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**TECHNICAL STATEMENT FROM THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK
FORUM (#NCOF13)**

Ref No: KMSA/FCST/08-2026/TS/02

Issue Date: 26th Aug 2026

**1. CLIMATE OUTLOOK FOR THE OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER (OND) 2026
"SHORT RAINS" SEASON**

1.1 Rainfall Outlook for the October-November-December (OND), 2026

The "Short Rains" (October–November–December, OND) season is an important rainfall season in Kenya, especially over Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Marsabit, Isiolo, Meru, Tharaka Nithi, Makueni, Kitui Taita Taveta, Machakos counties and parts of Kajiado and Tana River where it contributes to over 40% of the total annual rainfall. More than 700 mm of rainfall is received in some parts of the country during this season, as shown in **Figures 1a and 1b**.

The season occurs due to the southward migration of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ). Its duration and performance are influenced by the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), which enhances rainfall when in the positive phase. The ongoing strong El Niño event also enhances rainfall when it occurs concurrently with a positive IOD. On shorter timescales, rainfall intensity is influenced by the Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO) and the development of tropical cyclones over the Southwest Indian Ocean.

The Climate Outlook for the October–December 2026 "Short Rains" season indicates that above-average rainfall is expected over Baringo, Bomet, Bungoma, Busia, Elgeyo Marakwet, Embu, Garissa, Homa Bay, Isiolo, Kajiado, Kakamega, Kericho, Kiambu, Kilifi, Kirinyaga, Kisii, Kisumu, Kitui, Kwale, Laikipia, Lamu, Machakos, Makueni, Mandera, Meru, Migori, Mombasa,

Murang'a, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nandi, Narok, Nyamira, Nyandarua, Nyeri, Siaya, Taita/Taveta, Tana River, Tharaka-Nithi, Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Vihiga, Wajir, and much of West Pokot, Samburu and Marsabit Counties (**Figure 2**).

Near-average to above-average rainfall is likely over Turkana and a few parts of West Pokot, Samburu and Marsabit Counties. In Figure 2, areas projected to receive above-average rainfall are depicted in **dark green**, while those expected to receive near-average rainfall with a tendency towards above-average amounts are shown in **light green**.

According to the most recent update, the 2026 El Niño event continues to intensify across the central-eastern equatorial Pacific. The traditional Niño 3.4 index shows a clear and sustained increase, with the most recent seasonal mean reaching +1.51 °C during May–July 2026. and the July monthly value rising to +2.03 °C. The latest weekly Niño 3.4 index, centred on 12 August 2026, reached +2.7 °C. These observations indicate that El Niño is strengthening further and evolving toward a very strong event.

The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is currently neutral. As of 23 August 2026, the weekly IOD index stood at +0.17°C which is below the positive IOD threshold (+0.4°C). Sustained values above this threshold are required for eight consecutive weeks before a positive IOD event is considered established. The current IOD value is expected to increase in magnitude and surpass the threshold from September 2026 although some uncertainty remains regarding its timing and strength. The maximum predicted IOD value for the season is +0.7, which is closer to the level observed in 2015 than to those recorded in 2023 or 1997. The Kenya Meteorological Service Authority (KMSA) will continue to closely monitor El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and IOD conditions.

1.2 Expected Distribution of the OND Rainfall, Onset and Cessation Dates

1.2.1 Distribution

The predicted onsets, cessations, and distribution of rainfall were derived from dynamical models and statistical analysis of the selected analogue years, which showed similar characteristics to the current year, and are indicated in **Table 1**.

The analogue (similar) year is 2015 based on the most recent evolution and prediction of both the ENSO and IOD. The rainfall outcomes for this analogue year (2015), is for reference only and should not be interpreted as the forecast. Analogue years provide a sense of the rainfall outcomes that can occur under broadly similar global climate conditions.

The OND 2026 rainfall is expected to be fairly to well distributed, both in time and space, over several parts of the country, except over Turkana and Samburu where the distribution is likely to be poor to fair. This season will be marked by prolonged wet spells and occasional isolated storms over several parts of the country.

