

Snapshot of El Niño, Indian Ocean Dipole & Middle East Crisis

Asia and the Pacific is entering a period of increasingly complex and overlapping risk. El Niño conditions are strengthening, while the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) continues to fluctuate around neutral to positive levels but is forecast to become more consistently positive from September 2026. At the same time, renewed pressures linked to the Middle East are adding uncertainty to fuel, fertilizer, and food markets and supply chains.

KEY MESSAGES



POTENTIALLY REACHING HISTORIC STRENGTH AND MAY WELL EXTEND TO 2027

The latest forecasts point increasingly towards a very strong, and potentially exceptional, El Niño — it could rank among the strongest events in the historical record and may extend well into 2027. However, its strength alone will not determine impacts. What matters is where rainfall and temperature anomalies coincide with crop calendars, water scarcity, vulnerable livelihoods and limited coping capacity.



FOOD INSECURITY RISING

The combined impact could result in an additional 8.2 million people facing acute food insecurity in Asia and the Pacific in just a few monitored countries, with the overall number likely higher.



A CRITICAL AND NARROWING WINDOW FOR PREPAREDNESS AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

The risk is already emerging, but widespread impacts have not yet materialized. This provides a critical, and narrowing, window for preparedness and anticipatory action. The most serious agricultural and food-security impacts may not emerge until late 2026 and 2027, leaving a short window to act before losses become entrenched. Humanitarian and development actors must work closely with National governments to strengthen monitoring preparedness, anticipatory action and response as early as possible.

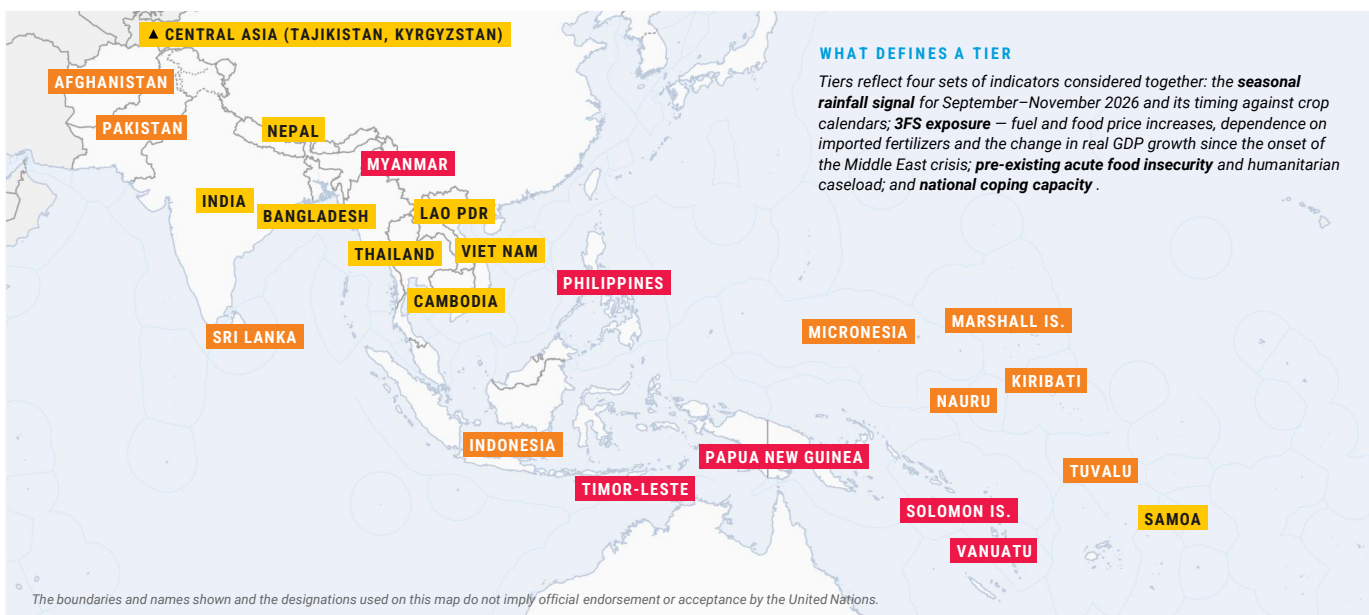


THE TRIPLE F CASCADING SHOCKS

The three Fs are creating a cascading shock where urea prices more than doubled at their peak, while fuel and food prices remain elevated, raising the risk that climate-related production losses translate into higher food insecurity in late 2026 and 2027.

COUNTRIES OF CONCERN · SEP–NOV 2026

■ Tier 1 · High concern ■ Tier 2 · Elevated concern ■ Tier 3 · Lower concern



The snapshot is structured in three parts and covers the period of September through to November 2026.

A CLIMATE RISK OUTLOOK

Section A provides a climate risk outlook by examining evolving El Niño and positive Indian Ocean Dipole conditions and historical El Niño events that tell us about country susceptibility.

B CONVERGENCE OF PRESSURES

Section B looks beyond climate to assess how these risks could compound with underlying vulnerabilities and pressures stemming from the Middle East crisis, particularly through fuel, fertilizer, food prices and supply chains.

C FROM RISK TO ACTION

Section C moves from risk to action, highlighting how governments and partners are preparing and acting ahead of potential impacts.

SECTION A

CLIMATE RISK OUTLOOK

El Niño is established and strengthening rapidly across the central-eastern equatorial Pacific, increasing the risk of significant rainfall and temperature anomalies across the Indo-Pacific through late 2026 and into early 2027. On 31 July 2026, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in its monthly Global Seasonal Climate Update based on multiple global models reported that El Niño was expected to strengthen further during August–October. Since then, ocean temperatures have continued to rise rapidly (WMO, 2026b).

The latest forecasts by WMO Global Producing Centres are pointing increasingly towards a very strong, and potentially exceptional, El Niño. The International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) forecast issued on 19 August shows that 25 of 26 models (15 dynamical and 11 statistical) expect El Niño to reach the “very strong” category during October–December, while 15 models project Niño 3.4 anomalies of at least +3.0°C. Significant warming is also occurring below the ocean surface, providing a reservoir of heat that could support further strengthening over the coming months (IRI, 2026). While the eventual peak remains uncertain, the latest evidence suggests that the 2026/27 El Niño could rank among the strongest events in the historical record and may extend well into 2027.

For the latest authoritative forecast information, see the quarterly WMO El Niño/La Niña Update (next update expected on 3 September 2026), monthly Global Seasonal Climate Update, and Regional and National Climate Outlook Fora (RCOFs/NCOFs) (WMO, 2026a; WMO 2026c).

The IOD remains an important additional risk driver, but positive conditions are not yet established. The Dipole Mode Index from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology briefly moved above the +0.4°C positive-IOD threshold earlier in August but declined to +0.18°C for the week ending of the 16th of August. Forecasts nevertheless continue to indicate the potential development of a positive IOD, potentially from September onward (Australian Bureau of Meteorology, 2026). The WMO multi-model ensemble also continues to forecast development of a positive IOD alongside the strengthening El Niño, creating the potential for the two climate drivers to interact and amplify regional rainfall anomalies.

Across Asia, the coming three months will mark a seasonal transition. The summer/southwest monsoon will continue to retreat through September–October, and has been deficient and erratic, while the northeast monsoon becomes increasingly influential from

around October, bringing an important rainy season to parts of Southeast Asia. Against this transition, El Niño and a positive IOD could increasingly shape rainfall patterns. Areas already experiencing rainfall deficits, heat and soil-moisture stress may face worsening water and agricultural conditions if rains weaken, become erratic or arrive late, while areas entering the period unusually wet or saturated may remain exposed to heavy rainfall and flooding. The tropical cyclone season in the Northern Indian Ocean lasts until December. In the South-West Indian Ocean basin, the season lasts from November to April. In this basin, El Niño is generally associated with cyclone seasons that are less impactful than average.

Across the Pacific, seasonal conditions will also shift through October–November. The dry season south of the equator will give way towards the wetter season, while rainfall patterns across the equatorial and northern Pacific also transition. At the same time, the South Pacific tropical cyclone season will begin in November while in the North-West Pacific cyclones may occur at any time (with the strongest typically around August and September), adding another layer of risk. El Niño can shift cyclone formation and tracks eastwards, and because of travelling longer distances over warm water, these cyclones have a higher chance of becoming intense storms. Their tracks also tend to shift northward and eastward, increasing risks for areas such as Japan while altering the distribution of impacts across the western Pacific and potentially increasing exposure across parts of the central and eastern South Pacific. In the eastern and central Pacific, El Niño events are generally associated with above normal activity. Seasonal cyclone outlooks are not yet available and will be incorporated in further editions of the snapshot once issued (likely in late October). Annex 1 highlights historical patterns to watch as the season develops.

For agriculture, however, the strength of El Niño alone does not determine the severity of impacts. The key question is whether these oceanic and atmospheric signals translate into sustained rainfall deficits, higher temperatures, declining soil moisture and vegetation stress during sensitive agricultural periods. Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea are among the areas requiring particularly close monitoring, alongside the Philippines and parts of the Pacific. As El Niño strengthens, monitoring should therefore increasingly focus on where climate anomalies are beginning to overlap with crop calendars, water availability, and already vulnerable agricultural systems.

WHERE THE SIGNAL STANDS

IRI · 19 AUGUST 2026

25 of 26

Models expecting a “very strong” El Niño during October–December

OCT–DEC 2026

+3.0°C

Niño 3.4 anomaly projected by 15 of the 26 models, at least

MID-AUGUST 2026

+2.7°C

Niño 3.4 latest weekly value

AUG–OCT 2026

>+2.9°C

WMO forecast anomaly could exceed

WEEK TO 16 AUG

+0.18°C

IOD Dipole Mode Index, below the +0.4°C threshold

SECTION A

AREAS OF GREATEST CLIMATIC CONCERN



The prioritization of countries and territories is based on a three-month forward-looking assessment covering September–November, using the methodology in Annex 2. While recent and observed conditions provide an important baseline, the assessment focuses primarily on emerging climate trends and where risks may intensify over the coming three months, particularly as El Niño approaches its expected peak. It also considers crop calendars and seasonal timing, as outlined in Annex 3, alongside relevant historical trends highlighted in Annex 1.

