REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTRY

State Department for Environment & Climate Change

KENYA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

Dagoretti Corner, Ngong Road, P. O. Box 30259, 00100 GPO, Nairobi, Kenya

Telephone: 254 (0) 20 3867880-7**,** 0724 255 153/4

E-mail: director@meteo.go.ke**,** info@meteo.go.ke **Website:** https://www.meteo.go.ke

Ref No: KMD/FCST/05-2026/MO/05 **Issue Date: 30th April 2026**

MONTHLY FORECAST FOR MAY, OUTLOOK THE NEXT THREE MONTHS (MAY-JUNE-JULY) AND REVIEW OF APRIL 2026

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Monthly Forecast for May 2026

The outlook indicates that near-average to above-average rainfall is likely to occur in a few areas in Northeastern Kenya. The Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin, the Rift Valley, the Coast and Northwestern Kenya are likely to experience near-average rainfall while the Southeastern Lowlands and much of Northeastern Kenya can expect near-average to below-average rainfall.

Mean temperatures are predicted to be warmer than average throughout the country.

1.2 Outlook for the Next Three Months (May-June-July 2026)

May marks the cessation of the long rains season in most parts of the country. Rainfall is expected to continue into June in the Highlands West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin, the Coast and parts of the Rift Valley and Northwestern Kenya. June is expected to be the beginning of the cold and dry season which will continue into July and August.

Mean temperatures are likely to be warmer than average over most parts of the country.

1.3 April 2026 Review

Rainfall was received in several parts of the country. Some parts of the Highlands East of the Rift Valley, the Coast and Northeastern Kenya recorded enhanced rainfall.

Mean temperatures were warmer than average in the Highlands East of the Rift Valley and cooler than average in Northeastern Kenya.

2.0 RAINFALL FORECAST FOR MAY 2026

2.1 May Rainfall Climatology

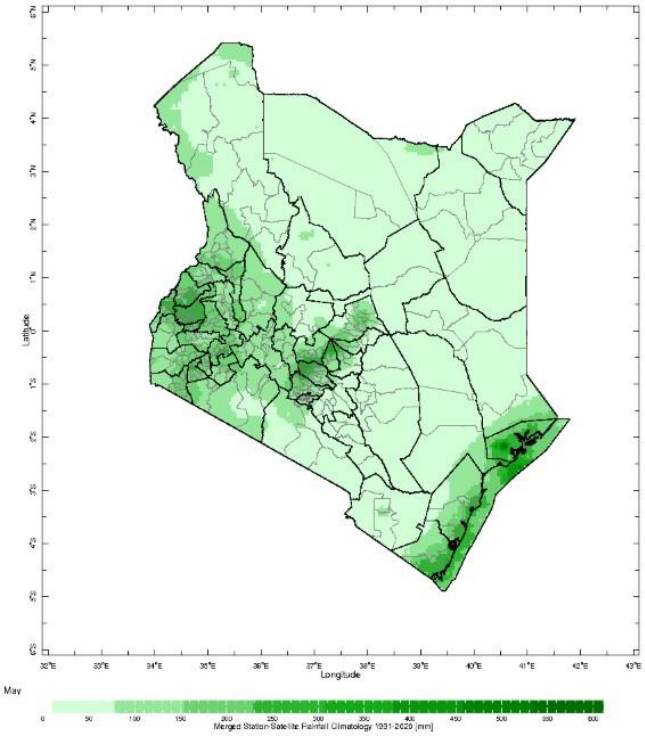

Figure 1: May Rainfall Climatology (1991-2020)

Climatologically, May marks the cessation of the March-April-May ("Long Rains") rainfall season over most parts of the country. However, in some parts of the Highlands West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin, the Coast and Northwestern Kenya, the rains continue into June.

The "Long Rains" end in May because the main rain-producing zone near the equator (the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone) shifts northwards as the sun moves into the Northern Hemisphere. This shift reduces moisture convergence over Kenya, weakening rainfall systems and allowing drier conditions to set in.

