# GU SEASONAL PERFORMANCE, HAGAA OUTLOOK AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOMALILAND

Issued: 13 July 2025

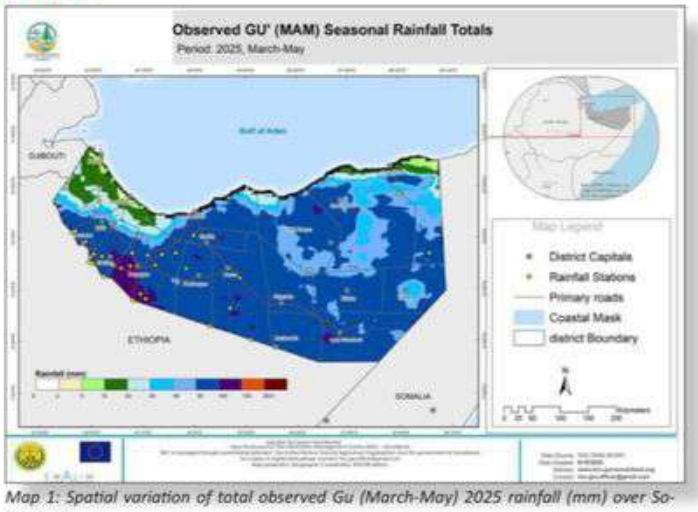
## GU SEASONAL PERFORMANCE: MARCH, APRIL, MAY, 2025

Varying rainfall patterns were observed across Somaliland during the Gu 2025 season with notable differences in total rainfall amounts and their impacts on the environment, agriculture, and livelihoods. The season began Late in April, tapering off end of May in many regions (Annex 1). While most areas experienced favorable total rainfall, others recorded significantly lower totals compared to the Long-Term Mean (LTM) (refer to the Gu rainfall anomaly map 1)

Balidhiig experienced substantial rainfall, reaching 1.3 times the LTM, Taysa reaching 1.26 times the LTM. The onset of Gu rains occurred in late April the rains initially spread across central and eastern parts of Somaliland but ended in sharp end of May, mostly stations recorded no rainfall in March and April. Most regions observed more than 50 consecutive dry days between March 1st and April 30th, 2025.

Figure 1 illustrates observed rainfall (in millimeters) recorded across various weather stations during March, April and May 2025, representing the total observed Gu rainfall observed in Somaliland. Notable observations include varying rainfall patterns among the stations, with some experiencing substantial rainfall. For instance, Taysa recorded a significant total rainfall of 186.5 mm and Balidhiig 187.5 primarily in April and May, Other stations, such as Xudun, Gargaara, Haji salah, Beer, Garadag, Xeego, Dooxaguban, Bodale, Berbera, Geerisa and Zaila reported less than 20 mm rainfall during the Gu season.

The map showing the total rainfall during the Gu season (March-May 2024) in Somaliland gives us a detailed look at the region's climate. It gives an understanding of how the rain was distributed and how intense it was across




*Map 1: Spatial variation of total observed Gu (March-May) 2025 rainfall (mm) over Somaliland*

different areas, which is essential for knowing its impact on the environment and agriculture in various regions.

Specifically, the few highest rainfall totals ranging between 100 mm - 200 mm were recorded in Hargeisa, Gumburaha, Baki, Sheikh, Taysa, and Balidhiig, indicating a concentration of precipitation conducive to favorable agricultural conditions. Conversely, moderate rainfall, ranging from 100 mm – 40 mm, was observed in locations such as Aburiin, Dhubato, Alleybadey, Seyla -beri, Geed deeble, Laasadacawo, Magaalo-cad, Wajaale, Garbodarar and Gabiley in Maroodi jeex region; Amoud, Boorama, Qulujeed and Dilla in Awdal regions, Burco, Oodwayne and Warabeeye in Togdheer region. Understanding these variations is essential for assessing the resilience and productivity of diverse regions within the country, thereby providing crucial information for sustainable development and resource management.

