

SOMALIA DROUGHT UPDATE

18 November 2021

Drought Severity			
DROUGHT CONDITION	IMPROVING	STABLE	WORSENING
NORMAL <i>Normal conditions</i>			Awdal and Woqooyi Galbeed and parts of Togdheer
MILD <i>Going into drought, long term dryness slowing planting and growth of crops. Also coming out of a drought – water deficits, partial loss of crops and pasture</i>			Sanaag, Sool and larger parts Togdheer regions
MODERATE <i>Damage to early planted crops, reduced land cultivation, and shortage of pastures and water</i>			Shabelle Riverine areas, Southern coastal areas and Western parts of Bari and Nugaal regions
SEVERE <i>Crop or pasture losses is likely; water shortages common and water trucking imminent</i>			Gedo, Middle Juba, Lower Juba, Bay, Bakool, Hiraan, Mudug, Galgadud and lager parts of Bari and Nuugal regions

Key messages

- The impacts of Climate Change and variability in Somalia are the major causes of current climatic hazards that have been facing the country over the last 10 years. In 2018 and 2019 the country experienced heavy rains leading to massive flooding and associated negative impacts. This was followed by poor rains in Dyer 2020, Gu 2021 and the ongoing Deyr season.
- Currently, more than 80% of the country is experiencing severe drought conditions following a third consecutive failed rainfall season. This has led to serious human suffering.
- Water trucking, migration of populations and livestock has become rampant in many areas leading to quick depletion of the limited resources.
- The Juba and Shabelle river levels are low and are expected to decrease further in the coming months. Likewise, most berkads and shallow wells have dried up leaving the communities to rely on boreholes which are far apart and some with low yield and poor quality especially in Puntland and the central regions.
- With crop failure expected in most of the agricultural areas the prospects for Deyr season cereal production remain bleak.
- The rainfall forecast for the second half of November indicates depressed rains in the country which will not be effective in mitigating the drought conditions.
- Drought conditions are expected to worsen in December 2021 and the first quarter of 2022 leading to a similar situation witnessed in 2017.

Rainfall Performance and Drought Severity Analysis

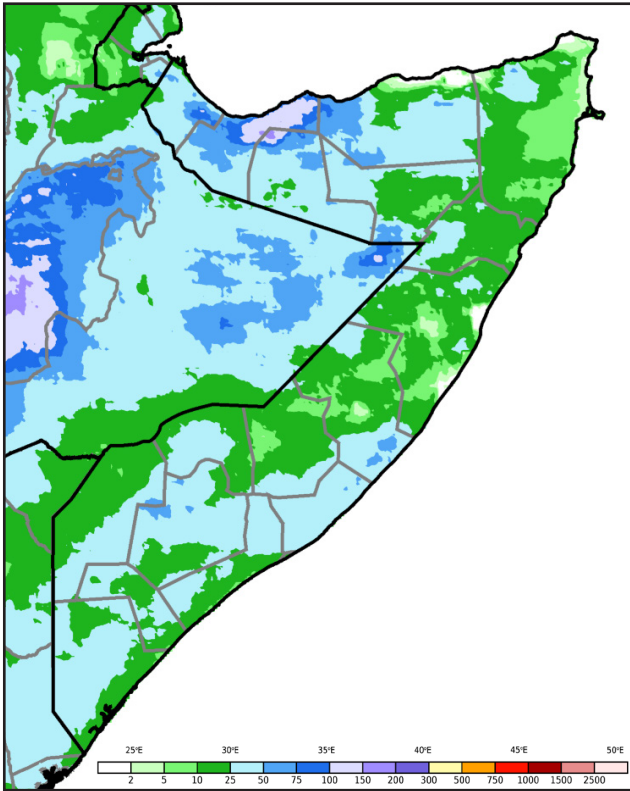
Hot and dry weather conditions persisted in most parts of Somalia in October and half of November 2021. The seasonal rains have been cumulatively low with poor spatial and temporal distribution. Some areas are yet to receive rains especially in the southern and central areas. Map 1 shows the total amount of rainfall recorded between 01 October and 10 November. Most areas recorded 50 mm of rainfall and below during the same period which is significantly below normal. Parts of Somaliland however recorded good rains during the same period. The Ethiopian highlands whose rainfall contributes to the river flow along the Juba and Shabelle Rivers inside Somalia recorded up to 75 mm of rainfall which is also below normal. High temperatures combined with depressed rains caused water stress to all sectors including agriculture, livestock and water resources.

