Government of Malawi
Ministry of Natural Resources

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 January 2026 | Season: 2025/2026 | Issue No.12

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HIGHLIGHTS

- **Below normal amounts over the southern half, normal to above over the northern half…**
- **Maize at tasseling to cobbing stages over the southern half, vegetative over the northern half…**
- **Rainfall activities anticipated over northern and central areas while dry conditions to persist over the south…**

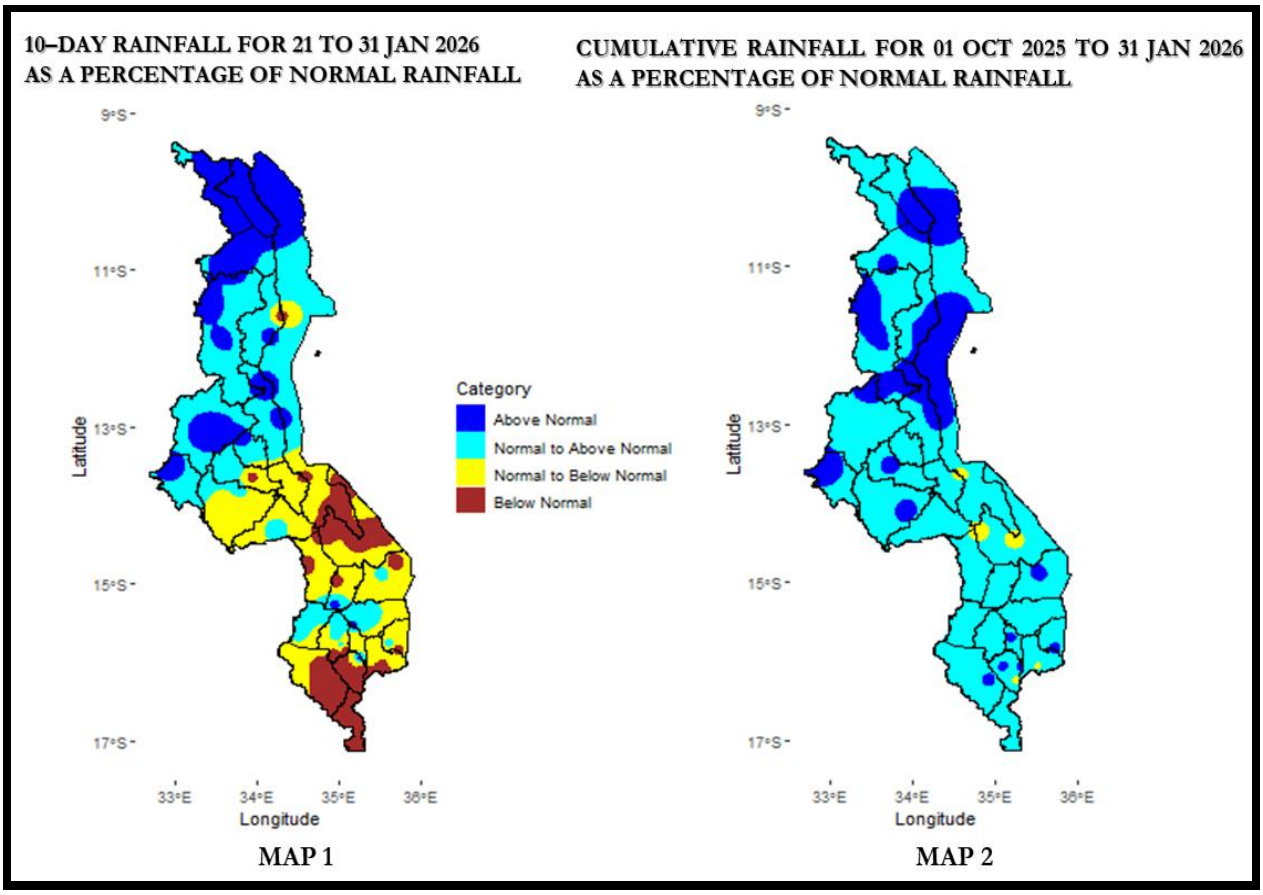

Figure 1: Observed dekadal and cumulative seasonal rainfall as percentage of normal for Malawi

1.0 WEATHER SUMMARY

During the period 21 to 31 January 2026, areas over northern half of the country were under the influence of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone resulting in widespread rainfall activities over the region with isolated rainfall episodes over southern half.