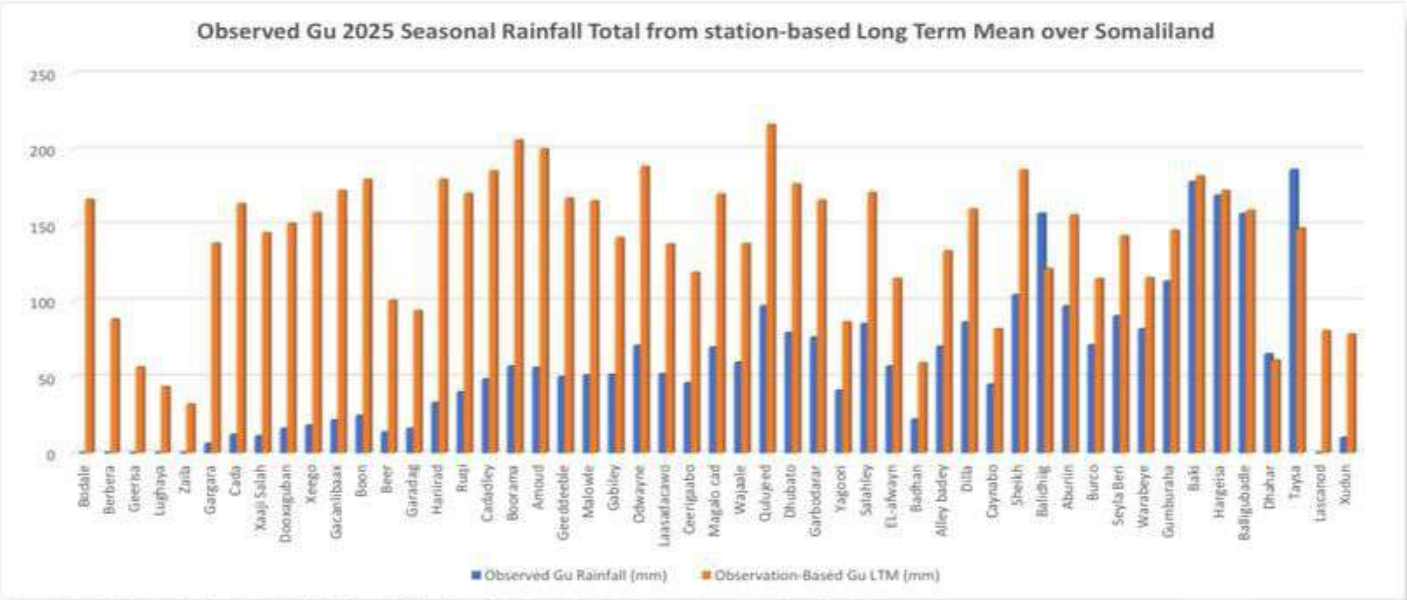



*Figure 1: Total Observed Gu (March-May) 2025 Rainfall (MM) and Stations -Based Long Term Mean over Somaliland*

