



MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES MONITORING AND ASSESSMENTS & DEPARTMENT
OF METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES**

SEASONAL HYDROLOGICAL STATUS & OUTLOOK BULLETIN



26th June 2026

SUMMARY

The river flows during MAM 2026 varied across basins. In Victoria and Kyoga basins, flow was Above normal to below-normal ranges in different rivers. The Water levels on major lakes (Victoria, Kyoga and Albert) remained high than the long term mean, indicating much above normal conditions during the March - May (MAM)2026 season. For groundwater levels analyzed from the stations of Maracha, Bugondo, Bugolobi and Ntungamo, the levels were generally normal indicating stable storage during MAM 2026.

Meanwhile the June-August 2026 National outlook indicate that, most parts of the country are expected to receive near normal to below normal (near average to below average) rainfall, drier than normal conditions expected in Southwestern, and temperatures are expected to be warmer than average. The climate outlook further indicates high chances of El Niño conditions in SOND 2026, and this is expected to influence regional weather patterns by; suppressing rainfall and increasing temperatures across East Africa during the JJA season, enhancing rainfall and increasing flood risk during the September–December 2026 rainfall season.

1.0 Introduction

The bulletin highlights on the current hydrological status of three major Lakes, rivers and groundwater focusing on performance of MAM 2026 season, and the climate outlook for June–August 2026 season. The bulletin aims to support water resources planning, disaster risk reduction, hydropower operations, agricultural production, and environmental management. The assessment was carried based on hydrological observations from the hydrological monitoring network and seasonal climate forecasts issued by the Department of Meteorological Services.

2.0 Current Hydrological Status [HydroSOS portal](#) / [WMO HydroSOS portal](#)

2.1 River Flow status

River flows in Victoria and Kyoga basins were normal to below-normal ranges during the MAM 2026 season. For example, Table below gives the status of some of the rivers as observed in MAM2026, the locations are presented in Figure 1. Further analysis show that most rivers are currently experiencing recession.

River	Mean flow (MAM 2026) m3/s	LTM (1991-2020) m3/s	Status
Ruizi (81272)	17.00	9.01	Normal
Nyakijumba (81248)	1.94	4.94	Below Normal
Manafwa (82212)	3.65	8.42	Below Normal
Malaba (81218)	24.82	14.98	Above Normal



Figure 1: Flow status of selected rivers

2.2 Lake Water Level status

The Water levels on major lakes remained high during the March - May (MAM)2026 season.

Lake Victoria

Lake Victoria water level during MAM 2026 remained approximated 0.3m below the highest water level recorded in 2024 but quite higher than the LTM of 11.74m (1991–2020) (Figure 2), the current levels of Victoria for the preceding six months indicate ‘much above normal’ conditions (Figure 5 & 6a), and it falls within the flood -risk band.

Ruizi

Lake Kyoga

Lake Kyoga water level rose by 16cm within MAM 2026 season. The highest water level recorded in MAM 2026 of 13.71m (31st May) is below the historical recorded of 14.42 by 0.71m (Figure 3). However, further analysis indicates that the current levels are ‘much above normal’ (Figure 5 & 6b).

Lake Albert

Lake Albert water levels showed a slight rise towards the end of the MAM 2026 season while remaining generally high throughout the season, with no flood events reported along the shoreline. By the end of MAM 2026, the average water level remained lower than the levels observed during previous flood years, and was 1.16 m below the historical maximum level of 14.90 m recorded in 2024 (Figure 3). However, water levels remained significantly above the long-term average throughout the season (Figure 5 & 6c).

