



NATIONAL DROUGHT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

National Drought Early Warning Bulletin

October 2025

1.0 DROUGHT SITUATION OVERVIEW

Sixteen (16) ASAL counties were classified under the Normal drought phase, while Seven (7)

counties including Mandera, Wajir, Garissa, Tana River, Kilifi, Kwale and Kajiado deteriorated to the **Alert** phase.

This classification is based on the performance of environmental, production, access, and utilization indicators, most of which remained within their usual ranges due to the delayed onset of the October, November, December (OND) rainfall season. The conditions remained generally dry to moderately wet across most of the ASAL counties. No county was categorized under the Alarm or Emergency drought phases. Overall, the drought situation is on deteriorating, although a few counties showed a normal and alert trend with seven counties having moved to Alert drought phase. The ASALs experienced late onset of October-November-December (OND) rains. Figure 1 illustrates

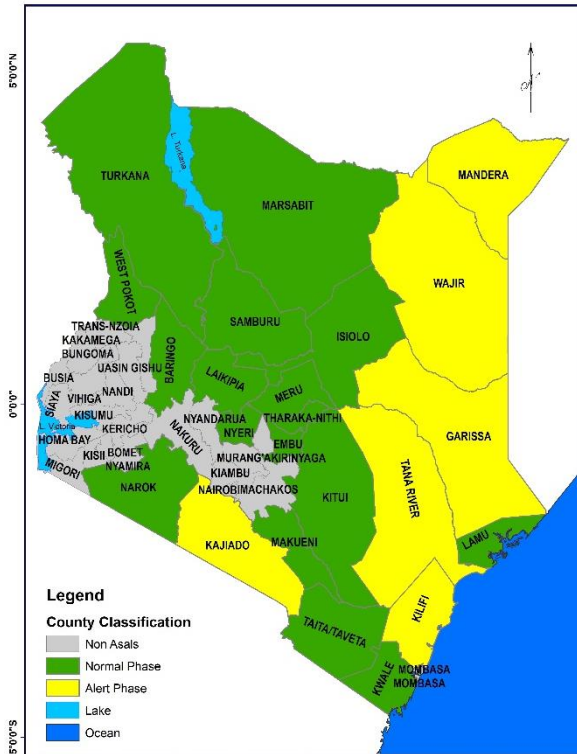


Figure 1: October Drought Phase Classification

the drought phase classification as of the end of October 2025.

2.0. Observed Drought Indicators

2.1. October 2025 Rainfall Performance

The month of October marks the onset of the October–November–December (OND) short-rains season in Kenya.

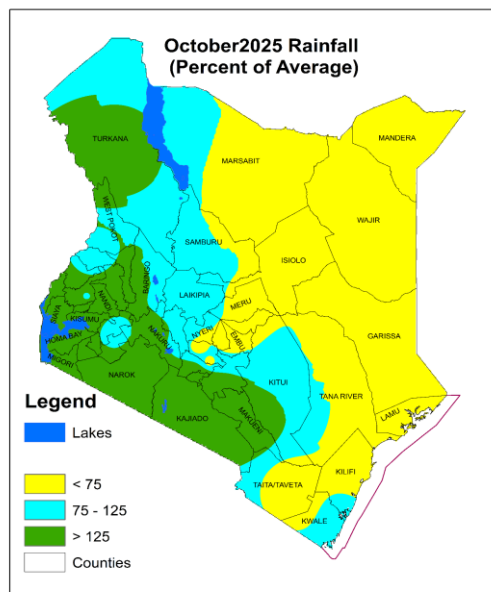
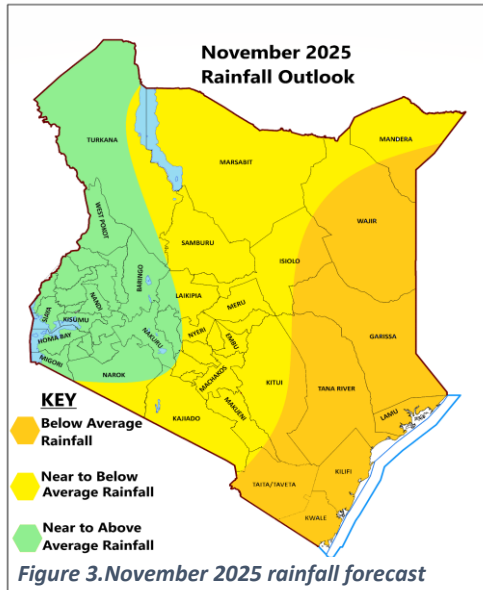