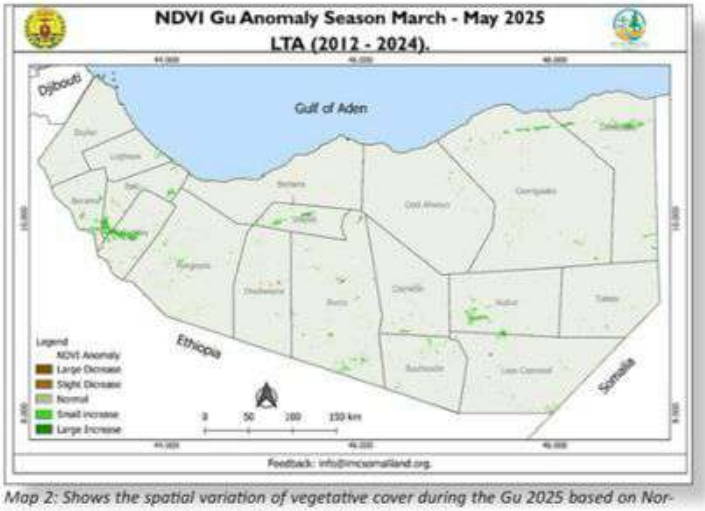
## Gu 2025 Vegetation Performance

The NDVI anomaly map for the Gu season (March to May 2025) compared to the long-term average (2012–2024) provides an overview of vegetation performance across Somaliland (Map 2). The NDVI, or Normalized Difference Vegetation Index, reflects the density and health of green vegetation and serves as an important indicator of rangeland and crop conditions.

Overall, much of Somaliland shows normal vegetation conditions, indicating that plant growth this season is close to average levels for this time of year. However, there are notable areas with positive anomalies, especially around Borama and Gabiley in Awdal region, as well as localized spots in Sanaag and Sool. These areas are experiencing small to large increases in NDVI, suggesting improved pasture conditions and better vegetation cover. This improvement is likely linked to favorable rainfall during the Gu season, which has supported pasture regeneration and reduced stress on livestock.

Conversely, parts of Togdheer, particularly around Burco and Odwayne, along with scattered locations in Sanaag, show slight to large decreases in NDVI relative to the long-term average. These reductions point to areas where vegetation growth has lagged, potentially due to uneven rainfall distribution or lingering dry conditions. Such areas may require close monitoring to assess the risk of deteriorating pasture and water availability, which could impact local livelihoods.

In summary, while the overall vegetation situation across Somaliland appears broadly stable and in line with seasonal expectations, the spatial variability highlighted by the NDVI anomalies underscores the importance of localized assessments. Continued monitoring will be critical to ensure early action in areas where vegetation remains below average, safeguarding both community resilience and livestock productivity.




*Map 2: Shows the spatial variation of vegetative cover during the Gu 2025 based on Normalized Difference Vegetative Index (NDVI) over Somaliland.*

## Combined Drought Index

The Combined Drought Index (CDI) for **March 2025** highlights various levels of drought conditions across the region. The spatial variation of drought severity is as follows:

**Mild to Moderate Drought:** The western areas around Buhoodle, Zeilac, eastern parts of Lasqorey and Lughaya districts.

**Normal Conditions:** Most parts of the country regions experienced normal conditions

The spatial patterns of **drought severity in April** was as follows:

**Extreme Drought:** The northern west parts of Borama district in Awdal region, and few northern parts of Ceerigaabo district in Sanaag region experienced extreme drought conditions.

**Moderate to severe Drought:** The drought conditions intensified in the northern coastal regions, including areas around Zeila, Borama, Baki and Lughaye districts in Awdal region, Northern of parts Ceel afwayn, eastern parts of Buhodle and western parts of Gebiley.

**Mild Drought:** The border areas between Buhoodle and Lascanood districts and eastern parts of Ceerigaabo district continued to experience mild drought conditions.

**Normal Conditions:** Most parts of Maroodi jeex, Saaxil, Laascanod, Togdheer, Sanaag and Sool regions experienced normal conditions with patches of mild drought.

In **May 2025,** the drought conditions in Somaliland continued to be severe with the following spatial variation:

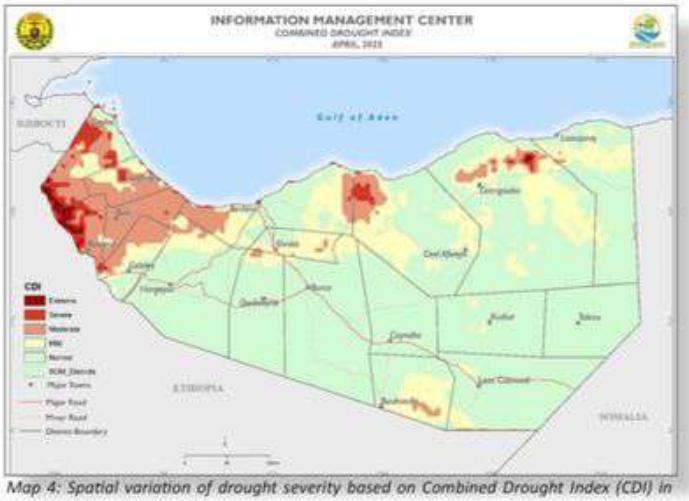
**Extreme Drought:** The northwestern parts of Borama district in Awdal region, along with some northern areas of Ceerigaabo district in Sanaag region, parts of Baki, parts of Lughaya, parts of El-afwayn, and parts of Lasqorey, experienced extreme drought conditions, as indicated by the darkest red on the map.