Most parts of the Southeastern Lowlands, Northeastern and Northwestern Kenya receive less than 100mm of rainfall in May (Figure 1).

2.2 Rainfall Forecast for May 2026

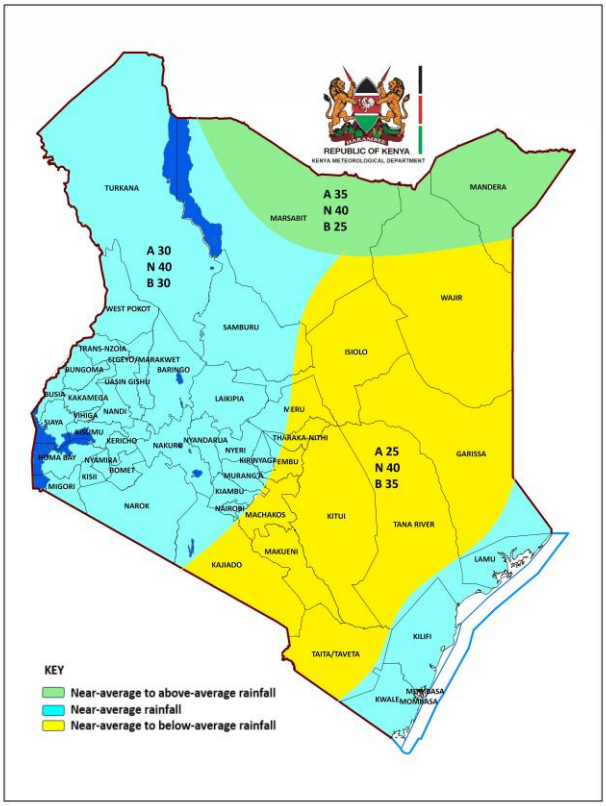

Figure 2: May 2026 Rainfall Forecast

The outlook indicates that near-average to above-average rainfall is likely to occur in a few areas in Northeastern Kenya. The Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin, the Rift Valley, the Coast and Northwestern Kenya are likely to experience near-average rainfall. The Southeastern Lowlands and much of Northeastern Kenya can expect near-average to below-average rainfall (Figure 2).

Rainfall is likely to be enhanced over much of the country during the first week of May when the Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO) is predicted to be in favourable phases. The enhanced rainfall may extend into the second week of May over a few areas. Depressed rainfall is expected during the second half of the month.

2.3 Detailed Regional Rainfall Forecast for May 2026

2.3.1 The Highlands West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin and the Rift Valley (Nandi, Kakamega, Vihiga, Bungoma, Siaya, Busia, Baringo, Nakuru, Trans-Nzoia, Uasin-Gishu, Elgeyo-Marakwet, West-Pokot, Kisii, Nyamira, Kericho, Bomet, Kisumu, Homabay, Migori and Narok Counties):

Rainfall is likely to be near-average. Heavy rainfall events are likely to occur in several parts of the region during the first half of the month.

2.3.2 North-western Kenya (Turkana and Samburu Counties):

Rainfall is likely to be near-average. Heavy rainfall events are likely to occur in a few parts of the region during the first half of the month.

2.3.3 The Highlands East of the Rift Valley (Nyandarua, Laikipia, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Murang'a, Kiambu, Meru, Embu, Tharaka-Nithi and Nairobi Counties):

Rainfall is likely to be near-average in Laikipia, Nyeri, Nyandarua, Murang'a, Kirinyaga, Kiambu, Nairobi and the western parts of Meru, Tharaka Nithi and Embu counties. The eastern parts of Meru, Tharaka Nithi and Embu counties are likely to experience near-average to below-average rainfall. Heavy rainfall events are likely to occur in several parts of the region during the first half of the month.

