



**Highlights**

- **Markets:** In the EAGC RATIC monitored markets, prices of cereals decreased or remained stable in the month of January and February owing to available stocks from the late harvest towards the end of last year. Overall, prices of cereals were slightly above their five-year levels and above last year's levels owing to effects of depleting supplies due to the below average first season harvest.
- **Season:** Harvest is nearing completion for main season cereals in the northern parts of the sub region (Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia) and yields are average and above average due to the ample rainfall received during the last quarter of the previous year. On the other hand, prolonged rainfall had negative effects on the harvest lowering anticipated levels. The Locust invasion in the region has also had negative effects on produce and continue to pose a risk.

**Introduction**

In the months of January and February, prices remained stable and slightly declined compared to the previous month but still were above the five-year average levels. This downward trend has mostly been due to adequate rainfall, which favoured production and slightly improved market supplies in most markets in the region. In Kenya, the short rains harvest is still ongoing with the locust infestation disrupting production. Market supplies have been steady with prices remaining above five-year average levels. In Uganda, the unprecedented off-season rainfall is encouraging farmers to do early field preparations activities for the March-May season, for which a favourable harvest is expected. In Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi, heavy rainfall triggered flooding during January and February. Prices remained relatively high in Rwanda despite supply from harvests and increasing imports from Tanzania.

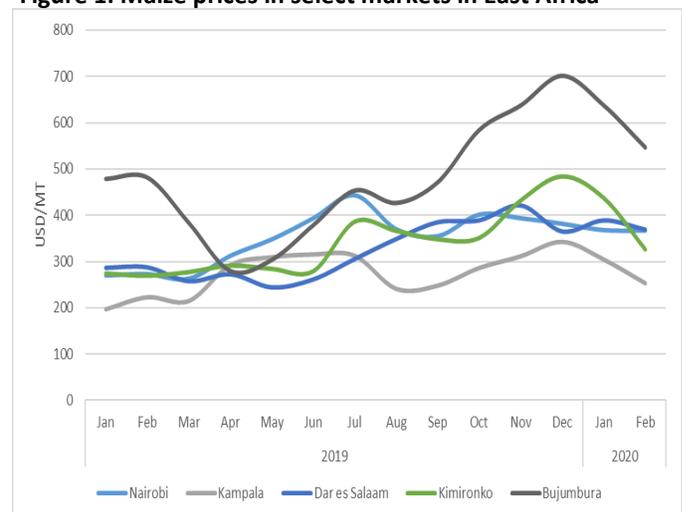
**Maize Market**

During the month of January and February, maize prices decreased slightly in major consumer markets across East

Africa. In **Kenya**, stocks were ample in monitored markets owing to the ongoing short rains harvest and imports from Uganda. In Nairobi, the wholesale price of maize was USD 367/MT and USD 345/MT in Eldoret. This was a 4 % decrease from last year's closing price. Field reports indicate that farmers have grown speculative due to experiences and thus aggregation of maize has been low, as farmers would rather hold their produce at won storage facilities as they wait for prices to pick up when market supply decreases.

**Outlook:** With the ongoing short rains harvest and imports from Uganda, prices are expected to remain relatively stable in the coming months with the seasonal role having a major part in upward movement of prices. Long-term price trend indicate prices usually uptick in May as supply to the markets tighten seasonally. Supplies from the main season harvest in Tanzania and Uganda in June may push prices further below the five-year average. In the coming month however, trade with Tanzania and Uganda is will be below the five-year average owing to stocks held by farmers and traders in the country.

**Figure 1: Maize prices in select markets in East Africa**



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In **Uganda**, the short rains harvest improved market supply, which resulted in a slight drop in prices in the monitored markets. Maize went for USD 253/MT in Kampala and USD 235/MT in Gulu. However, these prices remain well above the previous year's prices in the same period and above the five-year average due to sustained export demand from Kenya and South Sudan coupled up with tight domestic supply following the below average first season harvest.

