

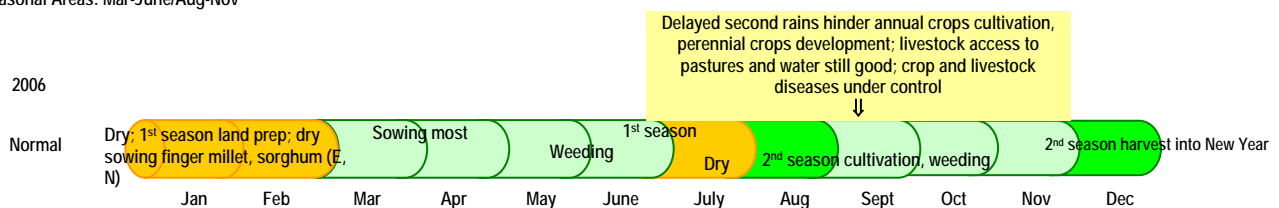
Alert Status:                      No Alert                      **Watch**                      Warning                      Emergency

### Summary and Implications

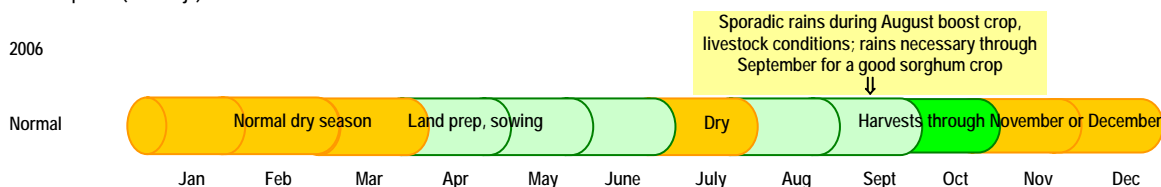
Early signals from the implementation of a peace agreement between the Government of Uganda (GOU) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have raised prospects for an improvement in civil security, a prerequisite for resettlement and the resumption of livelihoods in northern Uganda. A re-verification of the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their locations and needs is underway in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts to assist in planning. Resettlement is on schedule in Lira District. Government institutions are maintaining control measures and vigilant monitoring of Banana Bacterial Wilt (BBW) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), which remain threats to livelihoods and food security.

### Seasonal Timeline

Bimodal Seasonal Areas: Mar-June/Aug-Nov



Unimodal Season: Apr-Oct (Karamoja)



### Current Hazard Summary

- Projected poor rains in eastern and northern Uganda may hamper production there this season.
- Maize grain prices could rise again due to maintained high local and regional demand.

### Current Hazards

#### Peace initiatives promising, augur well for resettlement, stability

The signing of a peace agreement between the Government of Uganda (GOU) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and initial implementation of terms bears hope for northern Uganda where many people have lived away from their homes or ever on the move for more than two decades, facing moderate to severe food insecurity. Nonetheless, sporadic attacks continue, rendering civil insecurity uncertain for the time being. The process of healing and restoration of productive livelihoods in this region that has experienced untold suffering will be long and precarious at times. For now, at least 1.45 million people are internally displaced and depend on humanitarian organizations for most of their basic needs: food, water and sanitation, health and agricultural inputs. In light of the sporadic movement of internally displaced persons out of settlements towards their homes, UN agencies and district authorities in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts are conducting re-verification exercise of IDPs in the three districts to ascertain their numbers, locations and needs for mitigation and response planning.

A resettlement program in Lira District is reportedly on schedule, and in August, at least 28,455 IDPs received a three-month resettlement supply of food rations, plus other non food items as they prepared to return home. Resettlement in all northern Uganda districts is contingent on the return of civil security in the region. The implementation of the peace process in the coming months is critical to the restoration of the region's civil security and household livelihoods and food security.

Late rains hamper second season crop cultivation

Predominantly extended and widespread dry conditions were experienced in many districts of Uganda during August, delaying onset of the second season rains and impeding cultivation in most bimodal areas. The driest conditions were found in eastern, northern and parts of central Uganda. Sporadic rains were reported in parts of Lake Victoria Basin and southwestern districts, providing relief from the high daily temperatures and low moisture levels. The weather pattern to date has conformed with July 2006 predictions by Uganda's Department of Meteorology which forecast prolonged dry spells in several parts of the country during July to early September when second seasons rains were expected to begin. A late onset of the rains would shorten crop growing period if rains were to end normally in November. This would likely to affect crops during critical stages, reducing productivity and negatively impacting food security.