2.3.4 North-eastern Kenya (Marsabit, Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Isiolo Counties):

Rainfall is likely to be near-average to above-average in Mandera and the northern parts of Wajir and Marsabit counties. The remaining areas are likely to experience near-average to below-average rainfall. Heavy rainfall events are likely to occur in a few parts of the region during the first half of the month.

2.3.5 The South-eastern lowlands (Machakos, Kitui, Makueni, Kajiado and Taita-Taveta Counties as well as the inland parts of Tana-River County):

Rainfall is likely to be near-average to below-average over much of the region except the western parts of Kajiado county where near-average rainfall is expected. Heavy rainfall events are likely to occur in a few parts of the region during the first half of the month.

2.3.6 The Coast (Mombasa, Kilifi, Lamu and Kwale Counties as well as the Tana Delta):

Rainfall is likely to be near-average. Heavy rainfall events are likely to occur in few parts of the region during the first half of the month.

3.0 TEMPERATURE FORECAST FOR MAY 2026

3.1 May Temperature Climatology

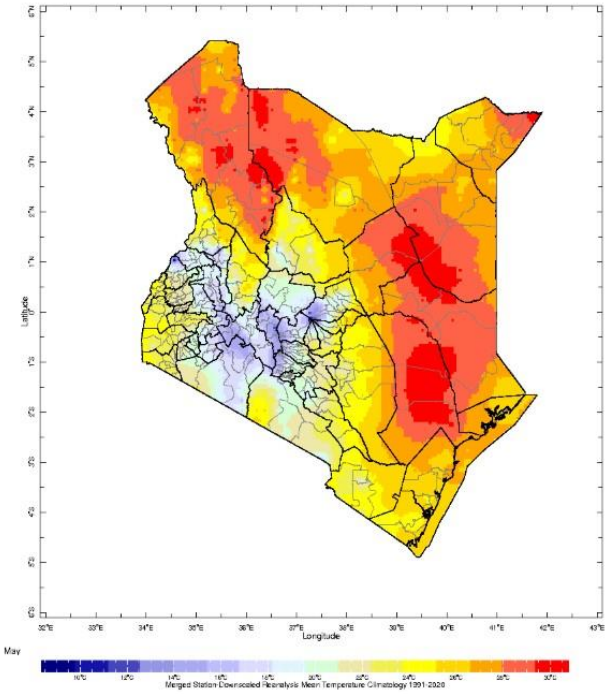

Figure 3: May Mean Temperature Climatology (1991-2020)

In May, Kenya's mean temperatures reflect the combined effects of altitude, cloud cover from the long rains, and regional aridity.

The Southeastern Lowlands, Northeastern and Northwestern Kenya experience the highest mean temperatures, often exceeding 30°C, due to dry conditions and low elevation.

In contrast, the Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley are cooler with mean temperatures generally remaining below 24°C (Figure 3) due persistent cloud cover and rainfall that limits daytime heating.

The Coast is generally warm and humid with mean temperatures of between 26°C and 30°C due to the influence of the Indian Ocean.

3.2 Detailed Regional Temperature Forecast for May 2026

Mean temperatures are expected to be warmer than average throughout the country more so over the Coast. Predicted maximum and minimum temperature ranges for individual regions are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Maximum and Minimum Temperature Ranges

Region	**Maximum Temperature Range**	**Minimum Temperature Range**
Highlands West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin and the Rift Valley *(Nandi, Kakamega, Vihiga, Bungoma, Siaya, Busia, Baringo, Nakuru, Trans-Nzoia, Uasin-Gishu, Elgeyo-Marakwet, West-Pokot, Kisii, Nyamira, Kericho, Bomet, Kisumu, Homabay, Migori and Narok Counties).*	18°C to 31°C	09°C to 21°C
North-western *(Turkana and Samburu Counties)*	20°C to 39°C	08°C to 28°C
Highlands East of the Rift Valley *(Nyandarua, Laikipia, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Murang'a, Kiambu, Meru, Embu, Tharaka-Nithi and Nairobi Counties)*	20°C to 29°C	05°C to 18°C
North-eastern *(Marsabit, Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Isiolo Counties)*	22°C to 39°C	16°C to 26°C
Southeastern Lowlands: *(Machakos, Kitui, Makueni, Kajiado and Taita-Taveta Counties as well as the inland parts of Tana-River County)*	23°C to 33°C	10°C to 22°C
Coast *(Mombasa, Kilifi, Lamu and Kwale Counties and the Tana Delta)*	26°C to 34°C	23°C to 27°C