TABLE 1: EMERGING CLIMATE RISK HOTSPOTS ACROSS ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

LEVEL OF CONCERN	COUNTRIES / TERRITORIES
VERY HIGH · DRIER CONDITIONS	Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji
HIGH · DRIER CONDITIONS	Palau, Tonga, Samoa, and Cook Islands
ELEVATED CONCERN · DRIER CONDITIONS	Cambodia, Viet Nam, Thailand, Lao PDR and parts of India
ELEVATED CONCERN · WETTER THAN AVERAGE OR MIXED CONDITIONS	Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Naoero, parts of Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Tuvalu

SEASONAL TRANSITIONS
TO WATCH

SEASONAL TRANSITIONS TO WATCH		AUG 2026	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2027	
CLIMATE DRIVERS	El Niño	Strengthening · expected peak late 2026						
	Positive Indian Ocean Dipole		Potential development from September					
ASIA	Southwest monsoon		Continues to retreat		deficient and erratic			
	Northeast monsoon			Increasingly influential from around October				
PACIFIC	South of equator	Dry season						
	Wetter season				Gives way towards the wetter season			
	Tropical cyclone season				Season begins · outlooks not yet available			

VERY HIGH CONCERN · DRIER CONDITIONS

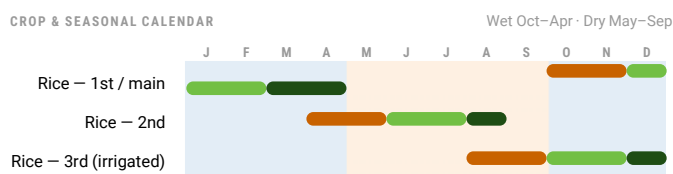
Indonesia, Timor-Leste, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji

These countries form the clearest area of emerging dry conditions across Asia and the Pacific over the next three months.



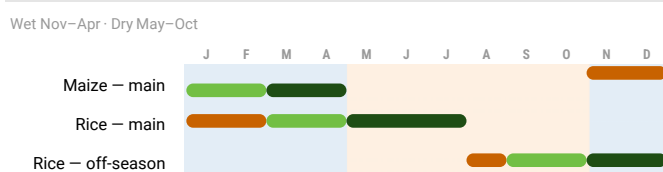
INDONESIA

Indonesia remains one of the clearest large-area drought concerns. Forecasts show widespread probabilities of below-normal rainfall through September–November, overlapping with the end of the dry season and transition into the main rainy and planting season. If El Niño prolongs seasonal dryness or delays the onset of rains, this could affect water availability, land preparation and planting of key crops, particularly rice. Vegetation observations do not yet show widespread severe deterioration, meaning there is still valuable lead time to monitor soil moisture, reservoirs, irrigation availability and crop conditions and prepare before impacts intensify. However, localised crop failures and areas at risk have been reported across Java, West and East Nusa Tenggara and parts of Sumatra, including damage to rice production. Forest and land fires (karhutla) are also associated with El Nino in Indonesia; this risk appears to be materializing during the current dry season, with reports of 95,000 hectares burned in July alone. In response to prolonged dry conditions, the Government has distributed approximately 100,000 water pumps and rehabilitated around 900,000 hectares of irrigation networks (Antara, 2026).



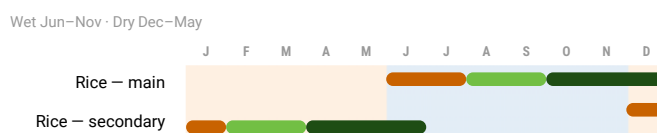
TIMOR-LESTE

Timor-Leste sits within the same strong dry pattern as Indonesia, but the timing of the risk is particularly important. Although August and September are normally dry, and below-normal rainfall during these months alone is therefore not the principal concern, this period coincides with peak horticultural production, while higher temperatures also increase forest-fire risks to coffee plantations and free-grazing livestock. The greater risk is that suppressed rainfall prolongs the dry season or delays the onset of the 2026/27 wet season, normally beginning in October. This could disrupt planting and crop establishment for rice and maize and intensify pressure on household and livestock water supplies (FAO, 2026d).



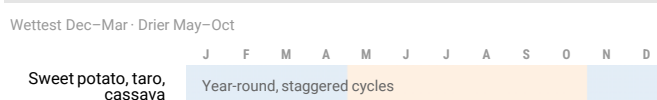
THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is showing an increasingly strong dry signal as El Niño strengthens. Dry spells are already being observed in parts of the country, with the current signal particularly relevant for southern provinces. The key concern is how conditions evolve as the monsoon retreats, where PAGASA projects dry conditions to expand substantially towards the end of 2026, with around 45 provinces potentially affected by the end of November and 81 provinces experiencing either dry conditions or dry spells by the end of December. Forecasts from September–November outlook also show a broad dry tendency. The concern is therefore not widespread drought at present, but the potential for current dry spells to intensify and expand as El Niño approaches maturity, increasing agricultural and water stress by late 2026 and into early 2027. In addition, more than 107,000 hectares had burned by 11th of August 2026, alongside more than 5,000 fire hotspots identified by late July.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

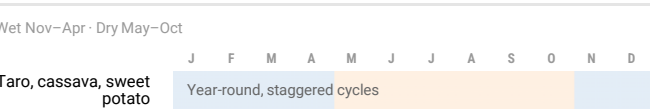
For Papua New Guinea, observed rainfall deficits are increasingly aligning with a strong seasonal dry outlook, with drought indicators showing a clear deterioration from June to August. Recent Pacific rainfall monitoring indicates substantial rainfall deficits across parts of mainland Papua New Guinea, while the latest drought monitoring from the National Weather Service shows an expansion of drought-alert and critical conditions across the mainland. At the same time, FAO vegetation indicators (FAO, 2026h) remain more mixed, with localized areas of stress but no widespread deterioration at this stage. This suggests that rainfall deficits are beginning to accumulate but have not yet translated into broad vegetation impacts, providing an important window for preparedness and preventive action (FAO, 2026c). The key concern is therefore the potential transition from currently localized impacts to more widespread agricultural and water stress if dry conditions persist into the latter part of 2026.



VERY HIGH CONCERN · CONTINUED

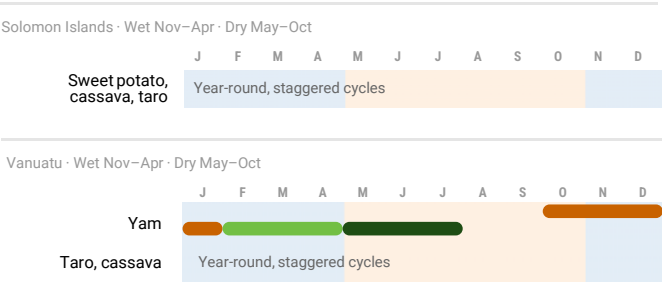
FIJI

Fiji is now also included in the very-high-concern group. Recent conditions have varied between islands, but the latest forecasts place Fiji clearly within the southwest Pacific dry corridor and indicate an elevated probability of particularly low seasonal rainfall. The signal strengthens into October–December, making water availability, pasture and rain-fed agriculture increasingly important to monitor, particularly in historically drought-prone western and leeward areas. Signs of stress are starting to emerge where 16 percent of assessed water sources were already at critical levels and a further 7 percent were approaching critical levels, prompting the Government to place three vessels on standby to transport water to maritime communities.



SOLOMON ISLANDS AND VANUATU

Solomon Islands and Vanuatu also sit firmly within the southwest Pacific dry corridor. In both countries, the combination of recent rainfall deficits and continued dry forecasts increases concern about cumulative impacts. Small-island communities can be particularly sensitive because limited freshwater storage and dependence on rain-fed agriculture mean that persistent deficits can translate relatively quickly into water shortages and stress on staple food production. In Vanuatu, the Government has already declared the first stage of meteorological drought on 21st of July 2026 across Torba and parts of Sanma, Penama and Malampa, with communities, or 336,000 people, urged to conserve water.



WHAT THIS MEANS NOW

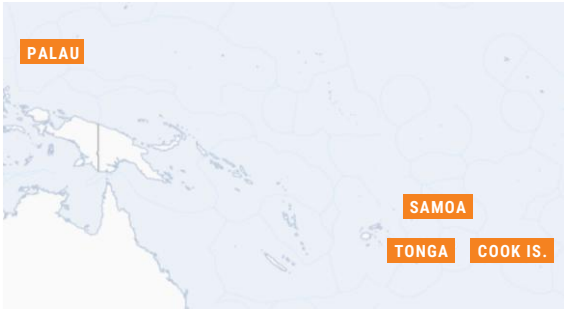
These six countries warrant the closest attention during the next three months. The priority is to determine whether forecast rainfall deficits are becoming persistent in observations and beginning to affect soil moisture, water availability, crops and vegetation. Readiness measures should be advanced before widespread agricultural and humanitarian impacts are visible.

HIGH CONCERN · DRIER CONDITIONS

Palau, Tonga, Samoa and the Cook Islands

A second group of countries also faces a meaningful dry signal, but either the forecast is more spatially variable, lies closer to the edge of the strongest dry corridor, or the most significant impacts are likely to emerge later as El Niño matures. These include:

Across the southwest Pacific, **Tonga, Samoa** and much of the **Cook Islands** remain within or close to the dry band identified by the Pacific seasonal forecasts. The current outlook indicates that the dry corridor persists and in places strengthens into October–December. The immediate concern is cumulative rainfall where several moderately dry months in succession can become more important for small-island water security and agriculture than a severe deficit in a single month. Tonga has also issued a drought warning for Ha’apai and a drought alert nationally and in effect for 90 days from the 11th of July.



Palau also warrants close attention. Recent monitoring has already identified unusually dry conditions in southern Palau, and its historical sensitivity to El Niño means that continued rainfall suppression could increasingly affect freshwater availability as the event progresses.

WHAT THIS MEANS NOW

These countries should strengthen drought monitoring and preparedness now, while watching closely for persistence. A sustained rainfall deficit across successive months, particularly where accompanied by declining soil moisture or water storage, would justify escalation.

ELEVATED CONCERN · DRIER

Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and parts of India

Across mainland Southeast Asia and parts of South Asia, the picture is less clear-cut. Seasonal forecasts indicate areas of below-normal rainfall, but the signal is less consistent and more temperamental than across Indonesia and the southwest Pacific, and the active monsoon continues to play an important role. Regardless, the following countries require close monitoring:

For mainland Southeast Asia (specifically, **Cambodia, Viet Nam, Thailand** and **Lao PDR**), the immediate concern is not necessarily widespread dry conditions during the next three months, but whether the remainder of the 2026 monsoon provides sufficient rainfall to replenish soil moisture, reservoirs and other water sources before the dry season begins. Historically, El Niño impacts across mainland Southeast Asia tend to become more pronounced later in the event, or during the transition from the dry to wet season, particularly February–May in the second year of an El Niño episode (FAO, 2026a).

