



Highlights

- Heavy rains cause floods in several parts of the region in January
- Elevated flood risk for central parts of the region in the month of February
- Armyworm outbreaks pose a threat to food security in central parts of the region
- Water supply challenges faced in areas where poor rainfall performance continues

Rainfall Performance

Heavy rains cause floods in several parts of the region in January

Rainfall estimates indicate that heavy rains were received in the central and eastern parts of the region in the month of January. Most of these areas received rains in excess of 200mm in the month. The highest amounts were registered in the northern and central parts of Mozambique and Madagascar mainly due to the tropical depression that was in the Mozambique Channel earlier in the month. Western parts of Madagascar had estimated rainfall totals of 400-800mm. Northern parts of Mozambique received up to 400mm in the month. Most of the Zambezi basin continued to receive high amounts of rain for the second consecutive month. Numerous areas in the region have been affected by flooding due to the heavy rains received in the month.

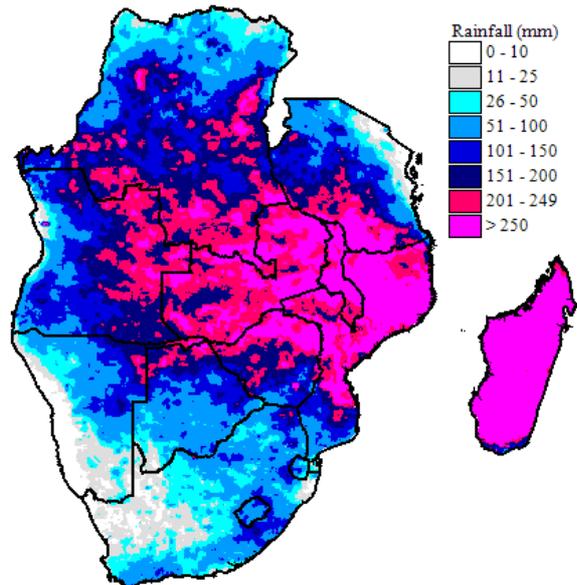


Figure 1: Rainfall Totals for January 2014
Source: USGS/FEWSNET

Botswana: Heavy rains caused flash floods

Heavy rains in eastern and northern parts of Botswana caused flash floods, affecting a number of villages in the Central District and more than 100 homes at the Dukwi Refugee camp in the northern part of the country. Traffic along the Gaborone-Francistown road was temporarily halted by an overflowing Serule river on the 31st of the January 2014. Rainfall forecasts for the country are indicating a continuation of rain showers, which could lead to more incidences of flooding in February.

Madagascar: Heavy rains cause severe flooding in the western parts of the Island

Heavy rains pounded western parts of Madagascar continuously in the first two weeks of January, mainly due to a tropical depression that was in the Mozambique channel. This resulted in severe flooding in the western region of Toliara and Mahajanga. Some unconfirmed reports indicated 3 people dead because of the

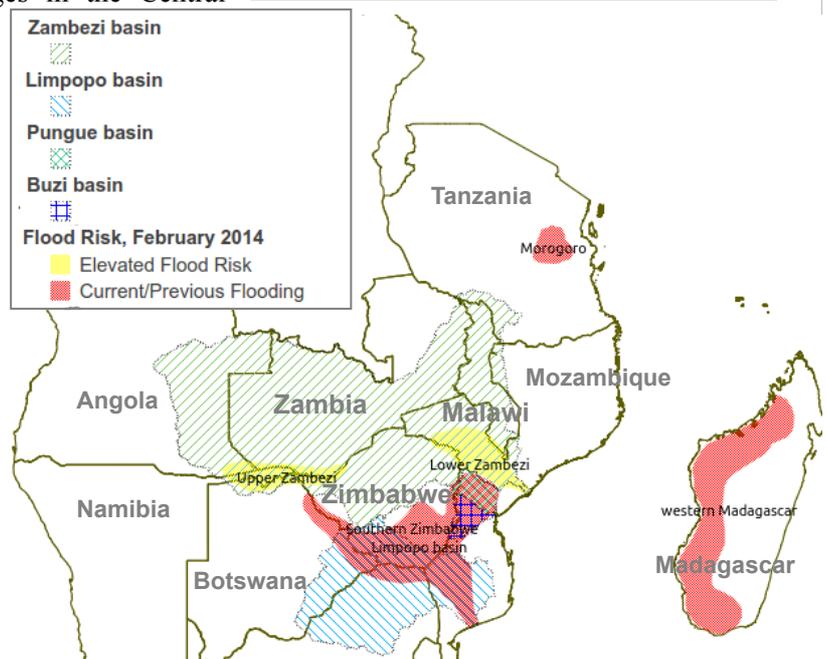


Figure 2: Areas affected by flooding and areas with an elevated flood risk



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floods. Hundreds of people were reportedly left homeless, mainly in the Toliara province. Further heavy rains are forecast for the south and south west of the island in the coming weeks. Worse still, Tropical Cyclone Amara could be heading towards Madagascar in the next few days. Antananarivo and Toliara cities are believed to be at an elevated risk of flooding. Antananarivo reportedly suffers from insufficient drainage systems. Toliara is at risk because of its proximity to the Fiherenana River.

Mozambique: high river levels cause flooding, with further flooding expected

High river levels have been observed in the Buzi and Pungue basins in the central part of the country owing to heavy rains in the area and inflows from upstream. Floods have already been experienced by some of the riverine communities and close to 200 families have already been displaced by the floods following damage to houses and inundation which marooned some villages. Preliminary assessments from UNOCHA indicated more than 1000 houses surrounded by water in the Buzi basin and close to 5500 people affected. District and provincial authorities in collaboration with Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) officers are providing assistance to the affected families.

