

REGIONAL ACCELERATOR

FOR OPERATIONAL READINESS IN HEALTH EMERGENCIES

2026–2027 El Niño

Alex Camacho

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster
Risk Reduction Regional Advisor
PAHO/WHO

PAHO



Pan American
Health
Organization



World Health
Organization
Americas Region

Public Health Situation Analysis: El Niño in the Americas, 2026-2027

Type of Emergency

-  Heavy rain
-  Drought
-  Tropical storms
-  Epidemics

Main Health Threats

- ✓ Malnutrition
- ✓ Water-borne diseases
- ✓ Vector-borne diseases
- ✓ Vaccine-preventable illnesses
- ✓ Maternal and Child Health
- ✓ Respiratory illnesses
- ✓ Heat Stress
- ✓ Gender Based Violence
- ✓ Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
- ✓ Envenoming from venomous animal bites

CONTEXT

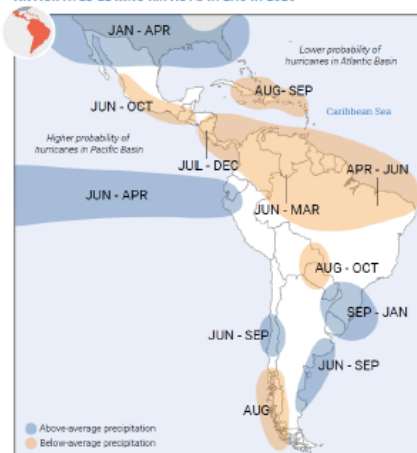
As of June 2026, oceanic and atmospheric conditions indicate a transition toward El Niño conditions in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, with forecasts suggesting a high probability of development during 2026 and persistence into early 2027 (1–3).

Seasonal outlooks indicate an increased likelihood of above-normal temperatures across much of the Americas, accompanied by regionally variable rainfall anomalies, including heightened risks of drought in parts of Central America, the Caribbean, and northern South America, and increased rainfall in portions of the Pacific coast of South America and the Southern Cone (*Figure 1*) (4). Experience from previous El Niño events, including the 2023–2024 event, demonstrates the potential for significant impacts on food security, water availability, livelihoods, public health, and critical infrastructure (5,6).

El Niño-related climatic anomalies may contribute to increased risks of vector-borne, water-borne, and food-borne diseases, heat-related illness, wildfire-associated respiratory impacts, food insecurity, displacement, and disruptions to health services, particularly among populations already affected by poverty, migration, displacement, or limited access to essential services (*Table 1*) (6–10).

Figure 1. Anticipated El Niño impacts in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2026

ANTICIPATED EL NIÑO IMPACTS IN LAC IN 2026



Source: Map excerpt adapted from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Latin America & Caribbean: El Niño Humanitarian Snapshot* (April 2026). Geneva: OCHA; 2026. Available from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/guatemala/latin-america-caribbean-el-nino-humanitarian-snapshot-april-2026> (4).

