



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTRY KENYA
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT**

Date of Issue: 30th April 2026

MAY OUTLOOK, REVIEW OF APRIL AND OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS (MAY-JUNE-JULY) 2026 FOR THARAKA NITHI COUNTY

1.0 Highlights

1.1 Outlook for May 2026

The outlook for May 2026 indicates that near-average to below average rainfall is expected over Tharaka Nithi County. The mean temperatures are predicted to be warmer than average throughout the county.

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

May marks the cessation of long rain season in Tharaka Nithi County. June is expected to be the start 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 county.

1.3 April 2026 Review

Rainfall was received in several parts of the county. The county received near average to below average rainfall. Mean temperatures were warmer than average.

2.0 Rainfall forecast for May 2026

2.1 May rainfall Climatology

Climatologically, May marks the cessation of March-April-May (“Long Rains”) rainfall season over several parts of the country, including Tharaka Nithi County.

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.

2.2 Rainfall Forecast for May 2026

The outlook indicates that Tharaka Nithi County is likely to experience near- average to below average rainfall, as shown in Fig 1 below.

Rainfall is likely to be enhanced over Mara and parts of Chuka/Igambang’ombe sub-counties during the first week of May when Maden Julian-Oscillation (MJO) is predicted to be in favourable phases. The enhanced rainfall may extend into the second week of May over few areas, in the aforementioned sub-counties.

Depressed rainfall is expected over the county during the second half of the month.

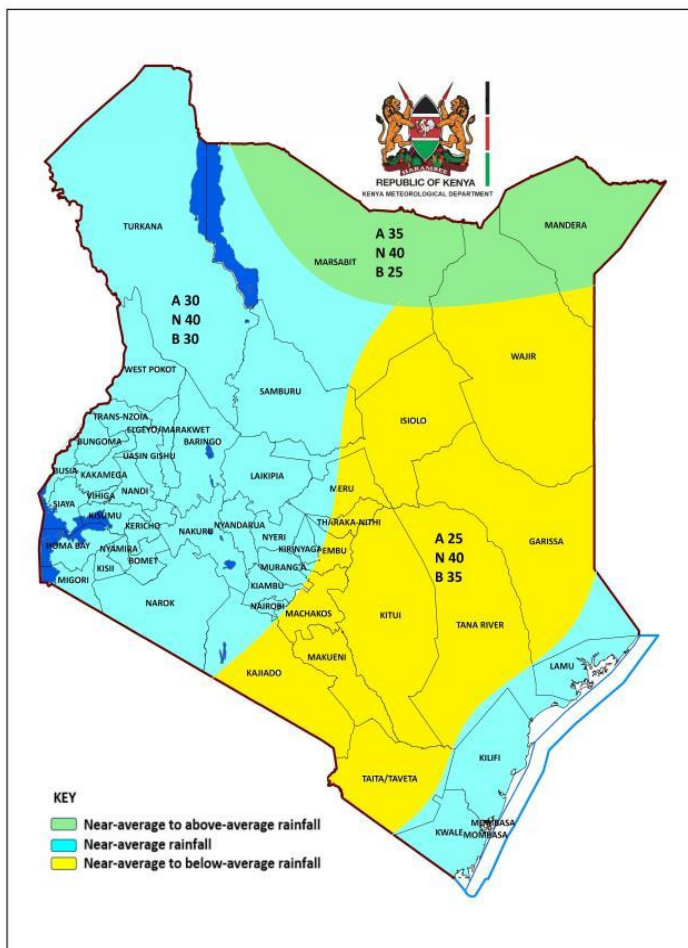


Fig 1: May 2026 Rainfall Outlook

3.0 Potential Sectoral impacts of May 2026 Rains

3.1 Agriculture

Continued heavy rainfall over the county is likely to worsen water-logging, flooding of crop lands, and physical damage to crops, while also increasing soil erosion and leaching of soil nutrients.

3.2 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.

3.3 Transport and Infrastructure

Transport and infrastructure are likely to face persistent disruptions, particularly in high ground areas of the County, where heavy early-May rainfall may further damage roads and bridges already weakened by prolonged wet conditions.

Flooded roads especially in lowlands could increase travel delays.

3.4 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.

Flood-affected areas of the county (lowlands) may face increased exposure to malaria (due to standing water) and diarrhea and cholera diseases, if sanitation is poor.

3.5 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 lowlands (arid and semi-arid areas), localized heavy storms may still trigger sudden emergencies.

4.0 Outlook for May-June-July

The outlook for May indicates that the second half of the month is likely to be drier than average, implying the cessation of the March-April-May 2026 rainfall season.

June is the climatological start of the cold and dry season in Kenya. During this month, several parts of the country, including Tharaka Nithi county, start experiencing cool and cloudy days. Both maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to start dropping over the county 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 most parts of the county. The cloudiness may be accompanied by light rains and fog. Both 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 county.

5.0 April 2026 Review (As at 30th April 2026)

The below figure (Fig 2) shows rainfall received in April over the county against the Long-term Means. Rainfall amounts were recorded in decads. It's evident that in the first decad, rainfall was depressed while in the second decad, near average rainfall was received. Moreover, rainfall was enhanced over some parts of the county in the last ten days of April.

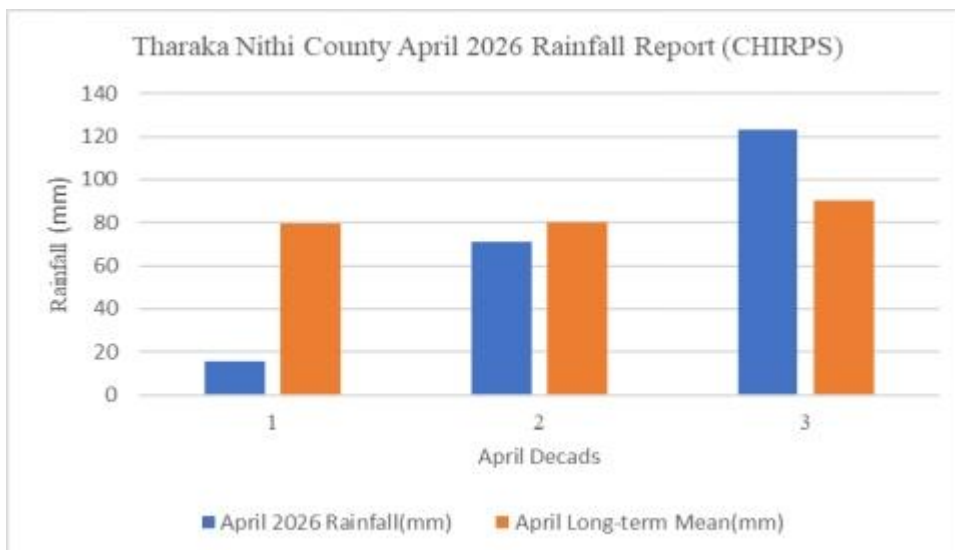


Fig 2: April 2026 Rainfall against April Mean

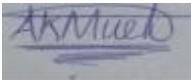
Key of scientific terms used

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.

Commentary of County Weather Forecaster:

This forecast should be used in conjunction with the daily, Five day, Seven day, regular updates and advisories issued by Kenya Meteorological Department.

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For more information about the climate and weather in Kenya visit KMD website at

<http://www.meteo.go.ke/>