**Outlook:** With Uganda being a 'price taker' with regards to regional trade, prices are expected to remain above the five year average due to persistent demand from regional markets. Exports into Kenya are expected to decrease seasonally as the country will have adequate domestic stocks. Therefore, South Sudan may emerge as a better market for Ugandan maize due to its deficits and the expected involvement of humanitarian organizations in procuring Ugandan maize for the refugee population. Therefore, marginal price gains are expected to be observed soon as the harvest season is completed in mid March; Furthermore, the involvement of Humanitarian organizations in the markets is expected to push prices higher as they usually offer better market prices.

In **Tanzania**, sustained demand from the Southern Africa countries kept prices above last year's prices during the same period and above the five-year average. The *Vuli* harvest helped stabilize prices in January and February but it is expected that the prices will remain high with high demand from neighbouring countries. Maize in Dar es Salaam was USD 369/MT in the month of February, which was interestingly higher than the price in Nairobi and Kampala.

**Outlook:** Prices are expected to increase marginally or remain somewhat stable until April as the country is in the midst of the lean period. Prices will remain higher than the five-year average due to high demand from the Southern Africa countries due to the drought experienced in the aforementioned region. Prices from Kenya traders will be lower as the country has adequate stocks.

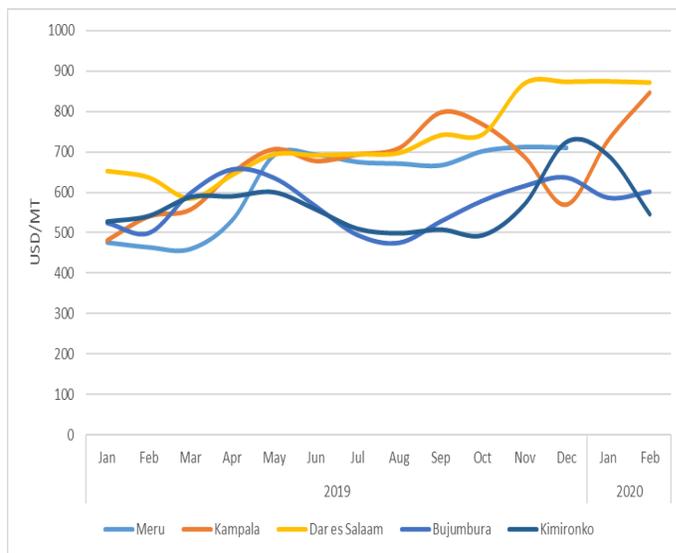
In **Rwanda**, maize prices hit all-time highs in the month of December but eased in the month of January and February where maize went for USD 327/MT in Kimironko and USD 312/MT in Ruhengeri. This decrease was due to the ongoing harvest Season A harvest, which was expected to be above average due to abundant rains and improved market supplies in country.

In **Burundi**, maize prices were highest in the region with maize retailing at USD 547/MT in Bujumbura and USD 515/MT in Gitega. Despite adequate domestic availabilities, the high

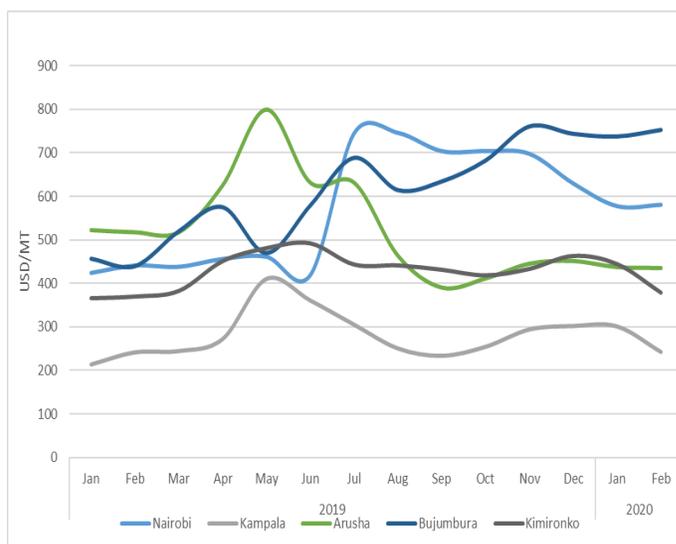
prices were sustained due to high maize demand from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo where disrupted agricultural operations led to significant production shortfalls.

