REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTRY

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

KENYA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

Ref. No. KMD/FCST/4-2026/MO/02 **Date: 31st January 2026**

RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR FEBRUARY 2026 AND REVIEW FOR JANUARY 2026

1. HIGHLIGHTS

1.1. The Forecast for February 2026

The forecast for February 2026 indicates that most parts of the country will experience generally sunny and dry conditions throughout the month. Occasional rainfall is however likely to occur over the Lake Victoria Basin, Highlands West of the Rift Valley, Southern Rift Valley, parts of the Highlands East of the Rift Valley including Nairobi, and parts of the South-eastern lowlands. Temperatures are also likely to be warmer than average over several parts of the country.

1.2. The outlook for The Next three months (February- March-April) 2026

Sunny and dry weather conditions are expected to dominate most parts of the country during February. However, a few areas in the western sector—particularly the Lake Victoria Basin and the Southern Rift Valley—as well as the Highlands East of the Rift Valley including Nairobi County, the Coastal region, and the Southeastern Lowlands, may experience occasional rainfall.

March is expected to mark the onset of the rainfall season over several parts of the country, while April is anticipated to represent the peak of the season, with more widespread and enhanced rainfall distribution.
Temperatures are expected to be warmer than average over the whole country during the forecast period.

1.3. January 2026 Rainfall Review

Sunny and dry conditions prevailed over most parts of the country during the month, with a few rainy days in isolated areas over the Western highlands, Lake Victoria Basin, Central highlands, the Coastal region and Northeast. This rainfall was below the January Long Term Mean.

2. The Forecast for February 2026

The rainfall outlook for February 2026 is mainly based on empirical statistical models developed from the expected evolution of global Sea Surface Temperature (SST) anomalies and the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI. Currently, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is neutral and La Niña conditions are still present. On sub-seasonal timescales, the Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO) may enter Phase 2 in early February and remain in generally favourable phases,

although its weak amplitude is likely to limit its overall influence; nevertheless, some localized rainfall enhancement, particularly over western Kenya from the second week of February, is forecasted.

2.1. The Rainfall Forecast for February 2026

The forecast indicates that most parts of the country will experience generally sunny and dry conditions throughout the month. A few areas in the Highlands West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria basin, Southern Rift Valley, the Highlands East of the Rift Valley including Nairobi, and the South-eastern lowlands are, however, likely to experience occasional rainfall **Figure 1** portrays the expected rainfall pattern during February 2026.

Temperatures are also likely to be warmer than average over the entire country.