Figure 2. October rainfall Performance

In 2025, the start of the seasonal rains over the Highlands East of the Rift Valley and the South Rift Valley was realized during the fourth week of October as had been predicted. A few areas however received significant amounts of rainfall during the first week of October but this was followed by a prolonged dry spell, thus the onset criteria were not met during this period. Onset over the Southeastern lowlands and the Coastal region was expected during the third to fourth week of November. However, significant amounts of rainfall were received over a few areas towards the end of October including some parts of the Northeastern region as a result of tropical cyclone Change. ASAL counties

including Marsabit, Mandera, Wajir, Garissa, Isiolo, Meru, Tana river, Kilifi, Lamu, Taita taveta received less than 75 percent of the October 2025 rainfall. However, counties of Turkana, Narok, Kajiado, Kitui, Laikipia and Samburu received between 75 and 125 percent of October rains, with western parts of Turkana, Narok, kajiado and Makueni recording above 125 percent of October average rains.

2.1.1 November 2025 Rainfall Outlook



The November forecast indicates that Narok, Baringo, and western parts of Laikipia are expected to receive rains during the month of November that is likely to be near to above the long-term average received during the same period. During this period, heavy storms are likely to be more frequent especially in the afternoons and evenings. The **North-western parts of Kenya including Turkana and Samburu** are expected to receive occasional rainfall during the month. The expected amounts of rainfall are likely to be near to above the long-term average amounts received in November over Turkana and near to below average in Samburu.

Episodes of heavy rains accompanied by strong winds may occur during the month. The **Highlands East of the Rift Valley including Nyeri and Meru** will receive morning rains and afternoon/evening showers are expected over several places in the month. The expected total amounts are likely to be near to below the long-term average amounts for November. Occasional episodes of heavy rainfall accompanied by strong winds may occur during the period. The North-eastern counties including Mandera, Marsabit and a few areas in Isiolo will receive occasional rainfall during the month. The expected amount of rainfall is likely to be near to below the long-term average for November. Episodes of isolated heavy rains accompanied with strong winds may occur during the period. However, Garissa, most parts of Wajir and parts of Isiolo are however likely to receive occasional rainfall that is likely to be below the long-term average amounts for November. The **South-eastern Lowlands** including Kajiado, Kitui, Makueni, Machakos, Tana River and Taita Taveta are expected to receive occasional rainfall during the month of November 2025. The expected amount of rainfall is likely to be near to below the long-term average amounts received in November over Machakos, Makueni, Kajiado and parts of Kitui and below average over the remaining parts and finally the **Coastal Strip** including Mombasa, Kilifi, Lamu, Kwale and Coastal Tana River are expected to receive occasional rainfall during the month and the expected amount of rainfall is likely to be below the long-term average amounts received in November.

2.2 Vegetation Condition

Overall, the vegetation condition in October was stable as compared to the previous month. Eighteen (18) counties recorded above normal vegetation greenness including Turkana, Marsabit, Samburu, West Pokot, Laikipia, Baringo, Kitui, Makueni, Kajiado, Narok, Embu, Meru, Nyeri, Tharaka Nithi, Lamu, Isiolo, Tana River and Taita Taveta. While five (5) counties Garissa, Mandera, Wajir, Kwale, and Kilifi exhibited normal vegetation greenness. Two counties Wajir and Garissa declined from above normal to normal vegetation greenness. Figure 4 summarizes the vegetation conditions across the ASAL counties as of the end of September and October 2025.