Cambodia deserves particularly close observation. FAO vegetation observations indicate pockets of poorer vegetation condition, while localized impacts are already being reported. The government reported that a prolonged dry spell reduced water availability for wet-season rice, affecting more than 250,000 hectares of wet-season paddy (approximately 11% of the cultivated area), of which around 12,500 hectares were completely damaged.



These signals are not yet sufficient to indicate widespread agricultural drought, but their persistence or expansion would be of increasing concern as El Niño strengthens and the wet season progresses.

For **Viet Nam, Thailand** and **Lao PDR**, widespread dry conditions are not currently evident. However, how forecasts evolve over the last quarter in 2026 will help determine vulnerability entering the 2026/27 dry season. In Viet Nam specifically, the Government has warned that a severe El Niño could place approximately 350,000 hectares of rice production at risk.

Cumulative rainfall across the Indus Basin was approximately 15–20 percent above average by early August 2026 (WFP, 2026d). Although slightly below the corresponding 2015/16 trajectories, rainfall was considerably higher than during 1997/98. However, rainfall alone provides a particularly limited indication of Indus water availability because river flows depend heavily on snow and glacier melt, reservoir storage, canal allocations and irrigation releases.

Parts of **India** warrant continued monitoring as the southwest monsoon enters its latter stages. The 2026 monsoon has been uneven, with cumulative rainfall remaining below normal despite periods of heavy rainfall in some areas. With below-normal rainfall also favoured during the latter part of the monsoon, areas already experiencing persistent deficits could face increasing soil-moisture and agricultural stress as El Niño strengthens. However, conditions remain spatially mixed, supporting targeted monitoring rather than a national drought classification.

ELEVATED CONCERN · WETTER THAN AVERAGE AND MIXED CONDITIONS

Afghanistan, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Naoero (Nauru), Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and parts of the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Tuvalu

While dry conditions are emerging as the primary concern in some parts of the region, seasonal forecasts indicate wetter-than-normal or near-average rainfall across others. These areas require a different risk lens, particularly where seasonal rainfall, saturated conditions or rainfall extremes could interact with existing vulnerabilities. Importantly, above-normal seasonal rainfall does not necessarily indicate flooding, but highlights areas where rainfall conditions and potential extremes should continue to be monitored.

WETTER THAN AVERAGE CONDITIONS · SOUTH ASIA



AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan requires increasing surveillance and early warning systems, with widespread above-average precipitation forecast over the next three months as the country approaches the start of its winter wet season. This could support winter wheat establishment and begin to alleviate accumulated water deficits but also raises the potential for localized flooding and flash floods. Looking further ahead, the implications for spring 2027 will depend heavily on how much winter precipitation falls as snow, the resulting snowpack, and temperatures during spring. A substantial snowpack followed by rapid warming, snowmelt or heavy rainfall could significantly increase flash flood risk and glacier lake outburst flooding. With the influence of El-Niño, heavy snowfall in higher elevation areas, particularly in the northeast and central highlands, could also isolate remote communities and restrict access to markets and essential services for prolonged periods during winter.

WETTER THAN AVERAGE CONDITIONS · SOUTH ASIA (CONTINUED)

PAKISTAN

Pakistan presents a spatially mixed and uncertain outlook. Cumulative rainfall across the Indus Basin was approximately 15–20 percent above average by early August 2026—slightly below the corresponding 2015/16 trajectory but considerably higher than in 1997/98 (WFP, 2026d). The IRI September–November forecast also indicates an increased probability of above-normal rainfall across much of Pakistan, including parts of Punjab, upper Sindh and Balochistan. However, this does not negate the substantial rainfall deficits recorded locally in Sindh and Balochistan, as basin-wide totals may be strongly influenced by rainfall in the upper catchment. Rainfall is also an incomplete indicator of agricultural water availability because Indus flows depend heavily on snow and glacier melt, reservoir storage, canal allocations and irrigation releases. Monitoring should therefore cover both localized flood and waterlogging risks during the end of the monsoon and the

possibility that rainfall deficits persist into the rabi planting period, particularly in southern and drought-prone agricultural areas.

SRI LANKA

For Sri Lanka, the wetter signal becomes particularly important from October 2026 onwards, as it coincides with the Second Inter-Monsoon (October–November), typically the wettest period of the year across the country, followed by the Northeast Monsoon from December to February. A substantial proportion of Sri Lanka's annual rainfall is received during these latter parts of the year, and the Second Inter-Monsoon is particularly important because rainfall is widespread across much of the island and can be locally intense. As with Pakistan, the evolution of the IOD, particularly if it strengthens into a positive phase, will be important in determining wetter conditions.

WETTER THAN AVERAGE CONDITIONS · EQUATORIAL AND NORTHERN PACIFIC

The August–October 2026 outlook shows a pronounced shift towards wetter-than-normal conditions across the equatorial central Pacific, with the strongest signal affecting Naoero and parts of Kiribati, and elevated probabilities extending across the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), parts of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and northern Tuvalu:

NAOERO

Naoero (Nauru) lies within the core of the enhanced equatorial rainfall signal for August–October 2026, with forecasts strongly favouring above-normal rainfall. Nauru therefore warrants close monitoring for periods of unusually heavy rainfall, however due to being a high import based country, agricultural impacts will be low.

KIRIBATI

Kiribati is among the Pacific countries with the strongest historical relationship between El Niño and enhanced rainfall, and forecasts are consistent with this pattern. However, conditions can differ

considerably between the Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands, so rainfall forecasts and potential impacts should be assessed at island-group rather than national level wherever possible.

MARSHALL ISLANDS AND FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

For the RMI and FSM, the forecast favours above-average rainfall, as enhanced tropical convection extends into the central and northern Pacific. These countries have an important seasonally evolving relationship with El Niño, as wetter conditions during the developing and early mature stages can be followed by a pronounced reduction in rainfall as El Niño matures and the main convection zone shifts farther east and south. Consequently, above-average rainfall during late 2026 does not remove the risk of drought developing later, particularly into early 2027.

TUVALU

For Tuvalu, above-average rainfall is more likely from August–October 2026, particularly in the north. However, the signal varies across the country, with southern areas potentially experiencing different conditions. This reflects Tuvalu's position between wetter conditions near the equator and a stronger dry signal farther south, a pattern that can become more pronounced during El Niño.



SECTION B

CONVERGENCE OF CLIMATE SHOCKS, MIDDLE EAST AND UNDERLYING HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Asia and the Pacific is entering the 2026/27 El Niño episode with significant humanitarian needs already present and the effects of the Middle East crisis increasingly embedded in food, fuel and agricultural input systems. The greatest concern is therefore not climate risk in isolation, but where a strengthening El Niño intersects with existing food insecurity, high import dependence, rising food costs and limited household capacity to absorb another shock. Over the coming months, these pressures are likely to unfold sequentially, from fuel, to fertilizer, to food systems (3FS):

FUEL – THE IMMEDIATE ECONOMY-WIDE SHOCK

By mid-April 2026, Brent crude prices were more than 50 percent higher than at the start of the year, following what the World Bank Group (2026) described as the largest oil supply shock on record. This matters far beyond the energy sector, as oil is embedded throughout food systems, from agricultural machinery and irrigation to fertilizer production, processing and transport. Although international prices have eased from their April 2026 peak, fuel costs remain well above 2025 averages in many countries. Higher import bills and subsidy requirements are placing additional pressure on government budgets and external balances, including in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Fiji and other Pacific Island Countries (WFP, 2026b).

FERTILIZER – THE PRICE SHOCK HAS EASED, BUT THE PRODUCTION SHOCK MAY STILL BE AHEAD

The surge in energy prices hit fertilizer markets during a critical procurement and application period for Asia's 2026 cropping season. Urea prices peaked at approximately USD 857 per tonne in April 2026, more than twice pre-crisis levels, and remained around 78 percent above baseline during this critical period. By July, urea prices had largely normalized, but pressures had not disappeared across other key inputs, such as triple superphosphate (TSP) remained around 18 percent above baseline, potassium chloride 12 percent higher and phosphate rock 12 percent higher and still rising (World Bank Group, 2026). Even countries that were relatively less impacted by Middle East related fuel prices have recently seen a jump in fuel prices due to a recent Russian export ban on gasoline, with gasoline now 38 percent and 23 percent above pre-crisis levels in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (WFP, 2026b).

For farmers, particularly smallholders, the consequences may already be locked in. Some purchased fertilizer at substantially higher prices and others may have delayed purchases or reduced application. The implications for production will only become clearer as crops mature and harvests begin. Risks are particularly important in Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal, where agricultural production depends heavily on imported fertilizer and/or imported liquefied natural gas used in domestic urea production.

The concern is therefore increasingly one of confluence. If constrained fertilizer use affects yields at the same time that a strengthening El Niño suppresses rainfall, reduces irrigation availability or disrupts planting, production effects could become more visible towards the end of 2026 and into 2027. FAO (2026e) already identifies prospects for the 2026 main paddy and coarse-grain crops in East Asia as uncertain, reflecting the combined effects of El Niño-related weather variability, unattractive producer prices and elevated agricultural input costs. FAO further warns that reduced availability and higher prices of fuel and fertilizer during critical agricultural periods may constrain input use and adversely affect crop production, particularly in import-dependent countries.

FOOD – THE SECOND-ROUND SHOCK

These pressures are now converging with rising international food prices and a strengthening El Niño. The FAO Food Price Index (FAO, 2026e) has reached a two-year high, leaving import-dependent economies across Asia and the Pacific particularly exposed to movements in global markets. Since the start of the crisis, international prices have risen by 8 percent for wheat, 11 percent for rice and 6 percent for soybeans, while escalating conflict in the Black Sea has further disrupted grain exports (International Grains Council, 2026). Meanwhile, Thai rice prices have climbed to an 18-month high amid growing uncertainty over weather conditions.

