



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: 11 – 20 January 2026

Season: 2025/2026

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Dry spells observed mainly over northern and lakeshore areas during the second dekad of January, 2026 ...
- Maize at tasseling and cobbing stages mainly over the south...
- A pick in rainfall activities mainly over the north during the third dekad of January 2026...

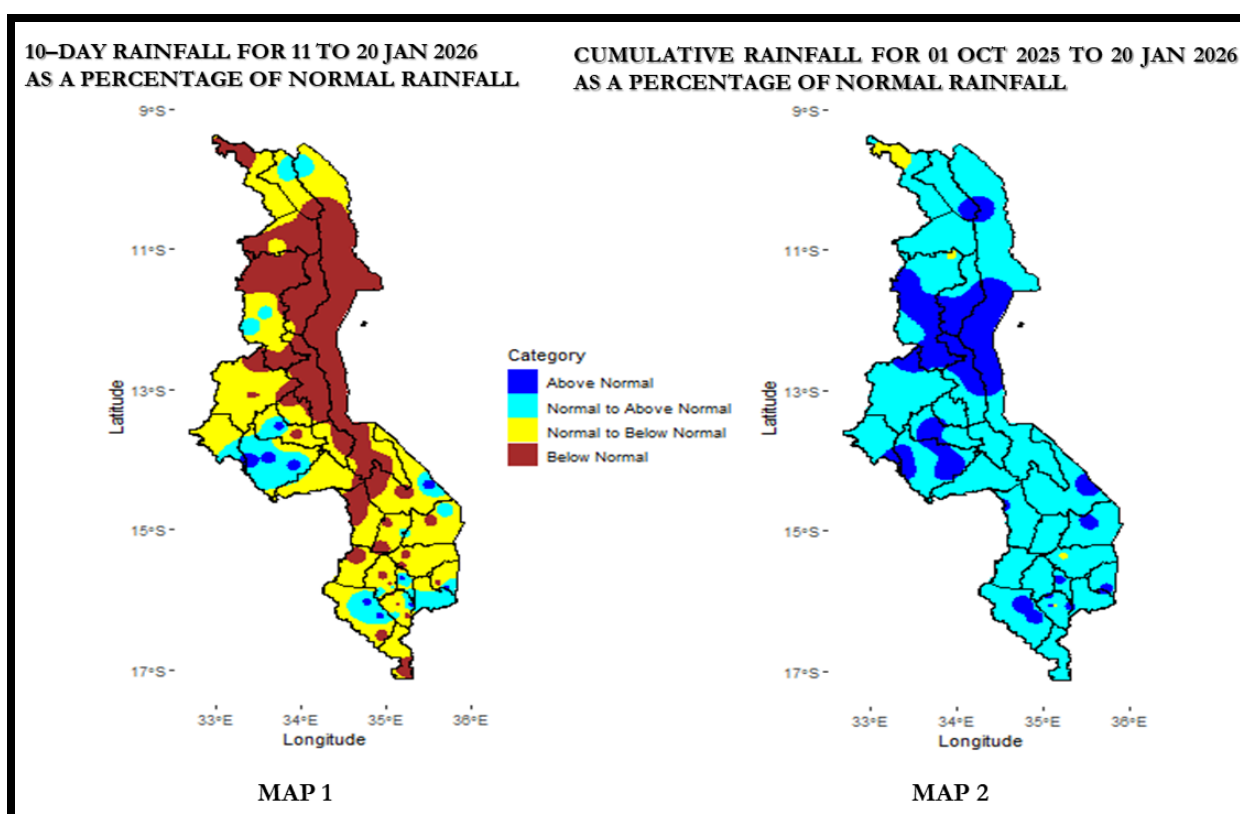


Figure 1: Observed dekadal and cumulative seasonal rainfall as percentage of normal for Malawi

1.0 WEATHER SUMMARY

The country experienced a reduction in rainfall intensity over most areas with a significant impact over northern and lakeshore areas where some areas like Nkhotoakota, Mzimba and NkhataBay gone more than 7 days without rains. Heavy episodes were experienced locally mainly over central and southern areas. This was mainly due to warm north easterly air mass.

1.1 RAINFALL SITUATION

Though locally heavy rains were observed over central and southern areas most areas had below normal rainfall amounts due to prolonged dry conditions (figure 1, Map 1) especially over the north. Cumulatively since the onset of the season generally normal to above normal rainfall have been experienced across the country. (Figure 1, Map 2).