**Outlook:** Prices are expected to decrease seasonally in the coming months because of Season A harvest in Rwanda and Burundi. The downward trend is expected in March as much of the harvest will have dried and ready for market.

**Figure 2: Mixed beans prices in select markets in East Africa**

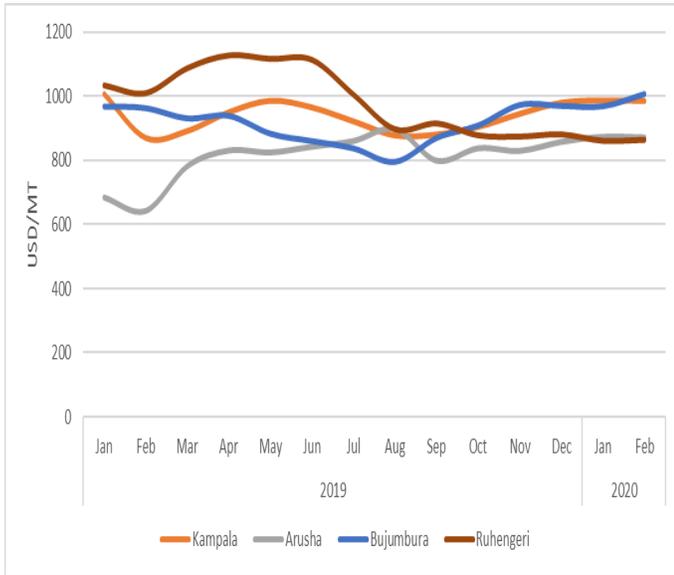


**Figure 3: Red Sorghum prices in select markets in East Africa**



**Note:** From mid-January through Early February, Southern Africa experienced favourable rainfall improving crop conditions therefore seasonal improvements in food access are expected with the coming harvest across the region in March/April and thus is pressure on the Eastern Africa countries. ([FEWSNET](#))

**Figure 4: Rice prices in select markets in East Africa**



**Trade Highlights**

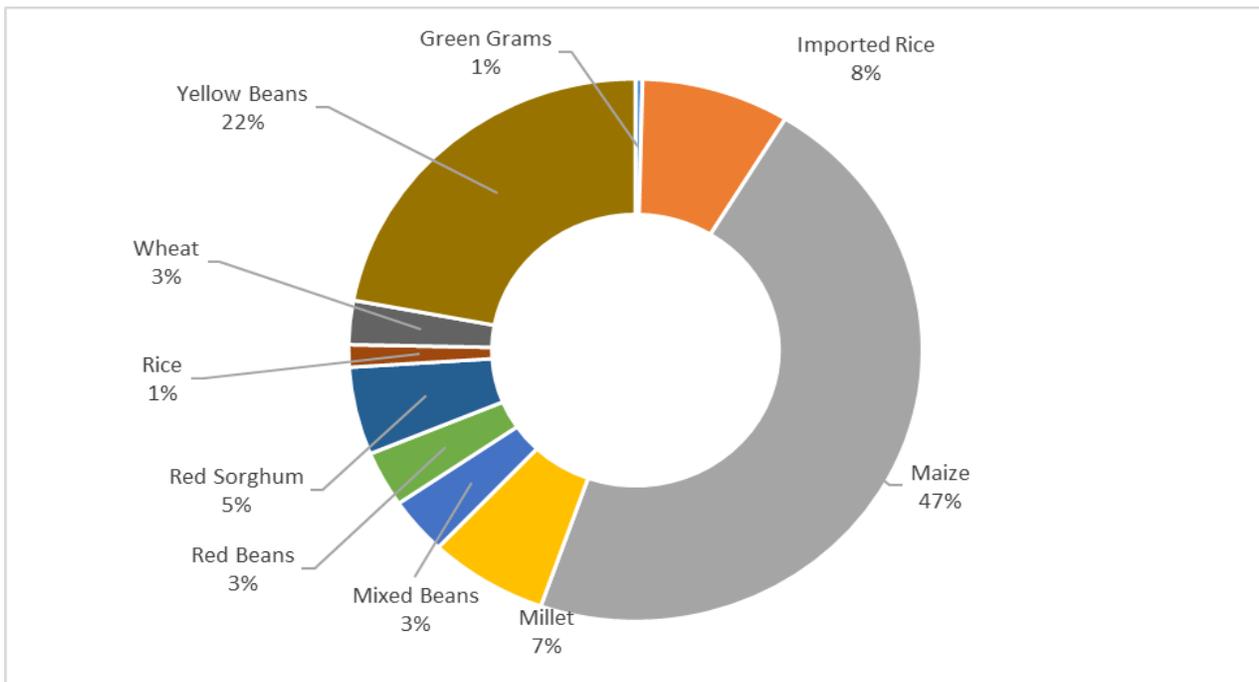
Informal cross border trade in the region increased by 12% in the month of February compared to the previous year supported mainly by the ongoing harvest coupled up with increased market supply and trading activity due to increasing volume of dried grains.