**Moderate to Severe Drought:** Drought conditions intensified across the northern coastal belt, including areas around Zeila, Borama, Baki, and Lughaye districts in Awdal region, as well as northern parts of El-Afweyn, Cerigabo, Gabiley, Laasqoray, Berbera and sheikh, where conditions ranged from moderate to severe (light red to red shades).

**Mild Drought:** Districts along the Parts Boram, Baki, Lughaye and Zailac, and most Parts of Sahil Region and most parts of El-afwayn, Cerigabo and Laasqoray, continued to face mild drought conditions, shown in yellow, requiring close monitoring for potential deterioration.

**Normal Conditions:** Most parts of the country in Marodijex, Saahil, Togdheer, Sool, and broader areas of Sanaag still exhibit normal conditions, with healthy vegetation and water availability, shown in green, although interspersed with patches of mild drought requiring vigilance.


*Map 3: Spatial variation of drought severity based on Combined Drought Index (CDI) in March 2025 over Somaliland.*

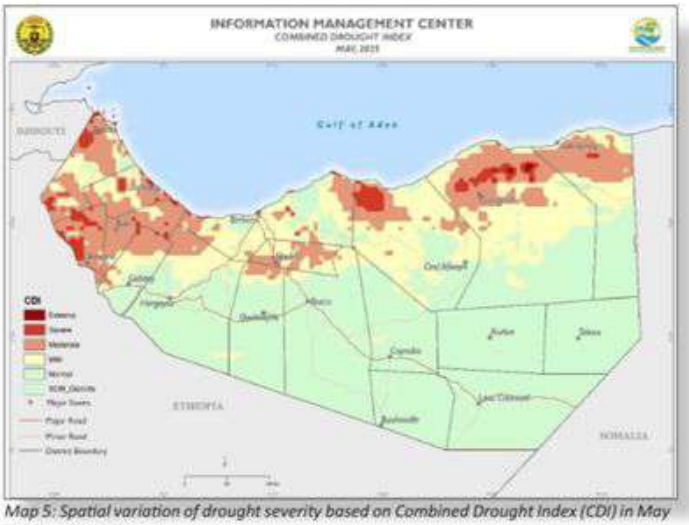



*Map 4: Spatial variation of drought severity based on Combined Drought Index (CDI) in April 2025 over Somaliland*

## Drought Evolution

Between March and May 2025, drought conditions in Somaliland evolved significantly, with the most severe deterioration observed in the northwestern and northeastern regions. including Zeila, Lughaya, Baki, and Borama districts in Awdal region transitioned from localized moderate drought in March to widespread extreme drought by April, persisting into May. Similarly around Ceerigaabo, Ceel-afwayn and Laasqoray districts in Sanaag region, experienced a steady intensification from emerging extreme drought in March to extensive severe and extreme conditions by May. Baki and northern Gabiley also shifted from normal to severe drought during this period.

In contrast, southern and southeastern areas such as Taleex and Xudun Districts in Sool region, and Buhodle District in Togdheer region. Remain largely stable with normal conditions or slight improvements. Overall, the timeline shows a sharp drought intensification in April, with conditions stabilizing or worsening slightly in May,




*Map 5: Spatial variation of drought severity based on Combined Drought Index (CDI) in May 2025 over Somaliland*

particularly in Awdal and Sanaag regions while the most parts Maroodijeex and Sool regions remained relatively unaffected.

