Government of Malawi
Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change

Malawi 10-day Weather and Agrometeorological Bulletin

"In support of National Early Warning Systems and Food Security"

Be wise be weather-wise
Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services

Period: 21 – 31 Oct 2026 | Season: 2026/2027 | Issue No.03

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HIGHLIGHTS

- **Very hot and dry conditions persisted over most areas…**
- **Land preparation, input acquisition in progress over most parts of the country…**
- **Localized rainfall activities anticipated during the first dekad of November 2026…**

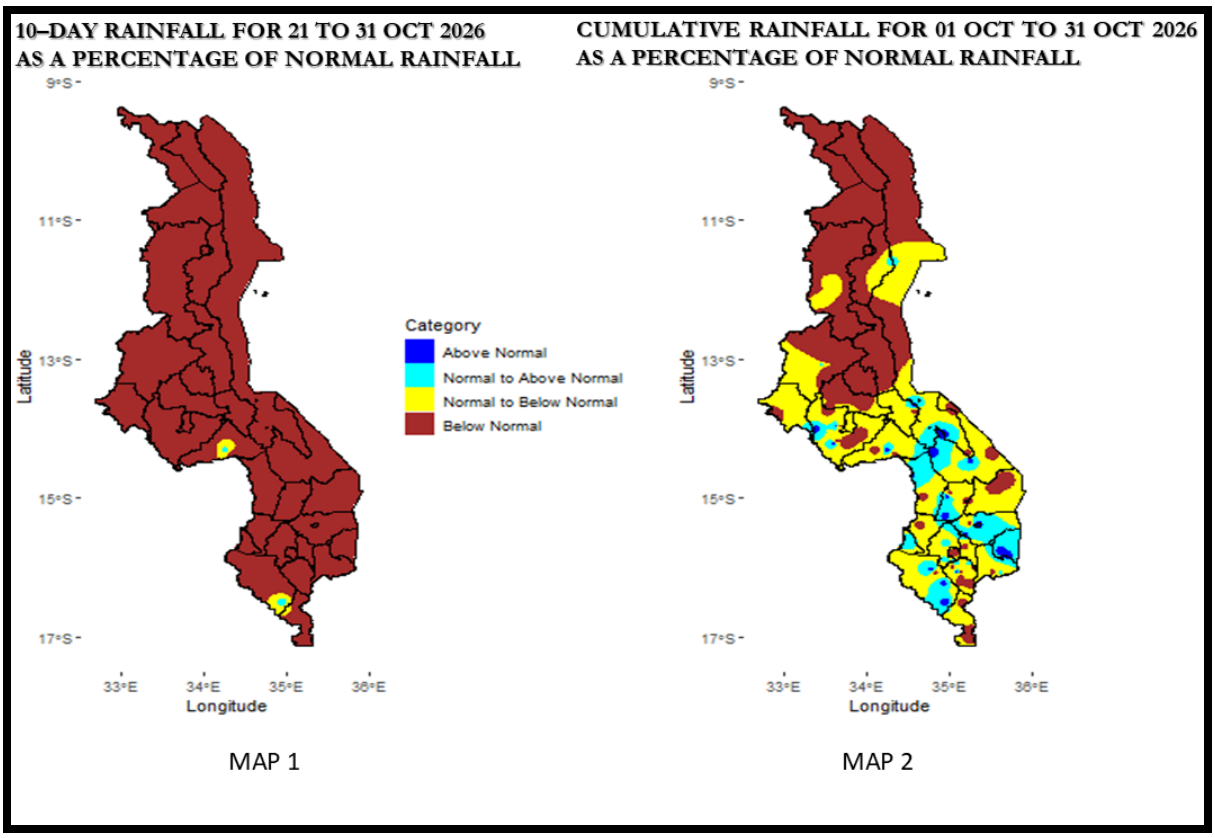


Figure 1: Observed dekadal and cumulative seasonal rainfall as a percentage of normal for Malawi

1.0 WEATHER SUMMARY

During the third dekad of October 2026, a weak convergence of warm easterly and cool south-easterly air masses enhanced localized thunderstorms, though hot to very hot, dry conditions dominated over the country.