4.0 POTENTIAL SECTORAL IMPACTS OF THE MAY 2026 RAINS

4.1 Agriculture

Continued heavy rainfall over the Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin and the Rift Valley is likely to worsen waterlogging, flooding of croplands, and physical damage to crops, while also increasing soil erosion and nutrient leaching.

In the Southeastern Lowlands and parts of Northeastern Kenya, near-average to below-average rainfall combined with episodic heavy storms may lead to uneven soil moisture conditions that may stress crops already weakened by earlier rains.

4.2 Water Resources and Flood Management

Water resources and flood-prone catchments may experience heightened pressure as rivers, dams and drainage systems in high-rainfall areas continue to receive significant inflows following wet conditions in April. Expected heavy rainfall in the first week of May increases the likelihood of river overflows, flash floods and prolonged inundation in low-lying and downstream areas. In contrast, regions expecting near-average to below-average rainfall may see only modest improvement in surface and groundwater availability.

4.3 Transport and Infrastructure

Transport and infrastructure are likely to face persistent disruptions, particularly in the Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin and the Rift Valley, where heavy early-May rainfall may further damage roads and bridges already weakened by prolonged wet conditions. Water-logged roads and flooded underpasses could increase travel delays and isolate communities.

4.4 Health

Public health risks are likely to remain elevated as continued wet conditions favour the spread of water-borne diseases, contamination of water sources and expansion of mosquito breeding habitats, especially in areas expecting heavy rainfall early in May. Flood-affected settlements may face increased exposure to diarrhoeal diseases, cholera and malaria due to standing water and poor sanitation.

4.5 Disaster Management and Humanitarian Response

Expected heavy rainfall during the first week of May sustains the threat of flash floods, landslides and displacement in already vulnerable regions. Emergency response systems may experience prolonged strain due to repeated incidents rather than isolated events, particularly in high-rainfall zones. In areas where near-average to below-average rainfall is expected, localized heavy storms may still trigger sudden emergencies despite otherwise moderate monthly totals.

5.0 OUTLOOK FOR MAY-JUNE-JULY

The outlook for May indicates that the second half of the month is likely to drier than average implying the cessation of the March-April-May 2026 rainfall season over much of the Highlands East of the Rift Valley, the Southeastern Lowlands and Northeastern Kenya.

Rainfall is expected to continue into June in the Highlands West of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin, the Coast and parts of the Rift Valley and Northwestern Kenya. However, this rainfall may be near-average to below-average.

June is the climatological start of the cold and dry season in Kenya. During this month, several parts of the country especially the Highlands East and West of the Rift Valley, the Rift Valley and the Southeastern Lowlands are likely to start experiencing cool and cloudy days. Both minimum

and maximum temperatures are expected to start dropping over much of the country during this month.

July is expected to be the peak of the cold and dry season. Cold and cloudy days are likely to persist over several parts of the country. The cloudiness may be accompanied by light rains and fog. Minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to be lowest during this month.

Mean temperatures in May-June-July 2026 are likely to be warmer than average throughout the country.