Cumulative dekadal rainfall amounts not exceeding 20mm were experienced mainly over the north as shown in Figure 2 below shows. Below are the highest dekadal cumulative rainfall above 100mm recorded during the last dekad; FortLister in Phalombe with 233.5 mm in 4 rainy days, Chitedze Research Station in Lilongwe recorded 134.1 mm in 6 rainy days, Lujeri Tea Estate in Mulanje recorded 125 mm in 7 rainy days, Namwera Agriculture in Mangochi recorded 119.8 mm in 5 rainy days, Kasinthula Research Station in Chikwawa recorded 119.2 mm in 8 rainy days, Namitete Agriculture in Lilongwe recorded 118.3 mm in 3 rainy days, Nchalo Sugar company in Chikwawa recorded 114.2 mm in 7 rainy days, Chikwawa Boma recorded 114.1 mm in 6 rainy days Mimosa Meteorological Station in Mulanje recorded 111.9 mm in 5 rainy days, Mulanje Boma recorded 103 mm in 8 rainy days, Chiradzulu Agriculture in recorded 102 mm in 3 rainy days, and Nathenje Agriculture in recorded 101 mm in 6 rainy days.

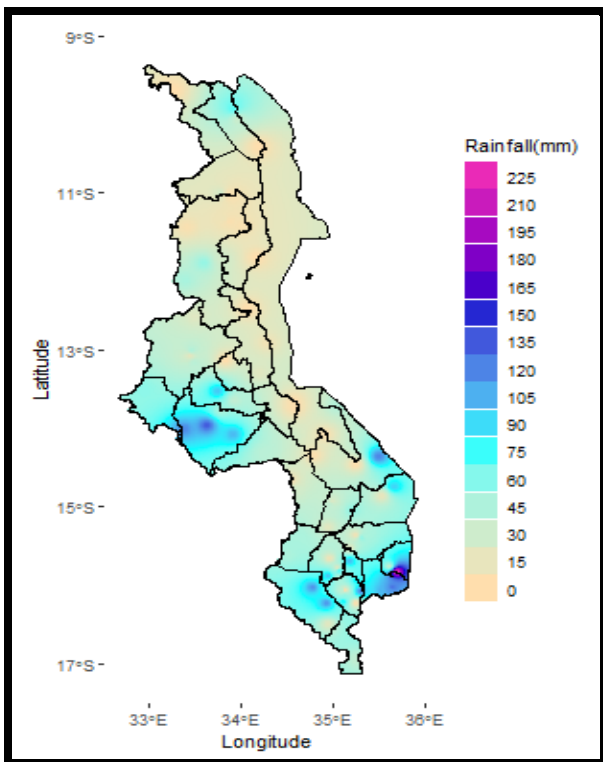


Figure 2: Observed dekadal rainfall for Malawi 11-20 January 2026

The average number of rainy days was 3 with some stations like Vinthukutu in Rumphi and Chintheche in NkhataBay having no rainy day. The highest was 8 from Kasinthula Research Station and Mulanje Boma followed by 7 rainy days from Balaka Township, Lujeri Tea Estate and Nchalo. Figure 3 shows the reported distribution of dekadal rainy days.

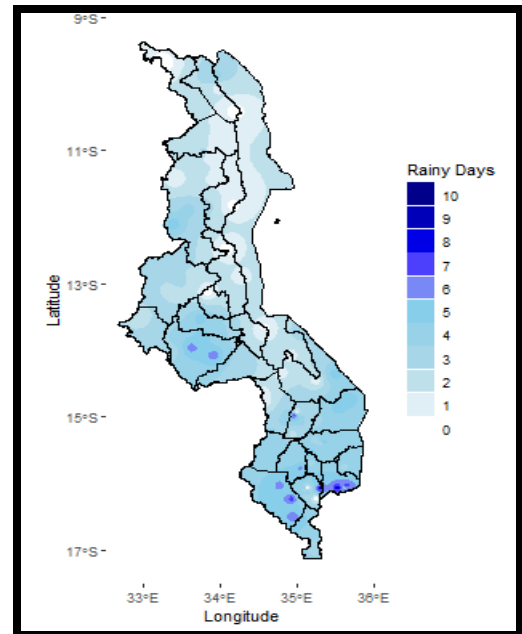


Figure 3: Rainy days for Malawi, 11-20 January 2026

1.2 OTHER WEATHER PARAMETERS

Due to the influence of warm north easterly air mass most areas experienced hot conditions with average maximum temperatures ranging from 26.2 °C at Kasungu Meteorological Station to 34.3 °C at Ngabu Meteorological Station in Chikwawa. The highest absolute maximum temperature of 37.2 °C, was recorded at Ngabu on 19th January 2026.

The air was dry over some areas and the average relative humidity ranged from 49% at Mangochi Meteorological Station to 82% at Dedza station.

