

CARE Philippines

El Niño 2026–27 in the Philippines

Situation and Action Report

12 October 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A strong to very strong El Niño is under way, and rainfall deficits are already observed across the country. PAGASA's latest monitor lists 41 provinces and areas in deficit, 7 of them in drought, and its forecast shows the deficit widening and deepening to early 2027, when all provinces are forecast way below normal rainfall. Communities enter this period already affected by the 2026 monsoon and cyclones. Drought also changes who works, who earns and who decides in a household, so CARE Philippines designs its cash, water, agriculture and health response around women's livelihoods, decision-making and leadership. Anticipatory action is most effective before the end of November, ahead of the forecast peak impact in February and March.

Strong to very strong El Niño present and intensifying; expected to persist into the first half of 2027	41 provinces and areas in rainfall deficit in the latest PAGASA monitor, 7 of them in drought; 85 forecast by end-March 2027	About 16 weeks from 12 October to February 2027, when all provinces are forecast way below normal rainfall	353,342 people reported affected in four regions (DSWD-DROMIC Report #19, 10 October 2026)
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- **The hazard is widespread and still intensifying.** PAGASA reports a strong to very strong El Niño, with a very strong state forecast for September–December (97–98% probability), sea-surface temperature anomalies peaking at about +3.3°C to +3.6°C in November–January, and persistence into the first half of 2027.
- **Drought is already observed and is forecast to spread.** Observed: the latest PAGASA monitor lists 41 provinces and areas already in rainfall deficit, 7 of them in drought condition. Forecast: PAGASA expects 85 provinces and areas in deficit by end-January 2027 and drought in 79 by end-March, with way-below-normal rainfall in all provinces in February. Drought impacts are emerging earlier than anticipated in some areas.
- **Reported humanitarian impact is at an early stage and exposure is large.** DSWD-DROMIC counts 353,342 people in four regions, and the Department of Agriculture records PHP 6.87 billion in agricultural damage across 14 regions. The ACCESS-Nexus Tracker estimates 109.03 million people (27.23 million households) as potentially affected by drought or dry spell, including 7.07 million farmers and 2.57 million fisherfolk, of whom about three in ten are below the poverty line. None of these figures is yet reported by sex, so women's share of affected farmers, fisherfolk and enterprise owners is still to be established.
- **Communities enter the dry season already affected by wet-season losses.** The 2026 monsoon and four tropical cyclones affected 2.78 million families and caused PHP 19.65 billion in recorded damage, including in six regions now forecast into drought.
- **The action window is short and varies by region.** In Bicol, Samar, Negros Oriental and Siquijor, where drought conditions are already established, support takes the form of cash assistance and water delivery, with women consulted on who receives cash and where water is delivered. Mindanao has about seven weeks to construct water storage facilities, develop boreholes and distribute seeds before conditions deteriorate further.
- **Drought changes who works, who earns and who decides, and women carry much of that change.** CARE's 2024 Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) in Kalinga and Negros Oriental found that women kept their household and care tasks while also working in the field, some starting at 3–4 AM to avoid the heat. Men decided on rice fields and women decided on food and

alternative income, so women's income and decisions shape how households cope. CARE designs its cash, water, agriculture and health support around women's livelihoods, decision-making and leadership. The findings are indicative until a 2026–27 analysis is done.

- **CARE Philippines is acting on several fronts.** It leads the ACCESS Consortium, runs the EAF Stream 2B analysis of where anticipatory action or response fits, is developing a water security project for drought-exposed communities in Catanduanes and Negros Island, and is adapting its existing projects to support drought anticipatory action and response. Each action applies a common gender approach: women take part in targeting, delivery and the management of water and risk as participants and decision-makers, and monitoring is reported by sex, age and disability.

CURRENT SITUATION AND FORECAST

A strong to very strong El Niño is under way and is intensifying. PAGASA's 7 October advisory expects it to peak before the end of 2026 and to persist into the first half of 2027, with a 97–98% probability of a very strong state through December. The latest PAGASA drought monitor lists 41 provinces and areas in rainfall deficit: 31 in dry condition, 3 in dry spell and 7 in drought (Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Negros Oriental, Samar and Siquijor). Communities enter the dry season already affected: the 2026 monsoon and four tropical cyclones affected 2.78 million families and caused PHP 19.65 billion in recorded damage.

PAGASA's forecast points to a widening and deepening dry period. The impact figure is an early count of observed effects.

- **Rainfall.** 85 provinces and areas are forecast in deficit by end-January 2027 and 79 in drought by end-March. All provinces are forecast way below normal rainfall in February.
- **Water.** February inflows are forecast at 2.0% of normal at Magat and 5.5% at Pantabangan. Mindanao basins fall from 46–96% of normal in November to 8–26% by February.
- **Heat.** Temperatures run above normal through March, reaching up to 38.7°C nationally and 39.5°C in Lowland Mindanao.
- **Cyclones.** PAGASA expects 3 to 5 tropical cyclones from October to March, against a normal of about 6.9, which means fewer chances for reservoirs to recharge.
- **Observed impact.** DSWD-DROMIC records 353,342 people affected in four regions, and the Department of Agriculture records PHP 6.87 billion in agricultural damage across 14 regions, both early counts. The ACCESS-Nexus Tracker estimates 109.03 million people as potentially affected, including 7.07 million farmers and 2.57 million fisherfolk.

The window for anticipatory action is about 16 weeks to February 2027. Mindanao has about seven weeks of lead time left for water storage, boreholes and seed before conditions deepen. The subsections below give the evidence for each element.

El Niño status and outlook

PAGASA's El Niño Advisory of 7 October 2026 reports a strong to very strong event. Sea-surface warming reached the strong threshold in late August and has kept intensifying: the weekly Niño 3.4 anomaly stood at +2.1°C on 22 September, already at the very-strong threshold, and the eastern Pacific is warmer still (Niño 3 at +3.0°C and Niño 1+2 at +3.9°C). PAGASA gives a 97% probability of a very strong state in September–November and 98% in October–December, and expects the event to persist through at least the first half of 2027. The CCSR/IRI model consensus peaks at about +3.3°C to +3.6°C in November–January.

Three features set this event apart. First, scale: the three earlier very strong events of the last 50 years peaked at an Oceanic Niño Index of 2.2 (1982–83), 2.4 (1997–98) and 2.6 (2015–16), and the modelled peak for 2026–27 is higher, although weekly and model anomalies are not strictly comparable to the seasonal index. Second, timing: the ocean peak falls in November–January,

while the largest rainfall and water effects arrive later, in February and March (see below). Third, duration: persistence into 2027 means a deficit that starts in the wet season and carries through the dry season, so communities have little time to recover between shocks. Very strong events recur about once every 12.5 years, which makes this the first of its scale since 2015–16.

Table 1. Key El Niño indicators

Indicator	Value	Date / source
Weekly Niño 3.4 anomaly	+2.1°C (very-strong threshold)	22 Sep 2026, PAGASA
Weekly Niño 3 and Niño 1+2 anomalies	+3.0°C and +3.9°C	22 Sep 2026, PAGASA
Probability of a very strong event	97% (Sep–Nov); 98% (Oct–Dec)	PAGASA outlook
Model consensus peak (CCSR/IRI)	About +3.3°C to +3.6°C in Nov–Jan	Sep 2026
Expected duration	At least the first half of 2027	PAGASA advisory

