

**FAO Key Messages: South Sudan Weather Outlook as depicted from Greater Horn of Africa
Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF73) 18-19 May 2026, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia**

Highlights

- June to September 2025 (JJAS) season is an important agricultural production season for South Sudan, particularly in both unimodal and bimodal rainfall zones, as this marks the intensification of cultivation in the unimodal zone and the second main cropping season in the bimodal zone.
- According to the latest report from ICPAC GHACOF73, there is an increased likelihood of below normal rainfall across South Sudan.
- Rainfall exceeding 500mm (colored green) is predicted across South Sudan.
- Below rainfall during this period will contribute to dry conditions and poor vegetation in most areas
- Comparing the evolution of the Niño 3.4 index in the analogue years with observed/predicted evolution in 2026 indicates that ENSO dry conditions will persist throughout the June to September season, similar to observed conditions in 1997 and 2003. Meaning, sea surface temperature (SST), winds, and rainfall favour El Niño (warm phase) over La Niña (cold phase) during this period.
- A mixture of normal to late rainfall onset is predicted in most parts of South Sudan.
- Warmer-than-usual temperature conditions (colored orange) are expected in the country, including Abyei.

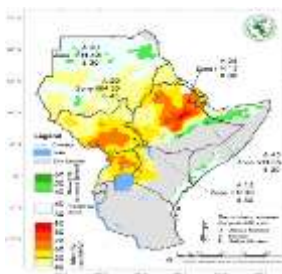


Fig 1. Rainfall forecast

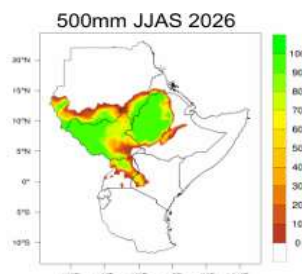


Fig 2. Probability of exceeding 500mm rainfall

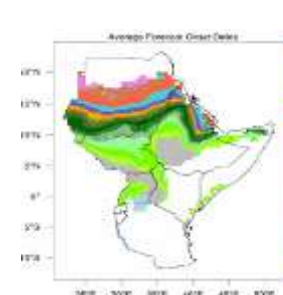


Fig 3. Rainfall Onset dates

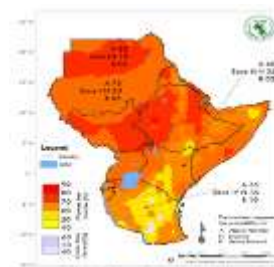


Fig 4. Temperature forecast

SOUTH SUDAN STATES-BASED CLIMATE OUTLOOK: MARCH-MAY 2025 SEASON

Central Equatoria State:

The forecast indicates that most of CES (colored orange) are predicted to have 80% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall or no rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to begin on the 22nd of May in the state. The state is predicted to have 85% probability of experiencing warmer-than-usual temperatures.

Eastern Equatoria states

The forecast indicates that most of the states (colored orange) is predicted to have 55% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from the 22 of May. The state is predicted to have 85% probability of experiencing warmer-than-usual temperatures.

Western Equatoria State.

The forecast indicates that Western Equatoria State (colored orange) is predicted to have 80% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted from 15 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have 60% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperature.

Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State

The forecast indicates that Western Bahr-el-Ghazal (colored orange) is predicted to have 55% probability of experiencing below normal. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to has 85% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperatures.

Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal State

The forecast indicates that most of Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal Equatoria State (colored orange) is predicted to have 55% probability of experiencing above normal. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have a 60-85% probability of experiencing warmer-than-usual temperatures.

Warrap State

The forecast indicates that most of Warrap State (colored orange) is predicted to have 45% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have 55% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperature.

Lakes State

The forecast indicates that Lakes State (colored orange) is predicted to have 80% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from 22 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have 85% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperature.

Unity State

The forecast indicates that Unity State (colored orange) is predicted to have 55% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have a 75-85% probability of experiencing warmer-than-usual temperatures.

Upper Nile State

The forecast indicates that Upper Nile state (colored light orange) is predicted to have 45% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal rainfall onset is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have a 60-85% probability of experiencing warmer-than-usual temperatures.

Jonglei State.