6.0 APRIL 2026 REVIEW (AS AT 29TH APRIL 2026)

6.1 Review of April 2026 Rainfall Performance

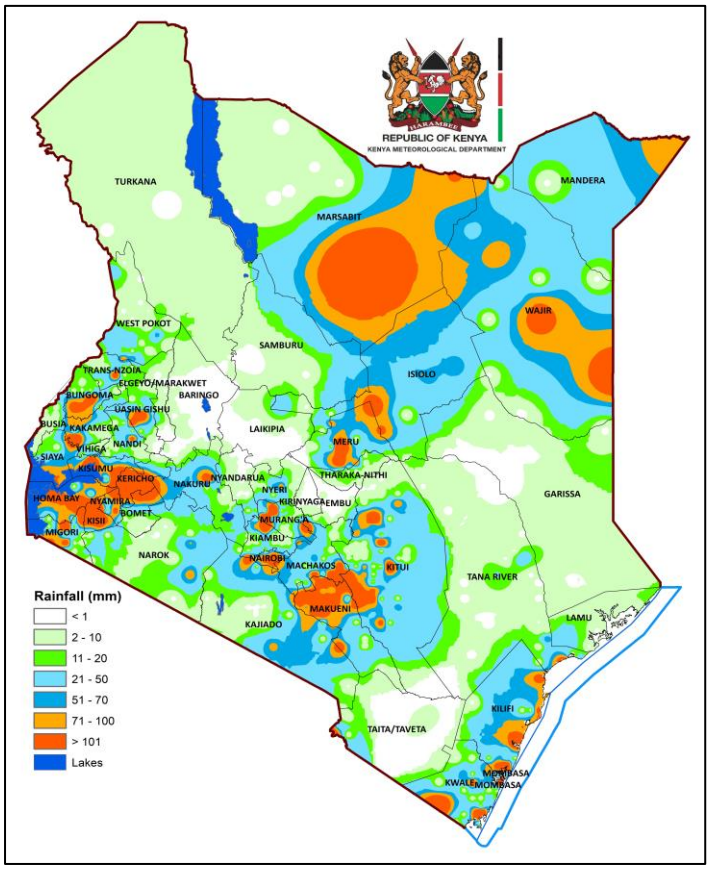

Figure 4: April 2026 Rainfall Totals

Rainfall was received in several parts of the country (Figure 4).

Figure 5 compares the total rainfall amounts recorded in April (Blue bars) to April LTMs (Red bars). From this figure it can be seen that some parts of the Highlands East of the Rift Valley, the Coast and Northeastern Kenya surpassed their April LTMs. Conversely, some stations such as Lodwar, Nyahururu, Narok, Kakamega, Voi and Nyeri recorded rainfall that was below their April LTMs.

