

# EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2008/16

## IN THE GAMBIA

Period: October 1 - 10, 2008



Government of The Gambia

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Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional  
Programme

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

### 1. PROGRESS OF RAINY SEASON

During the first dekad of October 2008 the ITD continued with its southwards journey. Its mean position was observed at 16°N over longitude 20°W, 17.0°N over northern Senegal, 17.0°N over the southern of Mauritania, 17.5°N and 17.25°N over west and central Mali respectively.

Convective clouds development, rain and thunderstorms (sometimes squally) characterised the weather to the south of the ITD, including The Gambia. However, to the north, warm, dry and sunny afternoons characterised the weather.

### 2. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, the entire country experienced a drop in both frequency and intensity as compared to the previous dekad. Significant rainfall amounts were only recorded during the first half of the dekad. Highest single day rainfall of more than 40mm was recorded at Yundum (44.5) and Fatoto (47.3mm). The number of rainy days ranged from 3 to 4, leading to end-of-dekad totals ranging from 17.1mm at Dankunku in the Middle Third and 125.9mm at Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country (fig.1).

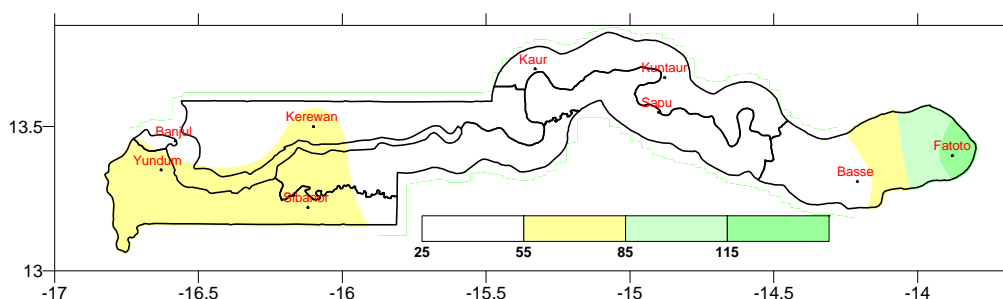
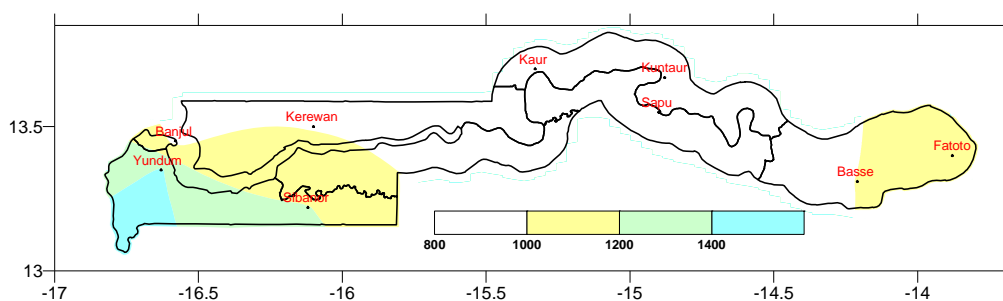


Figure 1. Total rainfall during October 1 - 10, 2008

The seasonal (May 1 to October 10) total rainfall amount in the country ranged from 798.4mm at Mankamang in the Middle Third to 1421.5mm at Yundum in the Western Third of the country (details in fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** Cumulative (May 1 - September 30, 2008) rainfall

The country average as at October 10, 2008 was 1000mm, compared to 768.1mm and 767.2mm recorded during the same period last year and the long-term respectively.

### 3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Mean temperatures during this dekad dropped slightly from 27.8°C in the previous dekad to 27.5 °C in this one. Thermal distribution within the country shows some degree of uniformity across the country. Highest temperatures recorded were 35.0°C at Banjul in the Western Third, 35.3°C at Kaur in the Middle Third and 35.0°C at Basse in the Eastern of the country.

Maximum relative humidity (RH) continues to remain above 90%, whilst the minimum RH also remained above 55% nationwide.

Generally, winds across the country were light to moderate in speed.

### 4. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Generally, the agricultural situation across the country remained impressive, as most crops have completed or are about to complete their cycles.

Harvesting of early millet is almost completed in both the Western (Lower River and North Bank Regions) and Middle Thirds (Central River region) of the country. Late millet is generally at heading/flowering stages in both the Eastern (Upper River Region) and Western (in some parts of western region) Thirds of the country, but the late sown fields in Western Region are still at vegetative phases (jointing).

Harvesting of maize is completed. Sorghum is generally heading/flowering in the Eastern (URR) and Middle (in some parts CRR) Thirds where it is predominant.

Most upland rice fields have reached flowering and maturity stages across the country. In the swamp rice fields, transplanting of rice nurseries has gained momentum in the Western (Lower River and North Bank Regions) and Middle (Central River Region) Thirds of the country.

Majority of the groundnut fields across the country have reached maturity. Harvesting is continuing in most parts of the country.

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