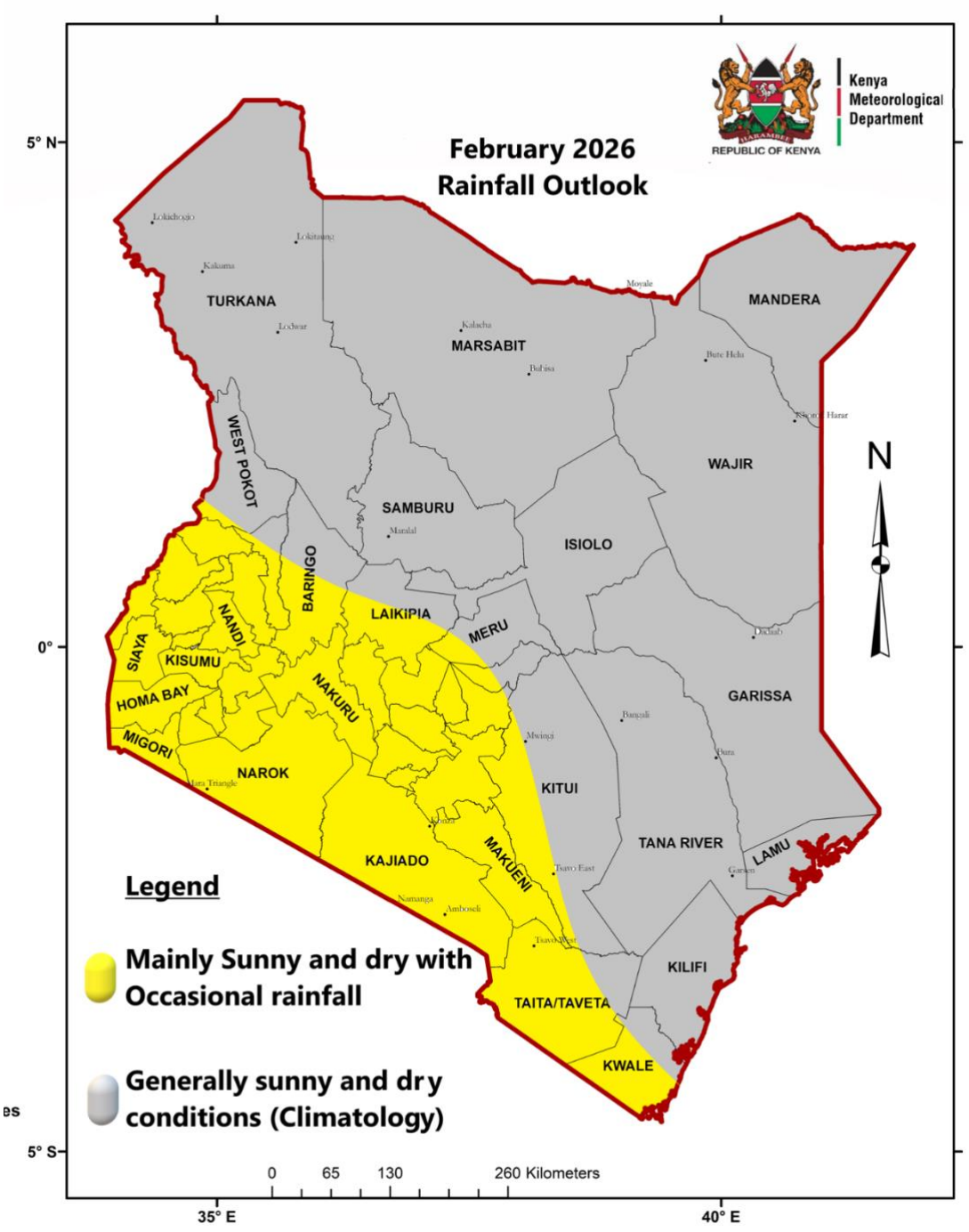

Figure 1: February 2026 Rainfall Forecast

2.2. Specific Outlook for Individual Areas

2.2.1. The Lake Victoria Basin, Highlands West of the Rift Valley and Central and South Rift Valley (Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori, Kisii, Nyamira, Trans Nzoia, Baringo, Uasin Gishu, Elgeyo-Marakwet, West Pokot, Nandi, Laikipia, Nakuru, Narok, Kericho, Bomet, Kakamega, Vihiga, Bungoma and Busia):

Sunny and dry conditions are likely during the month; however, occasional rainfall is expected over several parts of the region.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range between 24°C and 35°C, while minimum temperatures are likely to range from 5°C to 20°C.

2.2.2. North-western Region (Turkana, and Samburu):

North-western Region (Turkana, West Pokot, and Samburu): Sunny and dry conditions are expected to prevail in these areas. However occasional rainfall may be experienced. Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 30°C - 40°C, while minimum temperatures are expected to range from 20°C - 26°C.

2.2.3. Highlands East of the Rift Valley and Central Kenya (Nairobi, Nyandarua, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Murang'a, Kiambu, Meru, Embu, and Tharaka):

Sunny and dry conditions are likely during the month; however, occasional rainfall is expected over several parts of the region.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 22°C - 31°C, while minimum temperatures are expected to range from 5°C - 17°C.

2.2.4. North-eastern Region (Wajir, Garissa and Isiolo, Mandera and Marsabit):

These areas are likely to experience mainly sunny and dry conditions.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 26°C - 40°C, while minimum temperatures are expected to range from 16°C - 28°C.

2.2.5. South-eastern Lowlands (Kajiado, Kitui, Makueni, Machakos, and Taita Taveta):

These areas are likely to experience generally dry conditions for most of the month. However, occasional rainfall is expected to occur over a few places during the month.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 24°C - 36°C, while minimum temperatures are expected to range from 12°C - 23°C.

2.2.6. The Coastal Strip (Mombasa, Tana River, Kilifi, Lamu, and Kwale):

These areas are likely to experience generally dry conditions throughout the month. However, a few areas over the south coast may experience rainfall during the month.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 31°C - 35°C, while minimum temperatures are expected to range from 23°C - 27°C.

2.3. Potential impacts

The following are the likely impacts as a result of the expected performance of the rainfall during February 2026:

2.3.1. Agriculture and Food Security

The dry weather conditions expected during the month are likely to worsen the food security over the northern and parts of the eastern sectors of the country as availability of food, water and pasture for human as well as livestock use is expected to decline further. The national and local governments as well as humanitarian organizations are advised to take necessary action to avert any loss of lives.