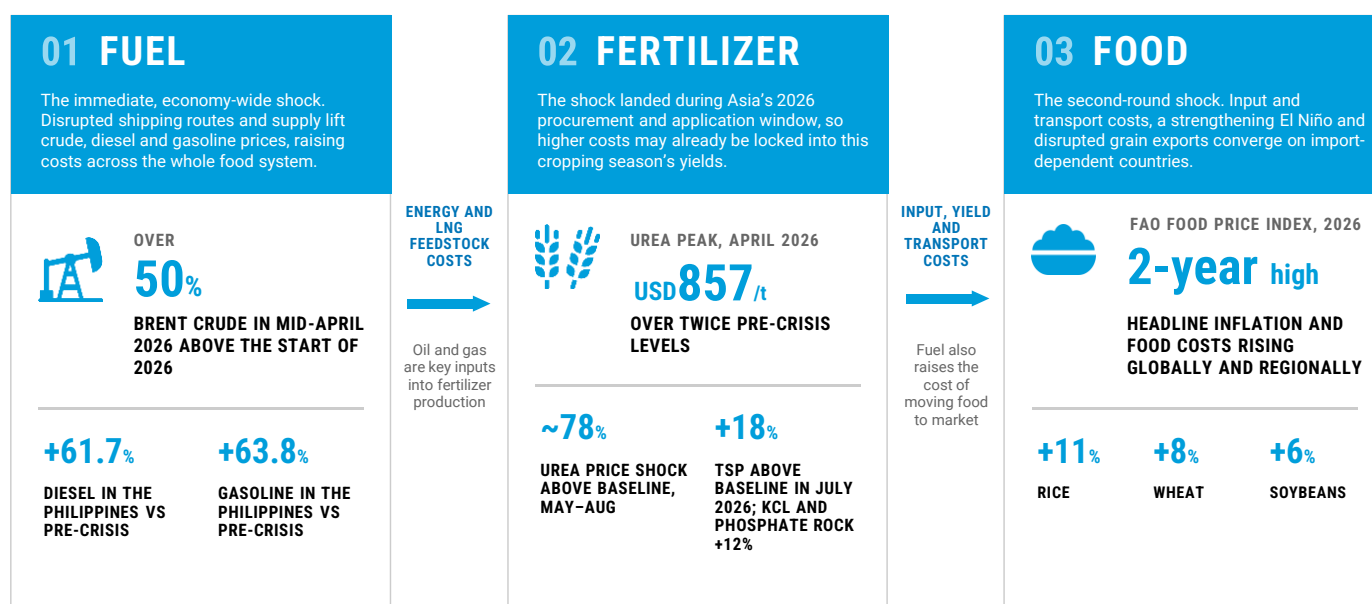
The potential implications for food security are significant. WFP estimates that a strengthening El Niño could result in an additional 8.2 million people facing acute food insecurity in Asia and the Pacific (WFP, 2026a). This estimate covers only the countries included in WFP's modelling and therefore does not capture potential impacts across the region as a whole. The overall number could consequently be higher as El Niño impacts extend to other vulnerable countries and compound existing food insecurity.

The transmission chain: fuel, fertilizer, food

These shocks do not reach households simultaneously and can affect food prices through multiple pathways. Higher fuel costs are transmitted first, directly raising transport and distribution costs, putting immediate pressure on food prices. Fertilizer prices have also risen through a separate channel: while higher energy costs have increased production costs, disruptions to fertilizer exports and shipments from the Middle East have constrained global supply and availability. The resulting impacts on agricultural production emerge more slowly: The fertilizer shock occurred during the 2026 growing season, but its consequences for agricultural production may only become visible toward the end of 2026 or early 2027 as major crops reach harvest; reduced input use and tighter supplies may then further push up food prices.

This creates a particularly important risk window. If reduced fertilizer use begins to constrain yields at the same time that El Niño and a positive IOD suppress rainfall or disrupt agricultural production, food prices could face further upward pressure in late 2026 and into 2027.

Importantly, this regional snapshot provides a high-level assessment focused primarily on the combined implications of climate conditions and the Middle East crisis. It does not fully capture the country-specific compounding risks, such as conflict, economic pressures, displacement, existing food insecurity or other hazards, that may further increase vulnerability and worsen impacts. The findings should therefore be complemented by coordinated monitoring and more detailed snapshots at the country level.



CONVERGENCE OF EMERGING CLIMATE RISKS AND 3FS

Table 2 - 3FS denotes fuel, fertilizer and food-system pressures. Notes on 3FS: Includes the reported impacts of fuel price increase, food price increase, dependence on imported fertilizers and change in Real GDP Growth since the start of the middle east crisis. Country rationales follow overleaf.

SUMMARY

CATEGORY	COUNTRIES OF CONCERN
HIGH CONCERN	Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Myanmar
ELEVATED CONCERN	Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Pacific Islands Countries (FSM, Marshall Islands, Naoero, Kiribati, Tuvalu)
LOWER CONCERN	Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, India, Nepal, Thailand, Viet Nam, Samoa, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan

COUNTRY	CLIMATE RISK IDENTIFIED IN TABLE 1	3FS	RISK PATHWAY
TIER 1 - HIGH CONCERN			
Papua New Guinea	Very High - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	CONVERGENCE
Philippines	Very High - Drier conditions	HIGH	CONVERGENCE
Timor-Leste	Very High - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	CONVERGENCE
Myanmar	Not currently an El Niño hotspot but, seasonal flooding occurring	VERY HIGH	MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DRIVEN
Solomon Islands	Very High - Drier conditions	HIGH	CONVERGENCE
Vanuatu	Very High - Drier conditions	HIGH	CONVERGENCE
TIER 2 - ELEVATED CONCERN			
Afghanistan	Elevated concern - Wetter than average conditions	HIGH	CONVERGENCE IN 2027
Indonesia	Very High - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	CONVERGENCE
Pakistan	Elevated concern - Wetter than average conditions	HIGH	CONVERGENCE
Sri Lanka	Elevated concern - Wetter than average conditions	HIGH	CONVERGENCE
Fiji	Very High - Drier conditions	HIGH	CLIMATE DRIVEN
Equatorial/northern Pacific – parts of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Naoero (Nauru), Kiribati, Tuvalu	Elevated concern - Wetter than average conditions	NO DATA	CLIMATE DRIVEN
TIER 3 - LOWER CONCERN			
Bangladesh	Not currently identified as a clear El Niño hotspot	HIGH	MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DRIVEN
Cambodia	Elevated concern - Drier conditions	HIGH	POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027
Central Asia (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan)	Elevated concern - Wetter than average conditions	HIGH	POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027
India(parts of)	Elevated concern - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	CONVERGENCE
Nepal	Not currently identified as a clear El Niño hotspot	HIGH	MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DRIVEN
Lao PDR	Elevated concern - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027
Thailand	Elevated concern - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027
Viet Nam	Elevated concern - Drier conditions	ELEVATED	POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

TABLE 2 · TIER 1 - HIGH CONCERN

Rationale, by country

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

CONVERGENCE

The Middle East crisis triggered a sharp fuel-price shock in April 2026, with unsubsidized pump prices increasing by approximately 36 percent for petrol and 67 percent for diesel. The Government subsequently introduced a K1 billion fuel-relief package to return regulated retail prices to pre-shock March levels, limiting the immediate pass-through to consumers but creating substantial fiscal exposure if elevated international prices persist (ICCC, 2026; IMF, 2026a).

PHILIPPINES

CONVERGENCE

One of the clearest potential convergence cases. Diesel and gasoline prices have risen by 61.7 percent and 63.8 percent, respectively, since the onset of the crisis, while elevated fertilizer costs have affected farmers during the 2026 production cycle (WFP, 2026b).

TIMOR-LESTE

CONVERGENCE

High import dependence leaves Timor-Leste exposed to the fuel and food-price transmission of the Middle East crisis. Diesel and gasoline prices have risen by around 27 percent and 39 percent, respectively (WFP, 2026b), increasing transport and production costs.

MYANMAR

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DRIVEN

The Middle East crisis is reinforcing an already severe economic and humanitarian food-security crisis. The cost of a standard food basket is around 20.8 percent above pre-crisis levels, while diesel and gasoline remain approximately 58.3 percent and 52.0 percent higher (WFP, 2026b) – cited as the world's largest increase in fuel prices since February. . FAO also identifies elevated domestic food, fuel and agricultural-input prices among the key drivers of food insecurity, with about 12.4 million people projected to face Crisis or worse acute food insecurity during the June–August lean season (FAO, 2026e). Recent flooding, (WFP, 2026c) occurring within Myanmar's established monsoon flood season, is adding localized pressure to livelihoods and agricultural production but is not considered a principal driver of the national food-security crisis. In the absence of event-specific attribution, it should not be directly linked to El Niño.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

CONVERGENCE

The principal convergence pathway is through imported fuel and food. As a small, highly import-dependent island economy, increases in global energy and shipping costs can transmit rapidly into domestic transport and food prices, while higher fuel costs also affect fishing and inter-island distribution (WFP, 2026b). Country-specific 3FS price data are limited, so the concern is primarily structural exposure rather than a documented large domestic price shock.

VANUATU

CONVERGENCE

Fuel, freight and imported food are important transmission channels from the Middle East crisis for Pacific Island economies (WFP, 2026b). Higher transport and fuel costs can increase the cost of distributing food and water across dispersed islands and raise agricultural and fishing costs. If rainfall deficits increasingly affect local staple production and water availability, households may become more reliant on imported food at the same time that import costs remain elevated.

TABLE 2 · TIER 2 - ELEVATED CONCERN

Rationale, by country

AFGHANISTAN

CONVERGENCE IN 2027

The immediate concern is high underlying food insecurity combined with rising wheat and transport costs, rather than an adverse climate impact alone. FAO reports that wheat grain and flour prices increased in March and April 2026 and remained significantly above year-earlier levels, reflecting anticipated rainfed production shortfalls, elevated transport costs and reduced informal trade. Approximately 13.8 million people are projected to face IPC Phase 3 or worse acute food insecurity between April and September 2026, including 2.9 million people in Emergency (FAO, 2026e).

INDONESIA

CONVERGENCE

The Middle East crisis is primarily a fuel and production-cost pathway. Non-subsidized Pertamina and Pertamina Green prices rose by 32.11 percent and 31.78 percent month-on-month in June 2026, respectively (National Economic Council of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). Fertilizer supply is comparatively buffered, with 9.36–9.4 million tonnes of annual urea capacity and 2026 production of 7.8 million tonnes against requirements of 6.3 million tonnes. The Government has also allocated 9.85 million tonnes of subsidized fertilizer (Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026; Coordinating Ministry for Food Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). National rice reserves are at record levels, substantially above the level held before the 2023 El Niño peak, which mitigates any risk of national food deficits. The key convergence risk is therefore higher fuel and production costs coinciding with El Niño-related water stress and the late-2026 rainy and planting-season transition.

TABLE 2 · TIER 2 - ELEVATED CONCERN (CONTINUED)

Rationale, by country

PAKISTAN

CONVERGENCE

Strong economic pressures are already visible across fuel, food and wheat markets. The standard food basket is around 8.7 percent above pre-crisis levels, while diesel and gasoline have increased by approximately 37.8 percent and 27.6 percent (WFP, 2026b). Wheat flour prices in May were 50–70 percent higher than a year earlier, with FAO attributing this partly to high transport costs that constrained movement from surplus-producing areas (FAO, 2026e).