1.2.2 Onset and Cessation

The expected onset and cessation dates for the Counties are as indicated in **Table 1**

Table 1: Expected Onset and Cessation for the OND 2026 Rains

Counties	Onset Dates	Cessation Dates	Distribution
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	Continues from September	Continues into January	Fair to good
Nyandarua, Laikipia, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Murang'a, Kiambu, Meru, Embu, Tharaka-Nithi and Nairobi	2 nd to 3 rd week of October	Continues into January	Fair to good
Machakos, Kitui, Makueni, Kajiado, Taita-Taveta and inland parts of Tana-River County	3 rd to 4 th week of October	Continues into January	Fair to good
Mombasa, Kwale, Lamu, Kilifi and the Tana Delta	2 nd to 3 rd week of October	1 st to 2 nd week of December	Fair to good
Turkana and Samburu	3 rd to 4 th week of October	1 st week of December	Poor to Fair
Marsabit, Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Isiolo	2 nd to 3 rd week of October	1 st to 2 nd week of December	Fair to good

NB: Updates on the onset, distribution, and cessation of rainfall will be provided regularly through weekly, monthly forecasts as the season approaches. These updates will offer detailed insights into any changes and developments in rainfall patterns to keep stakeholders informed and support timely decision-making.

1.3 Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) forecast

The SPI forecast for the October–November–December (OND) 2026 season indicates that the probability of the occurrence of mild, moderate or severe drought events is low over most parts of the country. There is however a 15 to 20% chance of a mild drought event in Turkana. The forecast probabilities for the two scenarios are shown in **Figure 4**.

1.4 OND 2026 Temperature Outlook

October–November–December Temperature Climatology

The October–November–December season in Kenya is generally warm with mean temperatures ranging from about 17°C in Kericho and Uasin Gishu Counties to over 30°C in parts of Turkana County (**Figure 5a**).

The warm temperatures are due to the southward migration of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) that is associated with warm humid air. During this season, day-to-night temperature variations is generally small across much of Kenya as illustrated in **figure 5a**.

1.5 Temperature Forecast for October–November–December 2026

Mean temperatures are predicted to be warmer than average during the season with higher probabilities over Kwale, Mombasa, Kilifi, Lamu and parts of Tana River, Taita/Taveta and Garissa Counties. (**Figure 5b**).

1.6 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE OND 2026 RAINS

The expected enhanced rainfall during the months of October to December rainfall season is expected to have both negative and positive impacts across various sectors. The most likely impacts on various sectors will be highlighted by the sector leads.

NB: There are intraseasonal drivers of variability, such as tropical cyclones and the Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO), that are only predictable at shorter lead times. It is therefore imperative to stay up to date with subsequent forecasts and updates.

This outlook should be used together with the 24-hour, 5-day, 7day, monthly, special forecasts and regular updates/advisories issued by this Authority as well as weekly and monthly county forecasts developed and availed by County Meteorological Offices.



Charles Mugah

FOR: Ag. DIRECTOR GENERAL, KENYA METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE AUTHORITY

