Government of Pakistan
Pakistan Meteorological Department
Islamabad

Tel: 051-9250364
Fax: 051-9250368

Issue date: 1st January 2026

Outlook for January-February-March (JFM), 2026

1. Current meteorological conditions

During the OND 2025 season, rainfall over most parts of the country remained normal to below normal. A moderate rainfall spell in the first week of October primarily affected the northern and northwestern regions. This was followed by a prolonged dry period that persisted across much of the country until the third week of December, when light rainfall over the western to northwestern regions brought an end to the extended dry spell in several areas. Southern Punjab and several parts of Sindh also received light rainfall during the last week of December, which helped alleviate the prolonged dry conditions prevailing in these areas. Temperature conditions during OND 2025 were generally normal to slightly above normal, with the largest positive temperature anomalies recorded over Gilgit-Baltistan (Table 1).

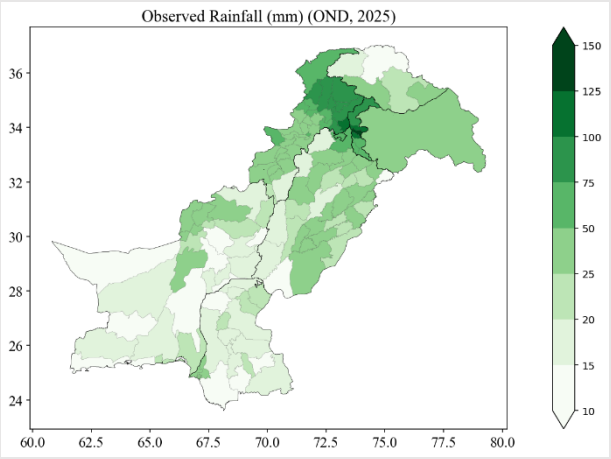

Figure 1: Observed rainfall (mm), OND 2025

Table 1: Summary of the OND 2025 Observed Rainfall and Temperature

Region	Total Rainfall (mm)	Normal* Rainfall (mm)	Rainfall Departure (%)	Mean Temp (°C)	Anomaly (°C)
Pakistan	35.5	42.9	-17.2	18.3	0.5
AJK	120.4	120.1	0.2	16.2	-0.2
Balochistan	12.8	21.4	-40.1	19.4	0.7
Gilgit-Baltistan	20.0	25.5	-21.6	10.2	1.0
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	60.4	87.8	-31.2	15.7	0.7
Punjab	40.5	40.8	-0.7	19.2	0.2
Sindh	14.9	10.4	43.3	23.3	0.2

* Normal Period (1991 – 2020)

2. Seasonal Rainfall Outlook:

The seasonal outlook is based on the outputs of eight global seasonal prediction models with optimal skill. The models' outputs are combined using the Multi-Model Ensemble (MME) technique to generate operational outlooks for seasonal rainfall and temperature. Currently, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is in a neutral phase and expected to remain in a neutral phase during the season. Likewise, the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO), currently in a marginally negative phase, is expected to shift to a neutral phase and remains in the same phase for the whole season.

Given these conditions, the forecast indicates a **mixed rainfall anomaly pattern** during the JFM 2026. **Above-normal*** rainfall is projected over the northwestern parts of the country, particularly upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, northwestern areas of Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan, indicating enhanced winter precipitation activity in these regions. In contrast, **below-normal** rainfall is expected across northeastern regions including Punjab and adjoining areas of Kashmir, as well as southern and southwestern areas, notably Balochistan, where negative anomalies dominate. Central Pakistan largely shows **near-normal conditions**, reflecting relatively stable seasonal rainfall behavior (Figure 2, 3). Overall, the spatial distribution highlights a north–south contrast in precipitation anomalies during JFM 2026.

