El Niño in Asia Pacific: 2026/2027

El Niño is now underway in the tropical Pacific and is expected to bring unusual rainfall and temperature patterns across the Pacific, South Asia and Southeast Asia. While each El Niño event is different, past events suggest that Red Cross Red Crescent Societies should prepare for increased risks such as drought, heat, water shortages and impacts on food security. These pressures may be worse in countries already affected by the fuel and fertilizer crisis, which is likely to continue through 2026.

What can we expect in 2026 in AP?

Higher probability of following hazards

1. **Droughts, Water Shortages and forest fire:** Reduced rainfall in parts of South Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia, and the western Pacific can lead to drought conditions and water shortages.

2. **Flooding and Storms:** El Niño events have been associated with increased rainfall and flooding in parts of Southeast Asia, including Indonesia and the Philippines.

3. **Vector-Borne Diseases and Forest Fire Haze:** Altered weather patterns and rising temperatures can increase the spread of vector-borne diseases such as dengue and malaria, while drought conditions may also heighten the risk of forest fires, leading to haze that affects air quality, causes respiratory health problems, disrupts daily life, and can escalate into transboundary pollution events.

Consequences

1. **Crop Failures and Food Shortages:** Reduced rainfall and drought conditions can lead to crop failures and decreased agricultural productivity. This, in turn, can result in food shortages, higher food prices, and increased food insecurity, affecting vulnerable populations.

2. **Health System Stress** Prolonged heatwaves can lead to heat stress, heat-related illnesses, and fatalities; haze and smoke from fires can cause breathing difficulties and respiratory distress especially among vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and young children.

3. **The Compounding Effects** of the Middle East Crisis will likely continue to impact fuel and fertilizer prices, increasing food production costs and further threatening food security.

Compounding Effects of the Middle East Crises:

El Niño is intensifying economic pressures across Asia-Pacific, with rising fuel, fertiliser and food prices linked to the Middle East crisis increasing risks to food security, livelihoods and household purchasing power. Southeast Asia and the Pacific face the highest combined climate-and-price risks, as drought, heat and rainfall deficits could reduce agricultural production and worsen water shortages.