Annexes

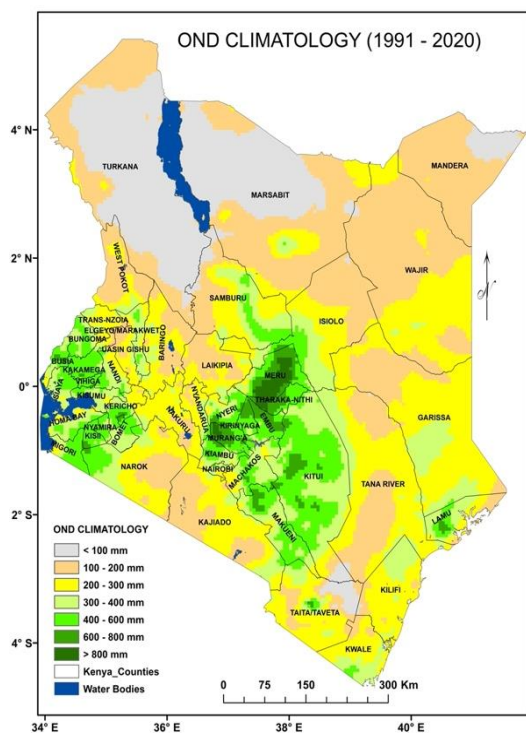


Figure 1a: October to December Rainfall Climatology

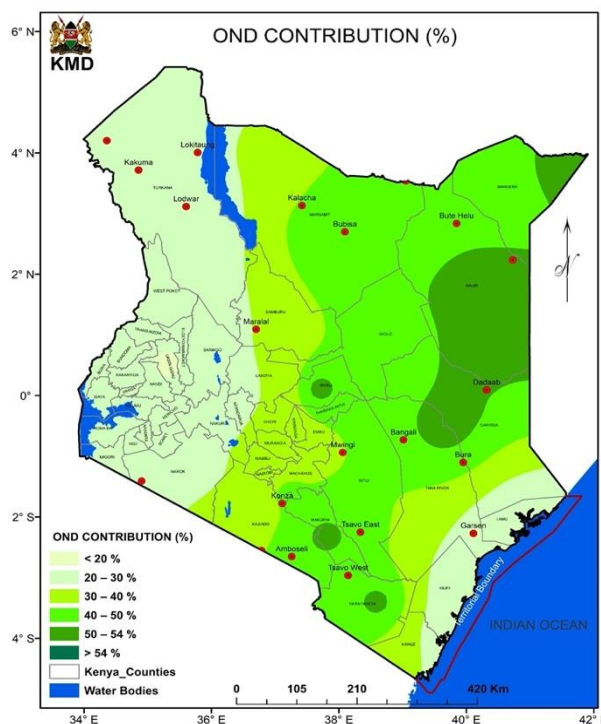


Figure 1b: OND contribution to Annual Rainfall

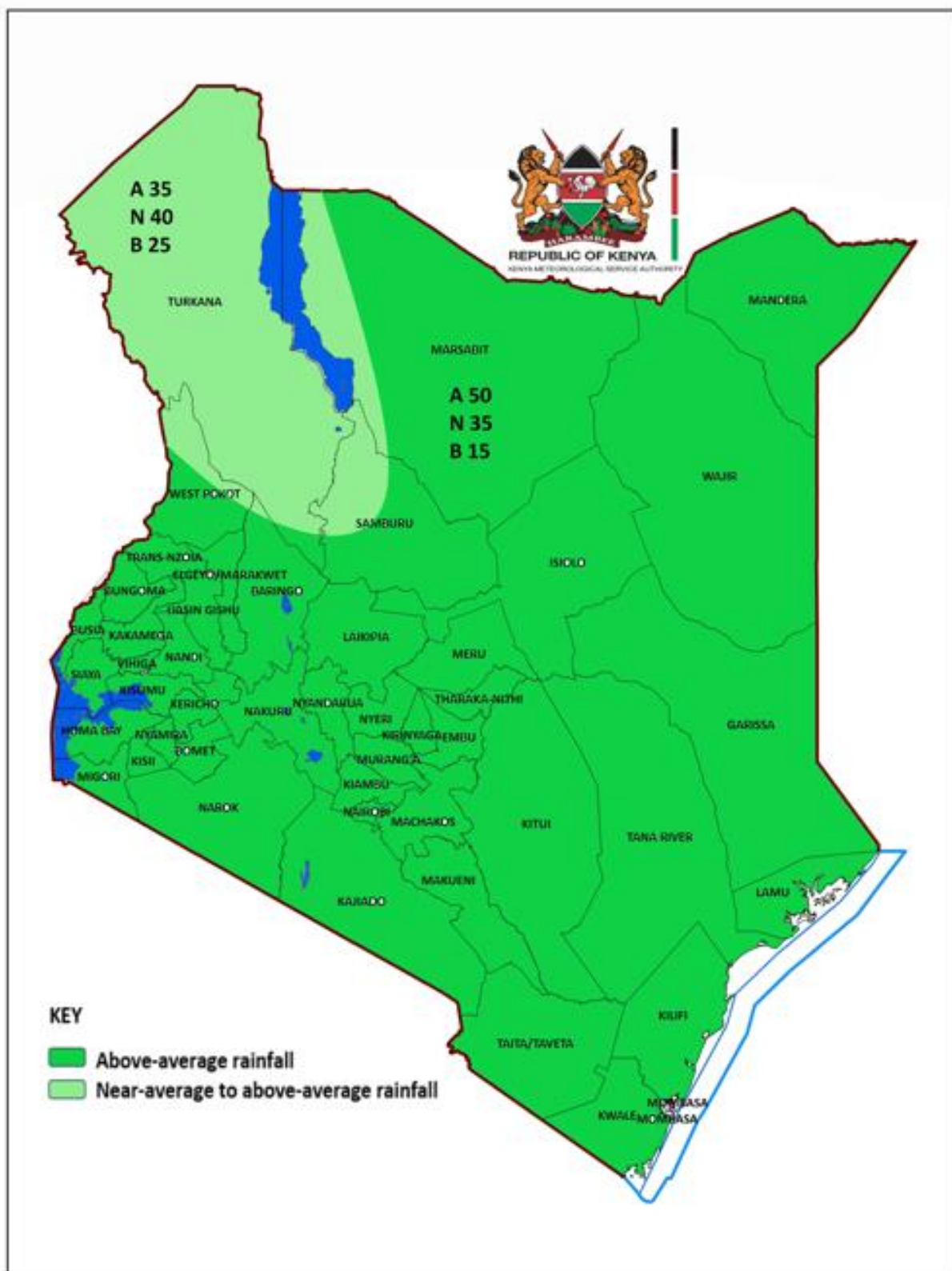
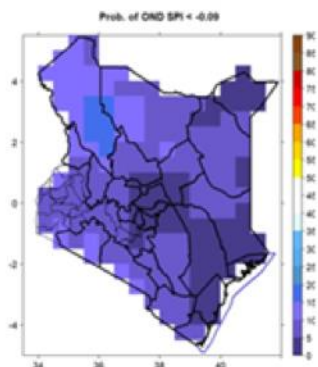


Figure 2: OND 2026 Rainfall Outlook

Figure 3: OND 2026 Rainfall Onset

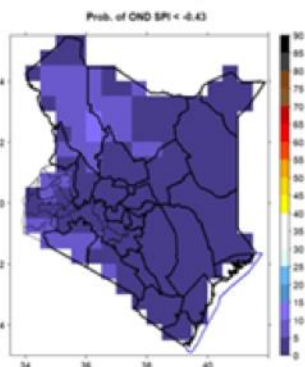
SPI

Forecast probabilities of SPI, Kenya: OND 2026 - initialised: August
number of models = 1 ; mm4_probs



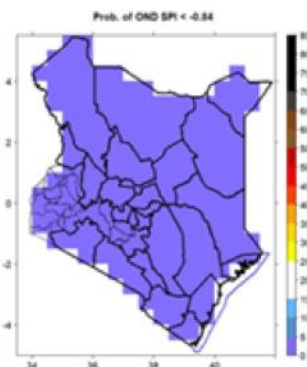
< -0.09
1.5% to 18%:
0.4 times the climatological chance, or
lower. Lowest chance in east

Forecast probabilities of SPI, Kenya: OND 2026 - initialised: August
number of models = 1 ; mm4_probs



< -0.43
0.2% to 12%:
0.35 times the climatological chance or
lower. Lowest chance central and east

Forecast probabilities of SPI, Kenya: OND 2026 - initialised: August
number of models = 1 ; mm4_probs



< -0.98
0% to 5%:
0.2 times the climatological
chance or lower.