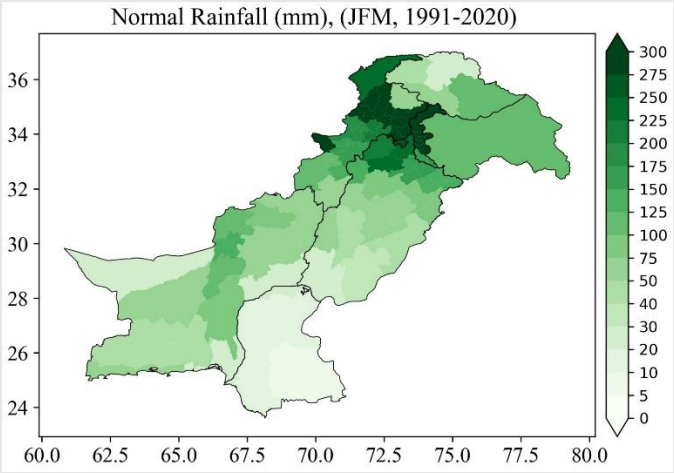

Figure 2: Normal (1991-2020) rainfall (mm) for JFM

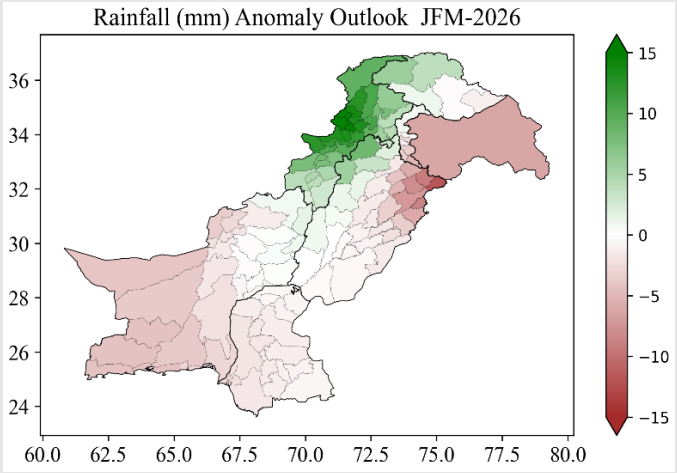

Figure 3: Monthly rainfall (mm) anomaly for JFM 2026

The probabilistic rainfall outlook reflects a consensus among all models used in the ensembles. The tercile probability output (Figure 4) indicates that most ensemble members predict the likelihood of near normal rainfall over most parts of the country. However, central parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa may get above normal rainfall whereas eastern parts of Gilgit-Baltistan are likely to receive below normal rainfall during the season JFM 2026.

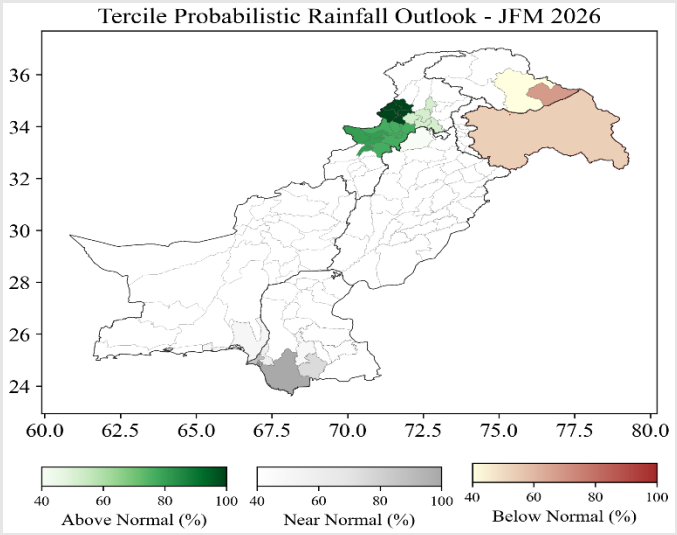

Figure 4: Probabilistic (%) rainfall outlook for JFM 2026

* Normal = 30-years average climatology

3. Seasonal Temperature Outlook:

Mean temperatures are expected to remain **above normal*** throughout the country, with maximum departure over northern areas of the country particularly Gilgit Baltistan during JFM 2026 (Figure 5, 6).

