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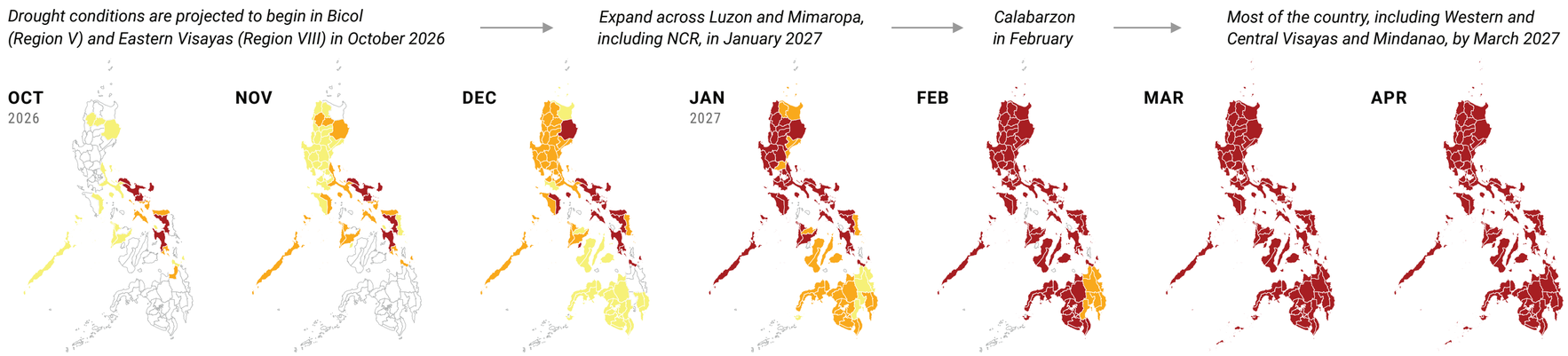
El Niño Snapshot: Impact and Response Actions

As of 30 October 2026

The Philippines is preparing for the anticipated impacts of a very strong El Niño. Prolonged fuel and freight disruptions linked to the Middle East conflict could amplify the effects on prices and livelihoods. While peak impacts are expected from late 2026, there remains a critical window to strengthen preparedness and implement anticipatory actions that can help reduce risks to vulnerable communities and livelihoods. Rainfall deficits, heat and water stress are expected to reduce crop production, strain water systems and raise health risks from late 2026, with impacts on food access likely to continue into the second quarter of 2027, beyond the climatic peak.



GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

US$123.2M

ALLOCATED FOR READINESS AND RESPONSE

Through the El Niño Task Force, the Government is coordinating nationwide measures to mitigate the impacts of a very strong El Niño, prioritizing water security, food supply, public health, public safety and energy resilience.

El Niño Task Force activated (DA, OCD, DSWD and others). **109 cities and municipalities** have declared a state of calamity.

4.6 million farmers and fisherfolk could be affected. The Department of Agriculture has provided **$117 million** in interventions, including production support, cloud seeding, crop insurance and poultry and livestock distribution.

54 provinces to experience drought conditions by end-2026. The public is urged to refer to official PAGASA forecasts.

Ramping up health communication against heat-related illnesses and readying hospitals for a patient surge.

1 in 3 barangays identified as vulnerable. The Government is allocating funding to expand water service coverage.

Peak electricity demand could increase by 10.7%.

SECTORAL IMPACTS

	Q4 2026 OCT · NOV · DEC	Q1 2027 JAN · FEB · MAR	Q2 2027 APR · MAY · JUN
Education	▪ Heat and inadequate school WASH may disrupt attendance and learning.	▪ Class interruptions, illness, water collection and household income losses may increase absenteeism, dropout and learning loss.	▪ Vulnerable learners may need continued outreach, accessible learning resources and support.
Food and Agriculture	▪ Rainfall deficits and rising input, fuel and transport costs may raise food prices and weaken purchasing power. ▪ Water stress and heat may reduce production, damage assets and lower farm incomes.	▪ Increasing food insecurity. ▪ Reduced household food access, negative coping and market stress may increase. ▪ Crop stress and livelihood losses may intensify.	▪ Negative food-access impacts may persist. ▪ Recovery may require water access, irrigation, inputs, asset restoration and temporary employment.
Health	▪ Rising risk of heat-related illnesses. ▪ Water scarcity may strain sanitation, infection control and cold chains. ▪ Increased risk of water- and food-borne diseases.	▪ High alert for heat-related illnesses. ▪ Water scarcity may increase water-borne disease risk. ▪ Chronic disease flares may affect vulnerable groups most.	▪ Heat-related illnesses, emergency room visits and admissions may surge. ▪ Power and water disruptions may affect facilities, medicines and cold chains. ▪ Routine and preventive services may be disrupted. ▪ Heat stress among health workers.
Nutrition	▪ Drought and food-price pressures may reduce diet quality.	▪ Peak drought may further limit food access.	▪ Nutrition risks may persist where purchasing power and supply recovery are slow.
Protection	▪ Water collection burdens and inflation of basic commodities may increase protection risks for women and children.	▪ Marginalized groups may face greater barriers to services.	▪ Protection concerns and distress reports may increase and overwhelm protection services.
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	▪ Declining reservoir, groundwater and surface water levels. ▪ More service interruptions and reduced production from Level II and III systems. ▪ Deteriorating water quality and higher contamination levels.	▪ Critical shortages of safe drinking and domestic water. ▪ Reduced functionality of community water sources and small water systems, particularly in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs), island and coastal areas. ▪ Greater use of unsafe water, increasing diarrhoeal disease and dehydration risks. ▪ Reduced sanitation, handwashing and menstrual hygiene facilities.	▪ Continued reliance on emergency and alternative water supplies. ▪ Rehabilitation of damaged or depleted water systems and sources. ▪ Increased demand for climate- and drought-resilient water infrastructure.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Sources: PAGASA, Government of the Philippines, UNCT, humanitarian partners, FAO, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, PINGON

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UN AND PARTNERS ENGAGEMENT FOR EL NIÑO PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Building on current preparedness and anticipatory action, with opportunities to further support Government-led action through policy advocacy, technical support and potential operational assistance.

