

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

IN THE GAMBIA

No. 2010/12

Period: August 21 - 31, 2010



Government of The Gambia

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Group of the AGRHYMET Regional Programme

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF 2010 RAINY SEASON

During this dekad the surface position of the Inter Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) maintained its position as in the previous dekad, oscillating over central Mauritania and stretching towards northern Mali, Niger and on to central Chad.

In the areas south of the ITD, thunderstorms and rain showers characterized the weather over southern Mauritania, Nigeria and Chad during most part of the dekad. However spots of dust haze-bristling dust featured over north west of Mauritania and North West Mali.

2. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR SEPTEMBER 1 - 10, 2010

Thunderstorm / rain showers are expected during the above period.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

The significant rainfall recorded during the preceding dekads continued into this present one across the country. Single day rainfall of more than 50mm was recorded on the 21st, 25th and 31st in most parts of the country. The number of rainy days varied from 4 to 7 days leading to end-of-dekad totals to range from 59.3mm at Banjul to 213.0mm at Sibanor, both in the Western Third of the country (fig. 1a).

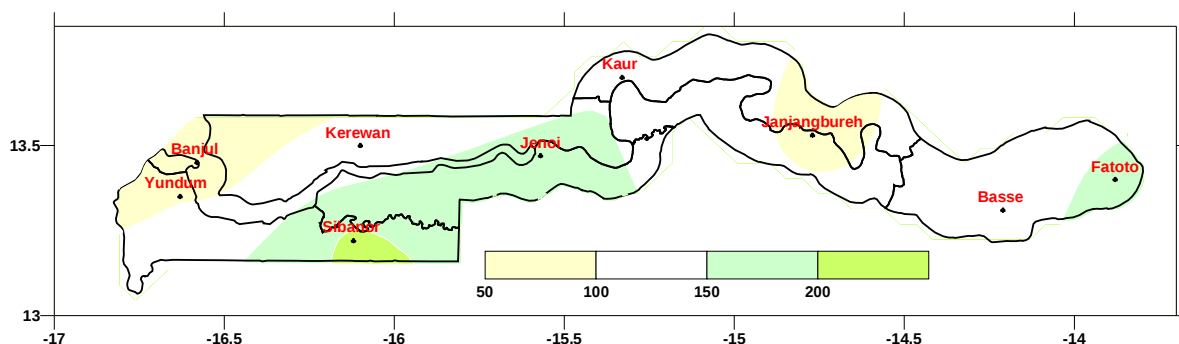


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during August 21 – 31, 2010

The seasonal total rainfall accumulated from May 1 to August 31, 2010 ranged from a minimum of 462.2mm at Kerewan to a maximum of 1008.5mm at Jenoi in the Middle Third of the country (Fig 1b).

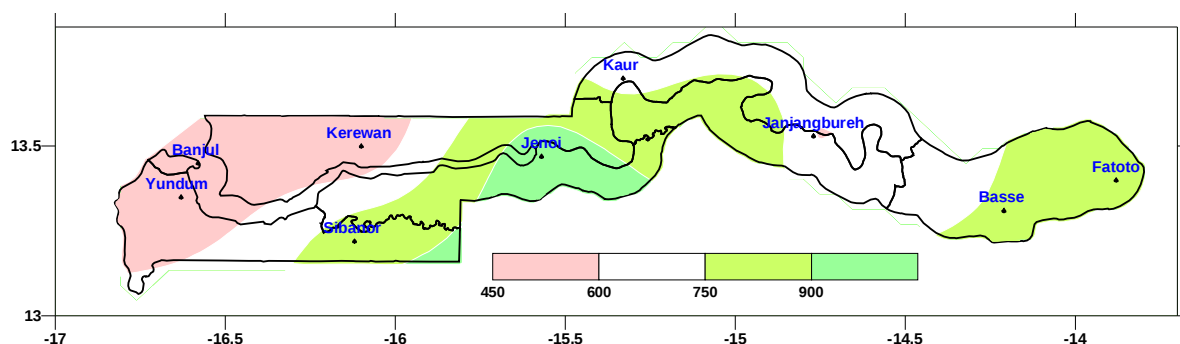


Figure 1b: Cumulative rainfall as at August 31, 2010

During the same period last year, the seasonal total rainfall ranged from 328.7mm at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third to 1035.2mm at Yundum in the Western Third of the country. When compared to the same period last year, deficits were recorded at Kaur in the Middle Third and the entire Western Third of the country. The rest of the country recorded a surplus.