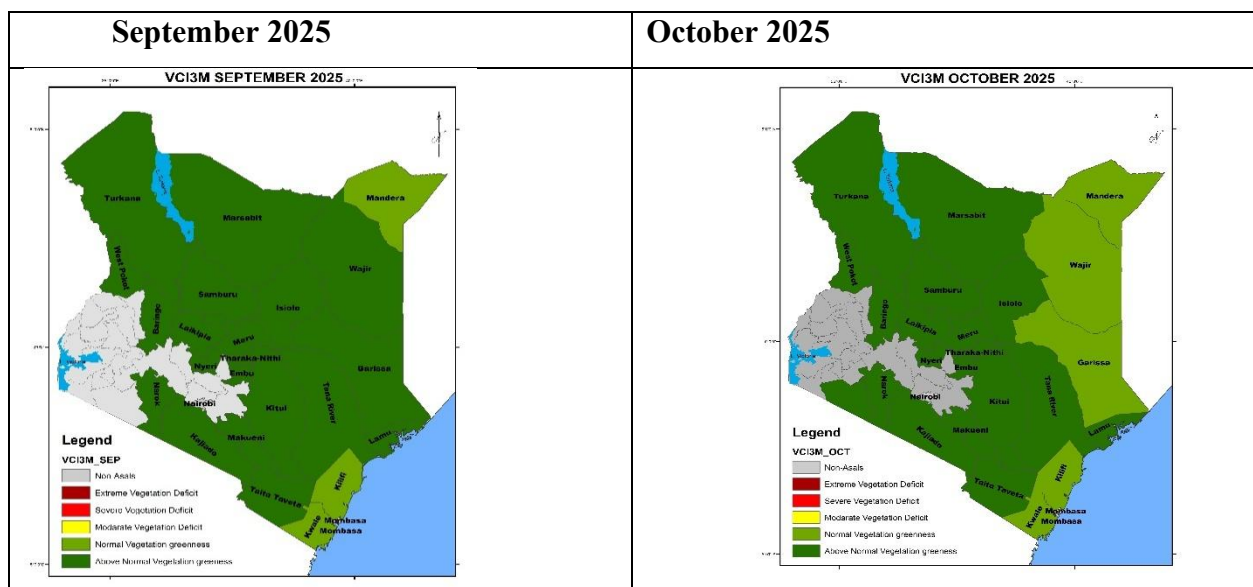


Figure 4. Vegetation Condition Index of October as compared to September 2025

2.3. LIVESTOCK SECTOR

2.3.1. Livestock diseases

Suspected Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreaks were reported in several counties, including Baringo, Kajiado, Kitui (51 cases across Zombie, Yatta Kwa Vonza, Mutha, Mutomo, and Ikanga), Narok (Mara, Naikarra, and Siana wards in Narok West Sub-County), and West Pokot (Kapchok ward – 90 cases). Garissa County experienced an increase in livestock diseases, with Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) and Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) affecting goats, causing high morbidity and reduced productivity. Similarly, 120 cases of PPR were reported in West Pokot

(90 in Chepareria and 30 in Kapchok). Cases of cattle deaths, suspected to be due to trypanosomiasis, were reported in Garissa (Bothai area). In Kitui (Mui), 18 deaths were attributed to Black Quarter disease. Mandera recorded around 107 animal deaths linked to diseases and drought (5 camels, 3 cattle, 82 goats, and 17 sheep). Additionally, approximately 13 cases of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) were noted in Kitui (Ikutha and Mwingi North). As a preventive measure, 11,486 cattle were vaccinated against LSD in West Pokot (Sook, Riwo, and Lelan wards)

2.3.2 Cattle prices

About 74 percent of the counties reported stable cattle prices compared to the previous month, while a few—namely Mandera, Tana River, Kwale, Kajiado, and Tharaka Nithi—experienced a decline (Table 5). The price drop in these counties was attributed to distress sales and oversupply, driven by the delayed onset of short rains and reduced demand for cattle. In contrast, stability in other regions was supported by good cattle body condition, allowing pastoralists to obtain favorable prices. Overall, cattle prices in nearly all counties, except Tana River and Lamu, remained above the average levels for this time of the year. Strong market participation, healthy livestock, limited market supply, and low trading volumes in certain areas were key factors sustaining these above-normal prices.

Table 5.0: Cattle prices, October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Baringo, Garissa Isiolo, Mandera Marsabit, Samburu Turkana, Wajir, Embu, Kajiado, Meru Kilifi, Kitui, Kwale Laikipia, Makueni Narok, Taita Taveta Nyeri, Tharaka Nithi West Pokot	Lamu Tana-River		Baringo Garissa Isiolo Samburu Kilifi Nyeri	Marsabit Turkana Wajir, Kitui Laikipia Lamu, Meru Makueni Narok Taita Taveta West Pokot	Mandera Tana River Embu Kajiado Kwale Tharaka Nithi

2.3.3 Goat Prices

Except for a few counties such as Kwale, Mandera, and Tana River, which reported a decline in goat prices due to deteriorating body condition, about 70 percent of the counties recorded stable price trends in October (Table 6). The stability in these areas was supported by increased demand

and improved browse availability following rainfall in some regions, which enhanced livestock body condition. Overall, goat prices across all counties remained within the typical range for this period, largely attributed to continued improvement in body condition driven by the availability of quality, palatable browse after the showers experienced.