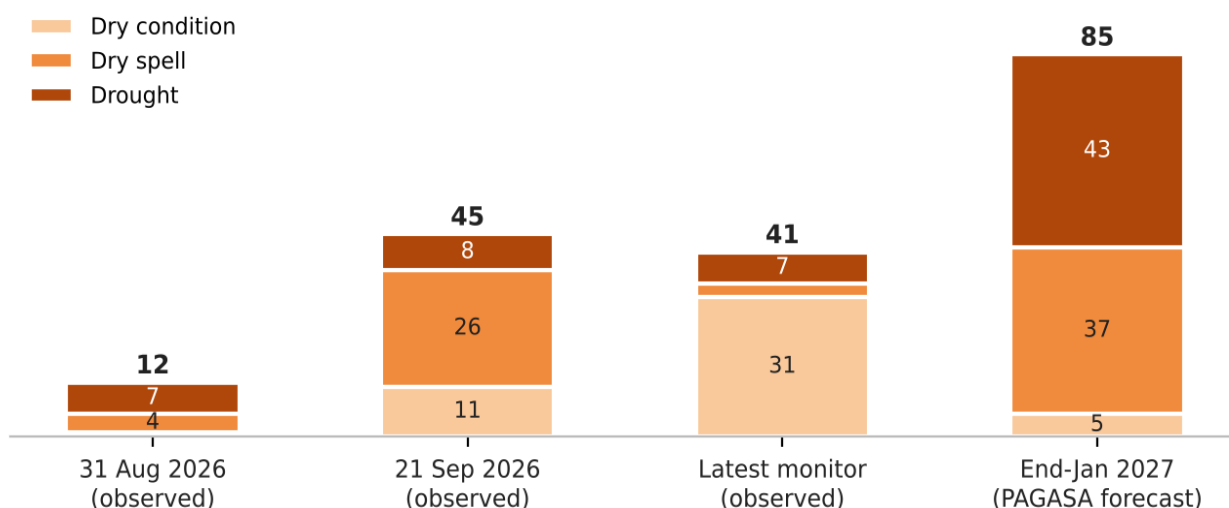
Sources: DOST-PAGASA El Niño Advisory and Seasonal Climate Outlook (23 September 2026); CARE EAF Stream 2B shortlist (2 October 2026).

Rainfall deficit: observed and forecast

Observed rainfall deficits began earlier than PAGASA’s June outlook indicated. That outlook expected adequate rainfall until September, with dry spells from November. In the observed record, 37 provinces recorded way-below-normal rainfall in August, and in 1–20 September no province recorded above-normal rainfall (0 above, 11 near normal, 39 below, 35 way below). The latest PAGASA drought monitor lists 41 provinces and areas in deficit: 31 in dry condition, 3 in dry spell and 7 in drought (Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Negros Oriental, Samar and Siquijor). Earlier assessments counted 12 on 31 August and 45 on 21 September.

Figure 1. Provinces in rainfall deficit by PAGASA class

Provinces and areas in rainfall deficit, by PAGASA class



Sources: PAGASA rainfall-deficit monitoring (31 Aug and 21 Sep 2026); PAGASA Seasonal Climate Outlook (23 Sep 2026), forecast to end-January 2027; latest PAGASA drought monitor. PAGASA tables cover 87 provinces and areas.

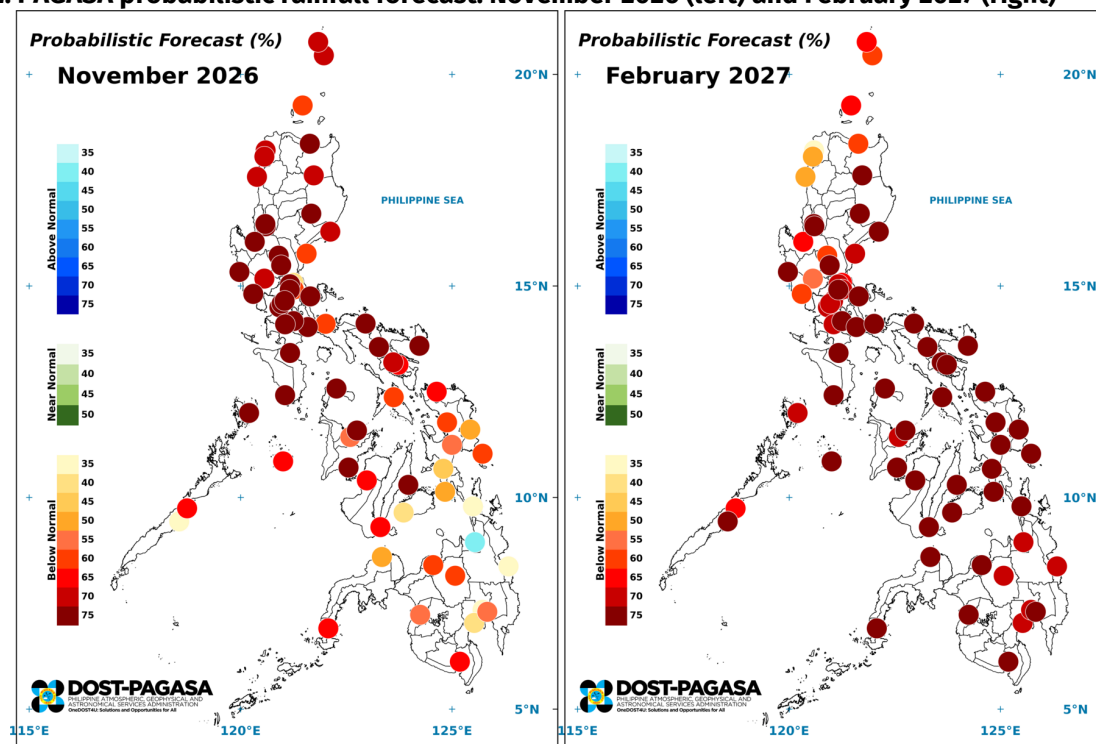
The three classes mark stages of one process. Dry condition means two consecutive months of below-normal rainfall (21–60% reduction). Dry spell means three consecutive months below normal, or two months way below normal (more than 60% reduction). Drought means five consecutive months below normal, or three months way below normal. The 31 areas in dry condition are therefore the early stage of the same accumulation that has already produced drought in seven provinces, and hardship for farmers and households can begin before a province reaches the formal classification.

March 2027 is forecast to be the most severe month, with all provinces forecast way below normal rainfall, and nearly all remain way below normal in March. Provinces in Bicol (Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes), Quirino, Eastern Samar, Leyte and Samar are forecast in drought from October or end-October through March, six consecutive months, the longest continuous forecast exposure nationally.

The pattern differs by climate type. The eastern seaboard, which has no dry season and depends on the December–February northeast monsoon (climate Type II), is affected first and longest: all 15 Type II provinces assessed are in deficit, and they average 4.07 forecast months in drought, against 2.60 for Type I and 1.28 for Type IV. Mindanao follows a different course: most of it is classed in dry condition or dry spell and reaches formal drought only from end-March 2027, a long moderate deficit and not an early severe one.

Figure 2 shows PAGASA’s probabilistic forecast. In November the signal is strongest across Luzon and weaker at several Visayas and Mindanao stations. By February almost every station shows a high probability of below-normal rainfall, up to 75% or more.

Figure 2. PAGASA probabilistic rainfall forecast: November 2026 (left) and February 2027 (right)



Source: DOST-PAGASA, monthly probabilistic rainfall forecast, October 2026 to March 2027 outlook (pubfiles.pagasa.dost.gov.ph). Reproduced without modification.