In the months of January and February, a total 126,760 MT of grains was traded informally in the region. Maize was the most traded commodity accounting for 47 percent of total trade at approximately 59,000 MT. This was followed by dry beans, which accounted for 28% of total trade at approximately at 36,460MT.

**Table 1: Breakdown of cross border trade in the East Africa Region in Metric tonnes**

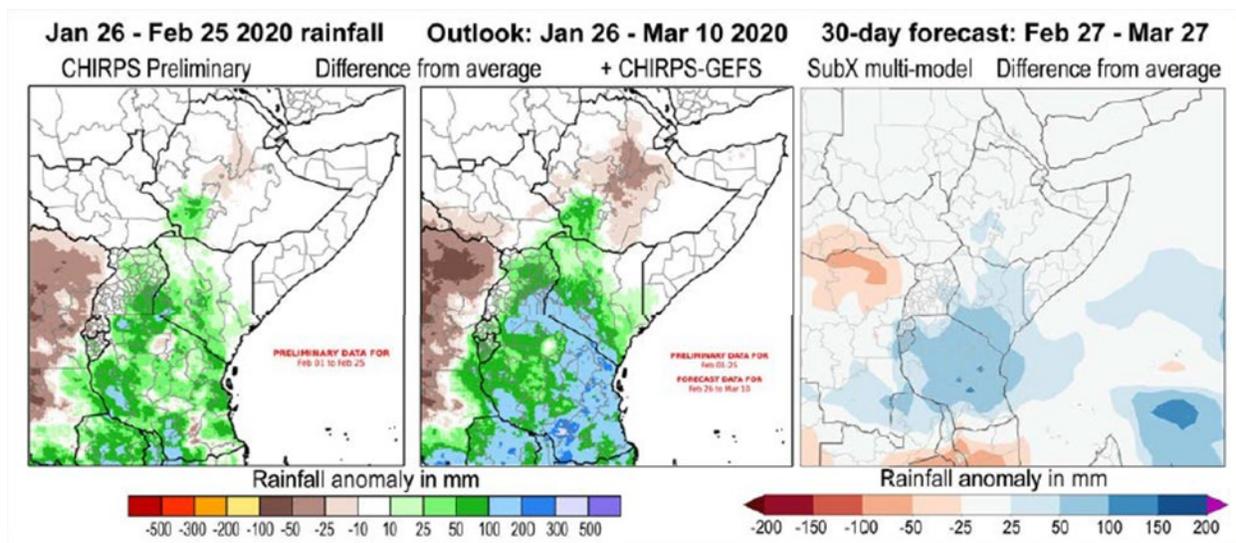
Commodity	January	February	Total
Green Grams	280.90	222.60	503.50
Imported Rice	4,069.50	6,508.78	10,578.28
Maize	24,167.64	34,920.61	59,088.25
Millet	3,696.66	4,790.53	8,487.19
Mixed Beans	1,844.15	2,452.71	4,296.86
Red Beans	1,630.42	2,575.00	4,205.42
Red Sorghum	2,967.59	3,665.83	6,633.42
Rice	883.00	807.12	1,690.12
Wheat	1,140.00	2,179.70	3,319.70
Yellow Beans	19,058.92	8,899.08	27,958.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>59,738.78</b>	<b>67,021.96</b>	<b>126,760.74</b>