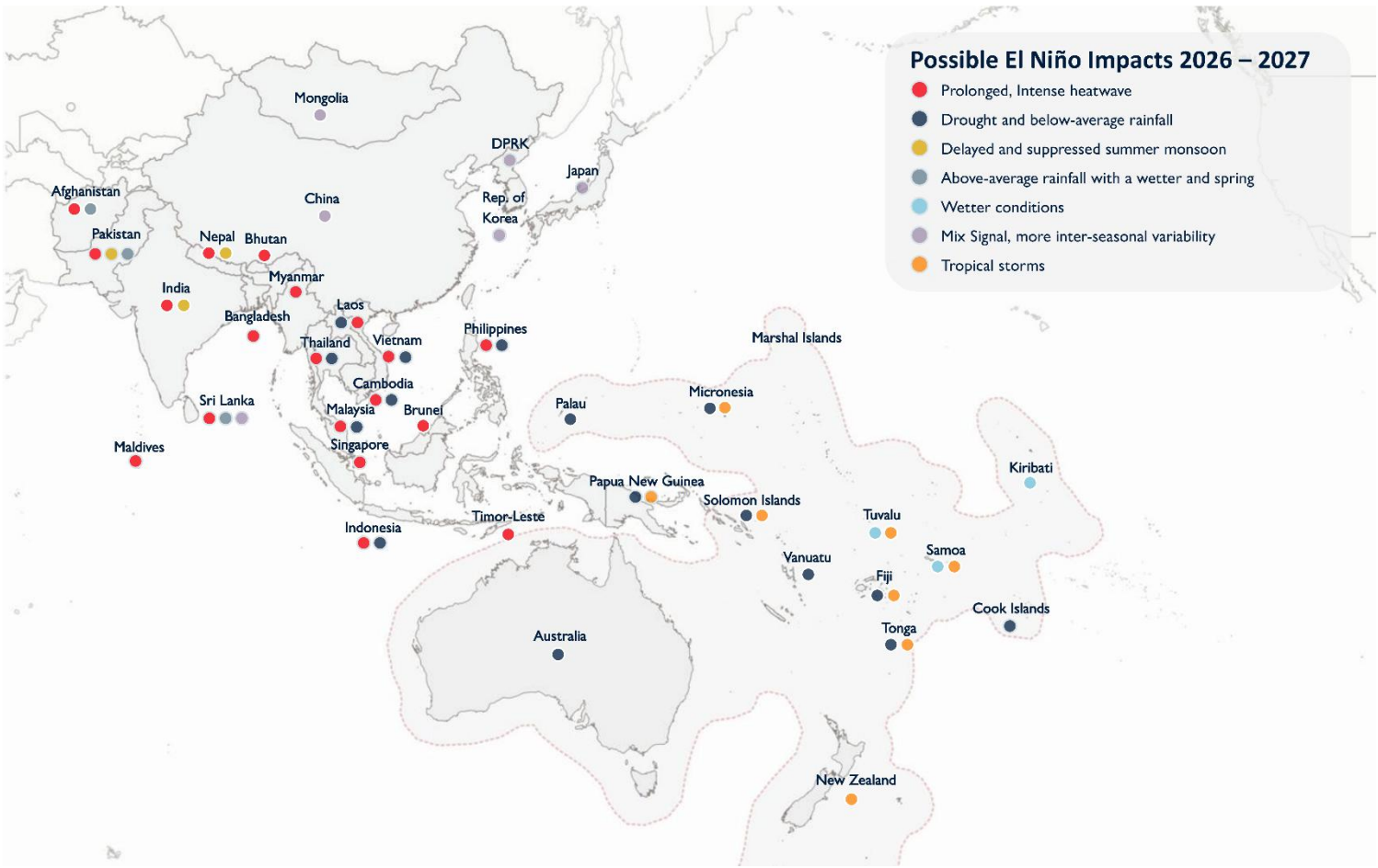
South Asia and Myanmar are mainly exposed through higher input and food costs. Reduced fertiliser use is already putting rice production at risk, increasing the likelihood of higher food prices and harmful coping strategies among vulnerable households.

VULNERABILITY

Many emerging markets in South and Southeast Asia, where agriculture commands a higher degree of importance to local economic output, are very vulnerable to El Niño disruptions.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Timor-Leste among other countries are particular vulnerable to El Niño due their agricultural dependence. For this cycle, the primary risk is not current, but during key planting and crop development stages in late 2026 and early 2027 if drought conditions continue to intensify (OCHA).

El Niño can exacerbate the vulnerabilities of these countries already facing a range of climate-related challenges, including typhoons, sea-level rise, and monsoons.



LESSONS FROM THE 2023/24 EL NIÑO

Lessons Learned from 15 extreme weather DREF Operations during the previous El Niño cycle.

- **El Nino is a Risk Multiplier:** Not a hazard itself —it manifested through droughts, floods, heatwaves, water shortages, food insecurity, and livelihood disruptions across Asia Pacific.
- **Flexibility mattered more than plans:** Operations that adapted modalities, timelines, and delivery approaches were better able to respond to changing conditions and evolving needs. El Niño-related droughts evolve over extended periods, often transitioning from preparedness to emergency response and recovery.
- **Strengthen preparedness and surge readiness:** Pre-position critical equipment and supplies (e.g., water treatment, pumping and drought-response assets), invest in technical training and maintenance capacity, and develop flexible contingency plans that can scale from preparedness to response and recovery as conditions evolve.
- **Empower local volunteers and decentralized response models:** Build and train local volunteer networks, strengthen duty-of-care measures, and ensure volunteers can lead assessments, distributions, monitoring, and community engagement when access constraints limit external support.