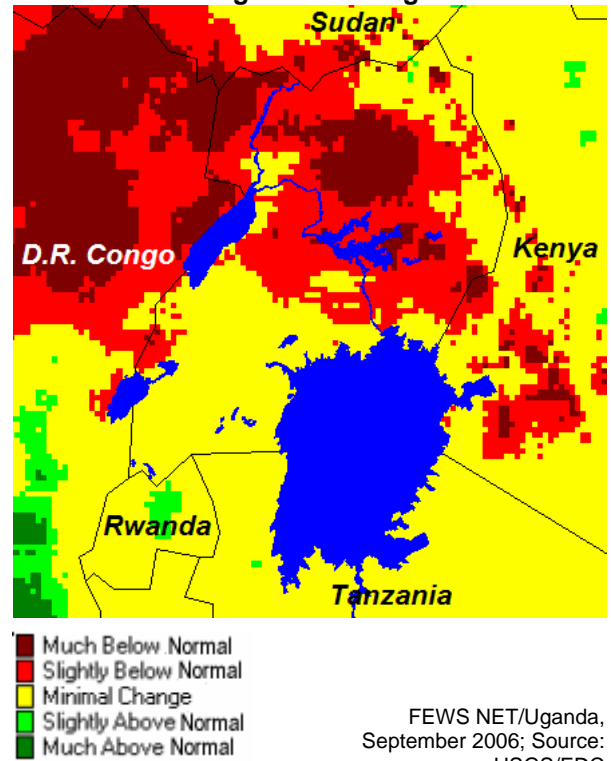
Figure 1, based on Meteosat imagery, shows the spatial distribution and intensity of rainfall across Uganda during August. Note the below-normal rainfall for eastern to northern Uganda, corroborating reports by the Department of Meteorology and district agriculture officials.

The long growing cycle maize crop (April to October) in Kapchorwa District, a key maize growing area, is in the field, and the harvest is expected to begin around mid October. The district is expected to have a marketable maize surplus of about 30,000 MT, which is normal for the area. This surplus is likely to be absorbed into the local market, and some will be sold in Kenya, a key export destination for Uganda's maize. Meanwhile, farmers in the district are busy mainly cultivating second season pulses, tubers and root crops.

Agro-pastoralists in Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts (Karamoja Region) began harvesting sorghum, a key staple, and other crops in August. However, a major portion of the harvest will be in late September to October. Rainfall is required through September to ensure near normal sorghum harvests. Uncertain civil insecurity in northern Uganda -- Gulu, Kitgum, Pader districts -- continues to limit many households' and internally displaced persons' (IDPs) access to land (albeit to a lesser extent than previously) as ongoing peace initiatives begin to slowly take effect. Improved civil security and sustained peace are prerequisites for increased access to cultivable land and improved household and regional food security in northern Uganda.

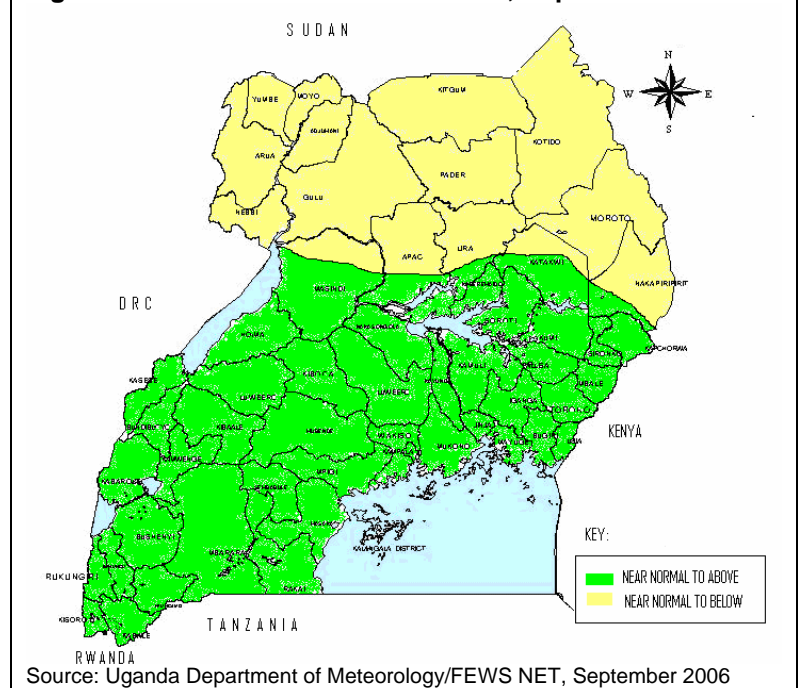
Following the Greater Horn of Africa Climatic Outlook Forum in August, the Uganda Department of Meteorology issued its medium to long-range forecast for September to December 2006. The department confirmed a delayed start to the second rainy season, but rains are forecast to extend by nearly a month into December for most bimodal districts of Uganda. Overall, there is an increased likelihood of near normal to above normal rainfall over most parts of central, eastern, south western and western Uganda as well as the Lake Victoria Basin. Most parts of northern Uganda are projected to have an increased likelihood of near normal to below normal rainfall (Figure 2). The rains are expected to perform rather poorly over many parts of the country in September but pick up thereafter, peaking around late October to mid November, with a high likelihood of extending into mid to late December.