Water supply and irrigation

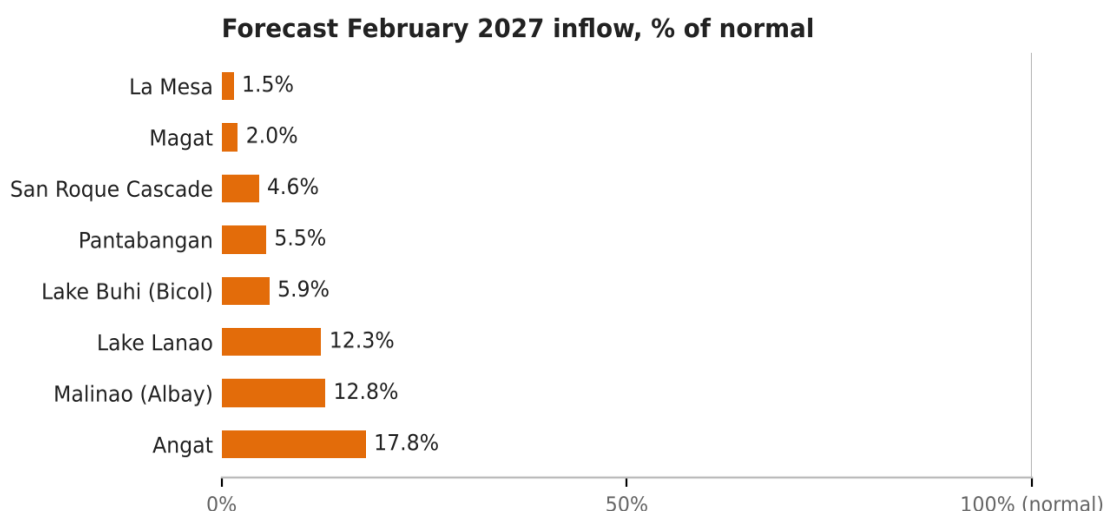
Rainfall deficits become water deficits through the reservoirs and river basins that supply irrigation, cities and power. PAGASA forecasts watershed inflow in February 2027 at 1.5% of normal at La Mesa, 2.0% at Magat, 4.6% at San Roque Cascade, 5.5% at Pantabangan, 5.9% at Lake Buhi, 12.3% at Lake Lanao, 12.8% at Malinao and 17.8% at Angat (Figure 3). Many Luzon river basins fall to 1% to 7% of normal in February, and the Sinocalan and Bued basins drop to about 1% as early as November. Four risks follow.

- Food supply. Magat irrigates Cagayan Valley, Pantabangan the Central Luzon rice bowl including Nueva Ecija, and San Roque Pangasinan and Region I. With inflows at 2.0%, 5.5% and 4.6% of normal in February, the 2027 dry-season rice and corn crop is at risk, and the National Irrigation Administration decides its allocation in October and November.

- Metro Manila supply. La Mesa, the terminal reservoir for Metro Manila, shows the most severe profile of any watershed (7.6% in November and 1.5% in February), and Angat, the main raw-water source, falls to 17.8% in February.
- Power. Lake Lanao falls to 8.4% of normal in March, which affects the Agus hydropower cascade that supplies a large share of the Mindanao grid.
- Bicol. Lake Buhi (5.9%) and the Bicol river basin (7.1%) in February show that the Bicol drought is hydrological as well as meteorological.

Mindanao basins run at 46% to 96% of normal in November and fall to 8% to 26% by February. This gap sets the readiness window for Mindanao at about seven weeks.

Figure 3. Forecast February 2027 inflow, % of normal



Source: PAGASA Seasonal Climate Outlook (23 September 2026). La Mesa is the terminal reservoir for Metro Manila; Magat serves Cagayan Valley; Pantabangan serves the Central Luzon rice bowl; San Roque serves Pangasinan and Region I.

Heat

Temperatures run above normal in all six months of the outlook (October 2026 to March 2027). Forecast extremes reach 38.7°C nationally and 39.5°C in Lowland Mindanao in March. August 2026 already surpassed temperature records at Catbalogan (36.5°C), Hinatuan (37.5°C), Butuan (36.5°C) and Puerto Princesa (35.4°C). The record-breaking stations lie on the eastern seaboard, in the same provinces now in drought, so heat and water scarcity reach the same households at the same time.

Heat raises water demand and crop and livestock stress while shrinking the time safe for outdoor work, which is the main earning activity of farm and fishing households. Women have already moved field work to 3–4 AM and household tasks to the late afternoon (CARE RGA 2024), so heat protection for outdoor workers has to cover both their paid work and their unpaid care. Heat also affects schools: the Department of Education’s Learning Continuity Framework moves schools to alternative delivery at a heat index of 42°C, with a lower 40°C threshold under consultation. Heat therefore needs its own place in the response, with health messaging, water at schools and health facilities, and protection for outdoor workers, women field workers included.

Heat also affects health, sleep, and children’s safety at household level. In the 2024 El Niño, adults in Kalinga and Negros Oriental reported that hot weather triggered hypertension, arthritis and rheumatism. Boys reported sleeping outdoors in hammocks during intense heat, and children could no longer play outside in the middle of the day. Some children cooled off by swimming in dams and rivers, where drowning cases had occurred before the event, and girls were discouraged

from going there while boys swam more often (CARE RGA El Niño 2024). Heat risks therefore differ by sex and age, and heat-health messaging and safe water access need to reach girls, boys, women and men through the channels each group uses.

Tropical cyclones

PAGASA forecasts 3 to 5 tropical cyclones between October 2026 and March 2027, against a 1948–2024 normal of about 6.9 for those months, a reduction of 28% to 57%. El Niño reduces cyclone activity and landfalls through most of the year, shifts genesis south-east and sends more storms on tracks that curve away from the archipelago. It raises intensity mainly between July and September, which the four storms of this season (Luis, Maymay, Neneng and Pilandok) have already shown.

Fewer storms carry two consequences. The first is lost recharge: reservoirs and river basins cannot count on a cyclone to reset levels, and the window for recharge ends when the northeast monsoon sets in. The second is that a lower probability of landfall does not reduce the impact if a cyclone does strike. A cyclone striking Samar, Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes or Quirino would reach communities that are already in drought and exposed to storms, and rain on dry ground brings flooding without recharge. Typhoon Yolanda (2013, neutral phase) and Typhoon Rolly (2020, La Niña) were the most extreme recent landfalls, and December storms Sendong (2011) and Pablo (2012) struck Mindanao at low latitude. Response plans in drought areas therefore need storm-resilient siting for assets and cash that can flex between hazards.

Wet-season losses entering the dry season

NDRRMC Situation Report No. 48 (20 September 2026) records the combined effect of the enhanced southwest monsoon and tropical cyclones Luis, Maymay, Neneng and Pilandok: 2,780,382 families (9,608,977 people) affected across 10 regions and 39 provinces, 44 dead, PHP 15.26 billion in infrastructure damage and PHP 4.39 billion in agricultural damage, a combined PHP 19.65 billion. These losses come from wet events and are recorded separately from drought losses (see Impacts recorded to date). The two sets of figures must not be added together.

The wet-season losses matter for the drought in three ways. They overlap geographically, because six of the affected regions (Region I, CAR, Region III, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA and Region VI) are also forecast into drought. They leave households and governments with less to draw on: household assets and local calamity funds in those regions are likely to start the dry season with reduced reserves. And they show how quickly losses accrue. Between 1 and 20 September, recorded agricultural damage doubled and infrastructure damage rose 2.4-fold. Agricultural damage from the wet season alone equals about 29% of the final 2023–24 drought total (PHP 15.30 billion). This is consistent with the usual El Niño pattern: activity is suppressed overall, while July to September storms can reach higher intensity.

HUMANITARIAN IMPACTS, PRIORITY GROUPS AND URGENT NEEDS

The sector table sets out how drought and heat translate into impacts, who is most affected and what they need. It reads each sector through gender: who carries the added work, whose income is exposed, who decides how assistance is used and who has a voice in how it is delivered. The gender analysis after the table draws these threads together, and recorded impacts, regional exposure and lessons from earlier events follow.