## HAGAA (JUNE-SEPTEMBER) 2025 OUTLOOK

Hagaa season (JJAS) contributes roughly 5% to 25% of the annual total, depending on the region, with coastal areas receiving relatively more due to moisture from the sea and southwest monsoon winds. For the Greater Horn of Africa (GHA) including Somaliland. According to IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC), Hagaa 2025 is predicted to be characterized by wetter-than-average rainfall mostly of the country, normal to delayed onset and above normal mean temperatures. There is a 60 % likelihood that most parts of the country (Zone IV in Dark Green/ light green in Map 1) will observe Above normal rains. There is even a higher likelihood (60 %) of increasing rainfall conditions being observed some parts of Baki and Borama Districts in Awdal region, Gabiley, Hargeisa districts in Maroodijeex region, Burco and Oodwayne districts in Togdheer region, same parts of Caynabo, Xudun and Taleex districts in Sool regio, Ceel-afwayn, Ceerigaabo and Laasqorey districts in Sanaag region and Sheikh district in Saaxil region (dark green to light green ). However, there are chances of (40-30 %) isolated transition between above/ below normal rains in some few in coastal areas like Zeilac and Lughaya districts in Awdal region, few parts in Laasqorey district in Sanaag region, Buhoodle district in Togdheer region, Laascanod district in Sool region and Berbera district in Saaxil region.

There is very high probability that cumulative Hagaa rainfall amount will exceed 200mm particularly over the Togdheer, Saaxil, Sanaag, Awdal and most parts of Maroodijeex regions.

### Deterministic and Probabilistic Rainfall Onset Forecast

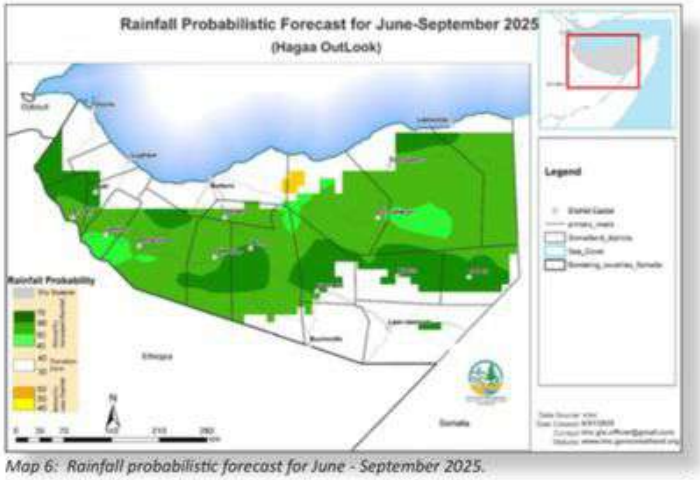
Onset timing for JJAS in Somaliland is most likely "normal" (neither significantly early nor late). The Hagaa 2025 rains are likely to start over Awdal and Maroodijeex regions in the first week of August. It will then spread eastern parts of the country like Togdheer region in the third week of August. Onset is not likely until the last week of August, Sool and Sanaag regions (Map 6).

Based on climatology, the probabilistic forecast of onset is mixed with chances of being normal to late especially in some areas of the country.

