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# EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2010/01

**IN THE GAMBIA**

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Government of The Gambia

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Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional  
Programme

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

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## 1. PROGRESS OF RAINY SEASON

During this dekad, both the Azores High Pressure Cell, centered over the north-west Atlantic Ocean and the St. Helena High Pressure Cell centered over the south Atlantic Ocean have almost equal core values of 1030 hpa towards the end of the dekad. However, the Azores had continued to influence the weather over the Sahel, including The Gambia, causing the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), boundary separating the moist and dry regions over northern Africa to fluctuate over countries south of the Gambia (Guinea Bissau, southern Mali, Central Burkina Faso, southern Niger and then slopping into eastern Nigeria).

The Sahel was dominated by dry, warm and stable atmosphere with occurrences of dust haze over the northern parts of Niger, Mali and Mauritania.

## 2. RAINFALL SITUATION

No rainfall was recorded throughout the country during this dekad. This depicts the same situation as in last year (2009).

However, compared to the long-term mean (1971 - 2000) cumulative rainfall during the same period, deficits ranged from 0.1mm to 2.5mm.

## 3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Temperatures during this dekad are high, particularly in the Middle and Eastern Thirds of the country. Highest temperatures remained above 40.0°C in all stations except those near the coast (Yundum and Banjul), where the highest temperatures were 36.0°C and below.

Minimum temperatures follow the same trend as the maximum temperatures; ranging between 19.0°C at Kerewan in the Western Third to 24.1 °C at Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country.

Relative humidity (RH) followed a reverse in trend to that of temperatures, as the Western and Middle Thirds recorded the highest RH ranging from 63% to 93%, whilst the Eastern Third recorded the lowest of 56%. During the same period last year, the average relative humidity varied between 60 and 93%.

Winds during the dekad were generally moderate to light in speed (30km/hr maximum).

#### 4. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The major on-field activities by farmers are field clearing, acquisition and preparation of seeds and the repair of farming implements.

As part of their expansion exercise, NERICA rice seeds are being introduced to new villages in the country.

Female farmers are still busy harvesting their vegetables, thus the availability of these commodities in the markets.

#### 5. SITUATION OF MARKETS

##### Cereal Prices

The food situation is generally good, due to the availability of stocks in households and products in retail and weekly markets. The high price levied on the cereal commodities in the market is due mainly to the places of acquisition normally from the weekly markets “Lumo” in the rural areas.

Price of imported whole rice is uniform in all the markets at D16.00 except at Ndugu Kebbeh where it cost D17.00 per kilo. Prices of cereals, decorticated groundnut and beans are generally lower in the rural markets than the urban ones.

##### Horticultural commodity prices

Like cereal, the prices of horticultural commodities fluctuate according to the demand and supply in the various markets. Average prices of exotic onion remain fairly stable throughout the country. The price of other commodities like tomato, okra and pepper varied from one market to the other.

##### Fruits

In all the markets for the past two weeks guava is unavailable and mangoes and lemon are in low supply as they are only available in few of the markets which is due mainly to the seasonal change of the products. Banana is the only commodity that is available in all the markets. The price of oranges is stable, whilst that of mangoes varied from D8.33/kg at Ndugu Kebbeh to D25.00/kg at Bakau.

##### Roots and tuber

The price of roots and tubers varies among commodities and from one market to the other. The price of carrot remains variably high in all the markets expect at Serekunda, where it stood at a low price of D35.00/kg; and Bakau registering the highest of D55.71/kg due mainly to tourist industry.

##### 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

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