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1.1 RAINFALL SITUATION

There was a significant pick in rainfall activities over the northern half as most areas registered normal to above-normal rainfall amounts as compared to the southern half of the country where most areas received normal to below-normal rainfall amounts (figure 1, Map 1). Cumulatively since the onset of the seasonal rainfall monitoring on 01 October 2025 to 31 January 2026, generally normal to above normal rainfall have been experienced across the country with patches of above normal mainly over the northern lakeshore areas and normal to below normal over parts of Mangochi and Salima districts. (Figure 1, Map 2).

The highest cumulative dekadal rainfall was from Chintheche Agriculture in Nkhata Bay which recorded 225.7 mm in 6 rainy days followed by Mkanda in Mchinji which recorded in 181.7 mm in 4 rainy days, Vinthukutu Agriculture in Karonga recorded 163.9 mm in 6 rainy days, Bolero Meteorological Station in Rumphi recorded 154.5 mm in 9 rainy days, Nkhotakota Meteorological Station recorded 146.2 mm in 10 rainy days, Lisasadzi station in Kasungu recorded 142.8 mm in 9 rainy days, Kasungu Meteorological Station recorded 136.1 mm in 8 rainy days, Rumphi Boma recorded 135.5 mm in 8 rainy days, while Dwangwa Sugar Company in Nkhotakota recorded 133 mm in 8 rainy days.

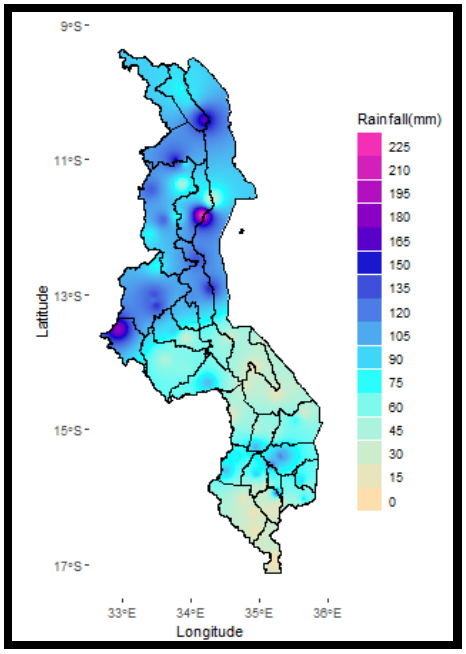

Figure 2: Observed dekadal rainfall for Malawi 21-31 January 2026

In terms of rainy days, higher rainy days were registered in stations mostly from northern half of the country. The highest number of 10 rainy days was registered at Nkhotakota Meteorological Station with majority of least rainy days observed over southern half stations of Balaka Township, Nankumba Agriculture and Monkey Bay Meteorological Station in Mangochi, Zoa Tea Estate in Thyolo and Nsanje Boma as captured in figure 3 below.