The sunny and dry weather conditions will be favorable for crop harvesting as well as land preparations in readiness for the coming planting season in the agricultural areas. The public is encouraged to seek relevant advises from the Ministry of Agriculture.

2.3.2. Disaster Management

The current drought being experienced over the northern and parts of the eastern sectors of the country is expected to intensify and may spread to other parts of the country. Relevant authorities are advised to put in place measures to avert any loss of lives and livelihoods. The limited pasture and water over the ASAL areas may lead to resource-based conflicts among the pastoral and farming communities.

2.3.3. Water Resources Management

Water availability for both human and livestock use is expected to decline further especially in the ASAL areas. Relevant authorities are advised to carry out water trucking to identify the most vulnerable members of the community and provide them with water.

The dry weather conditions expected during the month may negatively affect the major river catchment areas for the country's hydroelectric power generating dams. Careful reservoir management and continuous monitoring of water level is therefore recommended to ensure stable power supply.

2.3.4. Environment and forestry

Cases of human wildlife conflicts are likely to escalate as wildlife migrate in search of water and pasture. Wildlife deaths could also increase in the conservancies due to lack of pasture and water. Relevant authorities are advised to provide watering points and pasture for the wildlife to prevent any deaths as well as minimize human wildlife conflicts.

The expected dry conditions may result in dry land/vegetation cover. The public is advised to take caution and avoid activities which are likely to lead to the occurrence of wildfires in forests, parks, and game reserves. Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and other stakeholders should therefore be alert while putting in place measures to conserve the environment.

2.3.5. Health

There may be an increase in malnutrition related diseases especially over the ASAL areas due to food scarcity. Relevant authorities are therefore advised to closely monitor the situation and provide food and food supplements to the most affected members of the community.

The expected high temperatures during the month in most parts of the country may lead to heat stress and heat-related discomforts. The public is therefore advised to hydrate appropriately and avoid working in the open especially in the afternoons. Dusty conditions likely during the month may also provide favorable conditions for outbreaks of respiratory tract diseases.

3. Outlook for February – April 2026

Sunny and dry weather conditions are expected to dominate most parts of the country during February, consistent with prevailing large-scale climate drivers. However, a few areas in the western sector—particularly the Lake Victoria Basin and Southern Rift Valley—as well as the Highlands East of the Rift Valley including Nairobi County, the Coastal region, and the Southeastern Lowlands, may experience occasional rainfall.

March is expected to mark the onset of the rainfall season over several parts of the country, with rainfall gradually increasing in the western sector, Highlands East of the Rift Valley, Central and South Rift Valley, Southeastern lowlands, and Coastal region. Some areas, especially over the southern parts of Lake Victoria and the Southern Rift Valley, may receive a few rainy days in early to mid-March.

April is anticipated to represent the peak of the season, with more widespread and enhanced rainfall, particularly over the western sector, Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley, Central and South Rift Valley, Southeastern lowlands, and Coastal region. The northern and northeastern sectors are expected to remain dry in February and March, with rainfall mainly in April.

Temperatures during the forecast period are expected to be warmer than average across the country.

4. RAINFALL REVIEW JANUARY 2026

4.1. Review of January 2026 Rainfall Performance

The whole country experienced mainly sunny and dry weather conditions throughout the month except for a few areas over the Western highlands, Lake Victoria Basin, Central highlands (Nyeri and Thika), Northeast (Moyale) and the Coastal region (Mombasa) that experienced a day or two of rainfall that was below the January LTM. The highest amount of rainfall: 37.0mm was experienced in Kakamega Meteorological station.

Figure 2 shows the total rainfall amount recorded in January (Blue bars) in comparison with the January LTMs (Red bars).

