The various indicators of the Global Drought Observatory (GDO) do not hint to any severe ongoing or incoming meteorological drought over South Sudan (Figures 1 and 2). On the contrary, the 3 months outlook suggests an incoming large excess of rainfall compared to the long-term average for the period. Although such forecast might be overestimating actual rainfall, nevertheless there is a strong agreement of models against any looming meteorological drought at present.

**Figure 1: Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI-3) for March, April and May 2019**

While precipitation data of the recent past show no anomalies since late 2017, there are some signals of negative anomalies in the southernmost part of the country for soil moisture and vegetation indicators for late 2018, and again between end of March and May 2019, in concomitance with the stronger dry spell located further south and east (Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia) (see Figures 3 and 4). This wider event shrank since early May, leaving out all of South Sudan.
Drought situation in South Sudan – June 2019
JRC Global Drought Observatory (GDO) and ERCC Analytical Team
20/06/2019

Figure 3: Dekadal soil moisture anomalies for the period December 2018 to May 2019
Drought situation in South Sudan – June 2019
JRC Global Drought Observatory (GDO) and ERCC Analytical Team
20/06/2019
Note that reliable observational data in this region of the world is limited and with coarse temporal and spatial resolution. This makes interpolation and model calibration/validation very difficult and adds a lot on uncertainty. We therefore checked data from several other sources\(^1\) beyond ICPAC, but a consistent picture did not emerge, and the insufficient agreement among different sources hampers a unique interpretation. Given the high vulnerability of large parts of the population, small delays or reductions in rainfall could however lead to high impacts.

The food security alerts released from Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)\(^2\) are particularly negative, but concerns are not linked specifically to drought at present, but rather to conflict, displacement of population and market dysfunctionalities (e.g. high food prices), as well as other complex long-term issues.

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