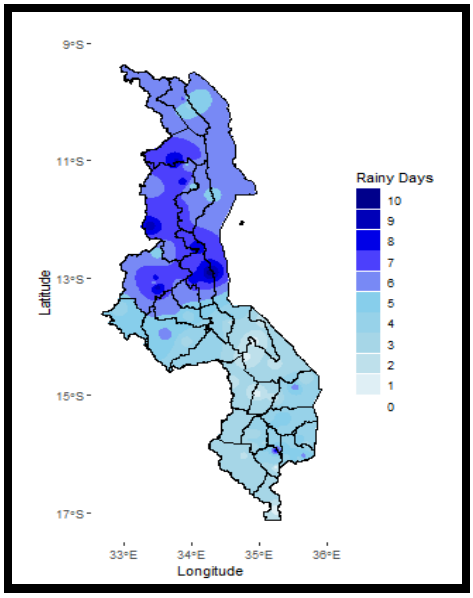

Figure 3: Rainy days for Malawi, 21-31 January 2026

1.2 OTHER WEATHER PARAMETERS

The average maximum temperatures ranged from 25.3 °C at Bvumbwe and Mzuzu Meteorological Stations to 32.8 °C at Ngabu Meteorological Station in Chikwawa. The highest absolute maximum temperature of 36.2 °C, was recorded at Ngabu on 23rd January 2026.

Air over Malawi was relatively moist, daily average Relative Humidity values recorded from stations ranged from 67% at Chileka Meteorological Station in Blantyre to 87% at Mzuzu Meteorological Station in Mzimba.

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 9.4 km per hour at Chileka Meteorological station.

Medium to long hours of bright sunshine were observed over Malawi, daily values of sunshine hours had ranged from 6.0 hours per day at Nkhata Bay Meteorological station to 9.3 hours per day at Ngabu Meteorological station and consequently the amount of Solar Radiation had ranged from 8.7 to 12.6 cal/cm²/day.

1.3 OTHER INDICATORS

In terms of dry spells, the longest consecutive dry days since onset of the season have been observed in Kasungu at Lisasadzi Agriculture up to 25, from 26th of December 2025 to 19th of January 2026, 23 consecutive dry days have been observed at Zombwe in Mzimba from 23rd December 2025 to 14th January 2026. Monkey Bay Meteorological Station in Mangochi where majority of damage to crops has been reported observed 18 consecutive dry days from 23rd December 2025 to 9th January 2026 and Namwera recorded 17 consecutive dry days from 25th December 2025 to 10th January 2026. More details in figure 4 and table 1 below.