**Figure 5: Informal cross border trade in East Africa during the months of January and February**



## Regional Weather Outlook

Late January to late February was atypically wet in equatorial and southern areas of the region, both in terms of rainfall amounts and the number of days with rain. Affected areas were throughout Tanzania, in northeaster Zambia, in western and southern Kenya, parts of Uganda, and in south-western Ethiopia. Forecasts are showing wetter than average conditions through March in these areas. According to Crop Monitor for Early warning, surpluses could grow by large amounts in the Lake Victoria region, southern Kenya, much of Tanzania, and north-eastern Zambia. If this occurs, January 26th to March 10th totals could be 100 mm to 300 mm above typical amounts in those areas. The 30-day SubX model forecast provides more indication that the recent wetter than average conditions could continue, particularly in Tanzania and southern Kenya. The 30-day forecast includes several models that show wet conditions continuing in mid- and late-March. One contributing factor for the enhanced rains may be warmer than normal sea surface temperatures that have persisted for months off the East Africa coast. According to seasonal forecasts released in early February, those warm temperatures may remain in place for several more months. ([Crop Monitor for Early Warning](#)).



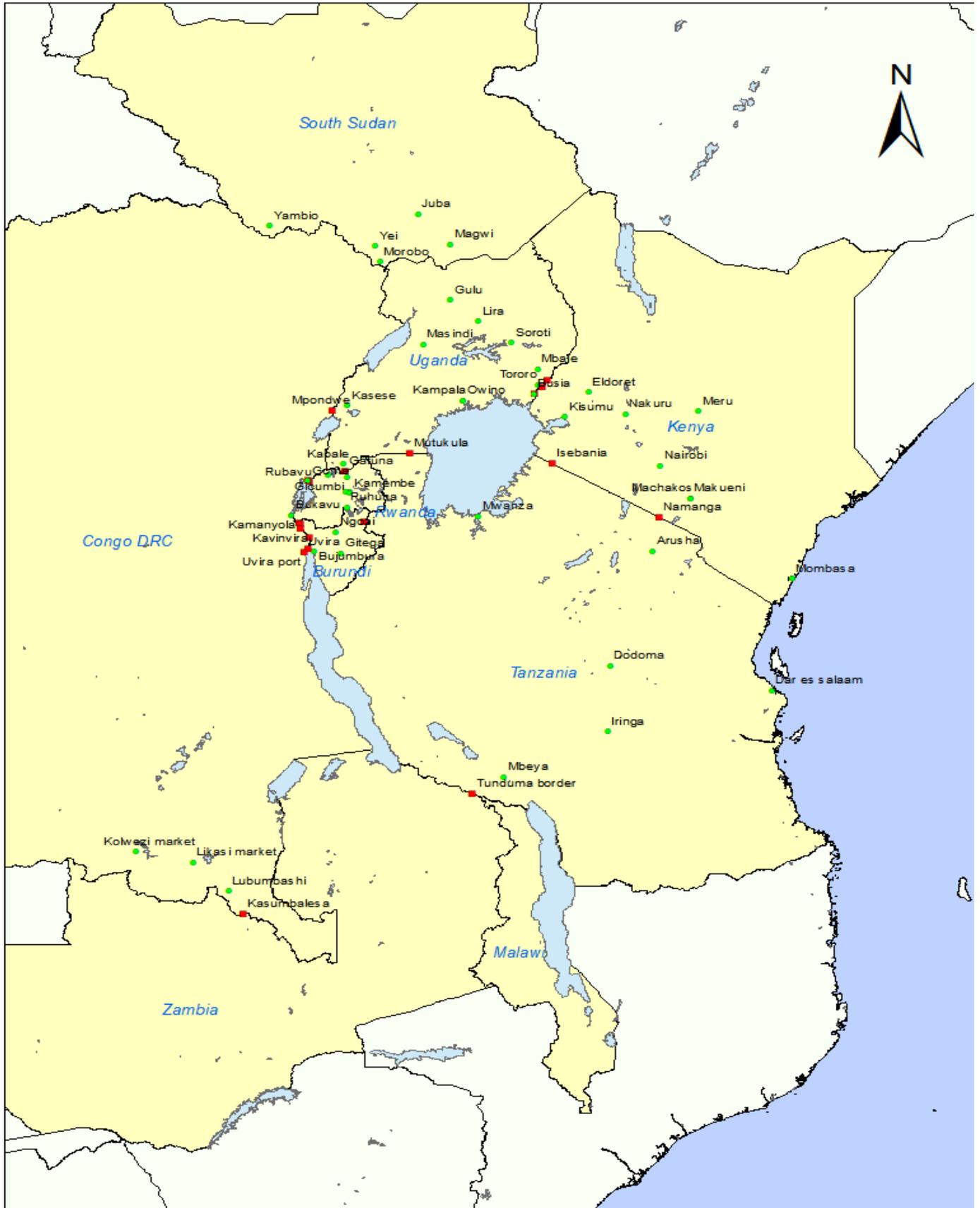
Source: Crop Monitor for Early Warning

## Alert: Locust Invasion in the East Africa Region

The desert locust outbreak in East Africa remains alarming with the highest concern in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia where widespread breeding is underway and new swarms are forming. Rainfall forecasts for the next two weeks indicate wet conditions are expected to continue across much of the region and the seasonal March April May (MAM) rains are forecast to be above average. The above-average rains are expected to support desert locust breeding and development and potentially increase their spread across the region. A protracted outbreak through June is likely, which