LESSONS CONTINUED:

- **Adapt assistance and engagement to local contexts:** Expand readiness to use cash assistance where markets are functioning, tailor communication and feedback channels to community preferences, and ensure inclusive approaches that reach women, children, older persons, and people with disabilities.
- **Invest in water security, public health, and resilience:** Prioritize long-term improvements in water infrastructure, safe water access, sanitation, livelihoods, and climate adaptation, while linking emergency operations to recovery and resilience programming from the outset.

Resources for preparedness and response:

Preparedness

- **Climate Centre:** https://www.climatecentre.org/
- **PER Rapid Response Capacity check** Rapid NS Response Capacity check PHASED TEMPLATE.xlsx (sharepoint.com)

Anticipatory Action

- **Anticipation Hub:** https://www.anticipation-hub.org/
- **DREF – Anticipatory pillar fund:** https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/Anticipatory-Pillar-DREF-brochure-practice-V3.pdf

Response:

- **DREF – Drought response**: Drought DREF operational parameter - Sept 2024 - Final.pdf
- **DREF Guidelines 2026**: DREF Guidelines 2026.pdf
- **IFRC Epidemic Control Kit:** https://epidemics.ifrc.org/manager
- **SoP Early Action to El Niño /La Niña Episodes IASC** - https://disasterlaw.ifrc.org/media/2051

Sources Referenced:

UN OCHA. *Asia and the Pacific: Snapshot of El Niño & Middle East Crisis (as of 12 June 2026*). Asia and the Pacific: Snapshot of El Niño & Middle East Crisis (as of 12 June 2026) | OCHA. 2026.

Disclaimer

This El Niño Factsheet is an internal RCRC product intended to support situational awareness and preparedness. The analysis presented is indicative and does not replace official national or regional early-warning systems.

Information used in this document is drawn from IFRC Delegations, National Societies, and verified external sources, including PDC, FACTAL, OCHA, AHA Centre, FAO, the Climate Centre, and other reputable monitoring platforms. The IFRC also uses information-analysis tools (IA tools) to generate outlooks, extract metadata, and process information from trusted websites and datasets.

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CURRENT REPORTED EVENTS TO EL NIÑO

As of 06 July 2026

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Country	Current Reported Events	RCRC Preparedness, Readiness, Anticipatory Action and Response
 Indonesia	*During the second half of 2026, Indonesia is expected to face increased risk of drought with moderate to strong intensity. These climate conditions are expected to result in a longer and drier season across the country. The peak of the dry season anticipated between August - September 2026 and last until the beginning of 2027.* *While the peak of the dry season is still months away, several districts have declared Drought Emergency Status and actively responding to the growing needs of water. This marked the dry season development in each of the regions are progressing at different speeds and impacts.*	PMI is responding to the drought situation by conducting National El Niño coordination and anticipation meeting. Then, inviting Movement Partners to update on the situation and plan. PMI is launching National and Local appeal to support the needs on the ground while developing Plan of Action to access IFRC DREF for Drought. PMI and CVTL will conduct joint assessment at the border area to determine targets, feasible interventions and collaboration to lessen the negative impact of El Niño
 Myanmar	*The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) has forecasted El Niño will reach a moderate level by June and potentially becoming very strong by the end of the year (DMH).* *Near-Normal rainfall predicted for Northern-half of the Country. While above-normal rainfall predicted to Southern and coastal areas of the country (WMO)*	MRCS is reviewing the heatwave trigger thresholds to better reflect the evolving risk context, including consideration of a lower activation temperature threshold. Forecast monitoring continues in coordination with the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH)
 Philippines	*Southern part of the country will experience below-normal rainfall for most of 2026, with significant rainfall deficits by November-December.* *Northern part of the country may experience near to above -normal rainfall. Above-normal temperatures are likely to affect the whole country. (WMO)*	Active sEAP for Cyclone MDRPH055 – close monitoring for the trigger is in place, readiness activities and preposition is ongoing. *IFRC is monitoring and coordinating closely with PRC for further support and update on the event.*