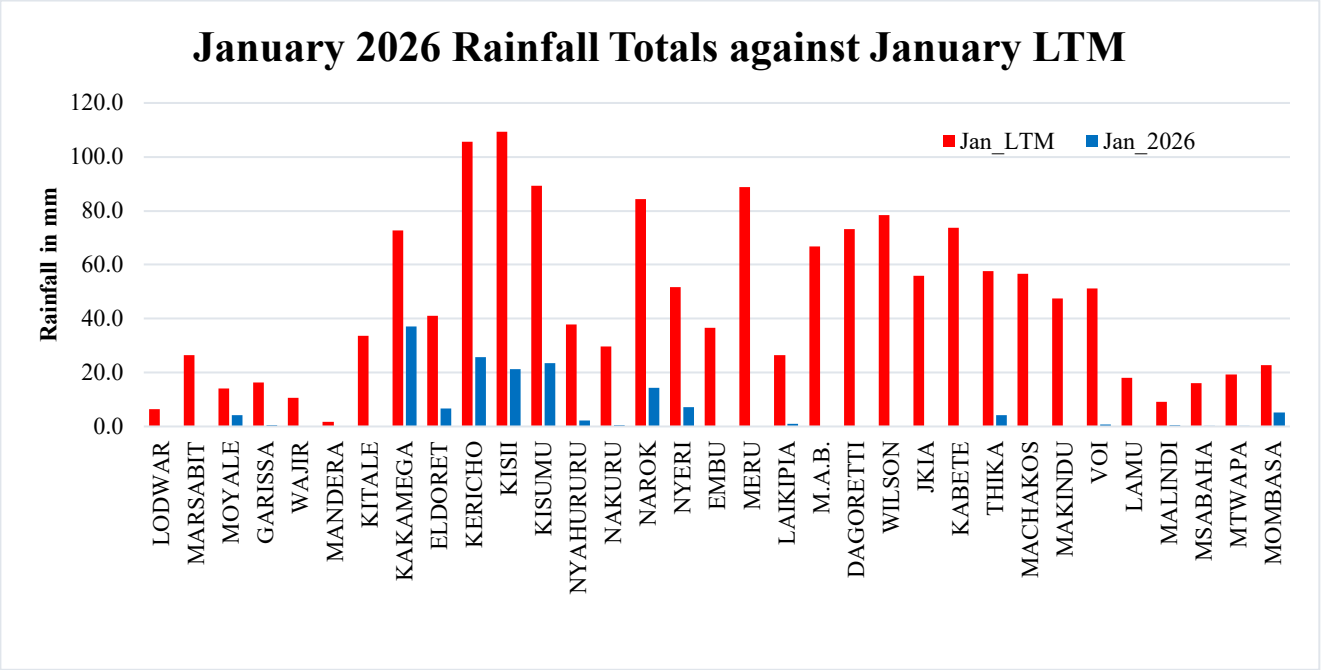

Figure 2: January 2026 Rainfall Totals against January LTM

4.2 Temperature Review – January 2026

4.2.1 Maximum Temperature

Most parts of the country experienced warmer than average day time temperatures except in Mandera, Malindi and Mtwapa where temperatures were cooler than average. The highest anomalies exceeding one degree Celsius, were observed in most stations over the central region including Nairobi and parts of Northeast (Marsabit) and Western Kenya (Kakamega). The highest anomaly of 3.0ºC was recorded in Thika which also experienced warmer than average temperatures compared to its Long-Term Mean (LTM) of 26.9ºC for most of the month. As of 29th January, the station had recorded temperature above its LTM throughout the month. The highest monthly temperature:37.5ºC was recorded in Wajir Meteorological station (**Figure 3a**)