SRI LANKA

CONVERGENCE

The convergence risk is particularly relevant as the Maha season begins. Diesel and gasoline remain around 44 percent and 41 percent above pre-crisis levels, respectively, while headline CPI has increased by around 6 percent (WFP, 2026b). Sri Lanka is also exposed to fertilizer imports and international wheat markets, while elevated fertilizer prices during 2026 increased pressure on agricultural production (World Bank, 2026f). These economic pressures coincide with the country's principal rice-growing season and a wetter-than-average climate signal, creating the potential for higher input costs and possible fertilizer constraints to interact with heavy rainfall or flooding (FAO, 2026; WMO, 2026b).

FIJI

CLIMATE DRIVEN

Primarily a fuel-cost pathway with increasing climate convergence. Fiji's dependence on imported fuel has exposed it to the Middle East energy shock, with diesel prices increasing by as much as 79 percent during April–May 2026. The Government has already responded with a FJD 56 million relief package, while establishing phased fuel-conservation measures should supplies tighten. Higher energy and transport costs could amplify impacts on agricultural production, fishing, water access and inter-island food distribution, while increasing pressure on household and government resources (IMF, 2026b).

EQUATORIAL/NORTHERN PACIFIC – PARTS OF MICRONESIA, MARSHALL ISLANDS, NAOERO (NAURU), KIRIBATI, TUVALU

CLIMATE DRIVEN

Primarily an imported fuel, food and transport-cost pathway, with potential climate convergence. FSM, RMI, Nauru, Kiribati and Tuvalu are highly exposed to global fuel and freight disruption because of their import dependence, remoteness and thin domestic markets. The Middle East crisis is already increasing imported inflation and fiscal pressure, with Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands declaring energy emergencies and other Pacific governments introducing response measures (ADB, 2026).

TABLE 2 · TIER 3 - LOW CONCERN

Rationale, by country

BANGLADESH

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DRIVEN

The Middle East crisis is primarily an agricultural-input and energy risk. Bangladesh imports more than 85 percent of its fertilizer requirements and relies on imported liquefied natural gas for its energy system, leaving fertilizer and energy supply exposed to global market disruption (World Bank, 2026a; 2026b). This is particularly important for the Aman and Boro rice seasons, which together account for around 90 percent of national rice production. In response to heightened supply and price risks, the World Bank approved USD 300 million to finance 600,000 tonnes of fertilizer, including 300,000 tonnes of urea, for the 2026/27 cropping seasons (World Bank, 2026a). Higher fertilizer costs or supply constraints could reduce or delay application and subsequently affect yields. Climate risk remains important, but there is currently limited evidence of a clear El Niño–economic convergence, the immediate concern is therefore input affordability and availability.

CAMBODIA

POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

In Cambodia, the Middle East crisis produced a sharp fuel-price shock, with gasoline and diesel prices initially rising by around 45 percent and more than 70 percent, respectively, relative to pre-conflict levels. By late May, these increases had moderated to around 35 percent and 36 percent, although prices remained substantially above pre-crisis levels (World Bank, 2026e). Headline inflation reached 5.8 percent in April. Agriculture remains particularly exposed, with energy and agrochemical inputs accounting for an estimated 43 percent of crop-production costs, while a 10 percent increase in fuel prices could raise the national poverty rate by 1.4 percentage points (World Bank, 2026e). Localized dryness is occurring in some areas, although there is currently no evidence of widespread agricultural drought. If seasonal dryness persists or the rainy season is disrupted, elevated fuel and input costs could increasingly compound water and production stress.

TABLE 2 · TIER 3 - LOWER CONCERN (CONTINUED)

Rationale, by country

INDIA(PARTS OF)

CONVERGENCE

Climate-economic convergence is increasing. Fertilizer availability remains broadly adequate, but high international fertilizer and liquefied natural gas prices meant the Government had already used around 56 percent of its annual fertilizer subsidy allocation by mid-August 2026 (Times of India, 2026). However, conditions have improved considerably, as India secured 1.7 million tonnes of urea at USD 390–394 per tonne in August, down from USD 935–959 per tonne in April, substantially easing urea supply and price pressures ahead of the Rabi season (Indian Express, 2026). The immediate concern is therefore less urea availability than the convergence of rainfall deficits with still-elevated input costs and continued pressure on phosphatic and complex fertilizer.

NEPAL

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DRIVEN

The Middle East crisis is primarily a fertilizer and agricultural-input pathway. Around 55 percent of Nepal's chemical fertilizer imports originate from the Middle East, although early procurement provided an initial buffer, with 472,000 tonnes, 79 percent of the annual target, already imported by February 2026 (World Bank, 2026). Despite this, fertilizer shortages emerged during the critical monsoon paddy-planting period, prompting plans for around 210,000 tonnes of additional imports, including supplies from Oman and Qatar (Kathmandu Post, 2026). Fuel exposure is also significant, although prices eased in July after earlier increases.

TAJIKISTAN

POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

Tajikistan combines high underlying vulnerability with growing climate risks. Domestic food prices remain sensitive to regional wheat and flour markets, including Black Sea related price shocks. El Nino conditions are expected to bring above-normal temperatures and heavier precipitation. These conditions could increase flood and landslide risks in mountain areas while exacerbating existing stresses on water and agricultural systems. Any climate deterioration may compound existing economic vulnerabilities.

KYRGYZSTAN

POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

Current concern centers on the interaction between food price vulnerability and climate volatility. The country relies on imports for nearly half of its wheat consumption and remains vulnerable to regional market shocks linked to Kazakhstan and the wider Black Sea region. El Nino forecasts indicate above normal temperatures and potentially heavier rainfall, raising risks of flooding, mudslides and localized agricultural disruption.

LAO PDR

POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

The Middle East crisis is currently primarily a fuel and agricultural production-cost pathway. Gasoline and diesel prices nearly doubled at their April 2026 peak and, despite government measures, remained 38–40 percent above pre-crisis levels in early June, while inflation rose to nearly 10 percent in April (World Bank, 2026). These pressures increase the costs of agricultural production, transport and access to inputs. Localized seasonal dryness is evident in some areas, although widespread agricultural drought is not currently apparent. If dryness becomes more widespread or the rainy-season transition is disrupted, elevated fuel and input costs could increasingly compound water and production stress.

THAILAND

POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

Widespread drought impacts are not currently evident, but the potential for climate-economic convergence is increasing. Thailand sources around 34 percent of its chemical fertilizer and 71 percent of its urea imports from the Middle East, with urea costs increasing by approximately 20–50 percent following the crisis (Bank of Thailand, 2026). Higher fuel and fertilizer costs are therefore already increasing agricultural production pressures. If seasonal dryness intensifies or rainfall becomes increasingly erratic through late 2026, higher input costs could compound water and production stress as Thailand approaches the 2026/27 dry season.

VIET NAM

POTENTIAL CONVERGENCE IN 2027

Energy-price pressures have eased considerably from their April 2026 peak, although fuel prices and supply remain exposed to continuing Middle East market volatility. By 13 August 2026, diesel prices had fallen by around 36 percent from their 8 April level, while gasoline was around 17 percent lower (Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam, 2026). If El Niño-related dryness intensifies into the 2026/27 dry season, renewed energy or input-price pressures could nevertheless compound agricultural water stress, particularly in the Central Highlands, South Central Coast and Mekong Delta.

SECTION B · CONTINUED

Gender, protection and negative coping strategies

The gender-differentiated impacts of the current El Niño are not yet systematically documented, but evidence from previous climate and economic shocks points to important risks that warrant close monitoring as conditions deteriorate. Emerging reports of increasing child marriage in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, for example, should be monitored alongside livelihood and food-security conditions as a potential protection signal and indication of increasing household stress (Gender-Based Violence Coordination, Asia-Pacific Region, 2026).

Women and girls may face disproportionate and mutually reinforcing impacts as food, water, heat and livelihood pressures intensify. Water scarcity can increase the time and distance required to collect water, a responsibility that falls disproportionately on women and girls in many contexts (UN Women, 2023). Women farmers may also be particularly constrained by unequal access to land, financial services, agricultural inputs, technologies, extension services and climate information, limiting their capacity to adapt when rainfall and production conditions deteriorate (FAO, 2023). At the same time, extreme heat and water scarcity can increase unpaid care and domestic workloads, further reducing time available for income generation, education and rest (UN Women, 2026).

These pressures can compound existing nutritional and protection risks. Evidence from previous food-price and livelihood shocks shows that women may reduce their own food consumption to protect the nutrition of children and other household members (Block et al., 2004; Ali and Vallianatos, 2017; Alston and Akhter

2016; CARE, 2022). This is particularly concerning for pregnant and lactating women and in a region where women already account for a disproportionate share of undernourished populations and anaemia among women remains widespread (FAO, WHO, UNICEF and WFP, 2022; AP GiHA WG, 2026). Resource scarcity, livelihood losses, displacement and increasing economic stress can also heighten risks of gender-based violence, child marriage, transactional sex and other harmful coping strategies (Gender-Based Violence Coordination, Asia-Pacific Region, 2026).

Early warnings need to reach women through accessible and trusted channels, while targeting and delivery mechanisms should account for inequalities in access to mobile phones, financial services, identification, transport, agricultural extension and household decision-making (WMO, 2024). Preparedness, anticipatory and response interventions should similarly reflect differentiated food, water, livelihood, health and protection needs.

Continued monitoring of gender-differentiated impacts will therefore be critical as El Niño strengthens through late 2026 and into 2027. Monitoring should capture not only changes in household food security and livelihoods, but also intra-household food allocation, women’s dietary diversity, time spent collecting water, unpaid care burdens, access to productive inputs and early-warning information, and emerging protection risks. These indicators may reveal deterioration among women and girls before it becomes visible through household-level food-security indicators alone (Block et al., 2004).

HOW CLIMATE AND PRICE STRESS BECOMES A GENDERED RISK

PRESSURE	GENDERED MECHANISM	COMPOUNDED OUTCOME	WHAT TO MONITOR
 Rainfall deficits and water scarcity	 Longer time and distance to collect water	 Women reduce their own food consumption first	 Intra-household food allocation and dietary diversity
 Food and input price rises	 Unequal access to land, credit, inputs and extension	 Nutrition risk concentrates in pregnant and lactating women	 Time collecting water; unpaid care burden
 Livelihood and income losses	 Rising unpaid care and domestic workloads	 GBV, child marriage and transactional sex risks rise	 Reach of early warning through trusted channels

SECTION C

PREPAREDNESS, ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND RESPONSE

Across the region, managing the emerging and potential shocks, will challenge existing National and multi-lateral capacity to scale up and respond. Some key actions that are underway in support of National responses include:

KEY ACTIONS UNDER WAY

Adjust and Scale Up real time monitoring of food security, nutrition, agriculture and market assessments and other key indicators.