The forecast indicates that most of the state (colored orange) is predicted to have a 55-80% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal rainfall onset is predicted to start from 29 May and progress northward. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have 85% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperature.

Pibor Administrative Area

The forecast indicates that the Pibor Administrative Area (colored orange) is predicted to have a 55-80% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal rainfall onset is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the Pibor is predicted to have 85% probability of experiencing warmer to normal temperatures.

Ruweng Administrative Area

The forecast indicates that the administrative area (colored orange) is predicted to have 55% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal onset of rainfall is predicted to start from 29 May. The forecast also indicates that the area is predicted to have 75% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperature

Abyei Administrative Area

The forecast indicates that the Abyei Administrative Area (colored orange) is predicted to have 45% probability of experiencing below normal rainfall. Normal rainfall onset is expected from 5 June. The forecast also indicates that the state is predicted to have 75% probability of experiencing warmer than usual temperature.

SEASONAL IMPLICATIONS, RISK AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Agriculture and Food Security

Risk and implications.

Positive impacts

- Below normal rainfall or dry conditions may encourage farmers to adopt drought-resilient practices in crop management, such as conservation agriculture (CA) or climate-smart agricultural practices.
- Below normal rainfall minimizes the risk of overbank flooding, which previously submerged farmlands and destroyed crops in flood-prone areas, e.g., Unity.
- Low moisture levels reduce the humidity that fosters crop pests and fungal diseases (like root rot) that thrive in high moisture conditions.

Negative impacts

- Below normal rainfall will reduce water availability for the growth of wild fruits, agricultural productivity, and may lead to the failure of staple crops such as sorghum and maize, causing food insecurity and economic strain.
- It also reduces food availability, leading to malnutrition
- Below normal rainfall and warmer conditions may also increase the incidence of FAW in areas prone to the pest, hence reducing crop production and exacerbating food insecurity.

Mitigation measures

- It is recommended to encourage farmers to adapt climate-resilient and conservation agricultural practices, plant fast-maturing, drought-tolerant crop varieties, e.g., sorghum, millet, etc., to take advantage of the limited available water or moisture in their farmlands.

Livestock

Risk and implications.

Positive impacts

- Below normal rainfall will lead to a reduction in water-borne livestock disease.

Negative impacts

- Below normal rainfall will lead to a reduction in pasture, the level of water tables, and depletion of water bodies that are normally sources of water for livestock.
- Under below normal rainfall conditions or in drier areas, there is increased movement of animals in search of pasture and water, creating conducive conditions for increased resource-based conflicts.

Mitigation measures

- Enhanced surveillance, treatment, and vaccination against expected animal diseases as livestock migrate.
- Support pastoralists in drier areas to access pasture (promoting conservation of crop residues for use as animal feeds) and water (by promoting water conservation and harvesting).
- Promote peace dialogues between pastoralists and farmers as appropriate.

Disaster Risk Management and Water

Risks & Implications

Positive impacts

- Below normal rainfall will likely result in a reduction in riverine and flash flood areas, water levels subsiding, relieving pressure on overstretched community resilience, and preventing further displacement.
- Dry conditions also allow for better and more consistent access to markets and roads that are usually flooded, thus improving mobility, allowing humanitarian agencies to preposition food and non-food items in remote areas.

Negative impacts

- Below normal rainfall will likely result in a reduction in riverine and flash flood areas, which usually result in displacement of populations, and destruction of property such as dwellings and farmlands
- Below normal rainfall or drier conditions will lead to water scarcity, making women and girls face increased workloads for water collection by travelling long distances and spending a long time fetching water for household use.

Mitigation measures

- Peace conferences should be held to address resource-based conflicts (water and pasture) among pastoralists.
- Water harvesting and conservation activities should be encouraged in areas with below normal rainfall to support livestock keeping.
- Provide weather advisories and early warning messages through radio and other media to persons in drought-prone areas so that they can take actions to lessen the impacts of the extreme weather conditions.

Source: ¹ South Sudan Meteorology Directorate and <https://www.icpac.net/weekly-forecast/>

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Visit the CLIMIS Portal: <http://www.climis-southsudan.org>: and View Rain Gauge Data on the CLIMIS Portal: http://www.climis-southsudan.org/agromet/rainfall_data

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