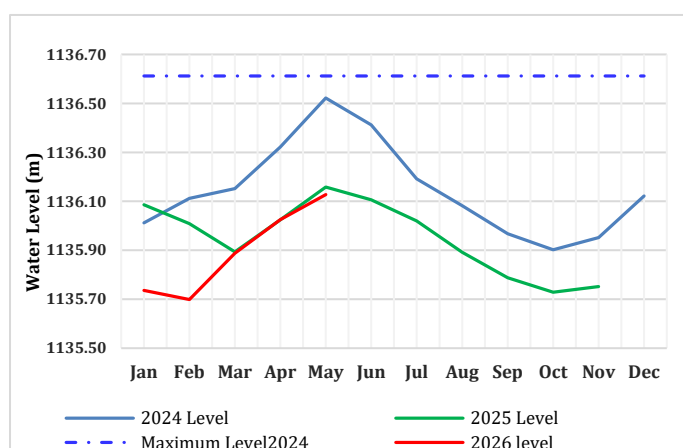


Figure 2: Lake Victoria Water Level Trend

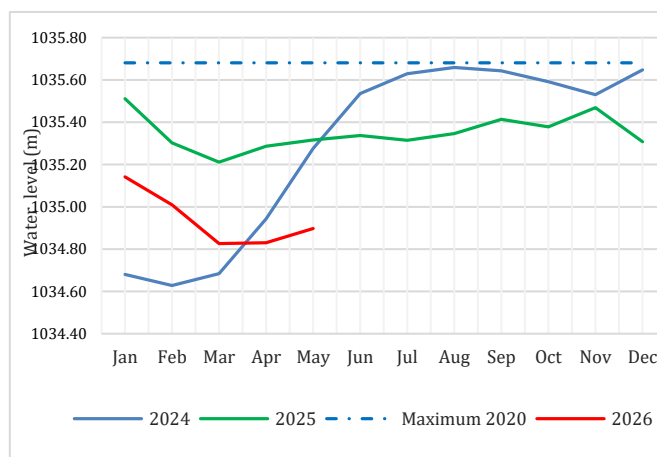


Figure 3: Lake Kyoga Water Level Trend

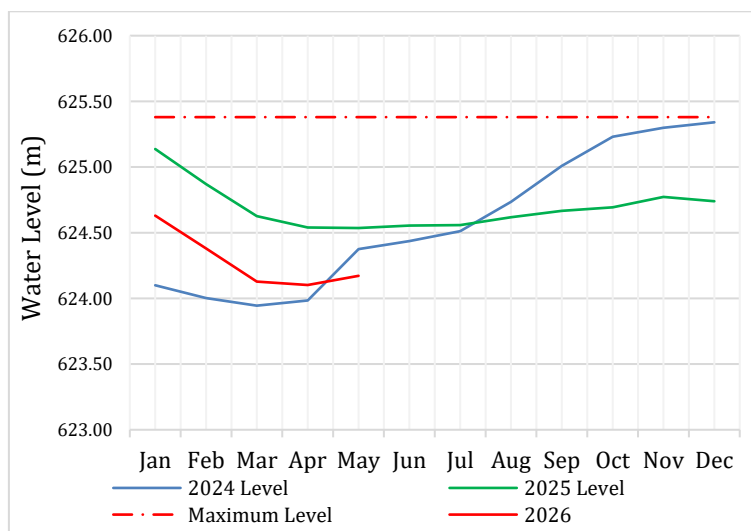