Review early warning messaging and community engagement to ensure relevance for the risks, particularly those that people may be less familiar with.

Work to align contingency planning with National government systems, including social protection systems that may be adjusted to respond to El Nino and other shocks, while strengthening humanitarian coordination.

Furthermore, countries are encouraged to develop complementary national snapshots through coordinated monitoring and analysis. Country-level assessments are essential for capturing local nuances, subnational variations and compounding risks that may not be fully or accurately reflected in this regional analysis. They also allow for deeper analysis of the timing and location of emerging risks, their interaction with seasonal and crop calendars, and their potential impacts. These national snapshots can support more targeted preparedness, anticipatory action and operational decision-making.

SECTION C · CASE STUDY

Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea has moved rapidly to strengthen preventive actions for the 2026/27 El Niño, reflecting the increasing risk of agricultural drought as the event develops. The Food Security Cluster has developed an El Niño Plan of Action for Agricultural Drought, led by the Department of Agriculture and Livestock (DAL) and FAO, with the National Weather Service (NWS) and Food Security Cluster partners (Papua New Guinea Food Security Cluster, 2026). The Plan establishes a phased framework for preparedness, anticipatory action, response and recovery, but importantly does not assume that the whole country will move through these phases at the same time but, aim where possible to protect livelihoods and concurrently address pressing food security needs - particularly as some areas experienced seasonal frosts and localised dry conditions.

The Plan complements the Government of Papua New Guinea’s broader 2026–2027 National ENSO Response and Relief Program. The Government programme provides the national architecture for drought

monitoring and assessment, food relief, water security, agricultural recovery, health security, educational protection, logistics and coordination, with an ENSO Task Force providing the principal national coordination mechanism. It also makes an important distinction between populations exposed to drought, those becoming vulnerable, and those requiring direct humanitarian assistance.

The decision-making system is intended to support this transition. The NWS Drought Early Warning System (DEWS) provides national drought classification and geographic prioritization, while the Combined Drought Index (CDI) is used to track evolving agricultural drought risk (FAO, 2026c). If severe conditions persist and agricultural and livelihood impacts become established, operational priorities progressively shift towards response. Such timing will inform priority actions which can include (and will take in consideration the Middle East crisis impacts on planning and implementation):

PREPAREDNESS

- Strengthen provincial drought task forces and contingency plans, and ensure the meaningful of women-led organizations in planning and coordination
- Establish consistent vulnerability and baseline assessment tools, including the collection and use of sex, age and disability-disaggregated data
- Monitor food prices and market availability, with attention to whether food prices are leading to changes in women and girls’ food intake
- Develop early warning messages and encourage low or no cost actions from farmers, including tailored practical advice to women’s roles, responsibility and constraints delivered through relevant local communications channels

ANTICIPATORY ACTION

- Scale up early-warning messages with practical agricultural advice
- Repair rainwater-harvesting systems and bring water collection sources closer to households
- Provide training on food and crop seed preservation techniques to ensure current harvests can stretch beyond their typical lifetime and future crops can be rapidly re-established, ensure participation of women but also of men and boys with messaging around sharing care and domestic work
- Protect breeding livestock through feed and water management
- Establish community multiplication gardens and seed systems to rebuild local planting material. Identify and secure community-agreed sites for seed multiplication and demonstration plots through consultation with customary landowners

RESPONSE

- Provide targeted delivery of food assistance or cash transfers to households with confirmed crop failure, also prioritizing women-headed households and women with limited access to financial services
- Deploy para-veterinary teams under veterinary supervision for disease surveillance, treatment and vaccination
- Promote home gardens, short-duration crops and staggered replanting where rainfall remains uncertain and means enable eg. small-scale irrigation systems remain functional

RECOVERY

- Restore agricultural production and planting material
- Promote diversified cropping systems, including intercropping and agroforestry, to reduce dependence on a single staple crop and to strengthen resilience to shocks in cropping conditions
- Protect and rehabilitate springs, gravity-fed water systems and catchments to improve dry-season water security
- Strengthen community-level resilience to subsequent droughts, including through seed and planting-material multiplication and community grain and seed banks

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ANNEX 1

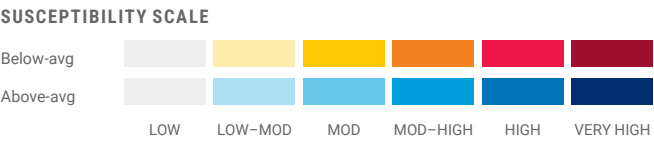
WHAT HISTORY TELLS US ABOUT EL NIÑO AND POSITIVE IOD RISK

Analysis of eight historical El Niño events since 1982 shows differences across Asia and the Pacific. In some locations, below- or above-average rainfall has occurred repeatedly during El Niño, providing a relatively strong risk signal. Elsewhere, the relationship is weak, highly seasonal or inconsistent, with other climate drivers playing a greater role. This distinction matters, as an impact that coincides with El Niño should not automatically be treated as an El Niño impact.

HISTORICAL SUSCEPTIBILITY, BY COUNTRY

Table 2 · Historical El Niño and positive-IOD associated below- and above-average rainfall susceptibility across Asia and the Pacific.

COUNTRY / TERRITORY	BELOW-AVG	ABOVE-AVG	COUNTRY / TERRITORY	BELOW-AVG	ABOVE-AVG
Afghanistan	LOW	HIGH	Nauru	LOW	VERY HIGH
Bangladesh	LOW-MODERATE	MODERATE	Nepal	MODERATE	LOW-MODERATE
Bhutan	LOW-MODERATE	LOW-MODERATE	Pakistan	MODERATE	MODERATE-HIGH
Cambodia	MODERATE-HIGH	LOW-MODERATE	Palau	VERY HIGH	LOW
Cook Islands	MODERATE	MODERATE-HIGH	Papua New Guinea	VERY HIGH	LOW-MODERATE
Federated States of Micronesia	HIGH	HIGH	Philippines	VERY HIGH	LOW-MODERATE
Fiji	HIGH	LOW-MODERATE	Samoa	MODERATE-HIGH	LOW-MODERATE
India	MODERATE-HIGH	MODERATE	Solomon Islands	HIGH	MODERATE
Indonesia	VERY HIGH	LOW	Sri Lanka	MODERATE	HIGH
Iran	LOW-MODERATE	HIGH	Thailand	MODERATE-HIGH	LOW-MODERATE
Kiribati	LOW	VERY HIGH	Timor-Leste	VERY HIGH	LOW
Lao PDR	MODERATE-HIGH	LOW-MODERATE	Tonga	HIGH	LOW
Maldives	LOW	LOW-MODERATE	Tuvalu	LOW	HIGH
Marshall Islands	HIGH	HIGH	Vanuatu	HIGH	LOW-MODERATE
Mongolia	LOW-MODERATE	LOW-MODERATE	Viet Nam	MODERATE-HIGH	LOW-MODERATE
Myanmar	LOW-MODERATE	LOW-MODERATE			



Interpretation of susceptibility rankings

Rankings reflect the historical strength and consistency of the rainfall response during El Niño, particularly where events have coincided with a positive IOD.

- VERY HIGH**
HIGH
MODERATE-HIGH
MODERATE
LOW-MODERATE
LOW
- A strong and recurrent relationship, with the rainfall anomaly occurring across most comparable historical events.

A clear and frequent relationship, although some events or areas may differ.

A recurring signal, but with greater variability in its strength, timing or spatial extent.

A discernible but inconsistent relationship.

A weak or highly variable relationship that has occurred in some events but is not a reliable feature of El Niño.

Little evidence of a consistent historical relationship.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The analysis examines the historical relationship between El Niño and drought/dry conditions/above-average rainfall/flood conditions across Asia and the Pacific. Eight El Niño episodes, paired with positive IODs, were assessed: 1982/83, 1994/95, 1997/98, 2002/03, 2006/07, 2015/16, 2018/19 and 2023/24. For each country or territory, documented conditions during these event windows were reviewed and classified according to the severity and consistency of observed drought or wet/flood impacts.

The resulting susceptibility ranking considers the frequency and strength of impacts across the assessed events, the established El Niño rainfall signal, the timing and seasonality of impacts, interaction with the IOD, and confidence in the available evidence.

The assessment is intended to identify repeatable historical patterns rather than assume causation. An impact occurring during an El Niño year does not necessarily mean that El Niño caused it. Higher rankings are therefore assigned where impacts recur across multiple events and are consistent with the known climatic relationship; isolated events or inconsistent outcomes receive lower rankings.

Rankings represent a regional assessment of historical El Niño-associated susceptibility and may contain data gaps or classification uncertainties. National verification is required before the rankings are used for country-level planning or decision-making. A low ranking does not indicate low underlying drought or flood risk; it indicates limited evidence of a consistent relationship with El Niño.

ANNEX 2

HOW WAS THIS ASSESSMENT MADE?

The risk levels below bring together four complementary sources of evidence:

- 01

CCSR/IRI Multi-Model Ensemble rainfall forecasts, issued in August 2026, were used to identify areas where below- or above-normal rainfall is consistently favoured through September–November 2026 (IRI, 2026).
- 02

Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) Multi-Model Ensemble , provided through Earth Sciences New Zealand and the Pacific Regional Climate Centre Network. This provides both the probability of below and above-normal rainfall and, importantly, the probability of particularly dry conditions, defined as rainfall below the 25th percentile, for August–October 2026 ((Asia-Pacific Technical Working Group on Early Warnings and Anticipatory Action, 2026).
- 03

Southeast Asia Regional Climate Centre (SEA-RCC) outlook provides additional detail across ASEAN, including observed and forecast Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) conditions and the probability of much drier conditions ((Asia-Pacific Technical Working Group on Early Warnings and Anticipatory Action, 2026).
- 04

FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) Vegetation Condition Index (VCI) , for the third dekad of July, is used to assess whether rainfall deficits are beginning to translate into vegetation stress (FAO, 2026h).

These current conditions are then considered alongside the historical El Niño impact analysis presented in Section 3. Countries are ranked more highly where the current rainfall forecast is strong and persistent and historical evidence shows that El Niño has repeatedly been associated with significant drought or agricultural impacts. The assessment therefore does not rely on El Niño alone, or on any single forecast model.