The country average rainfall as at August 31, 2010 rose to 702.0mm which is 1% below last year (710.0mm) and 31% above the normal (536.0mm) during the same period.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Generally, average temperatures during this dekad had increased by 0.2°C as compared to the preceding dekad. In the Middle Third, mean temperatures were about 28.5°C reducing to about 27.7°C in both the Western and Eastern Thirds of the country.

Extreme temperatures recorded were 35.0°C at Kerewan and Jenoi in the Western and Middle Thirds respectively, and 34.0°C at Jenoi in the Eastern Third of the country.

Maximum relative humidity (RH) remained above 90% in most parts of the country except in Banjul and Kaur where it dropped to 84%, while the minimum RH generally remained above 55%.

Winds across the country generally varied from low to moderate.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

5.1 General crop situation

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

5.2 Crop development

Cereals

Generally, maize is flowering and in some places the crop has reached maturity and harvesting has started. The early millet crop is at advanced stage of heading and grain formation in many regions. In the Western and Upper River Regions, late millet is at tillering or shooting stages. Sorghum fields are at advanced jointing stage with few fields booting.

The early maturing rice, *Nerica* is at booting stage in certain areas. Transplanting of rice nurseries has started in the lowland fields.

Groundnuts

The early maturing groundnut (Philippine pink) is at maturity in some places, whilst in other places it is at advanced stage of pegging. The other groundnut varieties, *Senegal 206* and *73-33* are at ramification and flowering/pegging stages.

5.3 Pest Situation

No serious pest infestation was reported during the period.

6. MARKET PRICES

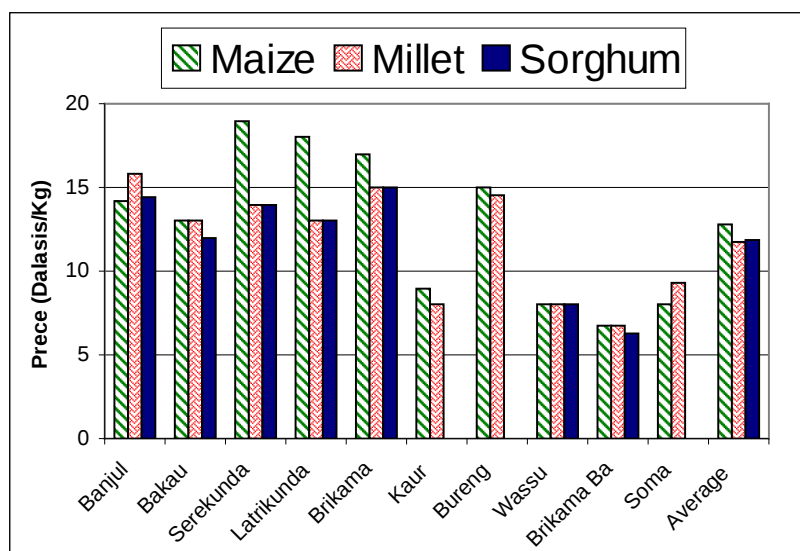


Figure 2: Evolution of cereal prices (Source: Planning Services Unit)

The price of cereals within Greater Banjul Areas remained above D10.00/kg, whilst in the rest of the country, these crops generally cost below D10.00/kg (fig. 2). The average prices of rice (broken and long grain) remained high at D17/kg and D16/kg respectively in the country. Meanwhile, when compared to the same period last year, this year is slightly lower.

Cereals

Average prices at the cereal markets continued to fluctuate depending on the volume of the commodities supplied and demand at the markets. Majority of the cereals (millet, maize and sorghum) are commanding high price as a result of their low supply and it has also been noticed that we are in the peak period of their production. Commodity like *findo* is becoming increasingly unavailable in most of the markets. However, a large quantity of imported rice is evident in both retail and weekly markets all over the country.

Horticultural commodity prices

The prices of horticultural commodities continued to fluctuate according to the demand and supply in the various markets. Average prices of cabbage, lettuce and large pepper are the highest and cost D40.00, D41.00 and D82.00 per kilo respectively.

Prices of imported horticultural commodities (onion) increases as one moves away from Banjul and varied from D27.00/Kg around Greater Banjul Area to D40.00/Kg inland.

Price of beef

The price of beef (meat & bone) is D50.00/Kg in Banjul and Brikama, a price pegged by Kanilai Farm Stall as their special *Ramadan* offer. Elsewhere, the price of this product remained at D60.00/Kg except at Bakau where it costs D75.00/Kg. The price of steak followed the same trend as the meat and bone, D70.00/Kg at Banjul and Brikama, D100.00/Kg at Bakau and D80.00 at the rest of the markets covered by this report.

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