Figure 4: OND 2026 SPI Forecast

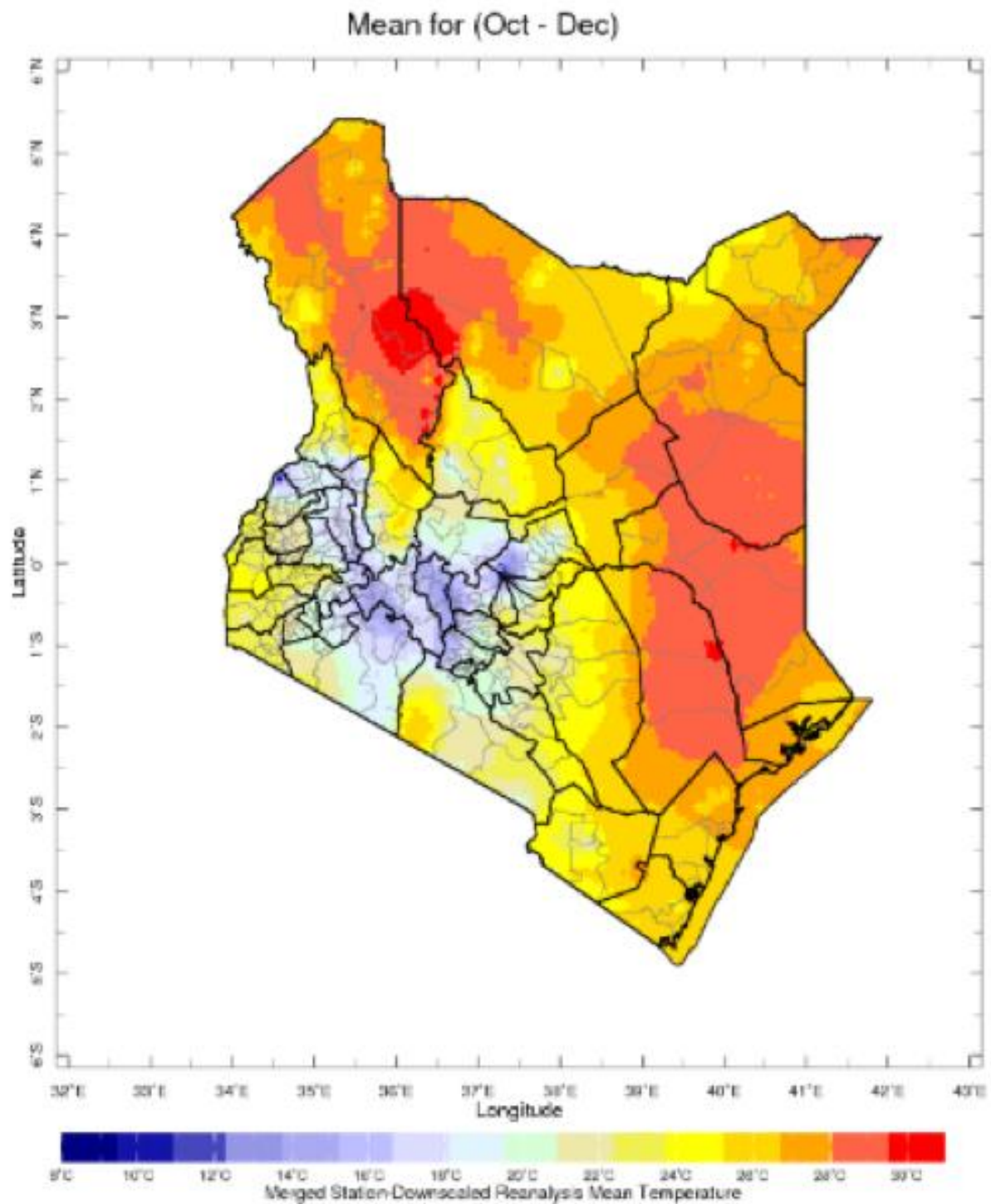


Figure 5a: OND Temperature