The drought severity map 2 shows drought magnitude in Mid November 2021. Rainfall data analysis from more than 100 rainfall monitoring stations accessible on the [Somalia climate monitoring network](#), reports from the ground and the SWALIM [drought monitoring tool](#) have been used to generate the map.

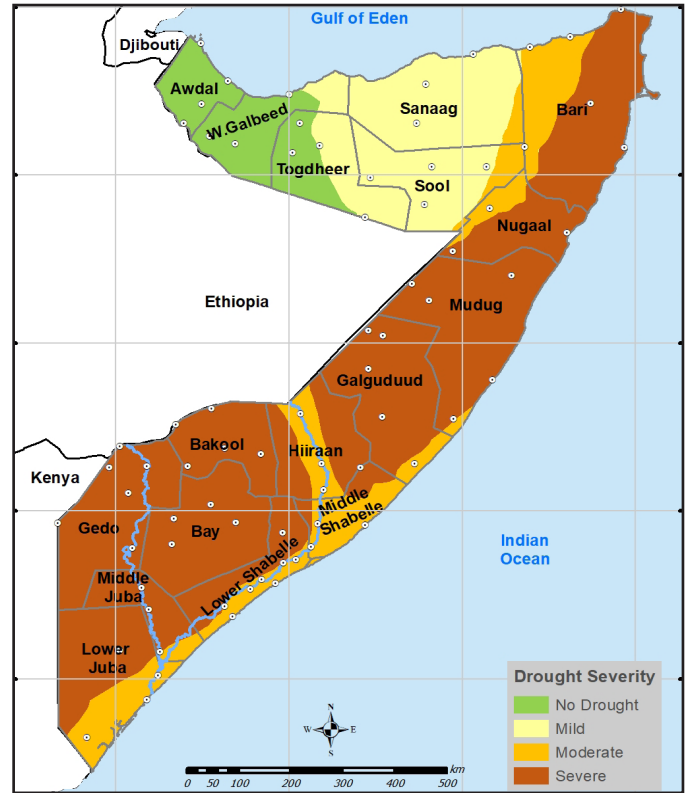
Since August 2021, the drought conditions progressed from the central and southern regions towards Puntland, further creeping to Sool and Sanaag regions in October. Currently, most parts of the country are experiencing severe drought conditions leading to competition of the limited resources among the different users.

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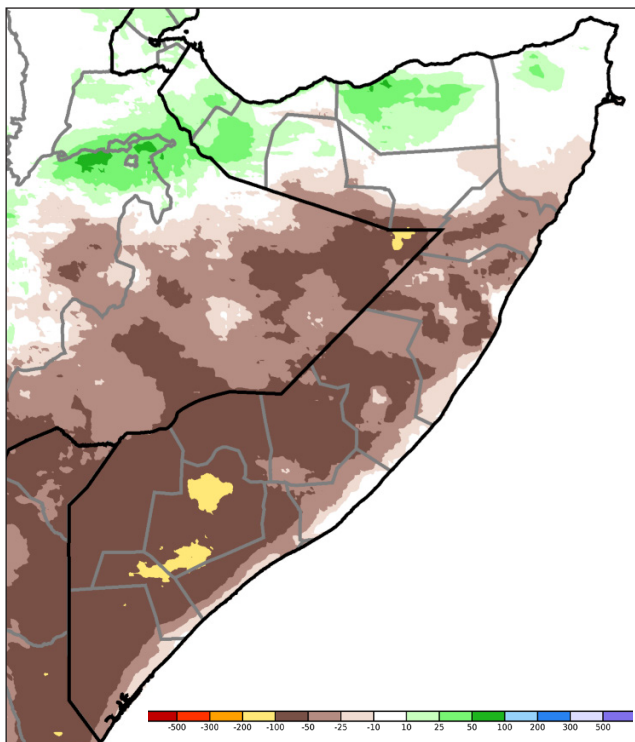