Impact pathways, priority groups and needs

Table 2. Sector impacts, priority groups and needs

Sector	Current and emerging impact	Priority affected groups	Priority needs
Food security, agriculture and livelihoods	Reduced rainfall and soil moisture constrain irrigation, delay planting and reduce yields. DA warns of major risks to agriculture, fisheries and livestock; under a strong El Niño scenario rice production could fall by up to 700,000 MT. Men decided on rice fields and women on food and alternative income (CARE RGA 2024), so a crop loss and a loss of alternative income reach household food in different ways.	Smallholder and rain-fed farmers, farm workers, fisherfolk, aquaculture producers; women farmers, women farm workers and women who earn alternative income or take part in collective enterprises.	Water for production; drought-tolerant and early-maturing seed; planting-calendar support; water-saving measures; cash or income support; market monitoring. Women take part in seed and planting-calendar decisions, and support protects women's alternative income and collective enterprises as well as the main crop.
Water, sanitation and hygiene	Shallow wells, springs, rainwater systems and small water infrastructure lose reliability. Collection time and water costs rise. In 2024, boys took on water fetching while women and girls absorbed added household work (CARE RGA 2024).	Remote and water-stressed communities; women and girls; boys who fetch water; schools and health facilities with limited storage.	Safe water access; storage and rainwater harvesting; water-quality monitoring; hygiene support; contingency supply; inclusive water points. Women help choose water-point sites and designs and sit on water committees; siting takes account of places women reported avoiding and keeps collection time short.
Health and nutrition	Higher temperatures raise dehydration and heat-stress risk. Lower incomes, food-price pressure and constrained water reduce diet quality and raise disease risk. Women reported that meals fell from three to two a day, with parents skipping meals so that children could eat, and malnutrition cases were rising. Girls reported urinary tract infections, fainting, fever and nosebleeds during the heat (CARE RGA 2024).	Children, older people, pregnant and lactating women, women and girls exposed to heat in the field or at home, persons with disabilities, outdoor workers, low-income households.	Heat-risk communication that reaches women field workers, girls and boys; safe drinking water; nutrition screening and referral, including pregnant and lactating women; health surveillance and referral supported by women health workers and volunteers; menstrual health supplies; continuity of essential services.
Education	Water shortages and heat reduce safe WASH conditions in schools and affect attendance and concentration. Private sanitation and menstrual hygiene support matter most for girls.	Children in water-stressed, remote and low-income communities; girls who need private sanitation and menstrual hygiene support.	School WASH continuity; drinking water; heat mitigation; attendance monitoring; referral for households under livelihood stress.

Sector	Current and emerging impact	Priority affected groups	Priority needs
Protection, gender and inclusion	Scarcity increases unpaid care burdens, resource competition, service barriers and risks linked to livelihood migration. These pressures fall unevenly by sex and age. Women's workload rose while roles stayed the same: some women started field work at 3–4 AM to avoid the heat and delayed household tasks to the late afternoon, while boys took on water fetching and sideline work. Women reported avoiding places where men gather to drink, and services specific to drought were not in place for women and girls (CARE RGA 2024, Kalinga and Negros Oriental).	Women and girls; persons with disabilities; older people; Indigenous Peoples; isolated and conflict-affected communities.	Accessible and safe assistance; safeguarding; inclusive feedback channels designed with women and girls; women's participation in decisions on targeting, modality and sites, and in committee leadership; women-led monitoring of safety at water points and distribution sites; targeted support for mobility and communication barriers.
Markets and household purchasing power	Production losses reduce local supply while households lose income. Weather and logistics disruptions already add to food-price pressure. Households borrow money and rice to be repaid after harvesting and consume livestock meant for sale. Free sharing of food among neighbors is no longer available. Women decided on food and alternative income in 2024, so these coping choices relate closely to women's decisions.	Low-income households reliant on agriculture, fisheries or daily wage work; women who manage food and alternative income.	Price and market monitoring; flexible cash where markets function, with the transfer modality and recipient chosen with women; food assistance where availability is constrained; measures against harmful debt and asset sales, monitored by sex of household head.

Sources: DA El Niño preparedness and food-price updates; ACCESS Drought Protocol; PAGASA climate outlook.

Gender: work, income, decision-making and leadership

Drought reaches households through the people who work, earn and decide in them, and the 2024 Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) in Kalinga and Negros Oriental shows how unevenly the added load falls. El Niño did not change who does what, but it increased the load. Women continued to carry cooking, childcare, animal care and laundry while also working in the field, and some began field work at 3–4 AM to avoid the heat and moved household tasks to the late afternoon. Girls continued to help with chores and school, while boys fetched water and took sideline work such as construction. CARE Philippines uses these findings as the working picture for 2026–27 and treats them as indicative until a new analysis is done in the areas where support is activated.

Women's income and decisions sit at the centre of how households cope. Access to resources was reported as equal, but men decided on rice fields while women decided on food and alternative income. When yields fall, food and alternative income carry the household, so protecting women's alternative income and women-led coastal livelihoods protects household food security directly. CARE's enterprise and livelihood work (WEE 2.0 in Catanduanes, PARAW / FFBS-Fisheries in Palawan) and the seed, input and cash support planned elsewhere therefore aim to reach women as farmers, farm workers, fisherfolk and enterprise members, and not only the registered landholder.

The same split guides how assistance is delivered. Cash held by the person who decides on food reaches meals, and cash held by the person who decides on the field reaches inputs, so the recipient is chosen for the purpose of the transfer. CARE proposes a short household assessment of decision-making and protection risks before each cash activation, with women as recipients where that is safe, and with options such as a second recipient or individual transfers where one recipient would raise tension in the household. The same logic applies to water: the siting, storage and management of water points decide how much time households spend on water and how safely women, girls and boys reach it, so women help choose sites and sit on the committees that manage them.

Leadership decides whose needs reach the plan. Municipal DRRM councils, barangay drought assessments, trigger-validation exercises in October and November, and community water committees set who is targeted, where assets sit and what comes first. Drought-specific services for women and girls were not in place in 2024, so women's participation in these bodies is the most direct route to services that fit. CARE proposes a target of at least half of the seats for women on the water and enterprise committees it supports.

Scarcity also brings safety and health risks that differ by sex and age. Women reported avoiding places where men gather to drink, girls were discouraged from swimming in dams and rivers while boys swam more often, and girls reported urinary tract infections, fainting, fever and nosebleeds during the heat. Water points, distribution sites and the routes to them therefore need to be safe for women and girls to use. Menstrual health supplies, private sanitation, nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women, and referral pathways for violence against women and children and for sexual exploitation and abuse complete the package, and heat-health messaging reaches women who work in the field in the early hours through women's groups and women health workers.

Four commitments follow and apply to every package in this report. Women are consulted on targeting, transfer modality and water-point siting before delivery. Cash recipients are chosen through the household assessment described above. Women hold leadership roles in water and enterprise committees. All monitoring and reporting is disaggregated by sex, age and disability, which also fills the gap left by figures that are not yet reported by sex (see Potential exposure of farmers and fisherfolk).

Impacts recorded to date

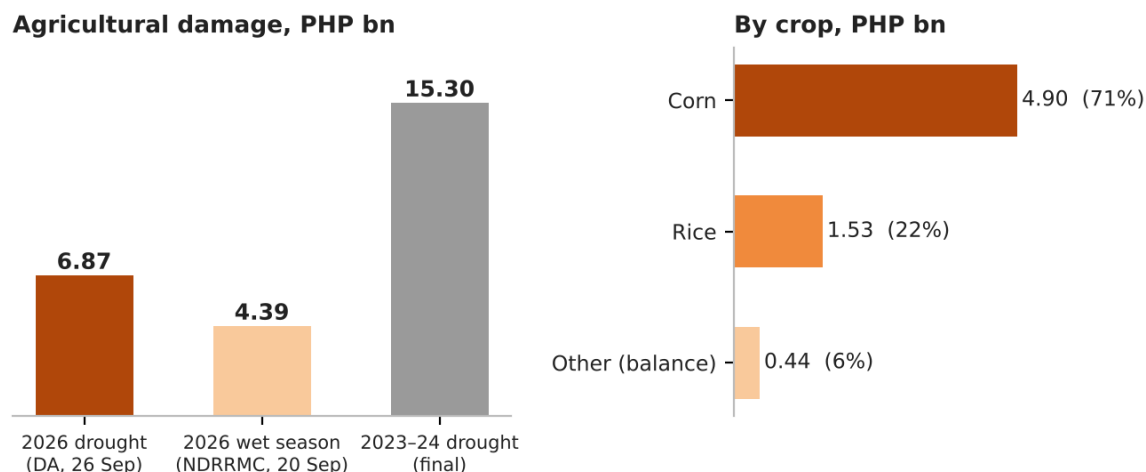
As of 10 October 2026, DSWD-DROMIC reports 117,054 families (353,342 people) across 1,154 barangays in four regions: Region V (Bicol) with 237,805 people (67% of the total), Region II with 47,587 (reported as farmers), MIMAROPA with 40,312 and CARAGA with 27,638.