The observed daily average wind speeds measured at a height of two metres above the ground level ranged from 0.4 km per hour at Bolero Meteorological station in Rumphi to 10.1 km per hour at Chileka Meteorological station.

1.3 OTHER INDICATORS

The dry spell analysis indicates notable spatial variability across Malawi with longer dry spell durations mainly over parts of the northern region and sections of the central areas where dry spells reached 8 to 10 days. The prolonged breaks in rainfall during the dekad affected the farming activities as it reduced soil moisture availability thereby affecting crops at sensitive growth stages. Figure 4 below shows the conditions of dry spells based on the reported data across the country

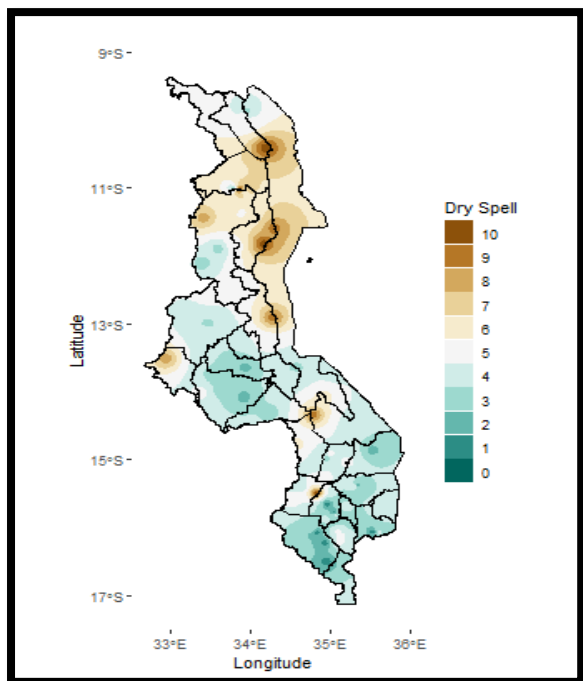


Figure 4 Condition of dry spells experienced during 11-20 January 2026

below-normal rainfall likely over some parts of the northern areas.

During January to March 2026, total rainfall amounts are anticipated to be generally normal to above-normal. Despite this trend, localized pockets, particularly in parts of Mchinji, Dowa, Kasungu and Lilongwe, are projected to receive normal to below-normal precipitation.”

Illustration of the forecast is given in Figure 6 below with map (a) and map (b) showing sub-seasons October, November, December (OND) and January, February, March (JFM), respectively.

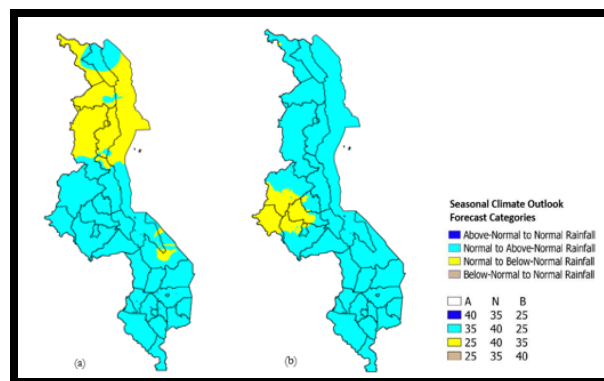


Figure 6: Forecast categories for OND and JFM

2. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Though the dry conditions have affected most of northern areas, the most crops in central and southern areas continue to perform well (Figures 5). Some farmers over the north are yet to plant while others are applying basal dressing fertilizer. In Lilongwe and Phalombe some crops were affected by flash flooding due to the heavy rains.



Figure 5: Maize at cobbing stage: Nanyumbu, EPA in Machinga. Photo: By Joster Mubalu.

RAINFALL FORECAST FOR JANUARY 2026

The January rainfall forecast indicates a likelihood of a normal to above-normal rainfall situation across the country, with pockets of normal to below normal rainfall over some central districts, refer to Figure 7 below map (a). The monthly rainfall totals are likely to range between 150 and 400 mm, as shown in Figure 9 map (b) below.