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1.1 RAINFALL SITUATION

Sporadic thunderstorms and rains were experienced during the last dekad of October 2026. The reported dekadal cumulative rainfalls were; 13.8mm from Ngabu Meteorological Station in Chikwawa, Dedza Meteorological Station recorded 5.3mm, Fort Lister in Phalombe recorded 5.2mm and Chitedze Meteorological Station in Lilongwe recorded 0.7mm. as captured in figure 2 below. Cumulatively from 1st to 31st October 2026, majority of areas over the northern half of the country have recorded below normal rainfall amounts as compared to southern half where most areas have recorded normal to below normal rainfall with cases of normal to above normal rainfall amounts as captured in Map 2 under Figure 1

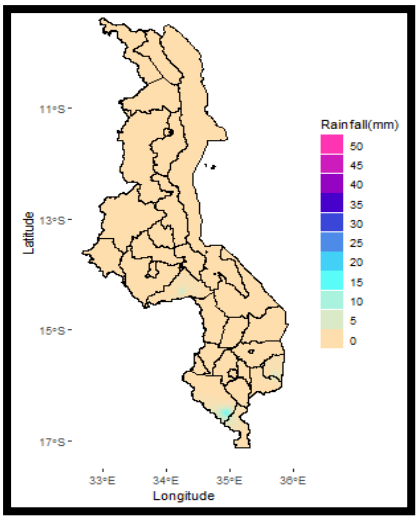


Figure 2: Observed dekadal rainfall for Malawi, 21-31 October 2026

All the stations that reported rainfall during the past dekad had only 1 rainy day as indicated in Figure 3 below.

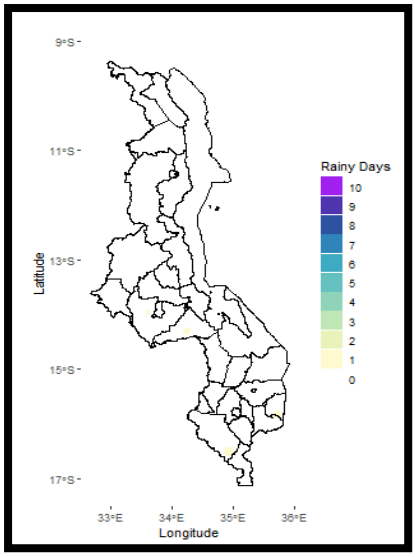


Figure 3*: dekadal rainy days for Malawi, 21-31October 2026*

The current status of onset indicates that as of 31st October 2026, no station has observed onset based on the department's definition: ***"the first day or 3 consecutive days receiving a total of 25mm or more and not followed by 9 consecutive dry days within the next 21 days".*** Based on historical onset data, the likelihood of onset being attained by 10th November remains minimal though now has increased from 20% to about 40% chance mainly over parts of Mchinji and some southern areas as captured in Figure 4 below.

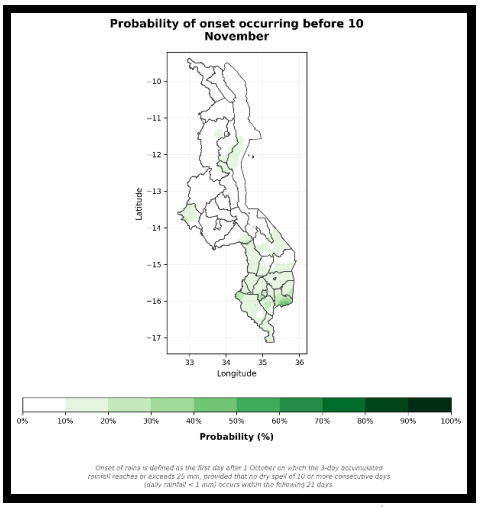


Figure 4: Probability of onset being attained before 10th November, 2026.

1.2 AIR TEMPERATURE

During the first part of the last dekad, the country experienced a heatwave. The reported average maximum temperatures surpassed the climatological records for most stations and they ranged from 28.6°C at Balaka Meteorological station to 37.9°C at Ngabu Meteorological Station with absolute maximum of 44.3°C recorded on 23rd October 2026.

1.3 RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Most areas had dry air as the daily average Relative Humidity values recorded from various weather stations across the country ranged from 37% at Bolero station in Rumphi to 51% at Nkhata Bay, Nkhotakota, Mimosa and Makoka Meteorological meteorological stations.

1.4 WIND SPEED

During the dekad under review, daily average wind speeds measured at a height of two metres above the ground ranged from 2.9 km per hour at Bolero Meteorological Station to 13.3 km per hour at Chitipa Meteorological Station.

1.5 SUNSHINE HOURS

Generally medium to long hours of bright sunshine were observed over Malawi during the period 21 to 31 October 2026. The daily values had ranged from 7.2 hours per day at Mzuzu Meteorological Station to 10.2 hours per day at Karonga Meteorological station and consequently the amount of Solar Radiation had ranged from 8.6 to 10.9 cal/cm^2/day.

1.6 OTHER INDICATORS

The October 2026 Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) analysis shows predominantly dry conditions across much of northern Malawi. In contrast, parts of central and southern Malawi experienced near-normal to slightly wet conditions as indicated on figure 5 below.