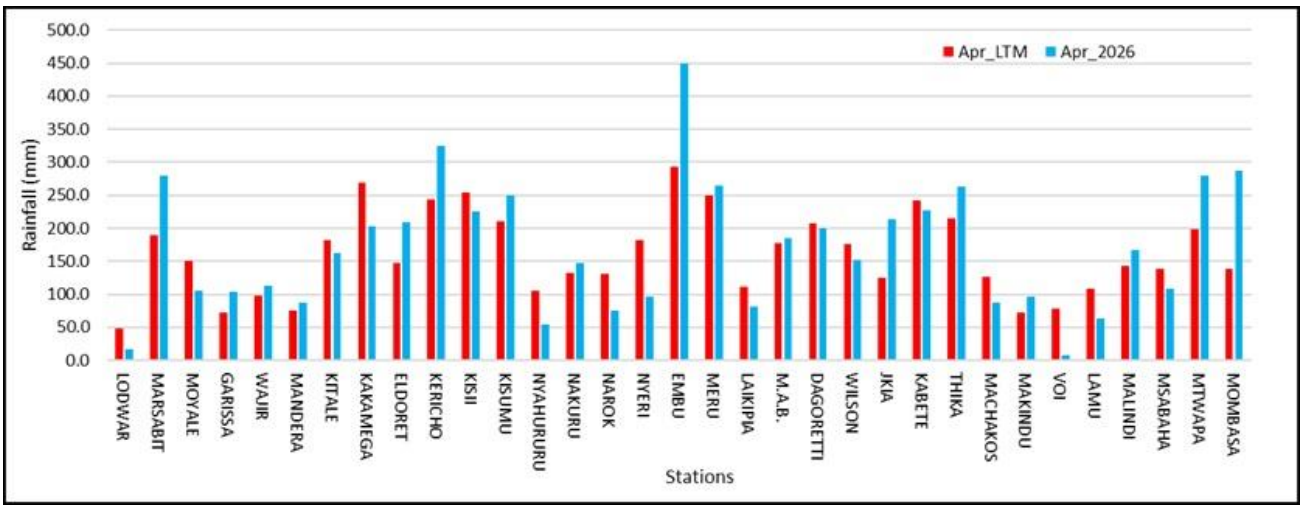

Figure 5: April 2026 Rainfall Totals against April LTMs

The highest monthly rainfall total (448.9mm) was recorded at Embu Meteorological Station. Marsabit Meteorological Station recorded the highest amount of rainfall within 24-hours: 232.4mm on 25th April 2026.

6.2 Review of April 2026 Temperatures

6.2.1 Maximum Temperature Review

Several parts of the country recorded cooler than average maximum (daytime) temperatures (Figure 6). The highest positive anomaly (1.0°C) was recorded at Kakamega Meteorological Station while the lowest negative anomaly (-1.6°C) was recorded at Marsabit Meteorological Station. Mandera and Lodwar Meteorological Stations recorded the highest daily maximum temperature: 38.0°C on 8th and 11th April 2026 respectively.