Map 1: Cumulative Rainfall for 01 Oct to 15 Nov 2021



Map 2: Drought severity map for November 2021

Rainfall Outlook



Map 3: Rainfall Anomaly for 01 Oct to 15 Nov and forecast for 16-30 Nov Rainfall Outlook

The seasonal climate forecast for the Greater Horn of Africa by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), issued in August 2021 predicted a poor Deyr rainy season in Somalia. This has been witnessed so far in most areas where minimal rains have been recorded since the start of the season.

Maps 3 shows the rainfall anomaly for 01 October to 30 November (with forecast for 16 to 30 Nov) and it clearly indicates a worsening situation. The situation is worst in the south moving northwards, where positive anomalies are observed in parts of Somaliland. Below normal conditions are also observed within the Ethiopian highlands.

Given the seasonal forecast, and with little or no rainfall expected through the end of November 2021, current drought conditions and impacts are expected to worsen in the coming months.

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Drought Impacts in Juba and Shabelle basins

Rainfall: All the regions within the Juba and Shabelle river basins have so far experienced depressed rains which were poorly distributed with notable dry periods in between. Overall, most stations recorded an average of 5 rainy days, which is significantly inadequate. Insufficient rains have led to worsening of the drought conditions from moderate to severe. The rainfall forecast for the second half of November and the month of December indicates little or no rains within the Juba and Shabelle river basins. Therefore, the drought conditions are expected to get worse until the next rainy season.

Agriculture: Most of the country's agricultural activities take place in these regions. However, lack of reliable rainfall amounts coupled with high temperatures in the past months have had negative effects in this sector. In the rain-fed agricultural areas, the locals either carried out dry planting, which has been affected negatively by the poor rains, or had to wait for effective rains which has not materialized to date. Although planting has taken place in the riverine areas, there is concern that the harvest will be minimal because of the currently low river levels, which cannot fully support irrigation. The situation is more serious along River Shabelle since there are large areas under irrigation, and the off-season (after November) cash crops might be highly affected. Besides, there is high competition for water among different users in the riverine areas. Currently, there is a shortage of cereals causing a sharp increase in the prices which may rise further in the next months. This is consequently going to jeopardize the food security in the regions.

Livestock: In most areas within the Juba and Shabelle Basins, the rangeland conditions have continued to deteriorate given the dismal rainfall performance in Gu and Deyr 2021. Since July 2021, livestock migration has seen an increasing trend with some moving to Ethiopia and Kenya and back. The isolated pockets with relatively good pasture are getting depleted fast due to influx of livestock in such areas. Field reports indicate poor livestock body conditions in Gedo, Middle Juba and Lower Juba regions with massive deaths being reported as well. Household milk production is low and may get worse if forage and water shortage persists. In general, there has been decline of livestock holdings in many livelihood zones due to the harsh weather conditions that caused low births and increased livestock abortions particularly in cattle and small ruminants. The situation is expected to get worse given the forecasted poor rains. Pastoralists are starting to join IDP camps in Dolow, Luuq, and Garbaharey towns.

Water Resources: River levels along the Juba and Shabelle increased slightly in mid-October and later decreased rapidly in November. The decreasing trend is expected to continue until the next rainy season given the rainfall forecast. Ground water availability has also been affected adversely as it has become the main source of water, further lowering the quantity and quality for human and animal consumption. Massive water trucking in ongoing in all rural livelihoods zones except the riverine areas. The water trucking started in September and will continue until the next rainy season.