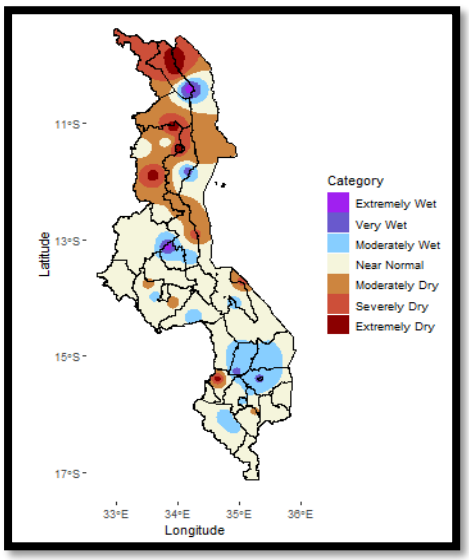


Figure 5 October 2026 observed SPEI

2. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The main on-farm activities over Malawi are still land preparation and manure application as farmers await effective planting rains. Some risk tolerant farmers who planted during the first dekad of October 2026 their crops are showing water stress conditions. Figure 6 below shows a water stressed maize field in Mpemba, Blantyre planted during the first dekad of October 2026.



*Figure 6: **A maize field planted during the first dekad of October 2026 in Mpemba, Blantyre.***

Other farmer activities remain input acquisition as individual farmers or cooperatives under the Malawi Government Initiative Farm Input Subsidy Program, FISP, as captured in figure 7 below.



Figure 7: Farmers accessing inputs under FISP, Mpilipili Extension Planning Area, Mangochi. Photo Courtesy of Grace Tengula

3. PROSPECTS FOR THE 2026/2027 SEASON

The 2026/2027 rainfall season is being influenced by **strong El Niño conditions** that have been established over eastern-central equatorial Pacific Ocean. Global models project that these conditions are likely to persist throughout the season.

The rainfall forecast for the 2026/2027 season as shown in Figure 8 is that:

> **"*During October to December 2026, normal to below-normal rainfall is expected over most parts of southern and central Malawi, while normal to above-normal rainfall conditions are likely over most parts of northern Malawi.***
>
> ***During January-February-March 2027 period, below-normal rainfall conditions are likely to occur over southern and central areas of the country, while normal to above-normal rainfall conditions are likely over most parts of northern Malawi. However, normal to below-normal rainfall is likely over Mzimba and parts of Rumphi.*"**

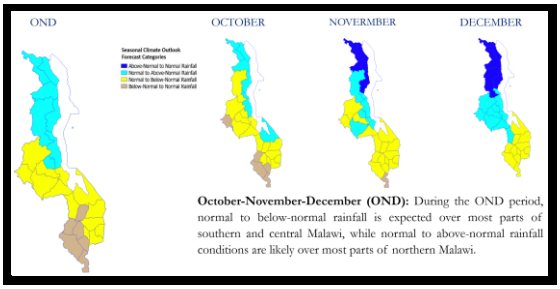


Figure 8(a): Forecast categories for sub-season OND and its monthly categories

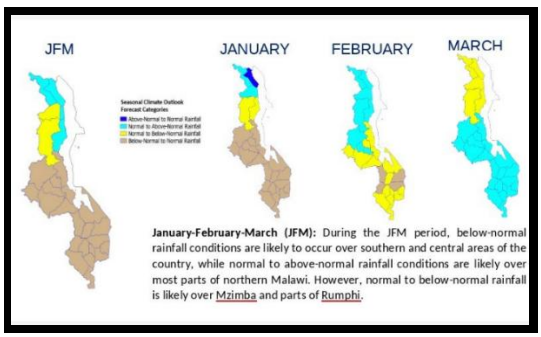


Figure 8(b): Forecast categories for sub-season JFM and its monthly categories

3.1 NOVEMBER RAINFALL FORECAST

For this month, generally normal to below normal rainfall amounts are expected over southern districts including Mchinji, Kasungu and Dowa. Normal to above normal rainfall amounts are expected over Lilongwe, Ntchisi, Salima, Nkhotakota and Mzimba. Above normal rainfall amounts are expected over Nkhata Bay, Rumphi, Mzimba, Karonga and Chitipa districts. The actual rainfall amounts anticipated are within the range of 50mm to 150mm (see Fig. 9-right).