A POLICY ADVOCACY AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

NATIONAL LEVEL Policy, planning, financing and coordination

ONGOING PREPAREDNESS AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

- Engagement with PAGASA on El Niño outlook and drought monitoring. **FAO, WFP**
- Support to development and operationalisation of the national drought anticipatory action framework. **WFP**
- Technical discussions with key agencies (e.g. NDRRMC, DSWD, DA, DOH, DepEd) on preparedness and sectoral contingency plans. **UN, partners**
- Strengthening integration of anticipatory action into national DRRM and sectoral planning. **UN**
- Exploration of financing options through existing government programmes (e.g. LAWA at BINHI, SECURE) and international partners. **WFP**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

- Advocate integration of anticipatory action in national policies and financing mechanisms.
- Integrate El Niño risk analysis into sectoral plans for water, food security, health, social protection and agriculture.
- Support dedicated financing windows for drought preparedness and anticipatory action.
- Align national guidance with subnational implementation and monitoring arrangements.
- Promote inclusive policies addressing gender, child protection and livelihood risks.

COORDINATED GOVERNMENT-LED ACTION

Evidence-based policies and plans, stronger systems and financing

SUBNATIONAL LEVEL Regional and local preparedness

ONGOING PREPAREDNESS AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

- Support regional and local governments in contextualising El Niño guidance and contingency plans (e.g. Regions V and VIII, BARMM). **WFP**
- Engagement with subnational authorities through HCT, clusters and area-based coordination.
- Support to risk monitoring and information sharing at local level. **UN, partners**
- Community preparedness activities through existing programmes (e.g. LAWA at BINHI, SECURE). **WFP**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

- Support local governments to integrate drought risk and anticipatory action in local DRRM and development plans.
- Strengthen coordination among LGUs, national agencies and humanitarian and development partners.
- Advocate inclusion of vulnerable populations, gender considerations and child protection in local plans.
- Promote forecast-based information to guide early action and resource prioritisation.

GENDER, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Address differentiated impacts and broader risks.

GENDER AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

- Increased risks for women and girls, including GBV, unpaid care work and health risks (e.g. maternal and reproductive health, heat-related illness).
- Children face heightened risks, including malnutrition, school disruptions and protection risks.
- Disproportionate impacts on persons with disabilities, older persons and other vulnerable groups.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

- Potential impacts on agriculture and fisheries production, food prices and household incomes.
- Risks to water supply, energy generation and local economies dependent on agriculture, fisheries, tourism and MSMEs.
- Possible inflationary pressures and reduced livelihoods, with implications for poverty and food insecurity.

B OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AREAS FOR FURTHER ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAMME-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT

UN agencies and partners could provide targeted assistance through existing programmes or new arrangements, subject to government priorities, assessed needs, operational feasibility and available resources.

ANTICIPATORY ACTION (FOCUS ON DROUGHT)

ONGOING

- Technical support to refine drought risk analysis, triggers and activation protocols.
- Coordination with government agencies on the AA framework; exploration of delivery arrangements, including payment modalities.
- Implementation of AA for drought in Tawi-Tawi, Tanay, Bicol, BARMM and Sarangani. **NGO**

OPPORTUNITIES

- Support activation of AA mechanisms where criteria are met; scale up in additional high-risk areas.
- Provide accessible early warnings.
- Mobilize resources, prepare standby agreements and delivery systems.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

ONGOING

- Assessment of priority water access and WASH needs in at-risk areas.
- Support preparedness measures for water supply and essential WASH services; identify local service gaps.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Support prepositioning of critical WASH supplies and expand water supply and WASH services in affected communities.
- Intensify messaging on water conservation, safe water handling and drought preparedness.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

ONGOING

- Risk monitoring and analysis of potential food security and nutrition impacts; coordination with DA, DSWD and partners.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Sustain food and nutrition services through existing government and partner programmes; integrate nutrition into preparedness and response plans.

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND CASH ASSISTANCE

ONGOING

- Dialogue with DSWD on shock-responsive social protection and potential use of existing programmes; exploration of payment modalities through LAWA at BINHI and SECURE.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Link affected households to existing social protection and cash assistance; address income losses and support vulnerable groups.
- Provide complementary assistance where assessments confirm needs persist.

LIVELIHOODS AND AGRICULTURE

ONGOING

- Assessment of agricultural and livelihood risks (e.g. crops, livestock, fisheries); coordination with DA and partners on preparedness.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Protect productive assets and livelihoods; support climate-resilient agricultural practices and market linkages.

RECOVERY

ONGOING

- Preliminary analysis of potential recovery needs based on risk scenarios and past El Niño impacts; coordination with government on recovery planning.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Support government-led recovery planning; explore early recovery support for water systems, irrigation, livelihoods and local markets.
- Support restoration of disrupted services through existing government systems, with continued protection support.

FROM PREPAREDNESS TO EARLY ACTION TO RESPONSE TO RECOVERY

Note: Ongoing activities reflect reported UN and partner engagement. Opportunities are subject to further assessment, government priorities, operational feasibility and available resources.

Sources: PAGASA, Government of the Philippines, UNCT, humanitarian partners, FAO, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, PINGON

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