Drought damage to agriculture is already on record. The Department of Agriculture's first drought bulletin (26 September 2026) records PHP 6.87 billion in agricultural damage across 14 of 18 regions, covering 249,028 hectares and 223,214 farmers. Corn accounts for PHP 4.90 billion (71%) and rice for PHP 1.53 billion (22%). The Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation is providing PHP 427 million to 42,383 farmers. In early October, OCD reporting cited about PHP 5.4 to 5.5 billion in agricultural losses across seven regions, and NDRRMC (as of 5 October) listed 106 cities and municipalities under a state of calamity: 66 in Cagayan Valley, 23 in Caraga, 12 in Bicol, 4 in CALABARZON and 1 in SOCCSKSARGEN. DA Bicol reports PHP 157 million in crop losses for June to September (3,803 hectares and 4,719 farmers), led by rice at PHP 99.2 million, with the largest rice losses in Sorsogon (PHP 38.2 million), Masbate (PHP 25.3 million) and Camarines Norte (PHP 19.8 million).

Recorded damage is large for this stage of the event. At PHP 6.87 billion, losses logged about five months before the forecast peak equal roughly 45% of the final 2023–24 total (PHP 15.30 billion)

and are 1.6 times the PHP 4.39 billion of agricultural damage from the 2026 wet season. The figures are preliminary, differ in regional coverage and reporting date, and are expected to rise as the dry season deepens.

Figure 4. Agricultural damage recorded: 2026 drought to date, 2026 wet season and 2023–24 drought



Sources: DA first drought bulletin (26 September 2026), as reported by the Philippine Daily Inquirer (27 September 2026); OCD figures as reported by Manila Bulletin (4–5 October 2026); NDRRMC report as of 5 October 2026, as reported by The Star/ANN (6 October 2026); DA Bicol, as reported by The Manila Times (4 October 2026).

In BARMM, MAFAR reported 851 hectares of rice and corn damaged by extreme heat across 36 municipalities and 167 barangays in the two Maguindanao provinces as of 24 April 2026, with about 1,500 MT lost, PHP 38.39 million in crop value and 810 farmers affected, after roughly three months of dry spell. Field monitoring through Action Against Hunger finds further impacts in Maguindanao del Norte and del Sur, the Special Geographic Areas, North Cotabato, the Zamboanga Peninsula and parts of Caraga:

- **Water.** River and groundwater levels are falling, hand pumps and wells are drying and households buy more water. Local availability has fallen by up to 50% in several Maguindanao municipalities, and some households draw water from riverbeds and improvised wells.
- **Crops.** Farmers are delaying planting and reducing cultivated area. In Datu Montawal, rice and corn losses range from 34% to 78%, and more than 4,500 hectares in Ligawasan and Tugunan are at risk if dry conditions persist.
- **Fisheries.** Receding water levels and changing aquatic conditions are lowering catch and income. Basilan and Tawi-Tawi, which rely almost entirely on rainfall and diesel-transported water, face the country's most severe water stress.
- **Food security.** Households report eating less, switching to cheaper foods and borrowing. Commodity prices in monitored BARMM areas are up at least 2% on lower production, lower fish catch and higher fuel costs.

Several CARE project areas report early effects: farmers in coconut-growing areas describe extreme heat and very dry soils delaying planting, and organic farming enterprises in Rizal province paused planting from April to June.

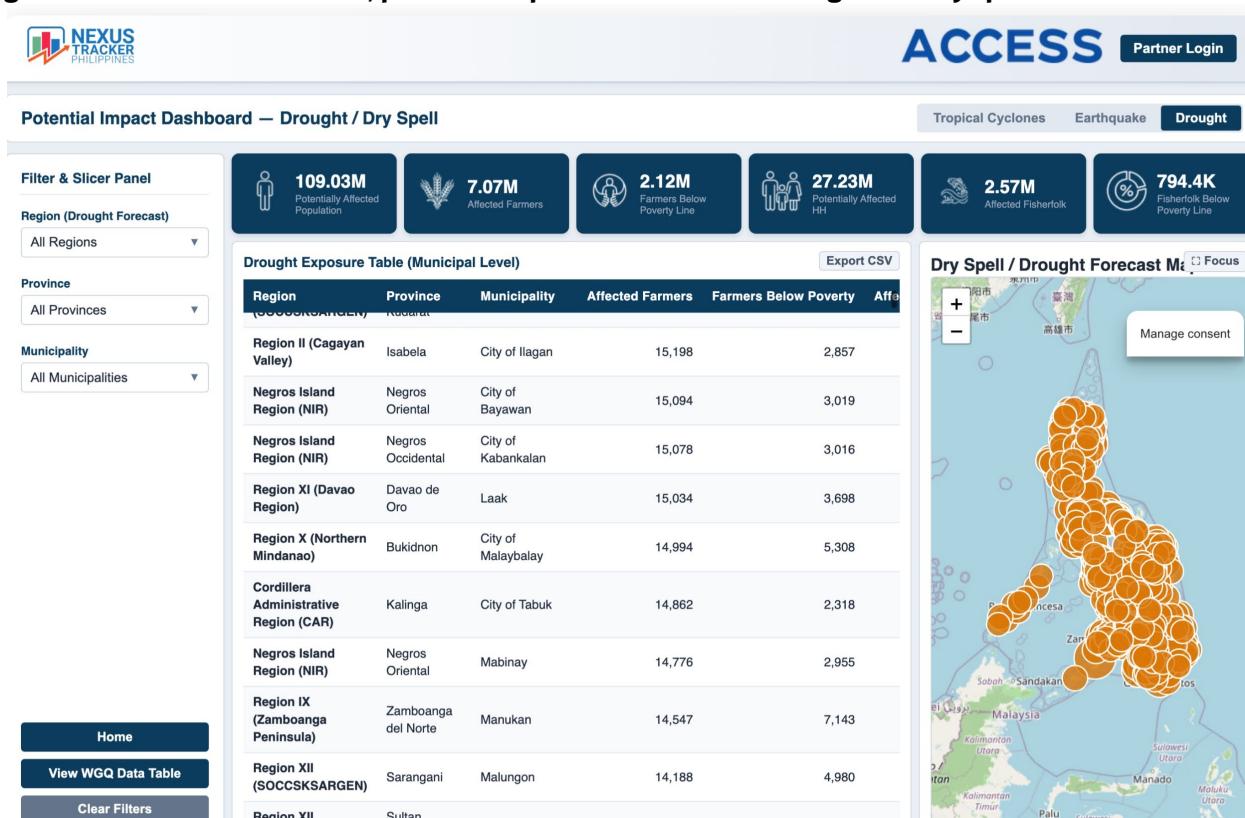
Potential exposure of farmers and fisherfolk

The ACCESS-Nexus Tracker estimates the potential impact of drought and dry spell at municipal level. Its drought dashboard shows 109.03 million people and 27.23 million households as potentially affected. Field evidence from the 2024 El Niño shows how heat and drought affect coastal livelihoods. In Bais City, Negros Oriental, fisherfolk shortened their fishing hours to avoid the heat, and fish moved to deeper waters, which reduced catch. The selling price of fish fell from

PHP 110 to PHP 80. Small-scale fishers also reported pressure from commercial fishing operations that encroach on their fishing grounds (CARE RGA El Niño 2024)

Livelihood exposure is concentrated in primary production: 7.07 million farmers, of whom 2.12 million are below the poverty line, and 2.57 million fisherfolk, of whom 794,400 are below the poverty line (Figure 5). Neither the Tracker, DROMIC nor the DA bulletins report these figures by sex, so the number of women farmers, farm workers, fisherfolk and enterprise owners affected is still to be established. Targeting therefore draws on women's groups, enterprise membership lists and community validation alongside land-based registries, and the 2026–27 analysis adds estimates by sex.

Figure 5. ACCESS-Nexus Tracker, potential impact dashboard for drought and dry spell



Source: ACCESS-Nexus Tracker Philippines, RILHUB, Potential Impact Dashboard, Drought / Dry Spell view (accessed 11 October 2026). Figures are modelled potential exposure.