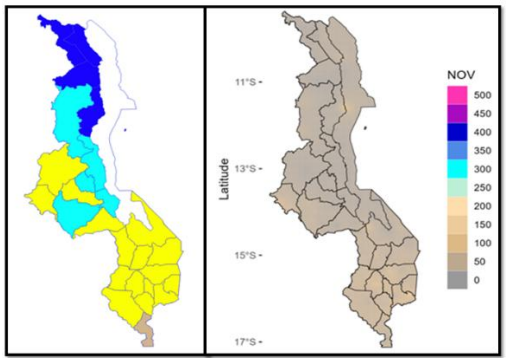


Figure 9: November 2026forecast categories (left) and forecast rainfall amounts (right)

3.2 NOVEMBER TEMPERATURE FORECAST

Hot to locally very hot in November 2026 with average maximum temperatures expected in the range of 30°C to 36°C (refer to Fig. 10-left). The persistence of above-normal temperatures during November may contribute to increased atmospheric instability and convective activity. However, areas around Chitipa, Karonga and parts of Rumphi are likely to experience maximum temperatures near the November climatological average.

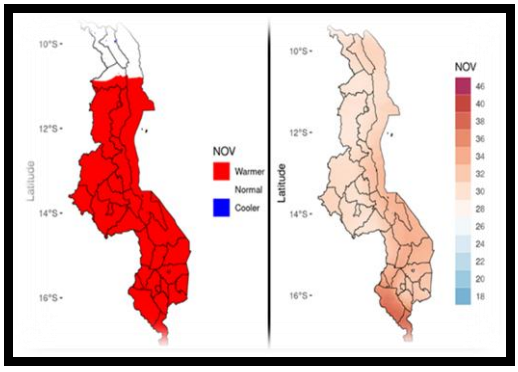


Figure 10: November 2026 maximum temperature forecast (a) categories and (b) values

4. OUTLOOK FOR 01-10 NOVEMBER 2026

Sporadic rainfall activities are expected over Malawi due to the convergence of warm easterly and cool south easterly air masses. In figure 11 below, the map on the left shows the expected rainfall amounts while the map on the right shows the category of the expected dekadal rainfall. Hot to very hot temperatures are anticipated during this period.

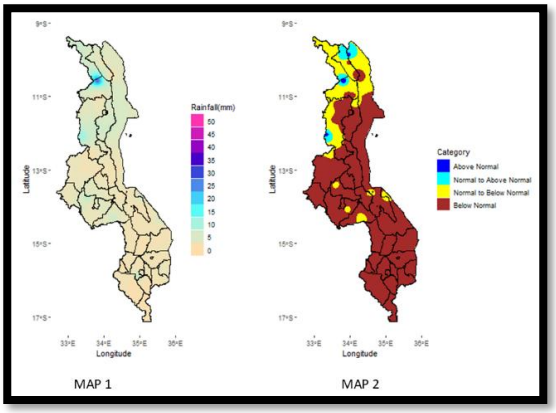


Figure 11: Dekadal rainfall outlook for Malawi for 01-10 November 2026

In terms of dry spells, the forecast indicates a high likelihood of a dry dekad with majority of areas expected to experience more than 7 consecutive dry days as captured in figure 12 below.

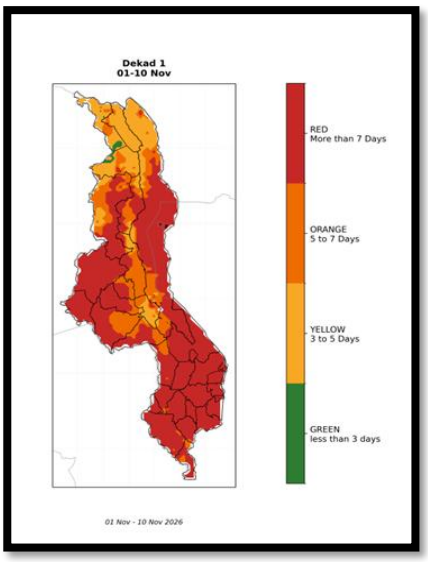


Figure 12: Dekadal dry spell risk outlook for 01-10 November 2026

5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND ADVISORIES

As the dry conditions are persisting over most areas, to minimise the risk of poor germination and seed loss farmers are advised to avoid planting immediately after isolated light showers. The high temperatures are likely to reduce the little moisture attained and this may hinder crop establishment. Farmers are therefore encouraged to follow local rainfall updates and planting advisories before commencing planting. For the few farmers that have already planted, are advised to supplement with irrigation where possible. Due to Elnino conditions expected, to maximise the turnover, farmers are requested to follow timely agricultural advisories and informed crop management decisions.

Livestock farmers are advised to ensure that animals have regular access to adequate supplies of clean drinking water throughout the day to minimise the risk of heat stress and dehydration. They should also provide sufficient shade in grazing areas, if possible, particularly during the hottest hours of the day.