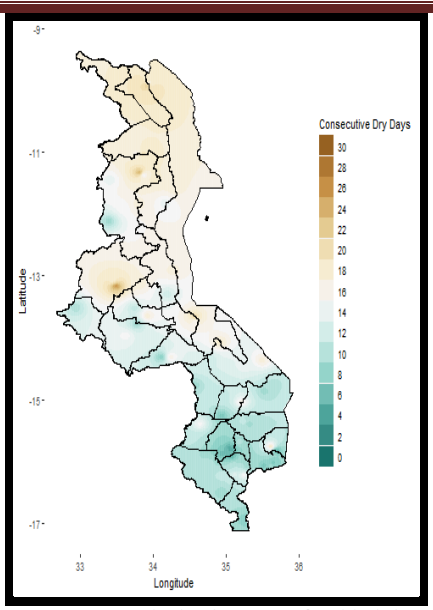

Figure 4: Longest consecutive dry days from onset to last dekad of January 2026

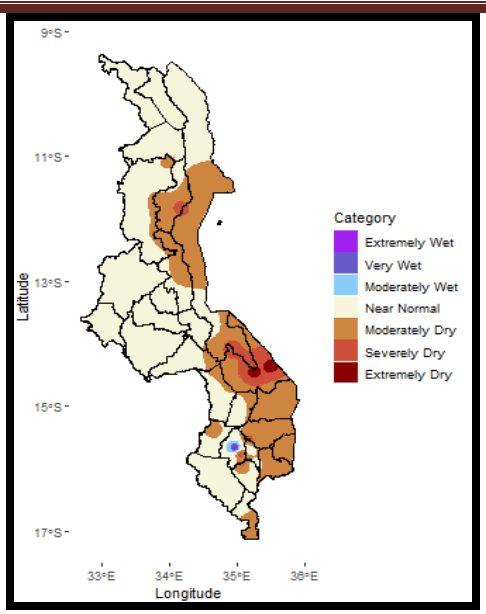

Figure 5: SPEI analysis for January 2026

STATION	START_DATE	END_DATE	DURATION
Lisasadzi	26/12/2025	19/01/2026	25
Zombwe Agric	23/12/2025	14/01/2026	23
Baka Res. Stn.	22/12/2025	11/01/2026	21
Lupembe	02/12/2025	20/12/2025	19
Rumphi Boma	23/12/2025	10/01/2026	19
Bwengu Agric.	24/12/2025	10/01/2026	18
Kasungu Met	25/12/2025	11/01/2026	18
Monkey Bay Met.	23/12/2025	09/01/2026	18
Mwimba Research	25/12/2025	11/01/2026	18
Mzuzu Met.	24/12/2025	10/01/2026	18
Vinthukutu Agric	22/12/2025	08/01/2026	18
Chikangawa forest	23/12/2025	08/01/2026	17
Dowa Agric	24/12/2025	09/01/2026	17
Karonga Met.	25/12/2025	10/01/2026	17
Malomo Agric	24/12/2025	09/01/2026	17
Namwera Agric	25/12/2025	10/01/2026	17
NkhataBay Met.	24/12/2025	09/01/2026	17
Nkhotakota Met	24/12/2025	09/01/2026	17
Bolero Met	24/12/2025	08/01/2026	16
Dwangwa Sugar	25/12/2025	09/01/2026	16
Kaluluma DTC	25/12/2025	09/01/2026	16
Liwonde Town	02/12/2025	17/12/2025	16
Salima Met	24/12/2025	08/01/2026	16

Table 1: Occurrence of dry spells and duration since onset

The January 2026 observed Standardized Precipitation - Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) indicates that near normal conditions were experienced over majority of northern and central areas. For southern and southern lakeshore areas, they experienced moderate to severe dry conditions as captured in figure 5 below.

2. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

During the last dekad of January 2026, the main on-farm activities have been application of top-dressing fertilizer and banking for some farmers over northern half of the country with basal dressing for those that planted late.

Maize crop is at tasseling to cobbing stages over southern half and vegetative phase over northern half. The general maize crop stand is encouraging over most parts of the country particularly where fertilizer or manure has been applied and good agricultural practices have been adhered as well as no prolonged dry spell has been experienced as captured in figure 6 below. However some crops including maize are reportedly showing signs of water stress particularly over southern areas, as captured in figure 7 below.

Figure 6: Dwale EPA, Thyolo. Photo by Blessings Jere.

Figure 7: ***Water stressed maize crop,*** *Nankumba EPA T/A: Nankumba. Photo credit: Lasteen Kalambo*

In terms of the amount of water that has been available to maize crop through the Water Requirement Satisfaction Index (WRSI), generally maize crop has had over 80% of water it requires for it to do well. This entails average yield are expected in majority of central and northern areas where maize has had 80 to 96% of the water it requires, while good to excellent yield expected mainly over southern areas where maize has had at least 97% of the water it requires. However, mediocre yields are expected in some northern, central and parts of Mangochi as illustrated in figure 8 below.

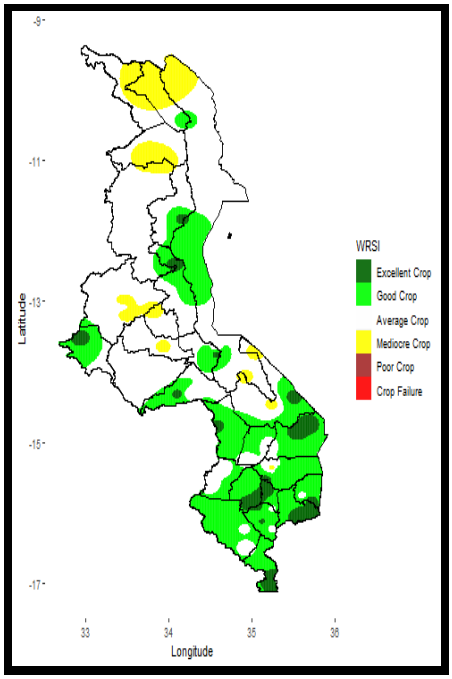

Figure 8: WRSI map for Malawi for 21-31 January 2026

In as much as the general water requirement for maize has been impressive, if the below normal conditions persist the good crop stand may be seriously stressed, particularly for southern areas, hence negatively impacting production thereby potentially affecting food security at household and national level.

3. SEASONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK

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

The rainfall forecast for sub-season-February-March-April (FMA) of the 2025/2026 season is that:

"normal to above-normal total rainfall amounts are anticipated over most central and northern areas of the country with above-normal total rainfall amounts over most southern areas of the country."

The spatial distribution of the forecast is captured in figure 9 below.

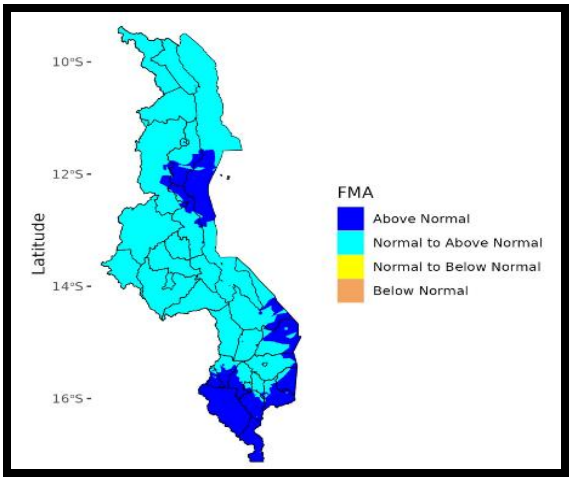

Figure 9: Forecast categories for the FMA sub season

4. OUTLOOK FOR 01-10 FEBRUARY 2026

During the period 01 - 10 February 2026, a broad equatorial trough is expected to influence weather over Malawi, particularly northern and central areas. As a result above normal rainfall amounts are anticipated over northern areas; with normal to above normal conditions over central and some southern areas and normal to below normal over southern areas with clearly below normal over Shire Valley. This is captured in figure 10 below.

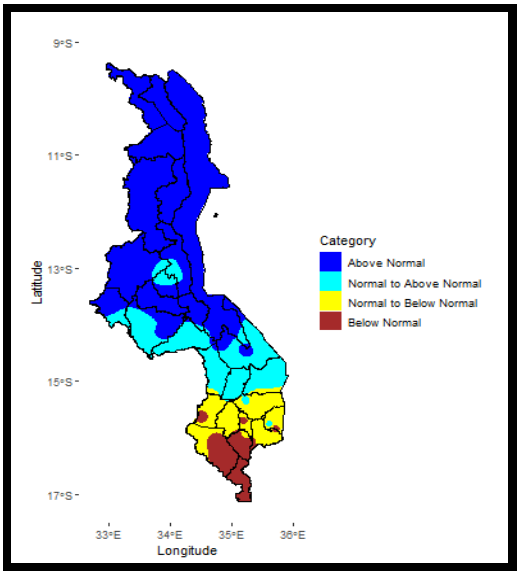

Figure 10: Dekadal rainfall outlook for Malawi for 01-10 February 2026

5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND ADVISORIES

The expected weather conditions are favourable for supporting vegetative growth of most crops including maize, rice in rice growing districts of Karonga and Nkhotakota among others. The conditions also favors planting of tuber crops particularly for northern and central areas.

Livestock farmers, are encouraged to take proactive measures in ensuring their stock is guarded against worms, parasites as the seasonal conditions may provide suitable environment for breeding of the same. Furthermore, farmers are advised to provide water to their stock at regular time intervals over southern Malawi as the anticipated dry and hot conditions may stress their stock.

Overall, for proper utilization of rain water, farmers should adhere to principles of good agricultural practices including moisture conservation, timely control of weeds, pests and diseases; and fertilizer/ manure application. Water harvesting technologies should also be practiced for future use during periods of suppressed rainfall.