Figure 4: Lake Albert water level trend

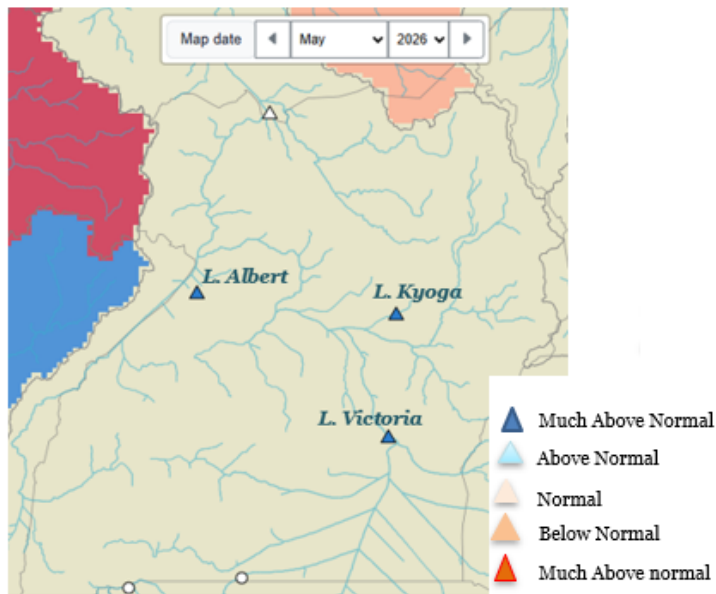


Figure 5: Lake water Level Status-May 2026

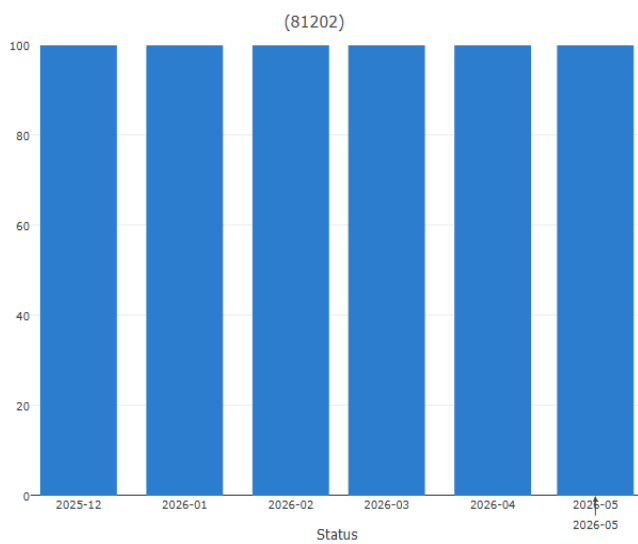
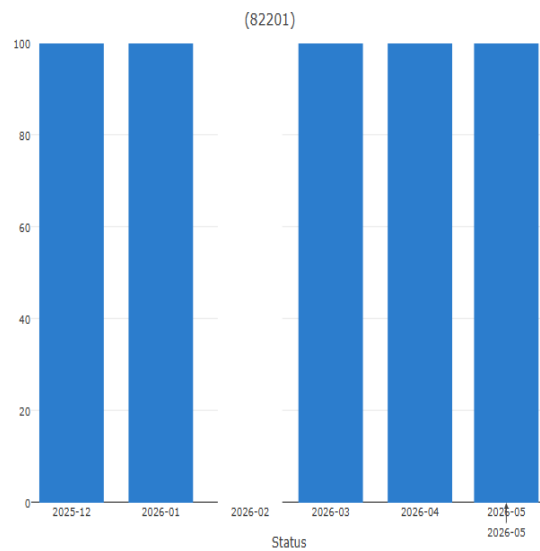
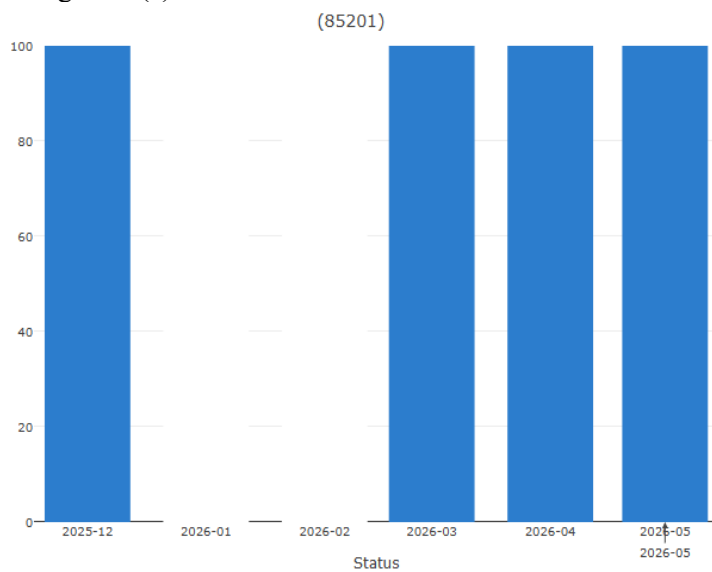