The result is a risk-based assessment rather than a prediction of impacts. A country classified as very high concern is not necessarily already experiencing drought or dry conditions, it means that the combination of the current forecast, persistence of the signal, observed conditions and historical experience provides a strong case for preparedness or preventive actions now.

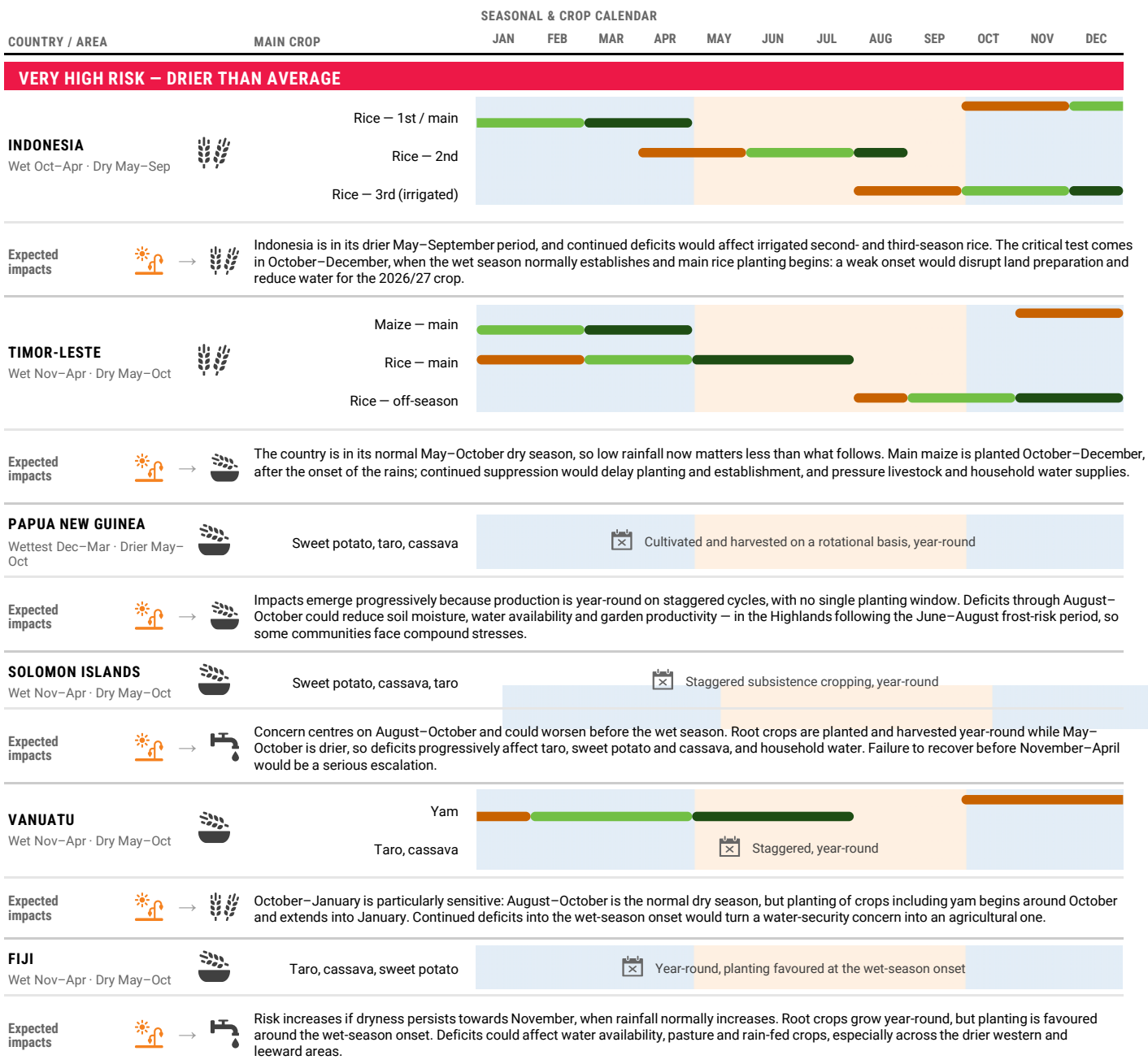
ANNEX 3

CROP CALENDARS AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS

VERY HIGH RISK

Drier than average · seasonal rainfall outlook set against the agricultural calendar

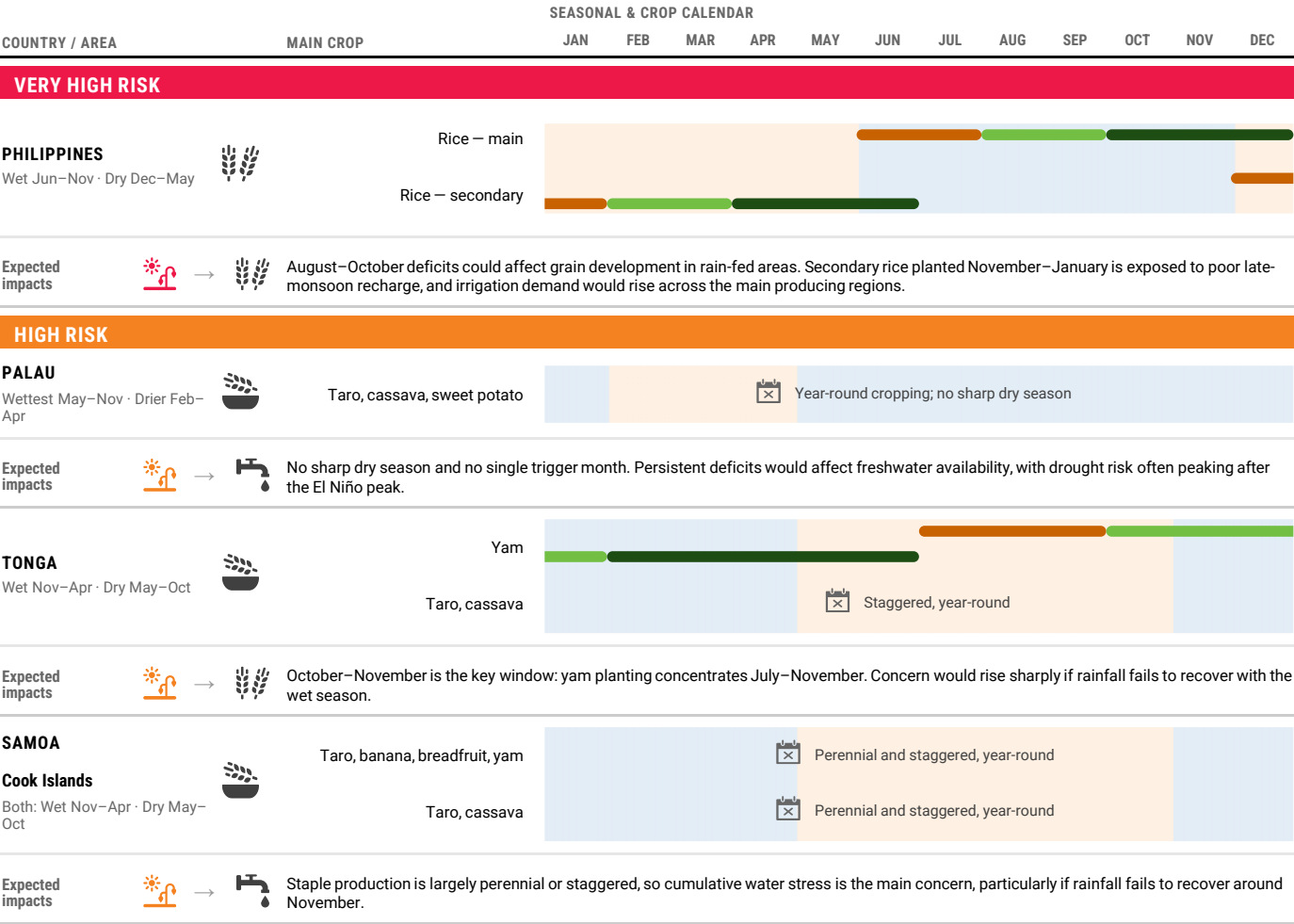
Planting Growing Harvest Wet season Dry season Year-round or staggered cropping Season shading sits behind the crop bars



HIGH RISK

Drier than average · seasonal rainfall outlook set against the agricultural calendar

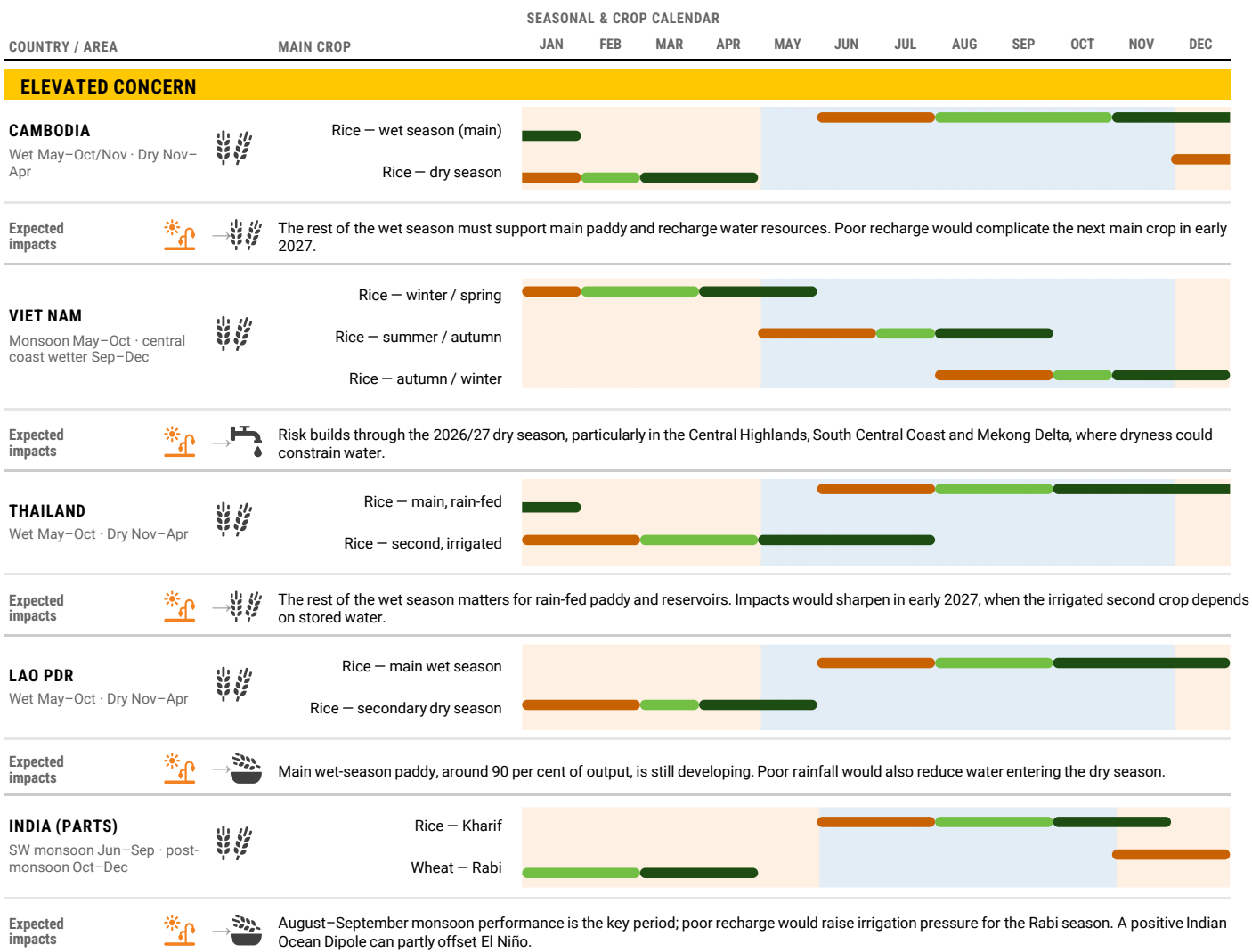
Planting Growing Harvest Wet season Dry season Year-round or staggered cropping Season shading sits behind the crop bars



