



FLOOD ADVISORY FOR BELETWEYNE ALONG SHABELLE RIVER, SOMALIA

Issued: 8th May, 2023

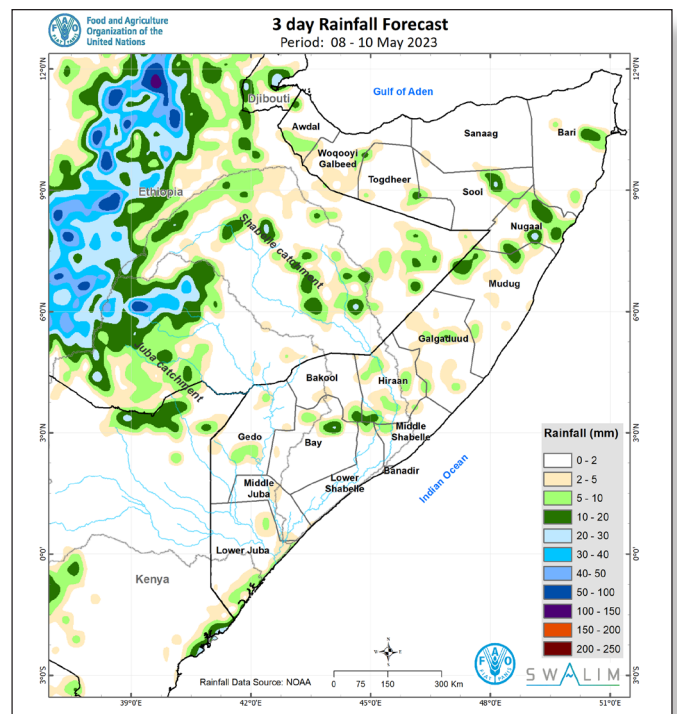
There is a High Risk of Flooding along the Shabelle River at Belet Weyne

Moderate rains received in Shabelle River catchment in the Ethiopian highlands and light rains observed in the areas around the Ethiopian border have sustained a steady rise in levels along Shabelle River. In the last four days, 40.5 mm of cumulative rainfall has been received at Belet Weyne; 22 mm on 5th, 8.5 mm on 6th and 10 mm on 8th May 2023.

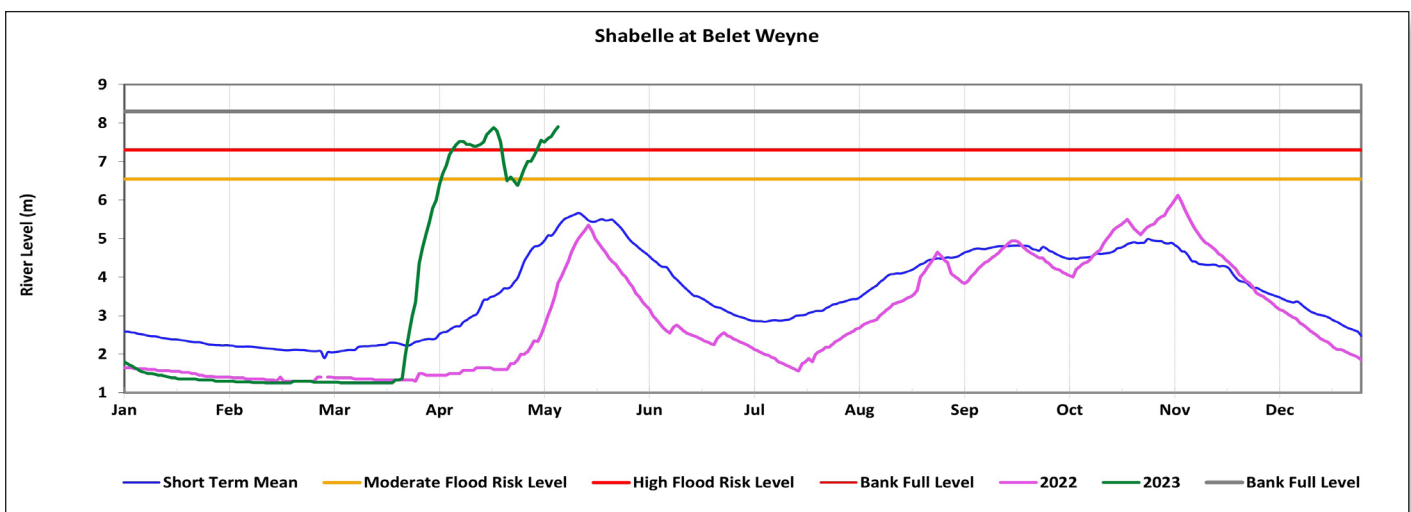
The river levels at Belet Weyne steadily **increased from 6.38m on 26th April to 7.90m as reported today (8th May 2023)** – Graph 1. Today's level is **60 cm above the high flood risk level (7.30 m) and just 40 cm below the bank full (8.30m) threshold.** However, at 6.12 m and 3.75 m, the levels at Bulu Burti and Jowhar are 38 cm and 1.25 m below their moderate flood risk thresholds.

Since 2nd May 2023 when the high flood risk level was reached at Belet Weyne, any increment in run off occasioned by the moderate rains across the Ethiopian border can potentially lead to river flooding. The information coming from the field indicates that the river flow is hitting the deck of two bridges in Belet Weyne with **very high likelihood of river overflowing the banks and causing flooding** that might affect Belet Weyne town and its surrounding areas. The Hirshabelle State, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation is reported to be distributing prepositioned sandbags to the vulnerable sites which have begun seeping the water into the town. Although these efforts may mitigate the effects of the flooding, population living in Belet Weyne town and its surrounding areas must still take precautionary measures.

The rainfall forecast for the next three days (8th – 10th May) indicates light cumulative rain of about 10 mm over Belet Weyne and of about 20 mm over its catchment in the Ethiopian Highlands (Map 1). Although there is high risk of flooding along Shabelle River at Belet Weyne currently, river levels are expected to stabilize to below moderate flood risk levels in the coming days given the above light to moderate forecast rainfall conditions.



Map 1: Cumulative rainfall forecast over Somalia between 8th and 10th May 2023 based on NOAA's GFS



Graph 1 : Shabelle river level at BeletWeyne gauging station

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