Figure 6 (a): Victoria water level status



(b): Kyoga water level status



(c): Albert water level status

2.3 Groundwater status

(i) *Maracha Groundwater Station*

Groundwater levels at the Maracha monitoring station exhibited a gradual declining trend from December 2025 through May 2026, decreasing from approximately 1170.50 m a.s.l. in early December to about 1169.05 m a.s.l. at the end of May, representing a total decline of approximately 1.45 m (Figure 7). At the onset of the MAM 2026 season, groundwater levels continued to recede despite the seasonal rains, although the rate of decline moderated during April, with a slight recovery of approximately 0.10 m observed before levels stabilized towards the end of May. Throughout the monitoring period, groundwater levels remained close to, but generally above, the long-term average of approximately 1169.10 m a.s.l., and well below the historical maximum of approximately 1170.90 m a.s.l., indicating that groundwater storage remained within the normal range. The relatively muted response to seasonal rainfall suggests delayed aquifer recharge or a groundwater system with a slower response to precipitation. Groundwater status indicate Normal conditions in the last six preceding months (Figure 8).

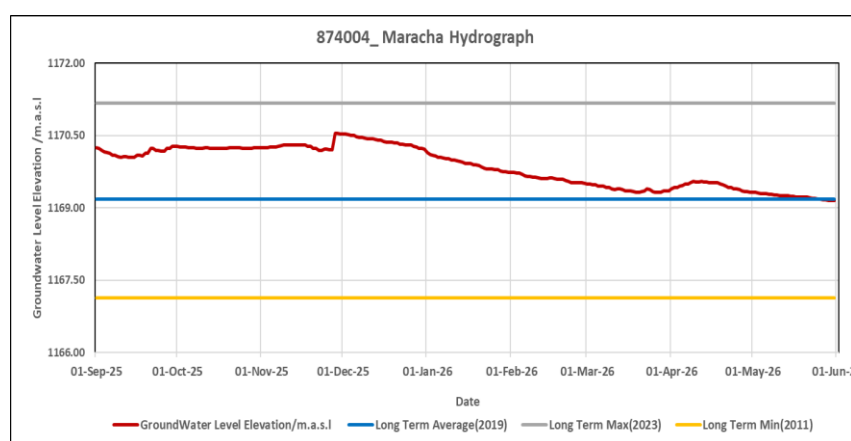


Figure 8: Maracha Groundwater Level Status

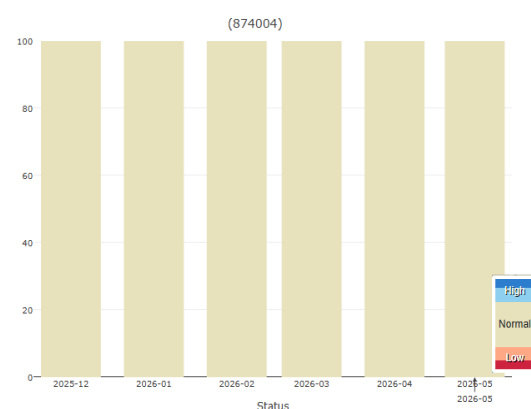


Figure 7: Groundwater Level Trend in Maracha

(ii) *Ntungamo Groundwater Station*

Groundwater levels at the Ntungamo monitoring station remained generally stable from December 2025 through May 2026, fluctuating between approximately 1428.60 and 1428.90 m a.s.l., with only minor fluctuations of less than 0.30 m around the long-term average of approximately 1428.75 m a.s.l (Figure 9). Unlike Bugolobi, the station exhibited a relatively subdued response to rainfall during the MAM 2026 season, despite several rainfall events of 10-30 mm, suggesting slower aquifer recharge or greater groundwater storage capacity. Groundwater levels remained well above the historical minimum of approximately 1426.50 m a.s.l. and below the historical maximum of approximately 1430.70 m a.s.l. throughout the monitoring period, indicating stable groundwater conditions. A slight decline was observed during March, with groundwater levels decreasing from approximately 1428.75 m a.s.l. to 1428.60 m a.s.l. (≈ 0.15 m) before levels recovered gradually towards the end of April and May to approximately 1428.85 m a.s.l. in response to continued rainfall. Groundwater status indicate Normal conditions in the last six preceding months (Figure 10).