Table 6.0: Goat prices, October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Baringo, Garissa Isiolo, Marsabit Samburu, Tana River Turkana, Kajiado Kilifi, Kitui Laikipia, Lamu Makueni, Meru Narok, Nyeri Taita Taveta Tharaka Nithi	Wajir Embu Kwale West-Pokot Mandera		Garissa Makueni Meru Narok West Pokot	Baringo, Isiolo Samburu Turkana, Wajir Kilifi, Kitui Laikipia, Lamu Nyeri Taita Taveta	Mandera Marsabit Tana River Embu Kajiado Kwale Tharaka Nithi

2.4 Crop production

Food and horticultural crops production is normally practiced in the Agro-pastoral, Coastal Marginal Agriculture (CMA) and South East Marginal Agriculture (SEMA) clusters. In addition, within the other clusters, some households practice irrigated agriculture along the riverine areas and reclaimed productive lands. Majority of farmers were actively engaged in land preparation and planting for the anticipated short rains, although the onset of these rains was noted as delayed or erratic in several areas like Makueni and Kitui. For farmers who had planted earlier, crops were generally reported to be at the germination to below knee-high stages, with overall crop conditions ranging from fair to poor due to moisture stress. Conversely, some counties like Kwale, Baringo, West Pokot, and Laikipia were simultaneously reporting ongoing or recently completed harvests of crops such as maize and cassava, which were expected to boost local food stocks despite challenges like post-harvest losses and localized flooding. Other crop production activities taking place in the various counties were as outlined in table 7.

Table 7.0: Current status of crop production

Cluster	Counties	Current state of crop production
CMA	Lamu	Majority of crop farmers across all livelihood zones were preparing their land for planting in anticipation of the short rains. For those who had planted earlier, their crops were at the early stages of germination.
	Taita Taveta	Crops were at germination stage in the Horticulture/Dairy livelihood zone while in the Irrigated/Livestock zone, maize, Beans and cow peas were below knee High. In the Mixed Farming: Food Crop/Livestock zone, maize was also at the Germination stage, while cowpeas and green grams were also Germinating.
	Kilifi	Cassava was the main crop being harvested during the month under review with the condition being fair as temperatures remained high.
	Kwale	Most farmers were selling their produce with a few conducting land preparation in anticipation of the OND rains.
SEMA	Embu	Farmers were planting various crops supported by the ongoing rains.
	Meru	Majority of the farmers embarked on planting, having concluded land preparation earlier in the month. Farmers opted to cultivate short-cycle crops, such as legumes, due to the uneven and erratic nature of the rains. Crops were at the germination stage for farmers who planted earlier, especially in the mixed farming zones and in fair condition due to the late onset of the rains. In the agro pastoral zone, crops were yet to germinate.
	Kitui	The short rains had delayed but most farmers were making efforts of planting utilizing the little showers.
	Tharaka Nithi	The ongoing activity among farmers was land preparation in anticipation of the short rains (OND). The current harvest is expected to boost household food stocks, stabilize local markets and strengthen short-term food security across the county.

	Makueni	Rainfed crop production in October remained subdued as most areas were still at the land preparation and dry planting stages due to the delayed onset of the short rains. In the Mixed Farming zones, farmers had begun planting or preparing land for mainly maize, beans, and pigeon peas, with crop condition rated as fair to poor depending on soil moisture availability. In contrast, the Marginal Mixed Farming zones recorded limited activity, with most farmers yet to commence planting and no active crop development observed. Overall, inadequate rainfall constrained planting progress and early crop establishment, leading to generally poor to fair field conditions across the reporting areas.
Agro-pastoral	Narok	The main agricultural activity taking place was land preparation and planting. Tomatoes, maize and cabbages are normally grown in irrigation schemes along seasonal rivers in Mosiro, Pulunga and Naroosura region.
	Baringo	Harvesting of maize had been completed in the Irrigated and Agropastoral livelihood zone while ongoing in the Mixed farming. Agro-Pastoral and Mixed Farming zones particularly benefited from these harvests, though localized challenges such as flooding in some low-lying areas affected portions of cropland.
	West Pokot	About 10-20 percent, of crops were still in the farms across the livelihood zones at advanced to the grain filling/podding and harvesting stages, with overall conditions ranging from fair to good. However, Majority of crops harvested currently are facing post-harvest losses about 15-20 percent due to ongoing rains.
	Laikipia	In the Mixed Farming livelihood zones, farmers were actively engaged in maize harvesting. Yields were expected to be above average in Igwamiti, Githiga, Marmanet, and Rumuruti Township wards, while below-average harvest was anticipated in Salama and Olmorani wards. Additionally, with the onset of the OND (October–November–December) rainfall season, farmers in these zones were also carrying out various field activities. These included planting of short-season crops, second weeding to manage early weed growth, and gapping to replace