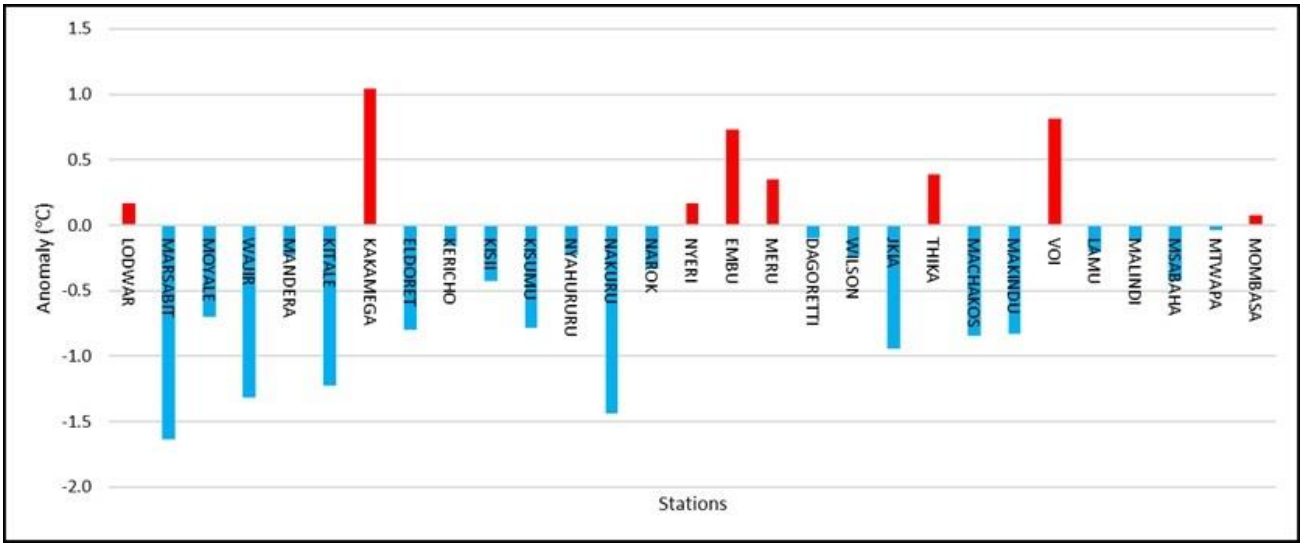

Figure 6: April 2026 Maximum Temperature Anomalies

6.2.2 Minimum Temperature Review

Minimum (nighttime) temperatures were warmer than average in most parts of the country (Figure 7). The highest positive anomaly 6.9°C was recorded at Voi Meteorological Station while Wajir Meteorological Station recorded the lowest negative anomaly (-0.5°C). Nyahururu Meteorological Station recorded the lowest daily minimum temperature: 6.2°C on 11th April 2026.

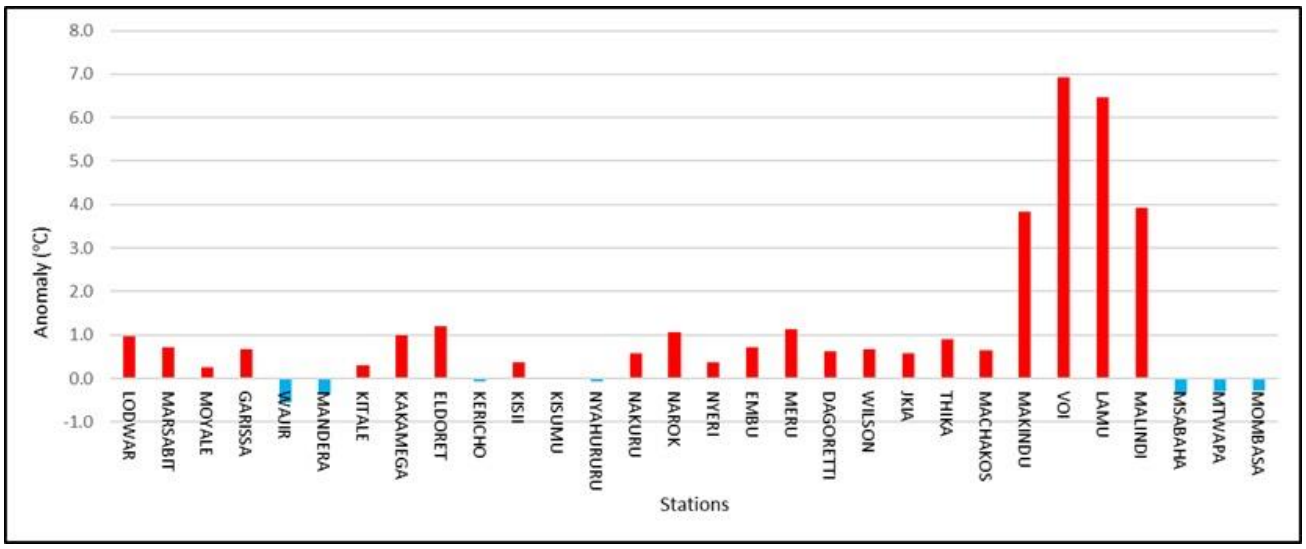

Figure 7: April 2026 Minimum Temperature Anomalies

6.2.1 Mean Temperature Review

Mean temperatures were warmer than average in a number of stations including Kakamega, Voi and Meru and cooler than average in Wajir, Marsabit and Kitale among others (Figure 8).