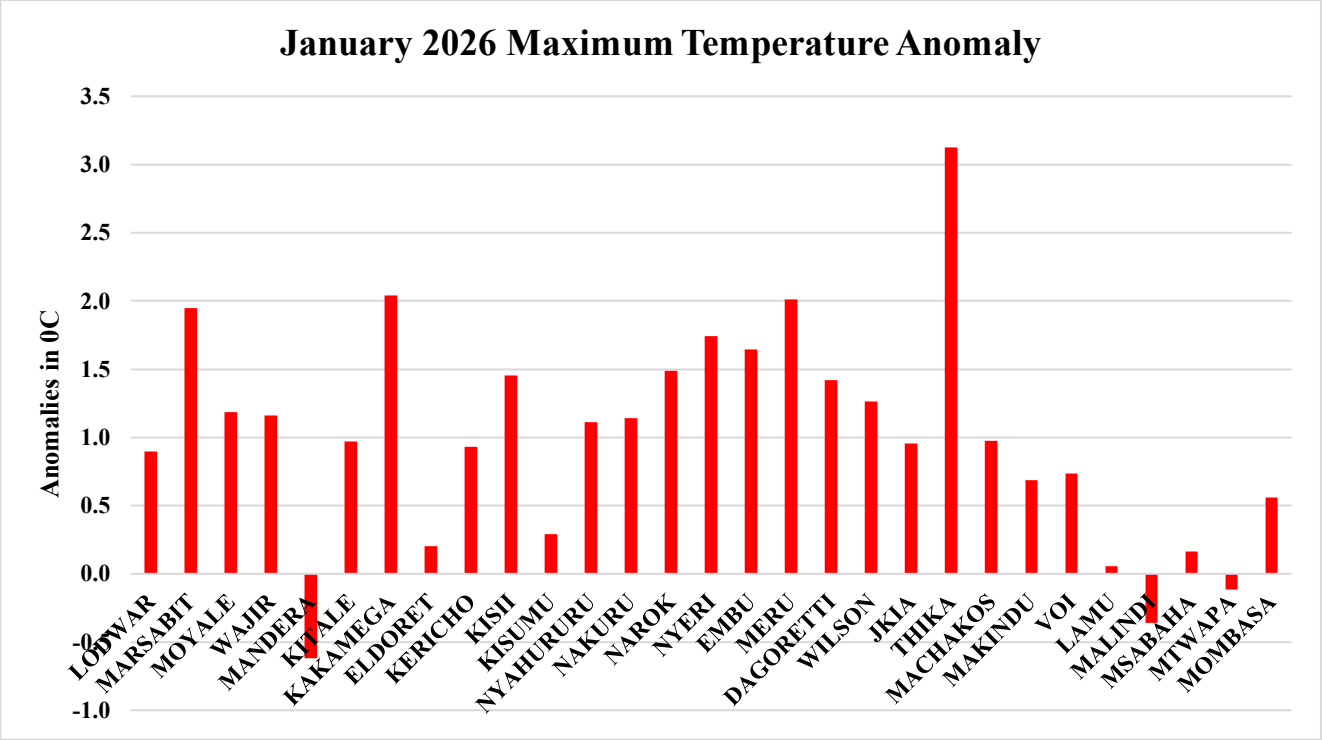

Figure 3a: January 2026 Maximum Temperature Anomalies

4.2.2 Minimum Temperature

Night time temperatures were also warmer than average over most parts of the country except in Lodwar, Kericho, Nyahururu where temperatures were cooler than average. The highest anomalies above 1 one degree Celsius were recorded over most of the Coastal region and parts of Northeast (Moyale, Wajir), Western Kenya (Kakamega and Nakuru) and Nairobi (Dagoretti and Wilson Airport). The highest anomaly of 1.50⁰C were observed in Lamu station. The highest minimum monthly temperature 25.4⁰C was recorded in Msabaha Meteorological station (**Figure 3b**)

