
EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2016/15

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: September 21 - 30, 2016



Government of The Gambia

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Multidisciplinary Working Group (MWG)

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1 SYNOPTIC SITUATION

The surface position of the ITD is steadily continuing on its southward motion fluctuating over southern Mauritania, central Mali, western Niger and then sloping onto southern Chad.

Places to the north of ITD remained stable with occurrence of dust haze reported over Libya, Algeria and northern Mali.

Convective activities, rain showers and thunderstorms, occasionally associated with strong winds depicted the weather over places to the south of the ITD. Most of the occurrences were confined to nights and early morning hours.

1.1 WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE GAMBIA

Warm, humid and variably cloudy conditions prevailed with rain showers and thunderstorms, occasionally associated with strong winds during the period.

1.1 OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD (01st - 10th October 2016)

Warm, humid and mostly partly cloudy condition will prevail through the first half of the decade whereas rain showers and thunderstorms will affect the eastern part of the country in the early morning hours of Thursday, 06th October 2016. Occasionally strong winds associated with thundery activities and slight rains are also expected during the period.

1.2 RAINFALL SITUATION

The rainfall situation in this dekad showed slight improvement as compared to the previous dekad. Daily intensities ranged from 0.4mm to 53.8mm, whilst in the last dekad it varied ranged from 0.5mm to 53.4mm. Variations in the number of rainy days is minimal during this dekad between **5** and **6**, dekadal totals ranged from 59.9mm at Banjul to 141.0mm at Kerewan (figure 1a) both in the Western Third of the country as compared to 38.9mm at Banjul to 131.8mm at Kerewan during the previous dekad. In the Middle Third, dekadal totals ranged from 48.0mm at Janjanbureh to 185.4mm at Jenoi as compared to 47.0mm at Sapu and 130.0mm at Janjanbureh in the previous dekad, whereas in the Eastern third dekadal totals ranged from 86.2mm at Fatoto to 92.8mm at Basse compared to 86.2mm at Fatoto to 130.0mm at Fatoto in the previous dekad.

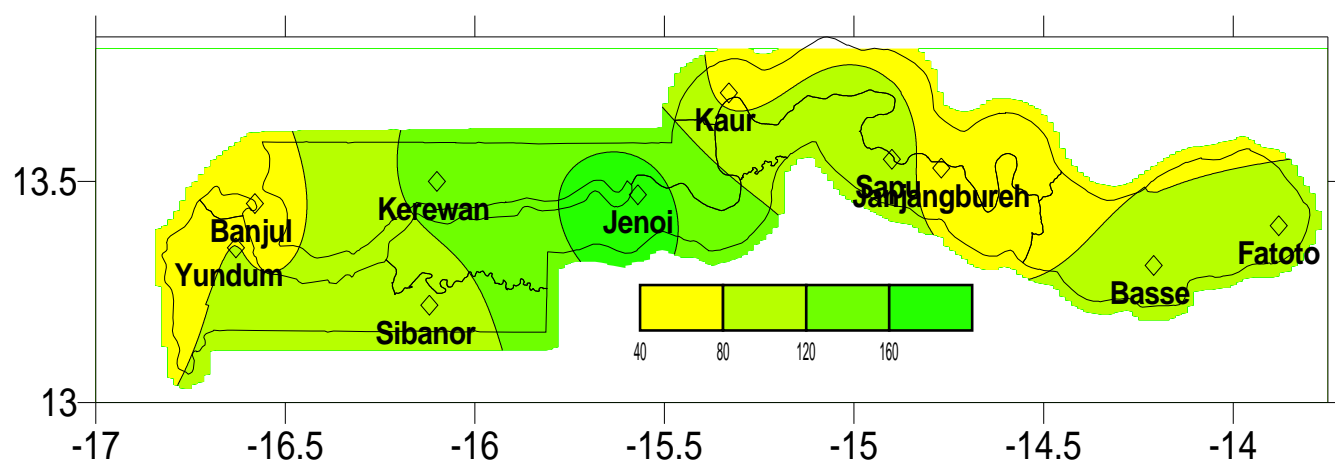


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensities during September 21 - 30, 2016.

Seasonal total rainfall amount recorded in this dekad (May 1 to September 30) ranged from 657.6mm at Fatoto to 1069.7mm at Jenoi. This spatial distribution shows Banjul and Fatoto recording the lowest rainfall intensities so far. (Figure 1b).