		plants affected by earlier moisture stress. Potato moulding was also underway to support healthy tuber development and improve yields. Overall, the onset of rains has supported renewed agricultural activity and is expected to enhance crop performance where timely field management is maintained.
	Nyeri	The major activity taking place was land preparation and planting for the short rains season across both livelihood zones.

2.4.1 Maize prices

Maize prices remained stable in most counties compared to the previous month, except in Marsabit, Meru, and Mandera, where prices rose due to declining household stocks and increased demand during the reporting period (Table 8). Notably, all counties except Wajir, Lamu, and Mandera recorded maize prices within the normal range for October. The overall trend observed during the month was influenced by a combination of local production particularly in the marginal agricultural and agro-pastoral areas and external supplies, including cross-border imports.

Table 8.0: Maize prices, October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At/close to LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Mandera Wajir Lamu	Garissa Isiolo Marsabit Kajiado Kilifi Kitui Tharaka Nithi West Pokot	Baringo, Samburu Tana River Turkana, Embu Kwale, Laikipia Makueni, Meru Narok, Nyeri Taita Taveta	Narok	Baringo, Garissa Isiolo, Samburu Tana River Turkana, Wajir Embu, Kajiado Kilifi, Kitui Kwale, Laikipia Lamu, Makueni Nyeri, Taita Taveta Tharaka Nithi West Pokot	Mandera Marsabit Meru

2.5 WATER ACCESS

2.5.1 Access to water for households

During the reporting period, approximately 78 percent of ASAL counties recorded stable trekking distances for households accessing water points (Table 9). This stability was largely attributed to

improved water availability resulting from the recharge of nearby open water sources following showers received in October. Conversely, increased distances in counties such as Kilifi, Tharaka Nithi, and Mandera were linked to high evaporation rates, which led to the drying up of some water sources and depletion of previously harvested water due to the delayed onset of the short rains. Among the arid counties, Mandera and Garissa reported the longest average distance to water points at 9.5 kilometers, while Kajiado recorded the highest distance among the semi-arid counties at 6.2 kilometers. With the exception of Garissa, Tana River, Kwale, and Wajir, trekking distances across counties remained within their respective long-term averages. The below-normal trekking distances observed in some areas were supported by the recharge of water facilities, particularly in counties that experienced the onset of the short rains.

Table 9.0: Distance from Households to Main Water Sources, October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Garissa Tana River Wajir Kwale	Baringo Marsabit Kajiado Kilifi Lamu Nyeri West Pokot	Isiolo, Mandera Samburu, Embu Turkana, Kitui Laikipia, Meru Makueni, Narok Taita Taveta Tharaka Nithi	Turkana Kitui Kwale Laikipia	Baringo, Embu Garissa, Isiolo Samburu Tana River Wajir, Kajiado Lamu, Meru Makueni Narok, Nyeri Taita Taveta	Mandera Marsabit Kilifi Tharaka Nithi West Pokot

2.5.2 Access to water for livestock

During the reporting period, trekking distances from grazing areas to water sources remained stable in about 57 percent of the counties, while an increase was observed in 43 percent of the areas (Table 10). The stability in majority of the counties was attributed to forage regeneration and improved water availability following the recharge of water sources. Conversely, the increase in trekking distances in some areas was linked to livestock movements away from farmlands and declining forage levels near water points. Among the arid counties, Garissa recorded the longest return trekking distance at 18.6 kilometers, while Kajiado reported the longest distance among the semi-arid counties at 6.8 kilometers. Compared to the usual distances for October, Garissa, Marsabit, Kwale, Lamu, and West Pokot reported trekking distances outside the normal range.

Overall, the recharge of water facilities during the period under review contributed significantly to the shorter-than-normal trekking distances observed in several counties.