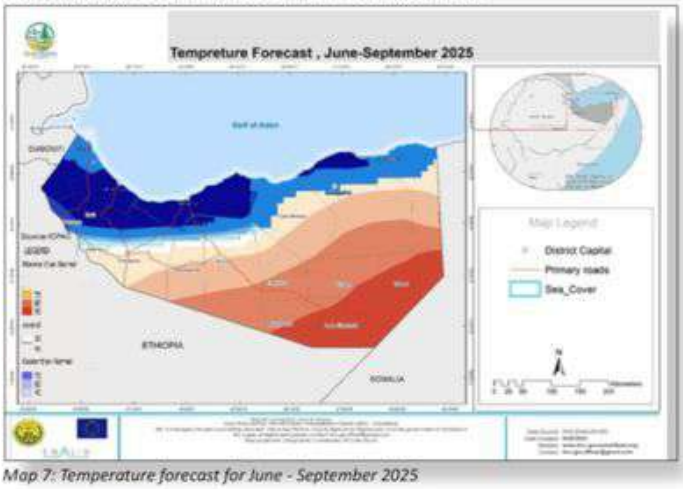
## Hagaa (June–September) 2025 Temperature Forecast

The upcoming Hagaa season (June–September 2025) temperature forecast for Somaliland shows a **distinct spatial pattern**, highlighting expected above-average and below-average temperature probabilities across different parts of the country. This forecast is crucial for early planning in agriculture, water management, and pastoral activities. As shown in map 7:

- Areas shaded in orange to dark orange indicate probabilities of above-average temperatures, ranging from 50 up to over 90, predominantly covering eastern regions such as Caynabo, Xudun, Taleex, Buuhodle, and Laas Caanood, extending into central areas like Burco and Owdweyne. This suggests these zones may face hotter than normal conditions, which could stress crops and livestock.
- Areas shaded in blue tones (from light to dark blue) show probabilities of below-average temperatures, ranging between 65 and 45, mainly concentrated in the northwest including Borama, Baki, Lughaye, Zeylac, Berbera, Sheikh and parts around Laasqoray. These cooler-than-usual conditions may ease heat stress but could also affect certain crop growing cycles.
- The transition zones (light beige) indicate areas with near-average temperature probabilities, showing minimal deviation from typical seasonal conditions.




*Map 6: Rainfall probabilistic forecast for June - September 2025.*




*Map 7: Temperature forecast for June - September 2025*

The inclusion of district capitals and primary roads helps in planning localized advisories and response actions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Strengthen Seasonal Forecasting Systems:** The scientific forecasting community should explore the integration of higher-resolution dynamical models and other sub-seasonal predictors such as the Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) and sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies into seasonal forecast production. IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) should conduct post-season forecast verification to identify model biases and enhance the credibility and skill of future outlooks.