At municipal level, exposure is spread across all 17 regions and not confined to the provinces classed in drought today (Table 3). Poverty overlaps most strongly in Zamboanga Peninsula, where 49% of exposed farmers are below the poverty line, and in Eastern Visayas, where the share is 42%, against 31% across all municipalities. In BARMM, 44% of exposed fisherfolk are below the poverty line. Anticipatory cash and livelihood support that targets by poverty status therefore reaches different groups from support that follows the drought classification alone.

Table 3. Potential exposure of farmers and fisherfolk by region, drought and dry spell

Region	Affected farmers	Farmers below poverty line	Affected fisherfolk	Fisherfolk below poverty line
CAR	256,669	40,044	51,964	10,446
I Ilocos	419,924	72,221	122,459	24,616
II Cagayan Valley	429,406	80,726	117,072	23,532

Region	Affected farmers	Farmers below poverty line	Affected fisherfolk	Fisherfolk below poverty line
III Central Luzon	332,158	57,795	113,886	26,195
IV-A CALABARZON	411,307	85,143	164,295	32,366
MIMAROPA	285,155	84,121	196,134	43,543
V Bicol	382,371	132,296	233,269	65,314
VI Western Visayas	630,051	174,523	182,435	41,232
Negros Island Region	376,318	75,264	98,166	19,635
VII Central Visayas	423,254	174,384	141,827	56,452
VIII Eastern Visayas	675,030	281,480	210,363	66,270
IX Zamboanga Peninsula	546,418	268,294	172,755	74,285
X Northern Mindanao	513,150	181,659	89,342	23,319
XI Davao	410,304	100,935	87,344	19,128
XII SOCCSKSARGEN	461,614	162,027	101,084	38,209
XIII Caraga	299,153	127,142	91,907	36,030
BARMM	180,787	62,732	127,659	56,040
All regions	7,033,069	2,160,786	2,301,961	656,612

Source: ACCESS-Nexus Tracker Philippines, Drought Exposure Table (municipal level, 1,500 municipalities), summed by region. Regions are listed from north to south. Column totals differ slightly from the dashboard headline figures in Figure 5. Modelled potential exposure; not a count of affected people.

Regional exposure and vulnerability

Exposure differs by region in timing, duration and underlying vulnerability (Table 4). Poverty incidence in the most exposed regions stands at 1.9 to 2.3 times the national rate of 10.9%.

Table 4. Regional exposure profile

Area	Status, latest monitor	Drought forecast from	Months in drought, Oct–Mar	Poverty incidence (PSA 2023)	Principal livelihood exposure
Bicol and Quirino	Drought: Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes. Dry condition: Masbate, Sorsogon	Oct 2026 (Sorsogon and Masbate: Dec 2026)	6 (4 for Sorsogon, Masbate)	Bicol 20.3%	Coconut, abaca, rice, corn, livestock
Eastern Visayas	Drought: Samar. Dry spell: Leyte. Dry condition: Biliran, Northern Samar, Southern Leyte	Oct 2026 (Samar, Eastern Samar, Leyte); Dec 2026 (others)	6 (4 for Northern Samar, Southern Leyte, Biliran)	21.7% to 24.9% (Samar, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Northern Samar)	Coconut, abaca, rice
Negros, Cebu, Bohol, Siquijor, Panay	Drought: Negros Oriental, Siquijor. Dry spell: Capiz. Dry condition: Bohol, Cebu, Negros Occidental	Mar 2027 (Panay provinces: Jan 2027)	1 to 3	Negros Island Region 22.6%	Rice, sugarcane (landless wage labour), corn
MIMAROPA and Luzon rice bowl	No deficit recorded	Jan 2027	3	Mid-range	Irrigated rice, onion, garlic
Mindanao (BARMM, SOCCSKSARGEN, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao)	Dry condition in 23 provinces; dry spell: Misamis Oriental	Mar 2027	1	BARMM 23.5%; Zamboanga Peninsula 24.2%	Corn, rice, cassava, seaweed, fisheries
Caraga eastern seaboard	Dry condition: Agusan del Norte, Dinagat Islands, Surigao del Norte	Dec 2026 (Surigao del Norte, Dinagat)	4	Mid-range	Coconut, rice, island fisheries

Sources: PAGASA drought monitor (latest) and Seasonal Climate Outlook (23 Sep 2026); PSA 2023 poverty statistics; CARE Philippines analysis.

Three patterns explain the footprint:

- **The eastern seaboard is affected first.** Provinces with no dry season and a December to February rain peak (climate Type II) lose the northeast monsoon rain on which their farming systems depend. All 15 Type II provinces assessed are in deficit, and they average 4.07 forecast months in drought, against 2.60 for Type I and 1.28 for Type IV. Because these provinces have no dry season in a normal year, farming systems there may have fewer water-storage practices and drought crop calendars.
- **Western provinces are forecast to dry later.** Type I provinces (Mindoro, Antique, Negros Occidental, Ilocos) show no deficit yet, and drought is forecast from January. Their exposure comes through failed reservoir and water-table recharge and irrigation failure.
- **Mindanao is forecast to see a long, moderate deficit.** Provinces there enter dry condition or dry spell early and are forecast to cross the drought threshold late, so deficits accumulate for about six months before formal classification.

Lessons from previous events

Four very strong events have occurred in the last 50 years (1982–83, 1997–98, 2015–16 and the current one), roughly one every 12.5 years. Table 5 shows what earlier events cost.

Table 5. Documented agricultural impact of earlier events

Event	Peak ONI	Documented impact (nominal, as reported)
1982–83	2.2	640,000 MT of rice and corn lost; about 450,000 hectares affected; about PHP 700 million at the time.
1997–98	2.4	1.06 million MT lost over 677,441 hectares; national rice output down more than 20%; drought across about 70% of national territory.
2015–16	2.6	About USD 327 million in agricultural losses (ADB); 1.48 million MT of crops lost; more than 400,000 farming households; 6 cities, 16 provinces and 65 municipalities declared a state of calamity; dry conditions lasted about 18 months.
2023–24	2.0	PHP 15.30 billion final agricultural damage; 333,195 farmers and fisherfolk; 270,855 hectares; 784,344 MT across 15 regions; DROMIC recorded 531,114 families (2,283,636 people) in 11 regions.

Sources: National Drought Plan; ADB/World Bank; DA-DRRM (2 August 2024); DSWD-DROMIC. Figures come from different compilers and scopes, are nominal and are not directly comparable across events.

Four lessons shape the current assessment:

- **Strength is an imperfect guide to impact.** The weak 2018–19 event caused PHP 7.96 billion in agricultural damage, and the strong 2009–10 event produced larger production losses than the very strong 1997–98 event. Crop calendar timing, irrigation coverage and antecedent soil moisture mediate outcomes.
- **Drought occurs without El Niño.** The 1989–90 drought, with 500,000 MT of rice and corn lost, occurred under neutral conditions. Triggers that rely on rainfall observations alongside ENSO status capture such events.
- **Institutions have usually been built after major losses.** Drought monitoring (1986), the National Water Crisis Act (1995), the Presidential Task Force on El Niño (1997) and RA 10121 (2010) each followed a major loss. The 2026–27 event is the first very strong event to arrive with a forecast system, drought classification, financing instruments, and operating architecture already in place.
- **Drought deepens women’s and girls’ burdens, and women’s income and decisions shape how households cope.** The 2024 RGA found that women and girls absorbed more work and care while roles and decision-making stayed the same, and that drought-specific services were not in place. Men decided on rice fields and women decided on food and alternative income. Response design should plan for these burdens, and for women’s income, decisions and leadership, from the start.

ACTIONS AND RESPONSE

Government response

The President has directed a whole-of-government approach and the formation of an El Niño response team through NDRRMC. OCD has reactivated Task Force El Niño in Eastern Visayas and Northern Mindanao. DA promotes hybrid rice, alternate wetting and drying and quick turn-around planting. DSWD Field Office XII holds pre-positioned relief stock for SOCCSKSARGEN and BARMM. DOH Memorandum 2025-0114 governs the heat-response cascade to local governments, and the DepEd Learning Continuity Framework (Order No. 14, s. 2026) moves schools to alternative delivery at a heat index of 42°C, with a lower 40°C threshold under consultation.