Table 10.0: Distance from Grazing area to Main Water Sources, October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Garissa Marsabit Kwale Lamu West Pokot	Mandera Turkana Wajir, Nyeri Kajiado Kilifi, Narok Taita Taveta	Baringo, Isiolo Samburu, Embu Tana River Kitui, Laikipia Makueni, Meru Tharaka Nithi	Baringo Tana River Turkana Kitui	Isiolo, Mandera Marsabit, Lamu Wajir, Kajiado Laikipia, Narok Nyeri	Garissa, Embu Samburu Kilifi, Kwale Makueni, Meru Taita Taveta Tharaka Nithi West Pokot

2.6 Terms of trade

Approximately 65 percent of the counties recorded stable terms of trade, largely due to minimal changes in goat prices compared to the previous month (Table 11). However, a decline in terms of trade observed in some areas was attributed to rising maize prices during the reporting period. The lowest terms of trade were recorded in Turkana (40) among the arid counties and Tharaka Nithi (53) among the semi-arid counties, leaving pastoral households in these regions economically disadvantaged due to reduced purchasing power. Overall, terms of trade across most counties remained above the long-term average, except in Tharaka Nithi and Mandera. This favorable trend was supported by maize prices that remained moderate and within the seasonal range, alongside slightly higher goat prices resulting from improved body condition.

Table 11.0: Terms of Trade, October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Baringo, Garissa Isiolo, Marsabit Samburu, Kajiado Tana River, Turkana Kilifi, Kitui, Kwale Laikipia, Makueni Meru, Taita Taveta Narok, West Pokot Nyeri	Wajir Embu Lamu	Mandera Tharaka Nithi	Samburu Laikipia Makueni Narok West Pokot	Baringo, Garissa Isiolo, Tana River Turkana, Wajir Kilifi, Kitui Nyeri, Taita Taveta	Mandera Marsabit Embu, Meru Kajiado Kwale, Lamu Tharaka Nithi

2.7. Health and nutrition

The nutrition situation remained stable in about 65 percent of the counties (Table 12). This stability was primarily attributed to favorable terms of trade that improved market access to diverse foods, as well as the availability of milk, green vegetables, and fruits produced at the household level. However, a deteriorating trend was reported in some counties, including Kwale, Meru, Marsabit, Samburu, and Tharaka Nithi, mainly due to inadequate and unbalanced diets driven by high poverty levels and elevated disease prevalence. Malnutrition rates remained within seasonal ranges in roughly 61 percent of the counties, a trend supported by milk availability, expanded mass screening programs, and ongoing medical outreaches. Conversely, poor feeding and childcare practices contributed to worsening nutrition outcomes in about 39 percent of the counties.

Table 12.0: Children at risk of malnutrition (MUAC), October 2025

Current status			Trend		
Above LTA	At LTA	Below LTA	Improving	Stable	Worsening
Baringo Garissa Marsabit Turkana Kilifi, Kwale Laikipia Lamu, Meru	Mandera Kajiado Kitui Taita Taveta	Isiolo, Samburu Tana River Wajir, Embu Makueni Narok, Nyeri Tharaka Nithi West Pokot	Isiolo Kilifi Lamu Makueni West Pokot	Garissa, Mandera Tana River Wajir, Embu Kajiado Kitui, Narok Nyeri Taita Taveta	Baringo, Meru Marsabit Samburu Turkana Kwale Laikipia Tharaka Nithi

2.8 Drought phase classification

Based on the range of early warning indicators tracked through the drought early warning system, seven (7) counties—Wajir, Kajiado, Mandera, Garissa, Kilifi, Tana River and Kwale—were classified under the *Alert* phase. Sixteen (16) counties remained in the *Normal* phase, though the trend was noted to be worsening in eight (8) of them. The counties experiencing a worsening trend included Isiolo, Turkana, Makueni, Meru, Embu, Tharaka Nithi, Kitui and Marsabit, as shown in Table 13.

Table 13.0: Drought phase classification, October 2025

Drought status	Trend		
	Improving	Stable	Worsening/ Deteriorating
Normal		Baringo, Samburu, Laikipia, Lamu, Narok, Nyeri, Taita Taveta, West Pokot (8)	Isiolo, Turkana, Makueni, Meru, Marsabit, Embu, Kitui, Tharaka Nithi (8)
Alert		Wajir, Kajiado (2)	Garissa, Mandera, Kilifi, Tana River, Kwale, (5)
Alarm			
Emergency			
Recovery			