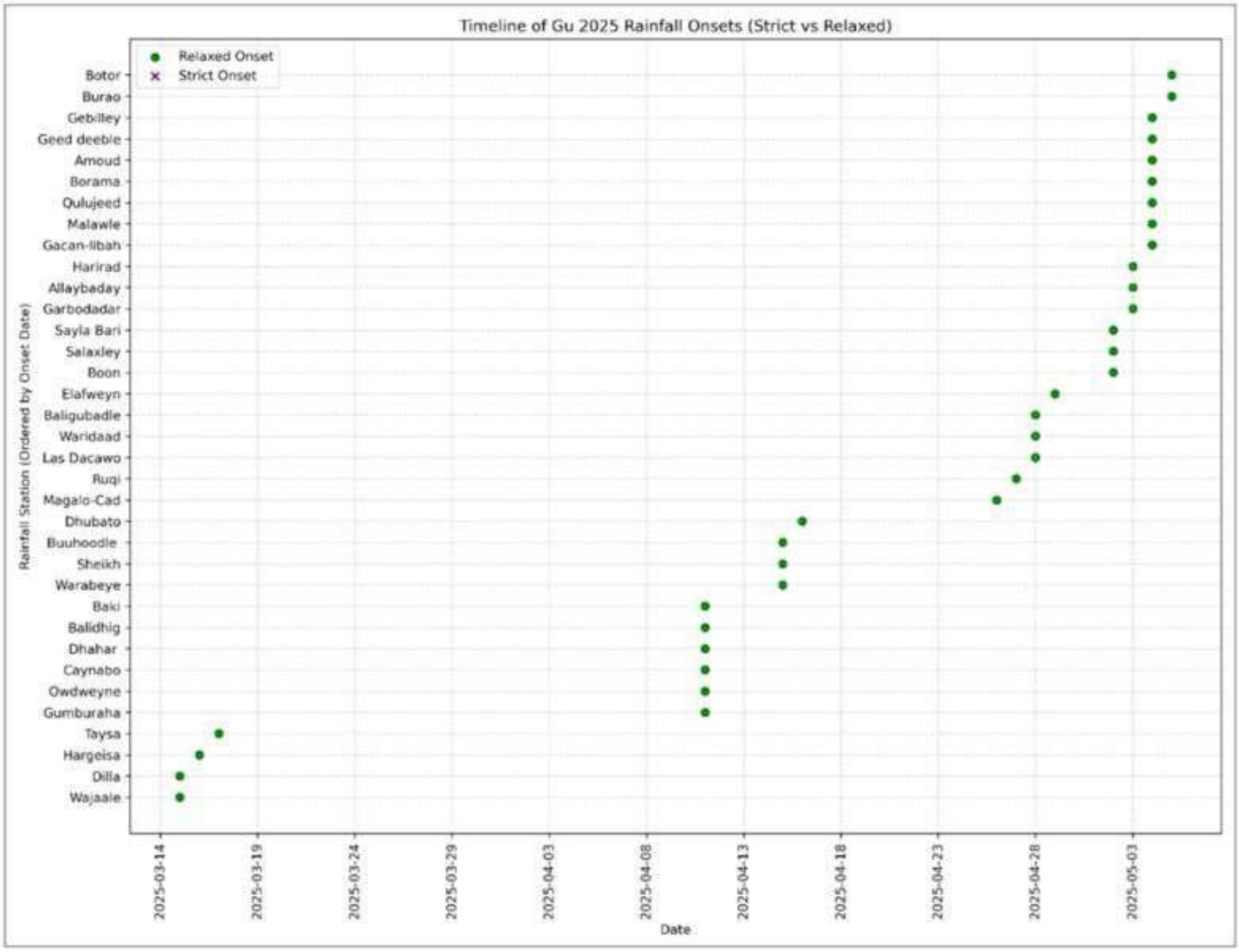
**Improve Early Warning Communication and Translation:** Government of Somaliland and humanitarian and development partners should develop actionable and sector-specific advisories that link rainfall onset and trends to key livelihood activities such as planting, herding, and disease prevention. Government of Somalia and humanitarian partners (e.g., FAO, OCHA), humanitarian communication partners (e.g., Radio Ergo) should translate advisories into Somali and other local languages and disseminate through trusted communication channels, including FM radio, SMS platforms, social media, and community forums.

**Develop Hagaa Contingency Plans:** Given the below normal Gu rains, most parts of Somlailand remain vulnerable. To mitigate risks during the Hagaa dry season, Government of Somaliland, OCHA, FAO, WASH and Health Clusters, Regional and Local Authorities should:

- Maintain health and WASH interventions in IDP and drought-affected areas to mitigate disease risks and ensure clean water access.
- Reprioritize drought response by gradually scaling down in well-recovered zones and intensifying support in districts where drought persists.
- Conduct rapid post-Gu assessments to verify livelihood conditions and inform rehabilitation planning.
- Monitor agro-pastoral indicators—pasture condition, water availability, livestock migration—through the Hagaa dry season to guide early warning and early action.
- Utilize updated rainfall and temperature projections for Hagaa 2025 to anticipate residual flood risk and guide preparedness in marine-prone coastal zones.
- Preposition emergency supplies and drought response resources in vulnerable areas across Somaliland where Gu deficits were most severe.

*The Somaliland Information Management Center (SL-IMC) ensures the production of weekly weather forecasts, monthly climate outlooks, drought updates, and groundwater monitoring reports.*

***Annex 1: Timeline for Observed Gu 2025 rainfall onset across stations over Somaliland***




Somaliland Information Management Center is technically supported by FAO SWALIM with funding from The European Union and AICS