could cause significant damage to main season crops. Apart from the main hotspots of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, desert locusts are present in Eritrea, South Sudan, Uganda, with sightings reported in northern Tanzania and as far south as the Democratic Republic of Congo, where it is the first time desert locusts have been sighted since 1944. In Ethiopia, swarms continue to mature and breed over Oromia and SNNPR regions and cross border, movements are reported between Somalia and Kenya. Locust breeding and development may benefit from the onset of the rains in March, putting crops at high risk. In Somalia, locusts are present and breeding is underway in the northwest and northeast. Some swarms may be moving south towards northeast Kenya. In Kenya, breeding is taking place in the north and central counties and immature swarms have started to form in the past few days. Early planting of long rains crops started in February in parts of western Kenya due to above-average and out of season rainfall through the start of the year. These early planted crops are at risk of damage from desert locusts. At the end of February, desert locust swarms crossed the border into northeast Uganda and southern South Sudan. The seasonal MAM rains are forecast to be above-average, which may protract the outbreak and damage is likely to occur for main season crops across the region if forecasts materialize. ([Crop Monitor for Early Warning](#)).

**Note:** The Sub seasonal Experiment (SubX) is a two year MAPP/Climate Test Bed project focused on improving sub seasonal predictions and providing a research dataset for the community to explore sub seasonal predictability in leading modelling systems.

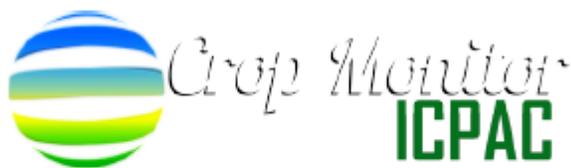
APPENDIX: RATIN Monitored Borders and Markets



## Partnerships



**ICPAC**  
IGAD Climate Prediction  
& Applications Centre



Prepared by members of the **GEOGLAM Community of Practice**, Coordinated by the **IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Center**



**EARTH DATA FOR INFORMED  
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