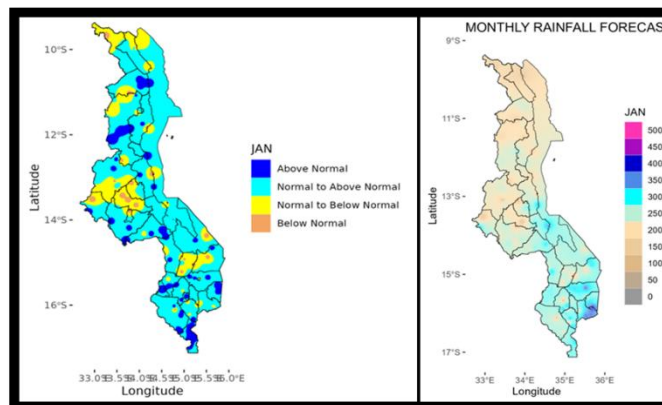


Figure 7: January 2026 rainfall forecast (a) categories and (b) values

3. SEASONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK

The 2025-2026 rainfall season is expected to be influenced predominantly by ENSO neutral conditions.

The rainfall forecast for the 2025/2026 season is that:

“During October to December 2025, total rainfall amounts are anticipated to be generally normal to above-normal in most areas of the country, with normal to

TEMPERATURE FORECAST FOR JANUARY 2026

A diverse temperature pattern is anticipated across the country, with normal conditions expected to be prevalent in the majority of areas, as shown in Figure 8, map (a), represented by white colour. Northern and southern regions, particularly those situated along the lakeshore and within the Shire Valley, are expected to experience warmer than average conditions with about 34.2 °C, contrasting sharply with the cooler temperatures of Nyika, where the average mean temperature is projected to be a more moderate regime of about 23.7 °C as captured in map (b) of figure 10 below.

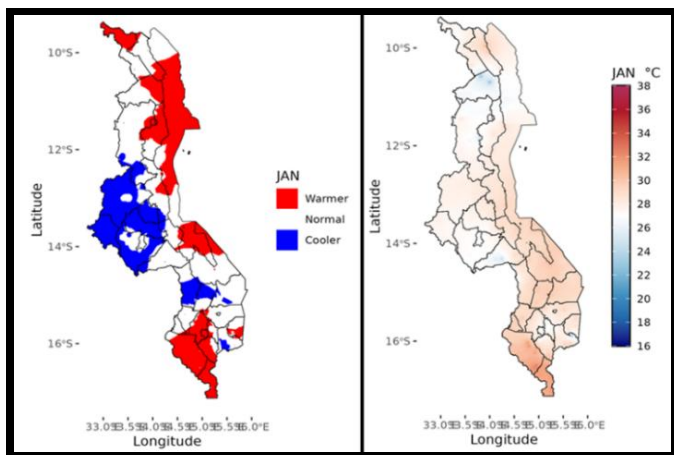


Figure 8 : January 2026 temperature forecast

4. OUTLOOK FOR 21-31 JANUARY 2026

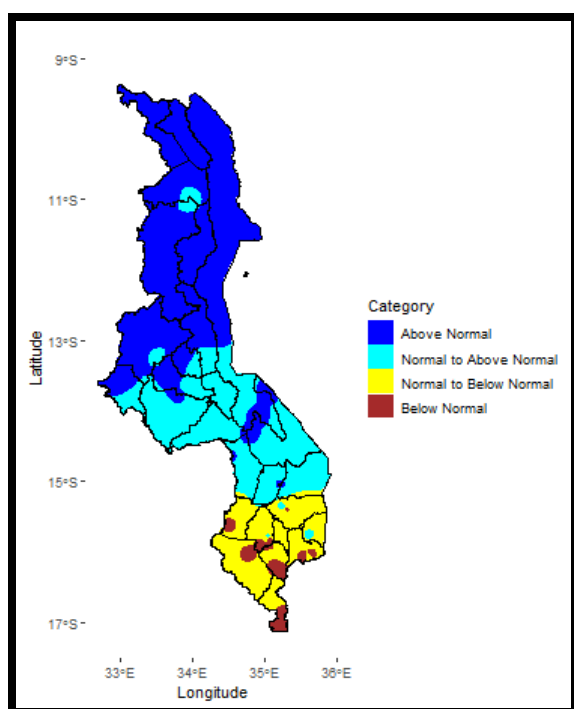


Figure 9: dekadal rainfall outlook for Malawi for 21-31 January 2026

During the last dekad of January 2026, locally heavy rains are expected over the north and few from central and southern areas. These rains may cause flash flooding mainly over northern lakeshore areas. This will be due to the influence of Inter-Tropic Convergence Zone (ITCZ) which will be more active over the north. However, the south may experience some dry spells in some areas Figure 9 shows the expected dekadal rainfall classes.

5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND ADVISORIES

For northern areas, the expected weather conditions will be favourable for farming activities such as planting and fertilizer application while for the south farmers may start planting tubers like sweet potato. As the chances of prolonged dry spells during this dekad are minimal but significant over the south, water harvesting techniques such as contour ridges, box ridges, and mulching to retain soil moisture are recommended for southern and some central areas.