 Timor-Leste	*Seasonal forecast indicating mixed rainfall will continue throughout July to August 2026. However, continuous El Niño development will likely increase the risk of reduced rainfall (WMO)*	*Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (CVTL) and Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) conducted coordination meeting for Drought preparedness and anticipation in May 2026. Under an existing MoU, both NS are planning to conduct cross-border drought response activity.* *CVTL and PMI will conduct joint-assessment at the border area by July 2026. Based on the assessment, CVTL will develop joint activity by targeting the most vulnerable community at the border with Indonesia.*

PACIFIC

Country	Current Reported Events	RCRC Preparedness, Readiness, Anticipatory Action and Response
 Micronesia	*El Niño conditions are developing and are expected to strengthen through late 2026.* *Above-normal rainfall is forecasted across most of Micronesia for July to September 2026.*	*IFRC is working closely with the MRCS, monitoring the situation.*
 Papua New Guinea	*Drought and below-average rainfall.* *PNG National Weather Service officially declared an El Niño climatic event in June, raising concerns over worsening drought and frost across several parts of the country.*	*IFRC is working closely with the PNGRCS, monitoring the situation.*

CURRENT REPORTED EVENTS TO EL NIÑO

As of 06 July 2026

 Vanuatu	*Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department (VMGD) reports that El Niño is now fully established and is expected to strengthen further in the coming months.* *Reduced and uneven rainfall is expected across many parts of Vanuatu.*	*IFRC is working closely with the VRCS, monitoring the situation.*
 Australia	*July-September 2026 indicates below-average rainfall is likely across parts of southern and eastern Australia while above-average temperatures are likely across most of the country.* *Elevated bushfire risk during the 2026/2027 fire season.* *Potential impact on agriculture, water resources and livestock production in drought-prone regions.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with ARC, monitoring the situation.*
 Solomon Islands	*The Solomon Islands Meteorological Service (SIMS) has declared El Niño conditions active, with forecasts indicating below-normal rainfall and an elevated risk of drought through June to December 2026.* *Warning of heightened risks of water shortages, reduced food production, increased pressure on public health and livelihoods, and an increased risk of tropical cyclone occurrence compared with average years.* *Early reports of water shortages have emerged in some locations, particularly in vulnerable rainwater-dependent communities.*	*IFRC is working closely with the SIRCS, monitoring the situation.*

CURRENT REPORTED EVENTS TO EL NIÑO

As of 06 July 2026

 Fiji	*El Niño conditions are officially underway and are expected to strengthen during the remainder of the year.* *Below-normal rainfall across the country through at least December 2026.* *Increasing risks of prolonged dry conditions, water shortages, agricultural losses and pressure on hydroelectric power generation.*	*Active sEAP for Cyclone MDRFJ008 – close monitoring for the trigger is in place, readiness activities and preposition is ongoing.* *IFRC is working closely with the FRCS, monitoring the situation.*
 Marshall Islands	*An increased likelihood of above-normal or well above-normal rainfall during July-September 2026.* *The Marshall Islands remains highly vulnerable to El Niño because of its dependence on rainwater harvesting and limited freshwater resources. Previous El Niño events resulted in severe drought emergencies.*	*IFRC is working closely with the MIRCS, monitoring the situation.*

SOUTH ASIA

Country	Current Reported Events	RCRC Preparedness, Readiness, Anticipatory Action and Response
 Bangladesh	*Monitoring potential impact of the developing El Niño event, which is expected to contribute to above-normal temperatures, an increased likelihood of heatwaves and below-average monsoon rainfall during the second half of 2026.* *Authorities are closely tracking climate conditions due to the possible implications for agriculture, water resources and public health during the remainder of 2026.*	*Active EAP for Floods until 31 October 2026, MDRBD037 OU – close monitoring for the trigger is in place, and readiness activities are ongoing.* *IFRC is in close coordination with BDRCS, monitoring the situation.*
 Afghanistan	*Above-average temperatures are forecast for July to September 2026 and above-average precipitation during October to April, particularly in northern, central and northeastern Afghanistan.* *El Niño is expected to be a key climatic factor influencing Afghanistan's 2026/2027 agricultural season.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with ARCS, monitoring the situation.* *A drought DREF briefing was convened between IFRC APRO, IFRC CD and ARCS, and the discussion is ongoing.*