Tanzania: Floods displace over 10,000 people following heavy rains in January

Heavy rains towards the end of January caused flash floods in Tanzania's Morogoro region, in the central part of the country, which displaced over 10,000 people and destroyed or damaged houses, public buildings, roads, bridges and crops. One fatality was reported in the Morogoro region. One of the worst affected areas was Kiteto Mountains region, where transport and communications have been disrupted due to damaged roads and a bridge that connects Morogoro and Dodoma regions. Reports indicated that most public buildings (schools, churches and mosques) along the Morogoro-Dodoma highway had been submerged. In some of the affected areas, there were reports of massive destruction of fields and crops, which will have negative implications on food availability. Estimates indicated close to 14000 people were affected, with around 3000 houses flooded. Government authorities were reportedly assisting victims and distributing aid that has been received from several donors.

Zimbabwe: Heavy downpours and overflowing rivers cause flooding

Heavy rains received in the northern and central parts of the country in the month of January caused several incidences of flash flooding in the country and have caused river levels to rise above alert or safe levels. Floods have led to hundreds of displaced people in a number of low-lying areas around the country. Reports from the country indicated that the heavy rains damaged crops, houses, roads, bridges, and left some areas impassable. Latest reports indicated that the heavy downpours are continuing into February and further flooding has left many people needing urgent assistance. This includes communities living along the Tokwe river downstream of the Tokwe-Mukosi dam whose wall partially collapsed due to torrential rains. Reports indicate that around 4000 families were at risk of flooding in this area and need to be evacuated. Civil protection authorities are currently assessing the extent of the assistance required and assisting those in need. National Red Cross officers are also assisting affected families in the Tokwe-Mukosi area with temporary shelter.

Elevated flood risk for central parts of the region in the month of February

Based on forecasts from meteorological offices, significant rainfall showers are expected to continue in the month of February and this will elevate flood risk in flood-prone areas. River levels are high in most parts of the main river basins of the region, including the Zambezi and the Limpopo basins.



Food Security

Armyworm outbreaks pose a threat to food security in central parts of the region

Malawi and Zambia: Crop damage from armyworm outbreaks

Reports from Malawi indicated that outbreaks of armyworm have damaged crops in parts of the country in December and January. The areas affected included the districts Machinga, Zomba, Blantyre, Mangochi, Mulanje, Phalombe, Chiladzulu and Balaka. The pest was reportedly attacking maize and pasture on more than 1,700 ha and caused mild to severe damage. Around 600 households were reportedly affected by the outbreak. Forecasts issued by the International Red Locust Control Organisation for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA) and USAID Emergency Trans-boundary Outbreak Pest (ETOP) team suggested that the outbreak will continue in the country and will likely spread southwards to other districts. In Zambia, armyworm outbreaks were reported on 394 hectares in a number of districts in the Eastern Province which affected around 300 households during December. Armyworm trap operators are advised to continue collecting trap moth catches and forwarding trap data to the national forecasting officers.

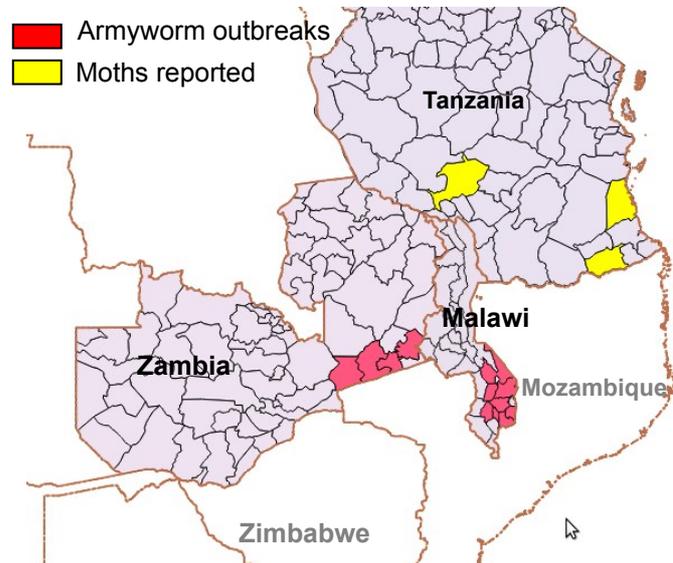


Figure 3: Armyworm outbreaks in December, January

Forecasts suggest possible spread of outbreak to Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe

Forecasts indicate that the outbreaks of armyworm affecting Zambia and Malawi will likely spread to neighbouring countries including Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. High numbers of moths have been reported in some districts in the southern parts of Tanzania, including the Southern Highlands, and outbreaks are expected there in the coming weeks. Winds blowing from affected areas into neighbouring regions carry moths that develop into armyworm and trigger outbreaks of the pest. Trap operators, including community forecasters are advised to continue monitoring the situation closely and report trap catches to concerned authorities in time to facilitate a timely launch of control operations.

Water

Water supply challenges faced in areas where poor rainfall performance continues

Reports from **Tanzania** indicated that dam levels and river-flows have decreased over bimodal areas in the north-eastern part of the country due to poor short-season (*vuli*) rains. Southern parts of **Botswana** continued to receive below average rains and this has resulted in poor water availability for most of the affected areas. These parts also witnessed poor rains in the previous season and this has led water levels in some major dams in the area to fall to all-time lows. The Gaborone Dam, which supplies water in the South East, Southern and some parts of Kweneng Districts currently stands at 11.3% and can only supply water for three more months without inflows.