ELEVATED CONCERN

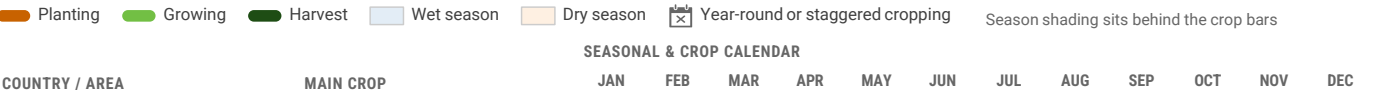
Mixed or localized signals · seasonal rainfall outlook set against the agricultural calendar

■ Planting
 ■ Growing
 ■ Harvest
 Wet season
 Dry season
 X Year-round or staggered cropping
 Season shading sits behind the crop bars

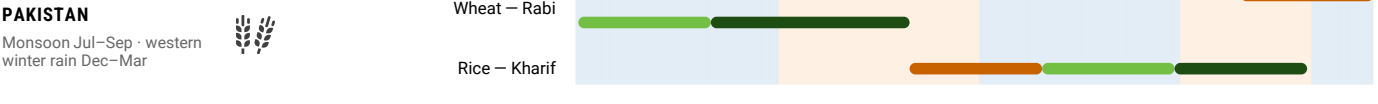


WETTER THAN AVERAGE

Above-average rainfall outlook · seasonal rainfall outlook set against the agricultural calendar

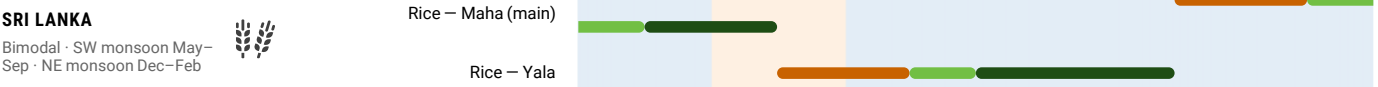


WETTER THAN AVERAGE – EXCESS-RAINFALL RISK



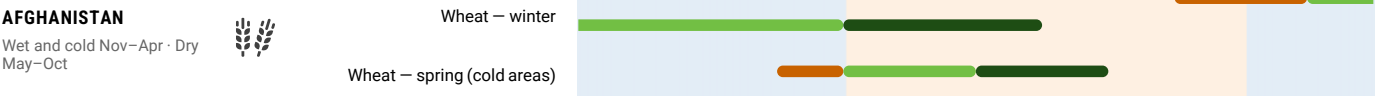
Expected impacts

 August–September is the immediate flood-sensitive window: the wetter signal overlaps the July–September monsoon and growing Kharif rice, so concentrated rainfall could cause waterlogging, riverine or flash flooding and crop damage. Winter wheat is planted October–December, when excessive winter or spring rain can damage crops and complicate harvest.



Expected impacts

 October–January is particularly important — the clearest crop-calendar overlap with the wetter outlook. Maha rice is planted September–November and grows through October–February, precisely as rainfall increases. Above-average rainfall aids reservoir recharge, but excess during planting causes waterlogging, flooding and delayed field operations.



Expected impacts

 The principal risk builds from winter into spring 2027. Winter wheat is planted October–November and grows through the November–April cold season; added precipitation can benefit water availability, particularly as snowpack. If a large snowpack meets rapid warming or heavy spring rain, flood and flash-flood risk rises around March–May 2027.



Bars mark perennial or staggered systems harvested year-round, with no single planting window.

Expected impacts

 Benefits and risks occur together. Most staples are perennial or staggered, so there is no single planting period: added rainfall replenishes rainwater supplies and supports breadfruit, pandanus, taro and pulaka, but persistent or intense rainfall causes waterlogging, erosion and contamination of freshwater lenses. Rainfall varies between island groups, so impacts need island-level assessment.

ANNEX 4

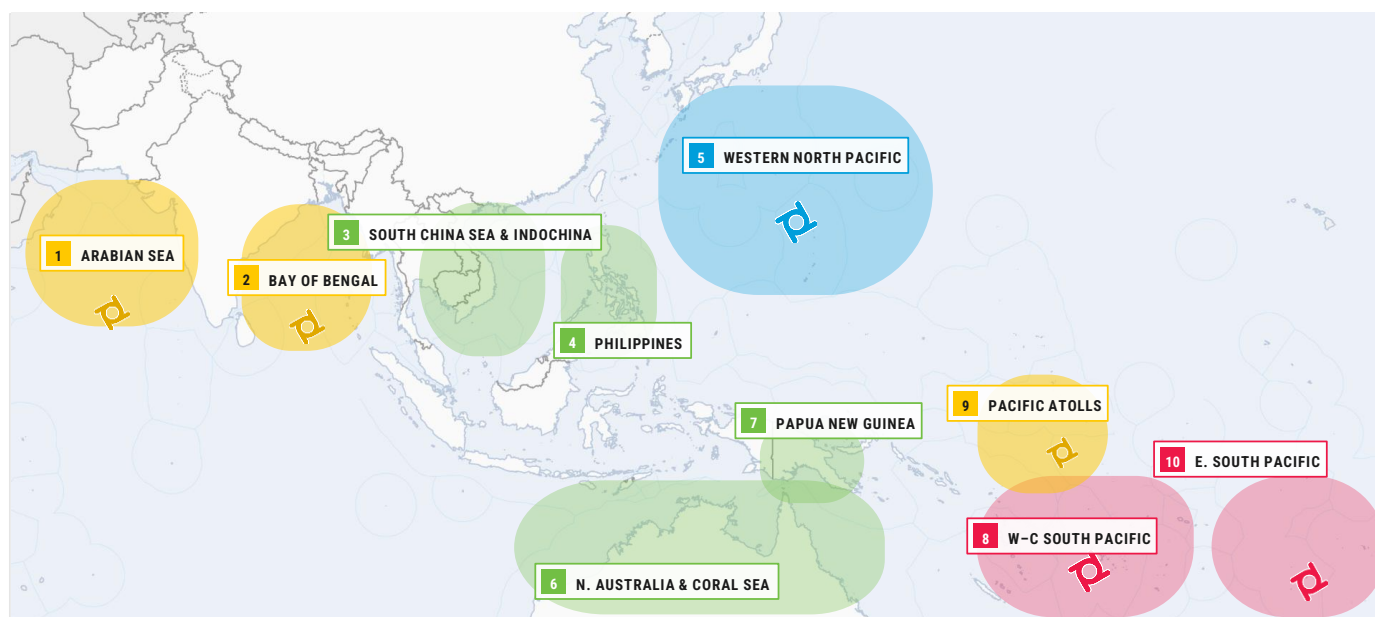
CYCLONE/TYPHOON RISK IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Seasonal cyclone outlooks are not yet available and will be incorporated in further editions of the snapshot once issued. This section highlights historical patterns to watch as the season develops.

HISTORICAL EL NIÑO AND POSITIVE IOD INFLUENCE ON TROPICAL CYCLONE ACTIVITY

Elevated Variable / moderate Reduced Shifted track

El Niño and a positive Indian Ocean Dipole typically shift tropical cyclone activity eastward across the basin and can lengthen the life of storms that form. Zones below are indicative of historical tendency, not a forecast.

**1 ARABIAN SEA**

VARIABLE / POTENTIALLY ELEVATED

A positive IOD can favour cyclogenesis here.

3 SOUTH CHINA SEA & INDOCHINA

REDUCED

El Niño typically reduces westward-moving storms into this region.

5 WESTERN NORTH PACIFIC

SHIFTED TRACK RISK

Genesis shifts south-eastward and recurvature towards the open Pacific and Japan / Korea becomes more favoured.

7 PAPUA NEW GUINEA

TRANSITION ZONE

Lower activity near Papua New Guinea compared with areas farther east.

9 PACIFIC ATOLLS

VARIABLE TO MODERATE

Some atolls and northern islands experience increased exposure during El Niño.

2 BAY OF BENGAL

MODERATE / VARIABLE

October–November is the climatological peak; the IOD is an important modulator.

4 PHILIPPINES

REDUCED LANDFALL TENDENCY

Fewer westward-moving systems historically, but individual storms can be more severe.

6 N. AUSTRALIA & CORAL SEA

REDUCED

El Niño tends to suppress cyclone activity in the Coral Sea and near northern Australia, Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

8 W-C SOUTH PACIFIC

ELEVATED

Activity shifts eastward; increased likelihood compared with normal, especially around the dateline (Fiji to the dateline and vicinity).

10 E. SOUTH PACIFIC

ELEVATED

El Niño can extend the cyclone envelope farther east than normal, towards French Polynesia.

Track and intensity of individual storms will vary. Monitor national meteorological services and official seasonal cyclone outlooks.

ABOUT THIS SNAPSHOT

Prepared by FAO, WFP, UN Women, WMO and OCHA. Figures are preliminary and should be treated with caution. This snapshot is updated to align with monthly seasonal forecast releases.

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