CURRENT REPORTED EVENTS TO EL NIÑO

As of 06 July 2026

Nepal	*Monitoring the potential impacts of the developing El Niño event, with forecasts indicating below-average monsoon rainfall and rising temperatures.* *The country team has formed a team for monitoring. NRCS team is in regular contact with DHM team as DHM issues forecast for EA activation.*	*Active sEAP for Heatwave – MDRPN020 - close monitoring for the trigger is in place, and readiness activities are ongoing. sEAP for Flood – MDRNP017 in final stages of revalidation.*
Pakistan	*Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has confirmed that El Niño conditions are now present and expected to influence the 2026 monsoon season.* *Below-normal rainfall is expected during July to September 2026, particularly in Punjab, Sindh, Southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and large parts of Balochistan.* *Above-normal temperatures are expected nationwide, with the highest anomalies forecast over northeastern Punjab and eastern Gilgit-Baltistan.* *Increased likelihood of heat stress and heatwave conditions, especially across southern Punjab and Sindh.* *National authorities continue to monitor evolving conditions and associated risks to livelihood and critical sectors.*	*Active sEAP for Riverine Floods MDRPK029 – close monitoring for the trigger is in place, readiness activities and preposition is ongoing.* *IFRC is in close coordination with PRCS, monitoring the situation.*
Sri Lanka	*Department of Meteorology indicated a 63% probability of strong El Niño developing and warned of potential weather extremes.* *The forecast indicates that July-August 2026 may experience below-normal rainfall and possible drought, particularly affecting agriculture, water resources, and hydropower generation.* *Possible above-normal rainfall and localized flooding during October-November 2026 if El Niño strengthens further.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with SLRCS, monitoring the situation.*

CURRENT REPORTED EVENTS TO EL NIÑO

As of 06 July 2026

EAST ASIA

Country	Current Reported Events	RCRC Preparedness, Readiness, Anticipatory Action and Response
 South Korea	*South Korea is forecast to experience above-normal temperatures in 2026 with the Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA) estimating a 70% probability that annual temperatures will be higher than normal.* *More frequent and intense heatwaves, including increased tropical nights and heat-related health impacts.* *Localized extreme rainfall and flash flooding, particularly during the summer monsoon season.* *Increased typhoon activity and intensity, with the warning that El Niño conditions tend to be associated with more powerful typhoons affecting the Korean Peninsula.* *Potential impacts on agriculture, fisheries and water resources management due to hotter conditions and weather variability.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with KNRC, monitoring the situation.*
 Japan	*Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) is indicating that the El Niño phenomenon is highly likely to persist through autumn 2026.* *Significantly above-normal temperatures and potential extreme heat during July, alongside heightened risks of heat-related illness, heavy rainfall, flooding and typhoon impacts in the coming months.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with JRCS, monitoring the situation.*

CURRENT REPORTED EVENTS RELATED TO EL NIÑO

As of 06 July 2026

 China	*China is experiencing a developing El Niño that was officially confirmed by the China Meteorological Administration (CMA) in May 2026.* *Heavy rainfall, flooding, and severe weather have already been reported across multiple provinces during the early flood season.* *El Niño is expected to intensify through summer and autumn 2026, increasing the risks of heatwaves, extreme rainfall, flooding, drought in some regions, stronger typhoons and disruptions to agriculture, energy and infrastructure.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with RCSC, monitoring the situation.*
 Mongolia	*Authorities and climate-monitoring agencies are closely tracking the development of a strengthening El Niño and its potential impacts on localized drought, pasture conditions, water availability and livestock-dependent livelihoods.* *Mongolia's high exposure to climate shocks, particularly in the agriculture and pastoral sectors, warrants continued monitoring through the remainder of 2026.*	*IFRC is in close coordination with MRCS, monitoring the situation.*