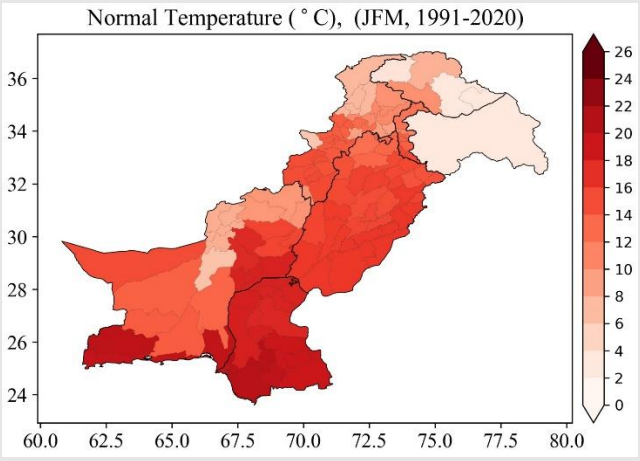

Figure 5: Normal (1991 - 2020) temperature for JFM

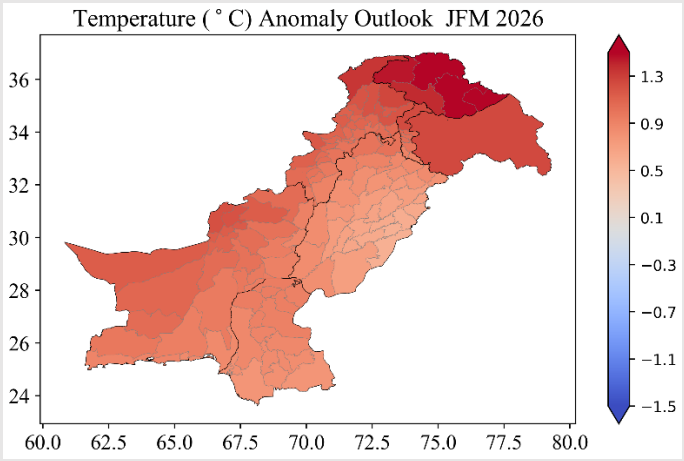

Figure 6: Monthly temperature anomaly outlook for JFM 2026

The tercile probabilistic temperature outlook (Figure 7) shows that most models predict above-normal temperatures across the country, with the highest likelihood over northern parts (Gilgit-Baltista and Kashmir) and southern parts (coastal belts of Sindh and Balochistan) during the forecast season.

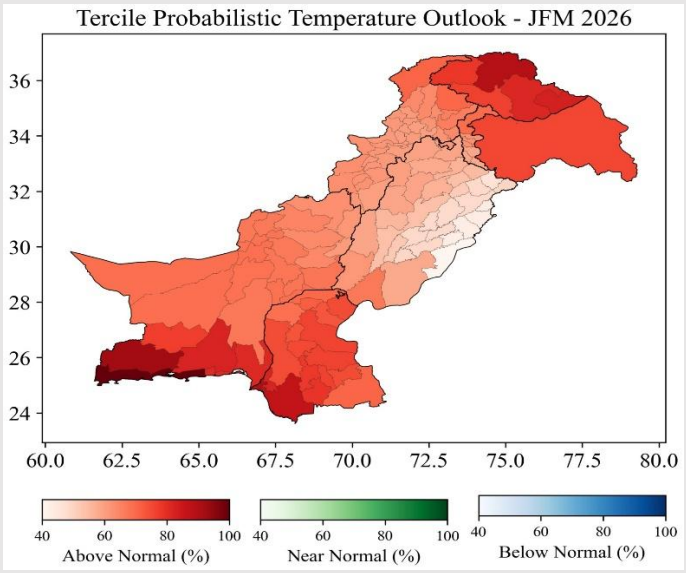

Figure 7: Probabilistic (%) temperature outlook for JFM 2026

Impacts:

- Above-normal rainfall in upper KP and northwestern Punjab likely to improve soil moisture and support rabi crop growth and tilling. In contrast, deficit rainfall in Sindh and Balochistan may lead to moisture stress and greater reliance on irrigation, especially for late-planted crops.

- As rainfall conditions are expected to improve across the country in the second half of the season, the return to normal soil moisture condition will support the grain-filling and maturity stages of Rabi crops, improving yield potential.

- Below-normal rainfall in rain fed areas may lead to reduced water availability for irrigation. Therefore, the reliance on supplementary irrigation could increase costs and would deplete water resources.

- Warmer temperatures and below normal rainfall during second half of the season may cause early onset of pollen season in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Above-normal temperatures could lead to early onset of heat stress in vulnerable populations, particularly in southern regions during March.

- Deficit rainfall in plains of Punjab, KP and northern Sindh may lead to an increased risk of fog and smog formation, potentially resulting in deteriorated air quality, causing respiratory problems and reducing visibility. But the enhance rainfall activity and rise in temperature in the second half of the season could help limit the persistence of fog and smog.

- Deficit rainfall in the early season may temporarily reduce water replenishment in reservoirs, potentially affecting water availability for agriculture and the power sector. However, the return to normal or near-normal rainfall in the second half of the season could help restore reservoir levels, easing pressure on water resources.

- Near- to above-normal rainfall over upper catchments (KP and GB) is likely to support river inflows and reservoir replenishment. However, slightly below-normal rainfall in parts of Punjab and southwestern Balochistan may temporarily constrain local water availability. Overall, rainfall during late January and February 2026 may help stabilize water resources and ease pressure on the agriculture and power sectors.

Note: The Seasonal Outlook is updated monthly in the first week of the month. The forecast reliability varies with location, time of year, and global ocean/atmospheric conditions. It provides general trends using probabilities rather than precise predictions and compares expected conditions to historical averages. For better decision-making, it should be used alongside short-term forecasts and other climate data issued by PMD.