The Bangsamoro Government placed the entire region under a state of calamity on 14 May 2026 (Proclamation No. 0002), citing the El Niño Alert in effect since 22 April and the fuel-price crisis. BARMM READi maintains the common operating picture and contingency planning, MOST leads forecast dissemination and groundwater mapping, MAFAR assesses crop losses and promotes drought-tolerant crops and water-saving practices, and MSSD screens vulnerable households for social protection. Special Geographic Area municipalities plan water-source mapping and barangay drought assessments, followed by trigger-validation exercises in October and November. Women's participation in these assessments and exercises decides whether trigger and targeting data reflect women's livelihoods and needs.

Working with the ACCESS Consortium

The ACCESS Consortium (14 organizations, EU ECHO-funded, with CARE Philippines as lead agency) is activating its Drought and El Niño Anticipatory Action and Rapid Response Protocol. Activation follows location, so preparedness, anticipatory action and response can run in different places at the same time. Each activation passes through forecast and risk review, sectoral verification, an Alert Note, pathway assessment, and a Go/No-Go decision, with safe access confirmed before assistance is delivered. CARE proposes that gender and protection analysis informs the Alert Note and the Go/No-Go decision, including who is consulted, who receives assistance and which risks need mitigation.

Table 6. ACCESS activation phases and triggers

Phase	Trigger thresholds	Validation required
Preparedness	El Niño Watch or heightened probability of onset; forecast below to near-normal rainfall.	PAGASA climate advisory.
Early Action	Dry condition: 2 consecutive months of 21–60% rainfall reduction. Dry spell: 3 consecutive months of 21–60% reduction, or 2 consecutive months of more than 60% reduction. SPI, soil moisture and VHI thresholds apply as well.	Field-level impact evidence, exposure, vulnerability, feasibility; evidence disaggregated by sex, age and disability, with women's groups consulted.
Response (RRM)	Severe drought: 3 consecutive months of more than 60% reduction. Prolonged drought: 5 consecutive months of 21–60% reduction.	Humanitarian impacts, response gaps, operational feasibility, safe access; gender and protection risks and women's access to assistance.

Source: ACCESS Drought and El Niño Anticipatory Action and Rapid Response Protocol, draft 2.0 (September 2026).

With 37 provinces way below normal in August and 35 in 1–20 September, Early Action thresholds are likely met in many areas, and any area that stays way below normal in October reaches the three-month Severe Drought threshold. The protocol's trigger table was designed around a November onset, so the PAGASA ten-day rainfall-deficit bulletin serves as the operative monitoring feed, with reservoir levels as a secondary feed for irrigated provinces.

An integrated package combining cash assistance, water access support and community preparedness delivers the greatest humanitarian value and reduces later response requirements (Table 7). Gender shapes how each part is designed: who receives cash, where water points sit, who takes part in seed and calendar decisions, and who reaches health messaging and services. Table 7 sets out these choices by sector, and the commitments in the gender analysis above apply to all of them.

Table 7. Planned sector packages

Sector	Anticipatory action (before peak impact)	Response (validated needs and gaps)
WASH	Water vouchers and household water purchase support; containers and safe storage; source augmentation and rehabilitation; community water monitoring and conservation. Women help map sources and lead community water monitoring, and water points are sited with women's input.	Emergency water trucking where sources fail, with delivery points chosen with women for safety and short collection time; household water treatment and hygiene promotion; temporary access solutions and minor repairs.
Food security and livelihoods	Anticipatory cash, with the recipient chosen through a household assessment of decision-making and protection risks; seeds, inputs, livestock and fisheries measures while the loss remains preventable, reaching women farmers, farm workers and women-led enterprises; women included in drought-tolerant seed and planting-calendar training.	Multipurpose cash transfers, with the modality and recipient chosen with women; food assistance for highly vulnerable households, including households with pregnant and lactating women.
Health and nutrition	Targeted heat and health messaging through women's groups, women health workers and volunteers; nutrition monitoring that includes pregnant and lactating women; community surveillance; referral readiness.	Emergency health support and referral of urgent cases, with menstrual health supplies; follow-up on nutrition and health gaps.
Protection, gender and inclusion	A gender and protection risk assessment before each cash and water activation; protection monitoring; referral pathways; GBV risk mitigation; community protection mechanisms led by women; accessible information.	Urgent referrals, psychological first aid, targeted support for vulnerable households, with women-led feedback and safety monitoring at water points and distribution sites.
Education in emergencies	School WASH support (water storage, treatment supplies, hygiene facilities, including private sanitation and menstrual hygiene supplies for girls); heat-safety and hygiene sessions; attendance monitoring by sex and early warning for at-risk learners.	Child protection and psychosocial support; continuity of learning through materials and community-based mechanisms.
Multipurpose cash	Approved cash to prevent an identified anticipated need, once beneficiary, market, financial service provider and safeguarding readiness is confirmed. Readiness includes women's consultation on the delivery mechanism, their access to phones and financial service providers, and any risk of tension in the household.	Delivered where markets and delivery systems function; in-kind or service assistance where they do not.

Sources: ACCESS Drought Protocol sections 4.6 and 5; El Niño Situational Analysis for BARMM and Mindanao.

CARE Philippines program and early action

CARE Philippines is acting through four channels: leadership of the ACCESS Consortium, the CARE EAF Stream 2B analysis that guides where anticipatory action or response fits, a proposed water security project for drought-exposed communities, and drought adaptations in projects already under way (Table 8). Each channel applies the same gender approach.

Table 8. CARE Philippines actions for El Niño and drought

Action	What CARE is doing	Where	Status
ACCESS Consortium	Leads the 14-organization consortium and its Drought and El Niño Anticipatory Action and Rapid Response Protocol, which links preparedness, anticipatory action and response to PAGASA-based triggers. CARE proposes to add a gender and protection check at the Alert Note and Go/No-Go stages.	BARMM	Activating
CARE EAF Stream 2B	Analyses PAGASA forecasts and exposure data to identify areas suited to anticipatory action (MIMAROPA and the Luzon rice bowl; Central and Western Visayas; Mindanao) and areas that may need response (Bicol, Quirino, Eastern Visayas). The analysis adds gender and women's livelihood exposure to its targeting criteria.	To be confirmed	Analysis under way
AQUA Project	Water security and resilience without cash: climate-resilient community water facilities (rainwater harvesting and storage, solar-powered groundwater systems, treatment); source and catchment protection; household water and hygiene kits with solar lighting; community water management and maintenance, with women in management roles and in siting decisions; municipal water-security and DRRM planning; and early-warning linkage with PAGASA.	Catanduanes and Negros Island (18 months)	Proposed, in development
EMPOWER	Adds climate-impact training and livestock and poultry information for young women and men producers, and water storage tanks beside organic farms and a community water station.	Batangas	Adapting
Coco RISE	Builds heat-ready livestock housing and drought adaptation into farm assessments and baselines, including the roles of women and men in animal care.	Bohol	Adapting
WEE 2.0	Adds climate-risk measures to collective enterprise business plans before funding approval, with women taking part in planning; demo farms and nurseries are monitored for water stress, and a forum with DOST, PhilFIDA and local governments on El Niño preparedness is planned, with women entrepreneurs and women's groups invited.	Catanduanes	Adapting; forum planned
HERS / E-HERS	Applies the emergency response and resilience approach to drought-related needs, and supports local preparedness and coordination, with needs assessed by sex, age and disability.	Rizal (Antipolo, Baras, Rodriguez)	Adapting

Action	What CARE is doing	Where	Status
PARAW / FFBS-Fisheries	Strengthens women-led coastal livelihoods and community disaster risk management, and includes El Niño and drought preparedness in community risk planning, with women's leadership in that planning.	Palawan	Adapting
ELCReP	Adds drought and El Niño preparedness and response measures to community recovery and resilience work, in coordination with local governments, with women and men consulted on priorities.	Surigao del Norte	Adapting

Sources: CARE Philippines project reports (EMPOWER, Coco RISE, WEE 2.0, HERS/E-HERS); CARE EAF Stream 2B update (2 October 2026); AQUA concept note (draft); ACCESS Drought and El Niño Anticipatory Action and Rapid Response Protocol, draft 2.0 (September 2026).