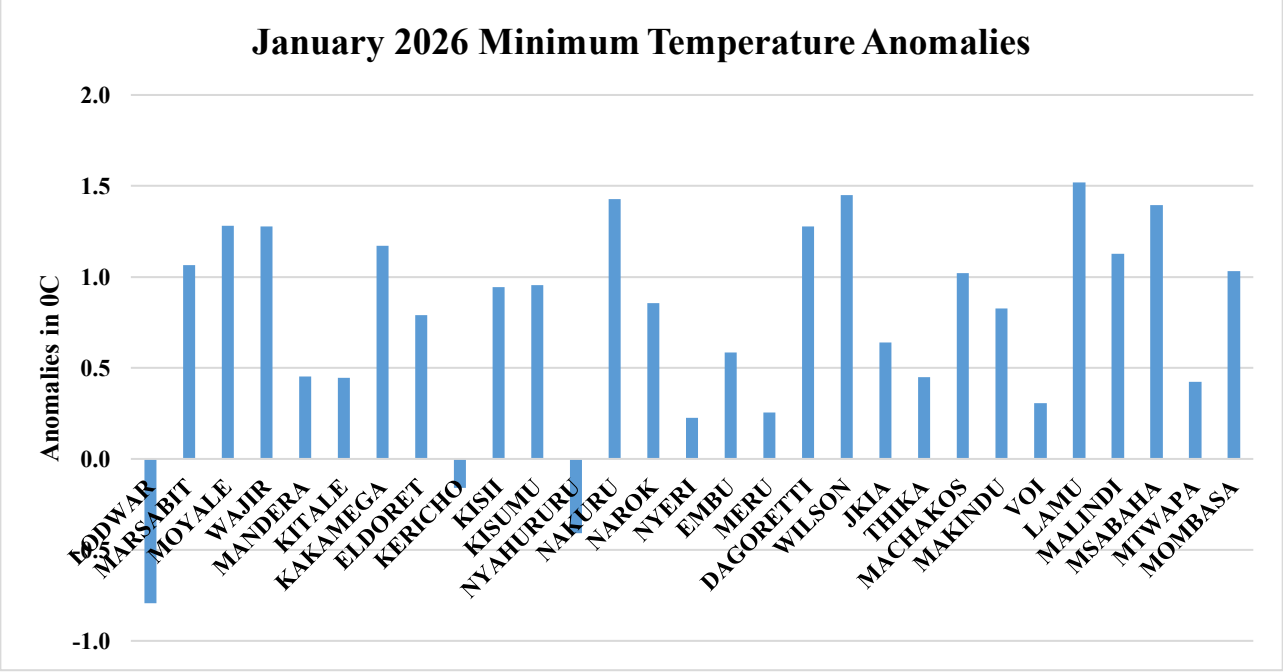

Figure 3b: January 2026 Minimum Temperature Anomalies

4.2.3 Mean Temperature

Mean temperatures across most parts of the country were warmer than average except in Mandera where cooler than average temperatures were observed. (**Figure 3c)**

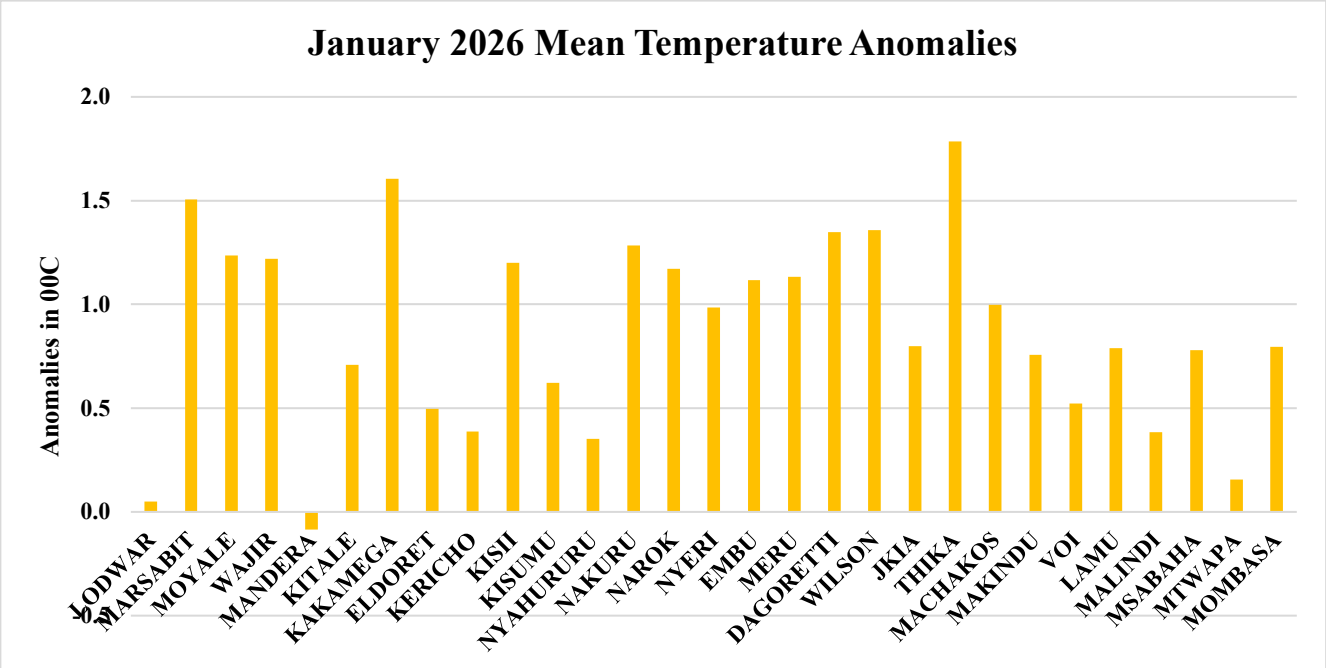

Figure 3c: January 2026 Mean Temperature Anomalies

NB: This outlook should be used together with the 24-hour, 5-day, 7-day, special forecasts and regular updates/advisories issued by this Department as well as Weekly and Monthly County forecasts developed and availed by County Meteorological Offices.

KEY OF SCIENTIFIC WORDS USED

Rainfall performance is generally categorized as follows:

- Below 75% of the LTM – Below Normal (Depressed) rainfall
- Between 75% and 125% of the LTM - Near normal rainfall
- Above 125% of the LTM – Above Normal (Enhanced) rainfall

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