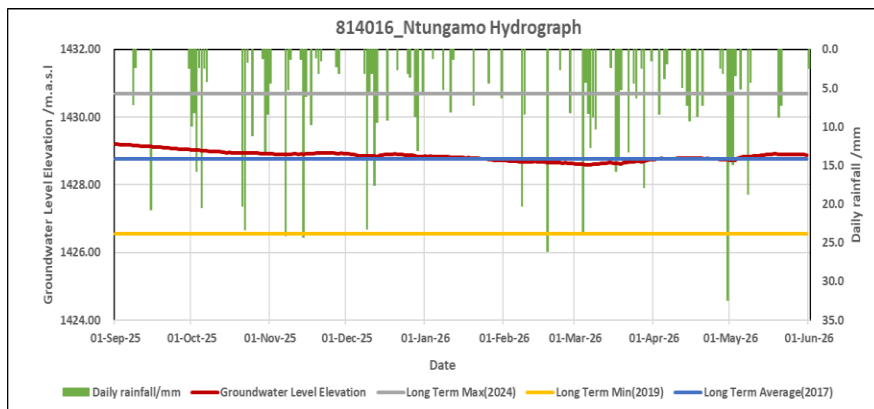


Figure 9: Groundwater Level Trend in Ntungamo

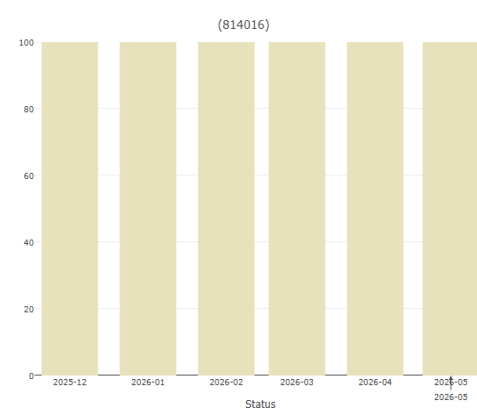


Figure 10: Ntungamo Groundwater Status

(iii) Bugolobi Groundwater Station

Groundwater levels at the Bugolobi monitoring station remained relatively stable between December 2025 and February 2026, fluctuating close to the long-term average at approximately 1159.90-1159.95 m a.s.l., which is almost identical to the long-term average of 1159.90 m a.s.l (Figure 10). With the onset of the March-May (MAM) 2026 rainy season, groundwater levels exhibited a gradual rise, increasing from approximately 1159.90 m a.s.l. in early March to a peak of about 1160.15 m a.s.l. in early May, representing a rise of approximately 0.25 m. This increase coincided with several rainfall events, including daily rainfall exceeding 20-30 mm during March and April, reflecting recharge from sustained rainfall events. The most noticeable increase occurred from mid-March through April, when groundwater levels rose about 0.25 m above the long-term average, indicating a positive recharge response. Levels remained below the historical maximum of approximately 1161.75 m a.s.l (Figure 11). throughout the monitoring period, suggesting that although recharge was significant, groundwater conditions did not reach exceptionally high levels. Towards the end of May, groundwater levels showed a slight decline from approximately 1160.15 m a.s.l. to about 1160.03 m a.s.l. (≈ 0.12 m), consistent with reduced rainfall intensity and the seasonal recession following the peak of the rainy season. The current groundwater status indicate Above Normal conditions in Bugolobi monitoring station (Figure 12).