Figure 1: Rainfall Estimate, August 2006 Vs Long Term Average



FEWS NET/Uganda, September 2006; Source: USGS/EDC

Figure 2: Downscaled rainfall forecast, Sep. to Dec. 2006



Source: Uganda Department of Meteorology/FEWS NET, September 2006

If the forecast holds, many areas in the southern half of Uganda are likely to receive adequate rainfall to support normal crop and livestock production, despite the delayed onset of the rainy season, and the extension of the rains into December would make up for any lost growing period at the beginning. There is concern over northern Uganda as poor performance of the season so far could hinder any efforts by the households there and IDPs to improve their food security and incomes as they increasingly access land to cultivate crops, assisted by humanitarian organizations that provide production inputs.

August rainfall in northeastern Uganda's Karamoja region (Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts) benefited vegetation growth and improved livestock access to pastures and fodder, which are in adequate supply. The rains also replenished ground water sources, increasing availability of water for human and livestock use. The presence of livestock in the region enables access to milk for households owning animals, especially for the young and elderly. Milk makes an especially critical contribution to the diet in this period when many people have limited food stocks before the annual harvest.

**Update on Banana Bacterial Wilt (BBW) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)**

Though under control, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, National Agriculture Research Organization (NARO) and district authorities still emphasize the risk posed by Banana Bacterial Wilt (BBW) and Foot and Mouth disease (FMD) to farmer's livelihoods and are vigorously implementing control measures to curtail their incidence and spread.

Banana Bacterial Wilt, a disease that nearly wiped out bananas in many areas, continues to affect production, household food security and incomes. Rigorous monitoring, information dissemination and control measures must be maintained to control BBW and improve banana production.

Foot and Mouth Disease, notable for its impact on health and dairy and meat production of large bovines, has been reported in central Uganda's "cattle corridor" districts, and reduced milk and beef production and household incomes for livestock rearing homes. However, as the disease incidence has declined due to widespread vaccinations and treatment, quarantine measures have been gradually relaxed or removed, thereby increasing availability of live animals to slaughter for beef and increased supplies of livestock products, such as milk, ghee, butter, and hides. This has led to commensurate price reductions and increased access for consumers.

**Market Prices**

Crop supplies to markets remain adequate in most of the country, enabling market dependent households to access sufficient food. A price decline observed for maize grain since June, dipped below the five year average in July and August for key production areas of Iganga and Masindi districts, and tapered off later in August. Prices have been kept stable by the high local and regional demand to meet household consumption and humanitarian needs. On average, a kilogram of dry maize grain costs US\$ 180 in production areas while it goes for about US\$ 200 in urban locations, which is similar to prices in a normal production year when demand is high.

High maize prices at the beginning of the first season of 2006 provided incentives for farming households to allot large land acreage to the crop, aiming to reap a reasonable income, from which they are now benefiting. Current high demand is likely to raise and maintain a high price of maize, promoting trade in the commodity despite quality limitations mainly attributed to foreign materials and in some instances high moisture content. Considering past trends, FEWS NET Uganda, WFP and food security partners envisage that if the current demand for maize holds, all other conditions being normal, prices will remain at a minimum US\$ 180 per kilogram of maize on the wholesale market for the remaining part of 2006. Although this will benefit farming households through better access to cash income this year and again encourage them to grow more maize in this second season, it may limit food access for poorer, market-dependent households.