Climatology

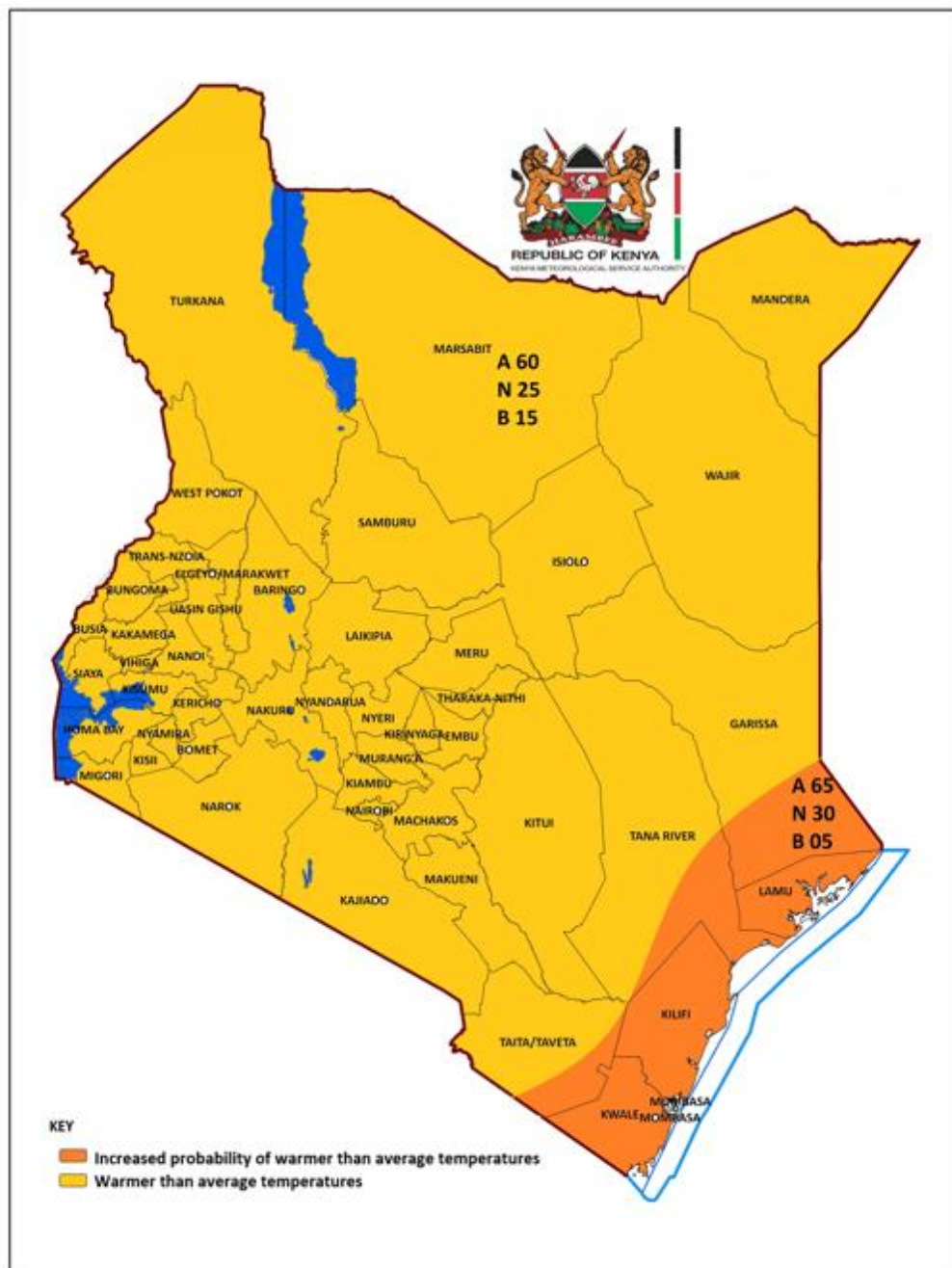


Figure 5b: OND 2026 Temperature Outlook