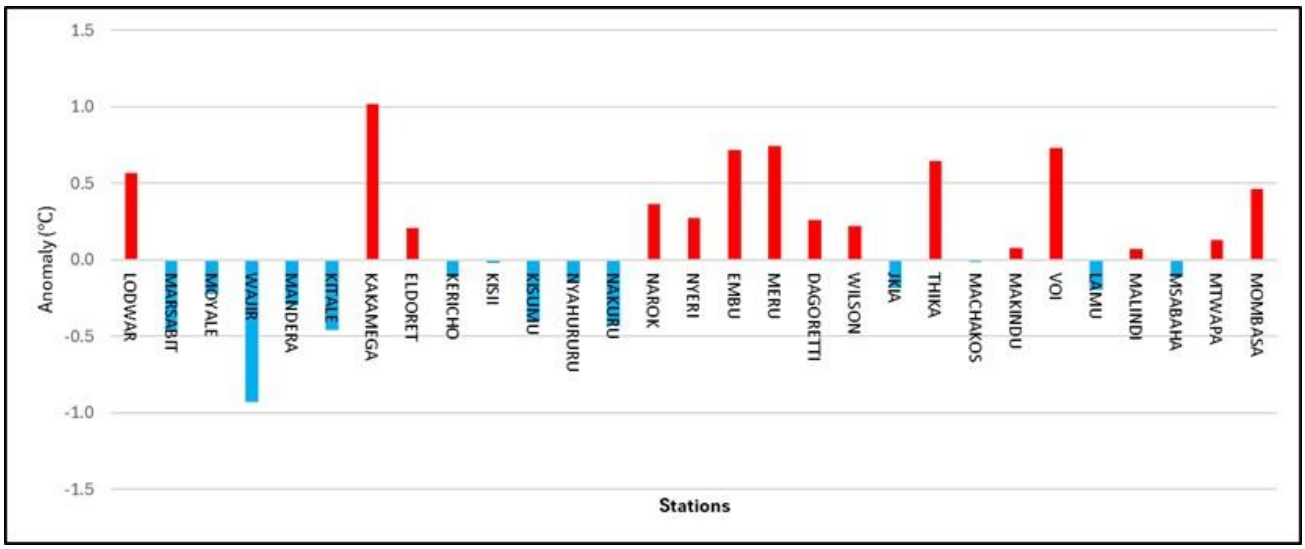

Figure 8: April 2026 Mean Temperature Anomalies

N.B: This outlook should be used together with the 24-hour, 5-day, 7-day and special forecasts as well as regular updates/advisories issued by this Department. County specific weekly forecasts and monthly outlooks are available from the offices of respective County Directors of Meteorological Services.

Edward M. Muriuki
Ag. DIRECTOR, KENYA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX I: INTERPRETATION OF TERMS USED

Term	Rainfall Amount (24 hrs.)	Description
Below normal/average	< 75% of the LTM	Depressed rainfall.
Normal/average	75% to 125% of the LTM	Near average rainfall.
Above normal/average	>125% of the LTM	Enhanced rainfall.
LTM		Long term mean

Term	Rainfall Amount (24 hrs.)	Description
Light	< 5 mm	Gentle rain, drizzle.
Moderate	5–20 mm	Steady, noticeable rain.
Heavy	21–50 mm	Intense rain, possible thunder.
Very Heavy	> 50 mm	Prolonged rain, high intensity.

Term	Area Affected	Description
Few places	< 33%	Rain in a small portion of the region.
Several places	33% to 66%	Rain in multiple but not most parts of the region.
Most places	> 66%	Rain in nearly all parts of the region.

Term	Area Affected	Description
Isolated	Less than 25%	Very few areas affected.
Scattered	25–50%	Several, but not most, areas affected.
Numerous	51–70%	Many areas affected.
Widespread	Over 70%	Almost all areas affected.

Term	Time Coverage (%)	Meaning
Occasional	Less than 25%	Happens rarely or a few times.
Intermittent	25% – 50%	Starts and stops, comes and goes.
Frequent	51% – 75%	Occurs regularly.
Very Frequent / Common	More than 75%	Happens almost all the time.

Term	Probability of Occurrence	Description
Possible	10–30%	There is low confidence.
Chance of/ May	31–50%	There is moderate confidence.
Likely	51–75%	The event is more probable than not.
Expected	76–90%	There is high confidence.
Very Likely	91–99%	There is very high confidence. Almost certain.
Certain	100%	The event is guaranteed to occur.