Visual Flow Chart for the Great Ruaha River

1994 - 2020 Data from Jongomero

River flow is read by month from left to right and uses observations from 1994 to 2020
A month of flowing water is represented as a blue square:
When the river is reduced to low flow this is represented as a blue dashed line:
If there was no water flow in the river this is represented as a red shaded square:

Total Rainfall and Notes

Approximately 4 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow April. Poor flows.

Approximately 9 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow March to May. Reasonable flows.

401mm of rain. Approximately 8 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow March. Very poor flows.

>900 mm El Ninio. Approximately 5 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow January to June extremely high flows.
MADIBIRA RICE FARM OPENS

392mm Approximately 12 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow April. Very poor flows.

527mm Approximately 14 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow March and April. Very poor flows

960mm Approximately 8 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow January to April. Reasonable flow

706mm Approximately 4 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow February to April. Peaked in March.
EXPANSION OF WET SEASON IRRIGATION

619mm Approximately 6 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow January. Extremely poor flows equal to flows in August in 1980's

532mm Approximately 15 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow April and May. Poor flow.

574mm Approximately 5 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow March and April. Poor flows.

555.5 mm Approximately 14 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow May. Very poor flows same as July and August in the 1980's.

Very heavy rain all season like El ninio early rain approximately 4 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow January to March good flows.

Normal rainfall. Approximately 12 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow in March and April.

Normal rainfall and better management upstream.
Approximately 6 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow April. Poor flows.

Normal rainfall but river flowed ALL YEAR.
This was due to good water management upstream.
Highest flow in March and April. Poor flows.

LONGEST NO FLOW EVER RECORDED.
River never had significant flow 19 weeks of no flow.
Highest flow in May same as flows in July of the 1980's.

Good rainfall generally. Approximately 12 weeks of no flow. Highest flow February to May but same level as the flows of July in the 1960's, '70's and '80's.

The Usangu water didnt flow till April. This is the latest it has ever been. There was NO flood this year!
THIS IS A DISASTER.

We are lucky the rain came early and local rainfall gave water to the river. The Usangu water came on February the 5th - 2 months earlier than last year

Rainfall - the Park received its normal quota by the end of April. 16 weeks no flow. Flow of the river was exceptionally poor. Usangu water arrived end of Feb.

Only 4 weeks no flow. El ninio rains and Flooding. Sand rivers in Ruaha National Park highest ever known. This river burst its banks in the Lunda area and on tow-wards Mtera Dam, causing much damage to farmers. Despite enormous rainfall and highest levels of flow recorded, the river again dried up on the 30th Oct.

Despite record low flows, the river dried up at the same time as last year - which had record high flows. Anthrax broke out killing large numbers of the Great Ruaha hippo population. It can be directly linked to low flow.

Due to heavy, late rains in March 2018 and heavy, early, rains in November 2018 the river was only completely dry for 40 days.

Massive floods occurred and surpassed the levels reached in El Nino years 1977/78. Rainfall was extreme throughout the area with many recording double their normal rainfall. Magangwe in the western zone of Ruaha NP had 1750mm of rain.

Very surprisingly, October 2020 is not dissimilar to the same month in 2019 - this shows how great the offtake for rice and other small crops is.