Drought Impacts in Galmudug

Rainfall: Galmudug regions are experiencing the third consecutive below-average rainfall season since Deyr 2020, which has in turn worsened the current drought. Consequently, communities from most of the rural areas are reported to have migrated to nearby towns in search of humanitarian aid after losing their animals.

Agriculture: Many farmers in agro-pastoral areas in Mudug and Galgaduud have already exhausted their food stocks from the below-average Gu season harvests. No crop production is foreseen during the current Deyr season. As a result, the income from agricultural products and services is expected to be insufficient. According to the field reports, the current food security in Galmudug is at an emergency level and this may worsen in the next months.

Livestock: In Galmudug, pasture depletion was reported as early as June 2021, following poor Gu rains. Reports indicate livestock death, especially goats and sheep, while there has been migration of other animals to Puntland and neighboring country of Ethiopia. With no rains expected in the coming months the situation is bound to get worse leading to further loss of livestock and serious human suffering.

Water Resources: In October, the Galmudug Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MoEWR) carried a water sources survey to evaluate the drought impact. Of the 225 berkads visited 41 (18%) of them have little water, which may not last long, while 184 (82%) had dried up. In Mudug, 591 berkads were visited and 66 (11%) had little water with poor quality for human consumption, while the remaining 89% had dried up. The survey indicated that some of the boreholes in Mudug and Galgaduud regions are non-functional.

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Drought Impacts in Puntland

Rainfall: Larger parts of Puntland have recorded significantly below normal rains during this Deyr season. The rains had a false start the first week of October and lasted for few days. Parts of Nuugal and Bari regions have not recorded any rains up to date. This is the third consecutive failed season in the area and therefore has led to severe drought conditions which has put serious stress on the livelihoods.

The Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Agency (HADMA) has called for a drought appeal to all humanitarian partners to provide the necessary support. With no more rains expected in November the situation will get worse in the coming months.

Livestock: In general, the pastoralists in Puntland are encountering water and pasture shortages, rapidly weakening livestock body conditions, and declining livestock reproduction prospects.

Drought Impacts in Somaliland

Rainfall: Most parts of Somaliland received good Karan rains from July to September. However, there was a decline of the rainfall amounts in October. The good rains received in August and September was very useful for all sectors, as it boosted groundwater recharge, pasture growth and crop production. The rainfall forecast for the second half of November and December indicates little or no rains within the areas.

Mild drought situation in Somaliland is observed in Sool, Sanaag and parts of Togdheer. No drought is observed in Woqooyi Galbeed and Awdal regions.

The next sections give an overview of the drought impact in the affected areas of Somaliland.

Agriculture: Field reports from agro-pastoral households in Togdheer region, including Burao and Odweyne districts, confirmed that the planted crops and fodder failed at an early stage of the Gu season. The poor Deyr rains could not support crop and fodder production.

The little October rains in parts of Bari and Sanaag led to limited pasture regeneration, which is depleting quickly because of the high concentration of livestock. The pasture was not allowed to fully re-grow because of early consumption. The animals are largely emaciated with no large-scale deaths reported so far.

Water Resources: It is reported that, more than 90% of the berkads in Puntland are dry. Water shortages particularly affect the inland Pastoral zone except for Nugaal Valley, which is endowed with shallow wells and springs. With no foreseen rains in the next months, the situation will worsen. Boreholes, which are spatially distanced and limited in numbers are the only remaining sources of water apart from the shallow wells present in the Coastal Areas, Nugaal, and Dharoor Valleys.

Livestock: Below average pasture conditions have been reported in Togdheer, Sool and Sanaag regions. In general, field reports indicate average to below average livestock body conditions in these regions. With limited rainfall foreseen in the next months, depletion of the scarce resource is inevitable.

Water Resources: Most villages in Odweyne and Burao districts water availability is scarce, and communities are traveling long distance in search of water. Water trucking has also started in some villages such as Habaasweyn, Gatiitaley, and Boodhley in Togdheer region. In the coming weeks, the price of water is expected to increase, and the situation may deteriorate if no more Deyr rains are received.

FAO SWALIM Technical Partners:



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