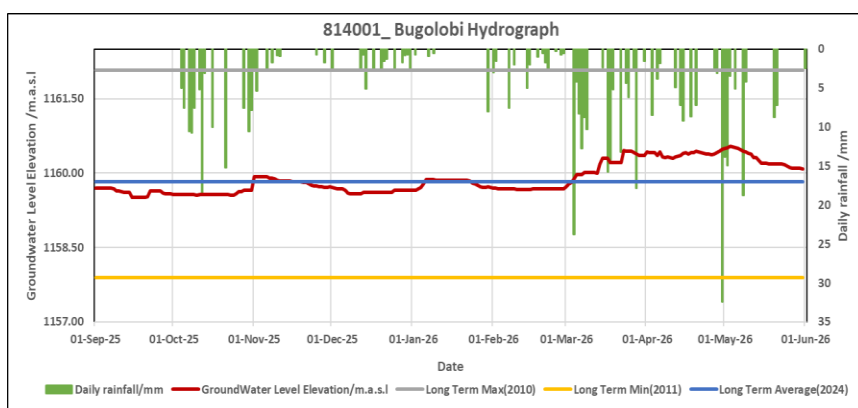


Figure 11: Groundwater Level Trend in Bugolobi

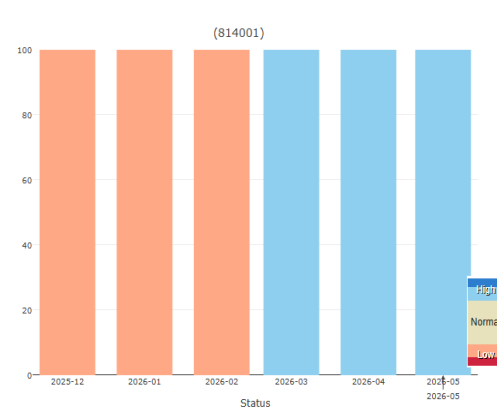


Figure 12: Bugolobi Groundwater status

(iv) Bugondo Groundwater Station

Groundwater levels at the Bugondo monitoring station showed a gradual decline from December 2025 through early April 2026, falling from approximately 1040.80 m a.s.l. to around 1040.25 m a.s.l. (Figure 13), representing a decline of approximately 0.55 m. The increase in groundwater levels observed during late April and May coincided with sustained rainfall, including several rainfall events exceeding 20-30 mm, indicating seasonal recharge of the aquifer. During this period, groundwater levels recovered to approximately 1040.60 m a.s.l., representing a recharge of about 0.35 m. Despite these fluctuations, groundwater levels remained approximately 0.4-0.8 m above the long-term average (≈ 1039.80 m a.s.l.) throughout the monitoring period and below the historical maximum of approximately 1041.00 m a.s.l., suggesting favourable groundwater conditions. The observed response demonstrates that the aquifer benefitted from MAM rainfall, although recharge was moderate rather than exceptional. This indicates that, groundwater conditions during MAM 2026 at Bugondo were normal, meaning stable groundwater storage.

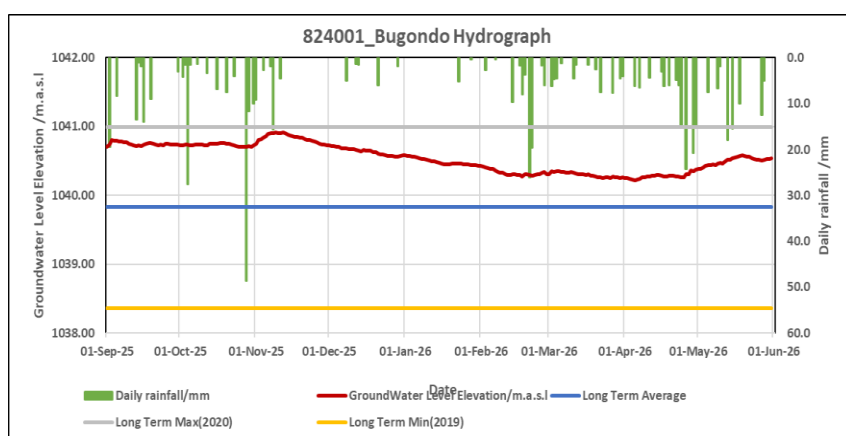


Figure 13: Groundwater Level Trend in Bugondo

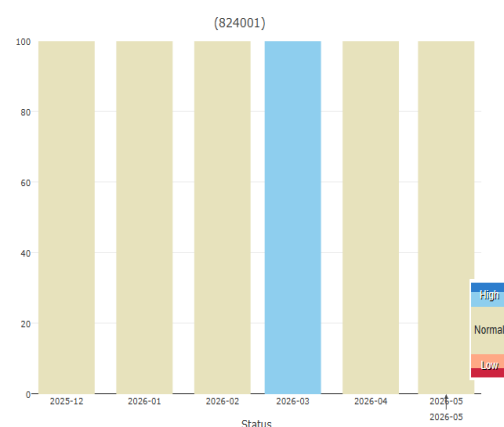


Figure 14: Bugondo Groundwater status

3.0 Hydrological Impacts Observed during MAM 2026

- Flash floods experiences in Kampala in March disrupting business.
- River Malaba in Tororo district burst its banks in the month of May displacing a number of families.
- Sufficient water for Agriculture, domestic use, hydropower generation and ecosystems in most regions.
- There was stable groundwater condition across the country.

