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THE “OUTLOOK FOR LONG RAINS” (MARCH-APRIL-MAY 2026 SEASON)

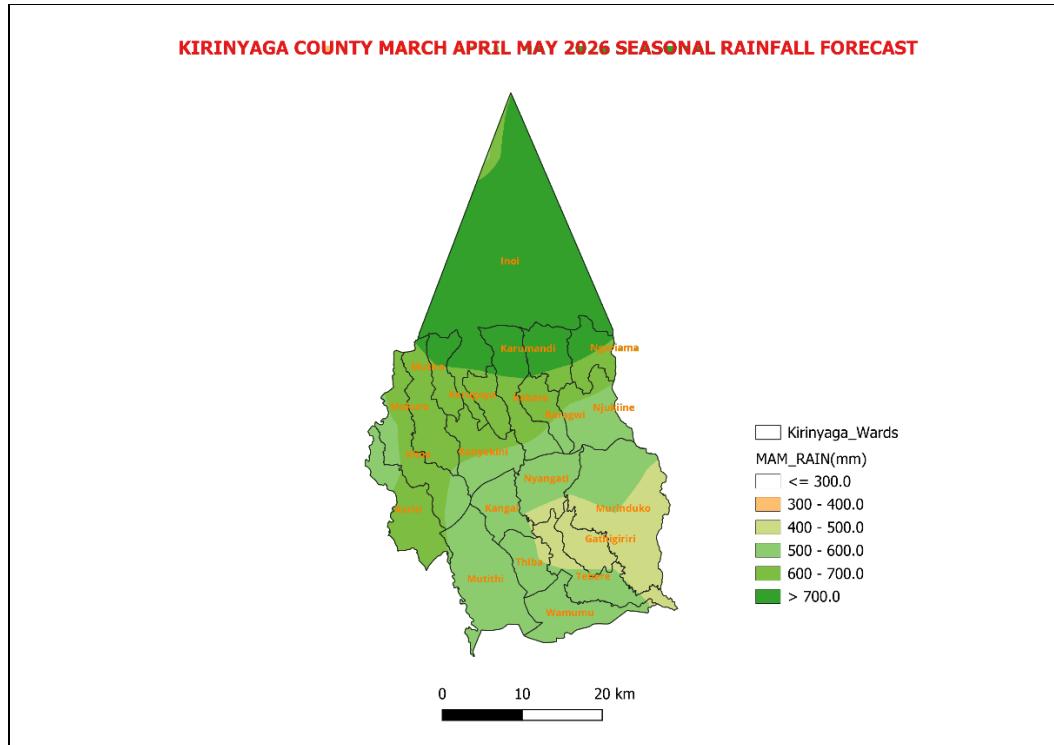
1. HIGHLIGHTS

1.1 Outlook for March-April-May 2026

- *Near Normal to Above Normal is expected over the highlands upper and middle altitude zones i.e Kabare, Baragwi, Njukiini, Ngariama, Karumandi, Mukure, Kiine, Mutira, Kanyekini, Kerugoya, Inoi, and in the lower zones of the county namely; Thiba, Wamumu, Nyangati, Murinduko, Gathigiriri, Rukanga and Tebere*
- *Most of the seasonal rainfall is expected during the peak month of April.*

1.2 Review of the rainfall conditions in October- November - December (OND) 2026

- *The October–November–December (OND) 2025 season in the county was marked by strong climatic contrasts whereby the county experienced near to below-average rainfall.*
- *The rainfall was poorly distributed in time and space with much of the county experiencing prolonged dry spells.*
- *Temperatures were generally warmer than average within the whole county.*



2. FORECAST FOR MARCH-APRIL-MAY (MAM) 2026 “SHORT- RAINS” SEASON

The “Long Rains” March to May (MAM) season constitutes an important rainfall season in the entire Kirinyaga County. During MAM 2026, it is expected that most parts of Kirinyaga County is likely to experience (Near Normal to Above Normal) rainfall.

3. EXPECTED SEASONAL RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION

The MAM 2026 rainfall distribution both in time and space throughout the season is likely to be fair to good with a possibility of occasional storms.

4. EXPECTED ONSET AND CESSATION DATES

The predicted onsets, cessations, and distribution of rainfall were derived from dynamical models and statistical analysis of the past year, which showed similar characteristics to the current year.

The analogue (similar) year chosen was 2023. The rainfall outcomes for this analogue year are for reference only and should not be interpreted as part of the forecast. Rather, they provide a sense of the rainfall outcomes that can occur given broadly similar global climate conditions.

Region	Onset Dates	Cessation Dates
Kirinyaga County.	2 nd week to 3 rd week of March 2026	3 rd to 4 th week of May 2026.

5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

In view of the forecasted Near Normal to Above Normal rainfall, many sectors are likely to be impacted in various ways. With adequate preparations, the county can avoid some of the likely negative impacts while taking full advantage of the positive ones. The most likely impacts are highlighted.

5.1 Agriculture, Food Security and Livestock Sectors

The Near Normal to Above Normal rainfall expected may have positive and negative impacts on agriculture, food security and livestock. In the agricultural areas of the County the farming communities should liaise with the county department of Agriculture for appropriate land-use management and for advice on the appropriate crops to be planted.

5.2 Transport and Public Safety

Flash floods during occasional rainstorms may lead to destruction of transport systems, especially infrastructure in low-lying areas. County Ministry of Roads & Public Works should open the drainage path ways and have the necessary resources ready for any eventuality.

5.3 Water Resources Management Sector

The Near Normal to Above Normal rainfall forecasted may lead to increased aquifer recharge and availability of water for all uses. Rain water harvesting any time it rains should also be encouraged to boost water availability in homes.

5.4 Energy Sector

The river catchment areas within the county are forecasted to receive Near Normal to Above Normal rainfall. Water levels in catchment areas and water pans are expected to increase.

5.5 Health Sector

The Near Normal to Above Normal rainfall is likely to lead to reduced malnutrition cases. Increased water availability may lead to reduced WASH related diseases.

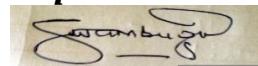
Possible flooding may however lead to:

a) Deaths, water contamination and subsequent outbreaks of waterborne diseases (e.g. cholera, typhoid and bilharzia) and vector-borne diseases (e.g. malaria, dengue and Rift Valley Fever).

5.6 Environment and Natural Resources Sectors

- a) The Near Normal to Above Normal rainfall is likely to lead to increased forest growth and regeneration through afforestation, reforestation and restoration activities.
- b) Enhanced water availability in forest catchments. Improved forest biodiversity and ecosystem health.
- c) Enhanced business opportunities for establishment of tree nurseries to raise stock for tree growing. Improved food security through Plantation Establishment and Livelihood Improvement Scheme (PELIS) within forest areas.

NB: This outlook should be used with 24 hour, 5-day, 7-day and monthly forecasts and regular updates issued by Kenya Meteorological Department.



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