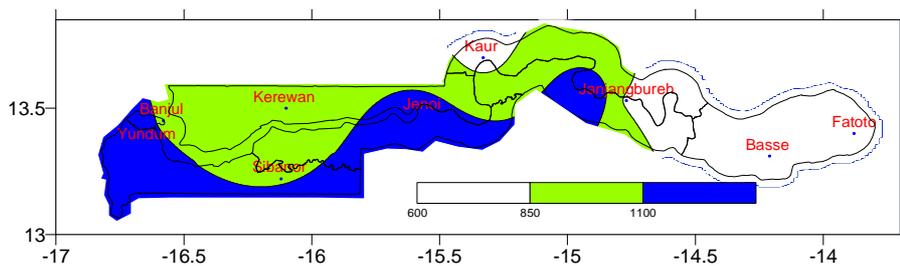


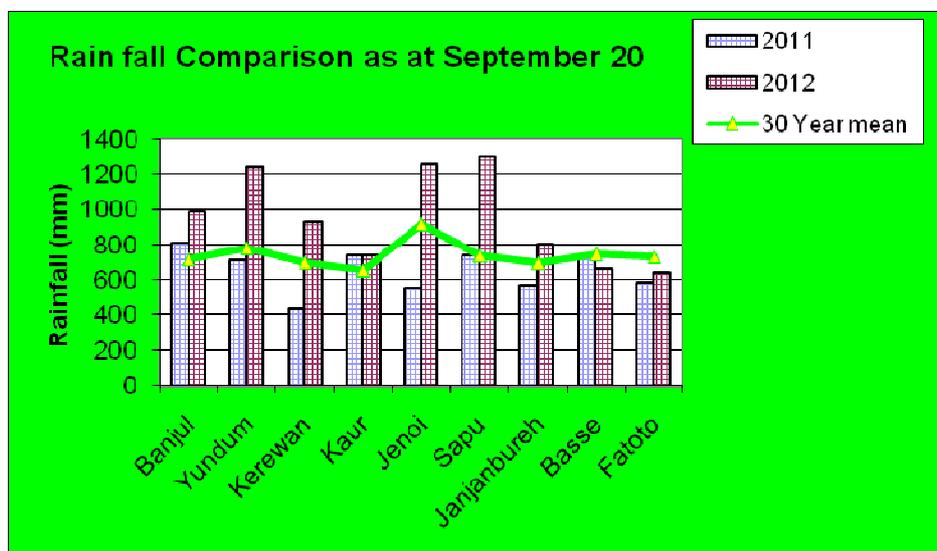
Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during September 11 – 20, 2012

The seasonal rainfall total as at end of this dekad ranged from 635.2mm at Fatoto in the Eastern Third to 1292.0mm at Sapu in the Middle Third of the country. In terms of annual distribution the Middle and the Western Thirds received more rainfall (fig.1b).



**Figure 1b:** Cumulative rainfall from May 1 – September 10, 2012

The country average as at September 20, 2012 stood at 980.0mm which is 51% above last year's (650.1mm) and 32 % above the long term mean (740.7mm). Compared to the same period last year (2011), surpluses were recorded in all stations across the country, except at Basse (figure 1c). Meanwhile, when compared to the long term mean (1981 – 2010), deficits were recorded only at Basse and Fatoto in the Eastern Third.



**Figure 1c:** Comparison of this year rainfall, against 2011 and the long-term mean

### 3. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD (21 – 30 SEPTEMBER, 2012)

Rain and thunderstorm occasionally squally are expected to affect the country during the next dekad

### 4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Average temperatures remained below 29°C throughout this dekad. However, maximum temperatures were higher in the Eastern Third than the Middle and the Western Thirds. They ranged from 35.5°C at Kerewan, 35.8°C at Sapu to 36.5°C at Basse.

Average sunshine ranged from 2.4 to 6.8hrs across the country whilst averagely daily evaporation were below 6mm across the country, highest (5.9mm) was recorded at Kerewan.

Average maximum Relatively Humidity was above 90%, and the minimum was also above 64%. Winds were generally light to moderate in speed, however, line squalls at speeds of 76 km/h and 83 km/h were recorded at Janjangbureh and Yundum respectively.

## **5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION**

Overall crop performance in terms of growth and development is progressing satisfactorily across the country.

Harvesting of maize is almost completed except the late sown fields in the West Coast Region and other isolated areas in the country. Sorghum is generally heading/flowering in the Upper River Region and in some parts of Central River Region where it is predominant.

The growth stages of early millet across the country ranged from flowering to grain formation, whilst late millet is generally at jointing stage of development. Sorghum is also at jointing/heading stage of development.

Crop fields such as early millet are at maturing stages particularly those planted early. Groundnuts vary from flowering, pegging to pod formation depending on planting dates. However, swamp rice continued to be affected by the downpours experienced recently across the country as some fields have submerged. Harvesting of maize is in progress.

Upland rice across the country is growing as expected and most of the crop is at tillering and booting phases. The *NERICA* rice variety is flowering in all the regions. In the swamp rice fields, transplanting of rice nurseries is continuing. However, swamp rice are affected by the downpours across the country as some fields have submerged.

Groundnut fields across the country are at different growth stages ranging from pegging to full maturity depending on the variety and date of sowing. Harvesting of the *Philippine pink* varieties is in progress in all the regions.

## **6. SITUATION OF MARKETS**

### **Cereal Prices**

Cereals are available in all the markets visited (retail and weekly markets) during the period under review.

However, at the retail markets, average prices of coarse grains (maize, sorghum and millet) remained high and varied from D16.66 to D17.34 per kilogramme, whilst the price of rice (broken and long grain) remained at D15.67 per kilogramme and local rice is sold at an average of D22.00 per kilogramme.

### **Price of beef**

Average price of beef (meat & bone) is D100.00/Kg at Brikama, D110.00 at Latrikunda and Bakau, whilst beef steak is at D130.00/kg at Latrikunda and Brikama and D125.00/kg at Bakau during the period under review.