5.0 Seasonal Climate Outlook for June-August (JJA) 2026

Most parts of the country are expected to receive **near normal to below normal (near average to below average)** rainfall, and temperatures are expected to be **warmer than average**. The spatial distribution of the expected seasonal rainfall is shown in **Figure 15a**. The spatial long term mean (average) rainfall distribution is provided in **Figure 15b** below

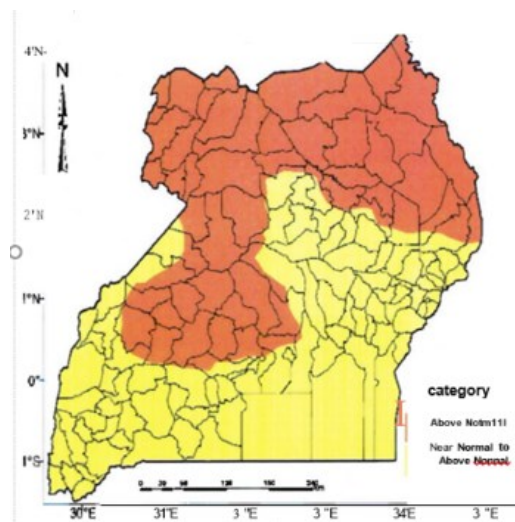
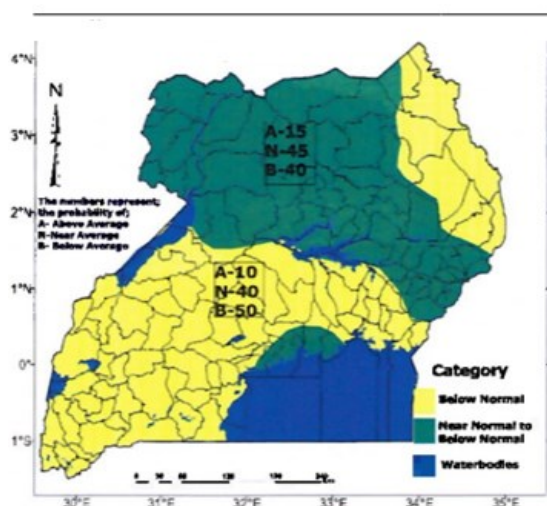


Figure 15a: Seasonal rainfall outlook map

Figure 15b: Seasonal temperature outlook map

5.1 Regional Forecast

Region	Forecast
Southwestern Highlands, Southwestern lowland, Rwenzori sub-region, Central parts of western, western central areas, Northeastern region.	Below normal rainfall (Drier than normal)
Central and Western Lake Victoria, Eastern-central region, Eastern parts of Kyoga basin, Mt. Elgon region, Northwestern region, Central Northern region, Eastern areas of Norther region	Near-normal to below normal

6.0 Potential Impacts of the JJA 2026 Outlook

These conditions are expected to influence river flows, groundwater recharge, and water demand.

- Flow in rivers is expected to reduce, this is likely to affect sector such as water supply (domestic water use), livestock, Agriculture and small power generation which rely on rivers,
- Lake Victoria, Kyoga and Lake Albert water level trend is expected to decline, however, the levels are expected to remain above their long-term average levels due to accumulated storage from previous wet seasons,
- Reservoir operators should continue monitoring inflow conditions and maintain operational preparedness,
- Groundwater recharge is expected to be reduce in all areas expected to receive below-normal rainfall,
- Low to moderate flood risk is expected in: Rwenzori region, Elgon slopes, Urban flood-prone areas.

7.0 Advisories

- Use of water efficiently and sparingly to avoid wastage.
- Water rationing,
- Continuously monitor water level in rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and monitor performance of weather to support early warning;
- De-silt reservoir, valley tanks and ponds to create more storage for the SOND season where El Nino has been forecasted.
- City and town councils to de-silt urban channels to minimize flood risks in the next season
- Water and road sector should carry out maintenance and repair work of water and road infrastructure,
- Review water abstraction permits to cater for other users.