These actions complement one another. The ACCESS protocol and the EAF Stream 2B analysis decide where and when to act, AQUA adds durable water security in two exposed areas, and the existing projects carry drought measures to the households and enterprises they already serve. The gender approach links them: the same commitments on consultation, recipient choice, women's leadership and disaggregated monitoring apply in each channel.

Timeline for anticipatory action

Actions that start in October reach communities before the deficit deepens. The timeline in Table 9 follows the lead times for each region.

Table 9. Timeline for anticipatory action

Period	Anticipatory actions	Where
Now to 31 October	Verify vulnerable households and targeting lists with women's groups; start the 2026–27 Rapid Gender Analysis in activated areas; map and monitor water sources with women; confirm supplier, warehousing and financial service provider readiness; start anticipatory cash with recipients chosen through the household assessment, pre-contracted water delivery, livestock feed and water, and heat-health messaging through women's groups.	Delivery now in provinces already in drought (Bicol, Samar, Negros Oriental, Siquijor). Readiness in other activated areas.
November	Deliver anticipatory cash ahead of November–January planting decisions, reaching the people who decide on food and on the field. Complete water storage, rainwater harvesting, borehole and spring rehabilitation, basin water-sharing agreements and drought-tolerant seed distribution before December–January planting, with women consulted on sites and seed.	Mindanao and BARMM (window to about 30 November); MIMAROPA, Luzon rice bowl and Caraga eastern seaboard (about 15 November).
December to January	Complete pre-positioning of stock, cash and surge staff; scale cash and water support; run simulation exercises with municipal DRRM councils, with women's participation; review triggers against each PAGASA update and the findings of the Rapid Gender Analysis.	All activated areas.
February to April 2027	Peak period. Activate the Rapid Response Mechanism where validated needs and gaps exist, with gender and protection analysis informing each decision.	All activated areas; Mindanao response runs March to June.

Sources: CARE Philippines analysis of PAGASA outlook (October 2026); BARMM SGA Drought AA Tracker, Municipal Action Plan.

Priority actions and where support is most time-critical

Table 10. Priority actions, timing and actors

Priority	Rationale	Time-critical	Primary actors
Cash and safe water for households in areas already in drought	Drought is observed in Bicol, Samar, Negros Oriental and Siquijor, so little rainfall remains to capture and assistance takes the form of delivery. Water impounding and rainwater harvesting add little in these provinces this season. Cash recipients are chosen through the household assessment, and water delivery points are chosen with women.	Now to December	Local governments, DSWD, humanitarian partners, donors with flexible funding
Water storage, boreholes, spring rehabilitation and drought-tolerant seed in Mindanao	Mindanao has the longest remaining construction lead time of the island groups. Basins fall from 46–96% of normal in November to 8–26% by February. Women help choose sites, designs and seed, and sit on the committees that manage water.	Decisions by mid-November; delivery by about 30 November	Humanitarian partners, BARMM and local governments, donors
Irrigation allocation and reservoir management	Magat at 2.0% and Pantabangan at 5.5% of normal in February put the 2027 dry-season rice and corn crop at risk. NIA allocation is decided October–November.	October–November	NIA, DA, local governments
Livelihood protection before distress sales	Livestock feed and water, seed, input-credit buffers for onion growers, coconut and abaca moisture conservation, protection of women's alternative income and women-led enterprises, and targeting of landless sugar workers (sacada) that farmer registries miss, and of women farm workers and enterprise members who may not appear on land-based lists. About three in ten exposed farmers and fisherfolk are below the poverty line (Tracker).	November–January	DA, MAFAR, humanitarian partners
Heat-health and school continuity	Extremes reach 38.7°C nationally and 39.5°C in Lowland Mindanao; schools need water, treatment supplies and heat measures, with private sanitation and menstrual hygiene support for girls; women field workers need heat-health messaging that fits their early-morning and late-afternoon schedules.	December–April	DOH, DepEd, local governments, partners
Women's livelihoods, decision-making and leadership, with protection and inclusion: responsive WASH and hygiene kits with sanitary items, safe and private sanitation, food packages for pregnant and lactating women, children, older people and persons with disabilities, and VAWC desks and referral pathways for VAWG and PSEA	Drought adds work and care for women and girls, while women's alternative income and food decisions drive household coping. Women's leadership in DRRM councils and water committees shapes whose needs the plans reflect. Water collection burden, negative coping and exclusion rise with scarcity; persons with disabilities, older people, Indigenous Peoples, women and girls need accessible assistance.	Throughout	All actors; women's organizations and groups

Priority	Rationale	Time-critical	Primary actors
Cyclone contingency in drought areas	Samar, Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes and Quirino face drought and high cyclone exposure; assets need storm-resilient siting and cash needs to flex between hazards.	Throughout	Local governments, partners
Financing, data and coordination	Local calamity funds are partly spent in six regions. A ten-day deficit trigger feed, DA-DRRM drought bulletins and reactivated task forces beyond Eastern Visayas and Northern Mindanao speed decisions. Reporting by sex, age and disability in these feeds and bulletins shows who is reached.	Now	NDRRMC, OCD, DA, PAGASA, donors

Sources: DOST-PAGASA Seasonal Climate Outlook (23 September 2026) and drought monitor; NDRRMC Situation Report No. 48 (20 September 2026); PSA 2023 poverty statistics; ACCESS-Nexus Tracker Philippines (RILHUB); BARMM SGA Drought Anticipatory Action Tracker 2026–2027 (Municipal Action Plan); CARE Philippines analysis.

UNCERTAINTIES AND LIMITATIONS

- **Forecast timing.** Observed deficits began earlier than the June outlook indicated, so province-level classifications are reviewed against each ten-day PAGASA bulletin and each monthly outlook.
- **Drought damage data.** DA records PHP 6.87 billion in agricultural damage (bulletin of 26 September 2026) and OCD cites about PHP 5.4 to 5.5 billion across seven regions. Both are preliminary, differ in coverage and are expected to rise. Province-level damage figures exist for only one of the 18 El Niño events in the last 50 years (2023–24).
- **Reported caseload.** DROMIC figures cover four regions and reflect validation to date, and the caseload reported by NDRRMC (388,375 people as of 5 October) differs from DROMIC's count; ACCESS-Nexus exposure figures are modelled potential exposure and not a count of affected people.
- **Gender evidence.** The gender findings draw on the 2024 RGA in Kalinga and Negros Oriental and are indicative for the 2026–27 event. The impact figures, the ACCESS-Nexus Tracker and the DROMIC caseload are not reported by sex, so the number of women farmers, fisherfolk and enterprise owners affected is still to be established. A 2026–27 RGA and monitoring by sex, age and disability will fill these gaps.
- **Wet-season figures.** NDRRMC damage relates to the monsoon and cyclones. The livestock, poultry and fisheries line (PHP 0.68 billion) may overlap with the agriculture line and is excluded from the PHP 19.65 billion total.
- **Province counts.** The Philippines has 82 provinces. PAGASA's drought monitor and outlook tables cover 87 provinces and areas, and counts in this report follow PAGASA.
- **Classification snapshots.** PAGASA classifications change between ten-day bulletins. The current situation in this report follows the latest PAGASA monitor assessment.
- **Observed and forecast figures.** Province counts, damage and caseload are observed to date. Classes, inflows and temperatures for later months are PAGASA forecasts and carry forecast uncertainty.
- **Climate type assignments.** Type assignments in Regional exposure and vulnerability are indicative and several provinces straddle two types.

Use of AI tools. This report was prepared by CARE Philippines staff with the assistance of an AI tool for data compilation, drafting, and cross-checking. CARE Philippines staff directed the analysis, reviewed all content and take responsibility for its accuracy. Figures are drawn from the sources listed above.