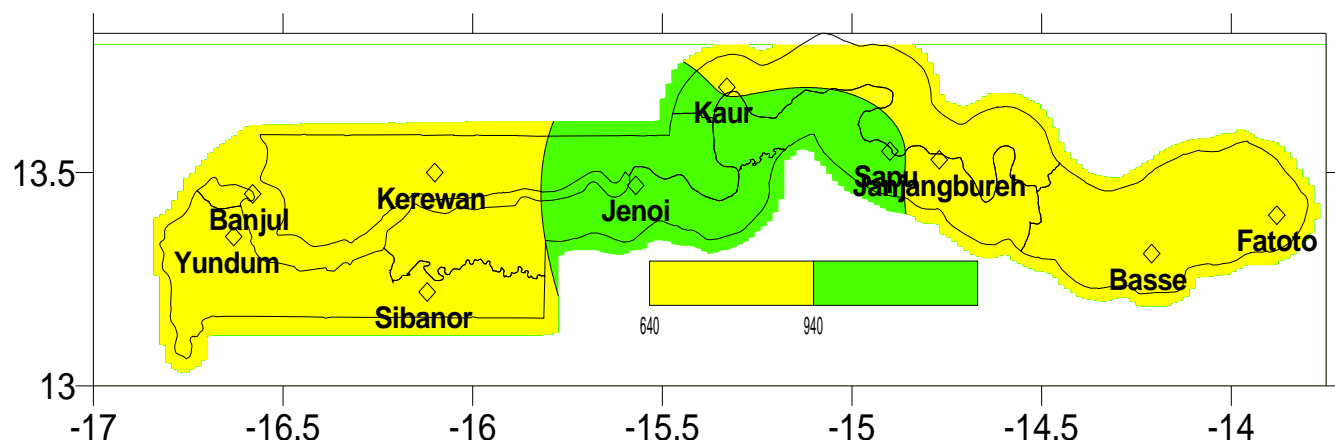


Figure 1b: Rainfall Seasonal totals from May 1st 2016– September 30th 2016.

In comparisons, the country average as at 30th September 2016 stood at **858.9mm**, which is **0.8%** below last year's amount (**866.0mm**) and **10.7%** above the long term mean (30 year period) of **775.3mm**, (Fig. 1b).

2 AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Average temperatures recorded in this dekad varied from 26°C to 31°C over the Western Third and 28°C over the rest of the country. Minimum temperature reached 24°C over Fatoto in the Eastern Third, whilst maximum temperature reached 34°C over the entire country.

Average relative humidity (RH) remained high above 60% during the dekad compared to the previous dekad. Maximum RH varied from 85% to 99% throughout the country, while the minimum RH generally remained above 50%.

Winds were generally light to moderate in speed (9km/h to 25km/h) but wind speed of up to 74 km/h was recorded in the Eastern Third of the country.

Sunshine duration on average recorded in this dekad was 7 hours.

3. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

3.1 CROP

As at this dekad crop performance in terms of growth and development continues to improve across the country. However, there are still variations in the phenological development of crops across the country, due to different dates of sowing, caused by varying rainfall onset in June and July as stated in our last bulletin.

Maize: maize is being harvested in almost all parts of the country. Although late sown maize crops are at advanced vegetative stage while others are at reproductive stages.

Early millet fields have reached full maturity and harvesting has already started in the North Bank Region in the Western Third of the country.in both the Western (Lower River and North Bank Regions) and Middle Thirds (Central River Region) of the country. However, farmers are waiting for the rains to subside before harvesting. In the rest of the country, late millet fields are at different phases ranging from tillering to shooting. Sorghum is generally at jointing stages of development.

Rice: rice across the country is growing as expected and most of the crop is at tillering and booting phases. Upland rice like The NERICA variety is harvested in the West Coast and the crop is flowering in other places. In Swamp rice fields, land preparation and transplanting nurseries is continuing in the Western Third (Lower River and North Bank Regions) of the country.

Sorghum:Generally, sorghum is at jointing stages of development.

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 has started in all the regions.

Cowpea and Watermelon: Harvesting of watermelon is in progress in the West Coast, whereas Land preparation and sowing of watermelon and cowpea is still in progress in some other places.

Vegetables: Vegetable gardening is in progress in most places. Harvesting of vegetables like okra and bitter tomato is ongoing in the West Coast Region.

3.2 Pests and Diseases

As at the end of this dekad no outbreaks of pests were reported.

3.3 LIVESTOCK

The Livestock situation in the Country has improved greatly in the Month of September, due to the availability of feeds and water. However, as indicated in the previous dekad, there is a slight increase in clinical cases as a result of the warm weather which is conducive for some disease vectors. CRRS 312 heads of cattle, 251 Sheep 134 goats, 84 donkeys and 97 horses. In CRRN 262 heads of cattle 143 Sheep 113 goats, 53 donkeys and 79 horses. LRR 245 heads of cattle, 114 Sheep, 175 goats, 65 donkeys and 92 horses. NBR, 314 cattle, 168 Sheep, 122 goats, 66 donkeys and 71 horses. URR 342 heads of cattle, 224 Sheep, 112 goats 96 donkeys and 152 horses. WCR 301 heads of cattle 211 Sheep 131 goats 87 donkeys and 56 horses.

The Department will not be found wanting in its fight against the destructive effects of animal diseases in the Country.

Composition of MWG:

Department of Water Resources
Planning Services - Department of Agriculture (DOA)
Communication, Extension & Education Services - DOA
Department of Livestock Services
Plant Protection Services - DOA
National Environment Agency

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