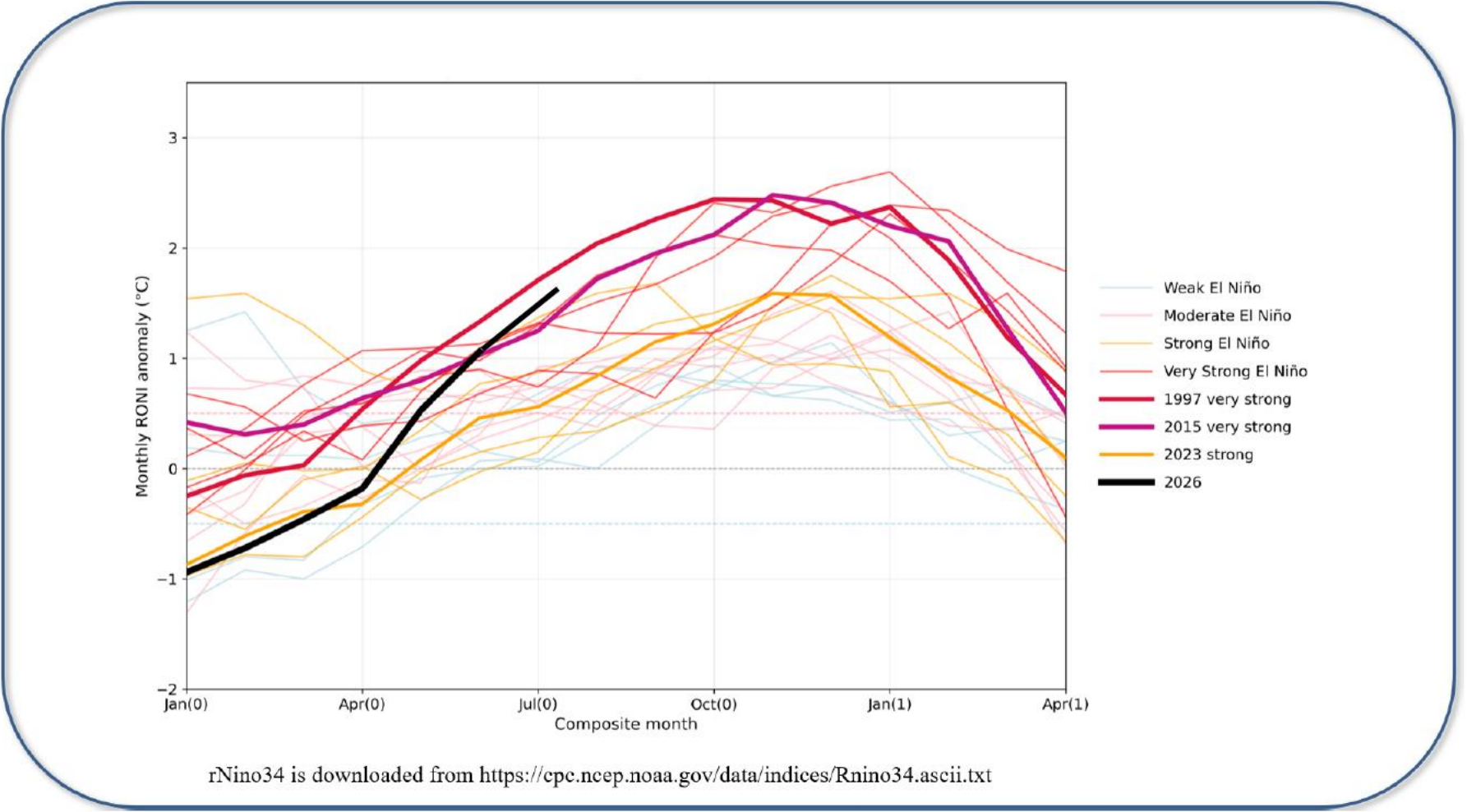
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Why a Regional Readiness Accelerator?

- Multi-Level Scope — national to facility level
- Differentiated Scenarios — wet and dry conditions
- Integrated Approach — hazards, services and populations
- Live Data — decisions from current forecasts

Why a Regional Readiness Accelerator?

Evolution of rNiño3.4 during historical El Niño events since 1950



El Niño 2026-2027

Documented impacts vs. alerts, by country. Status 11 August 2026.

DRY AND HOT CONDITIONS

Dry Corridor, Andes, Amazon, Panama basin

Honduras

15,000+ families assisted, Choluteca and El Paraíso (22 Jul)

Bolivia

Nationwide drought; Chiquitania and Chaco already burning

Panama

Neopanamax draught cut to 15.09 m from 3 Jul; 38 transits held

El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua

Maize and bean area cut; canícula extended

Colombia

Rainfall deficit forecast; 1.7 to 3 M added food-insecure (OCHA)

WET CONDITIONS

Pacific coast, southeastern South America

Peru

ENFEN alert: strong coastal event to Apr 2027; anchoveta displaced

Ecuador

Yellow alert, 17 provinces; 4,000 MW of hydro exposed

S Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, NE Argentina

Mid-July storm episode; Paraná and Uruguay rises ahead

Caribbean

Atlantic season 75% likely below normal: water, not wind

Mexico, Haiti, Jamaica

No verified country-level impact data located

Documented impact

Alert or forecast only

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10 Sessions

Program Formats

Situation Room

Decision Masterclass

Applied Laboratories

Community of Practice

Virtual Simulations

At a glance

10-Session Biweekly Agenda

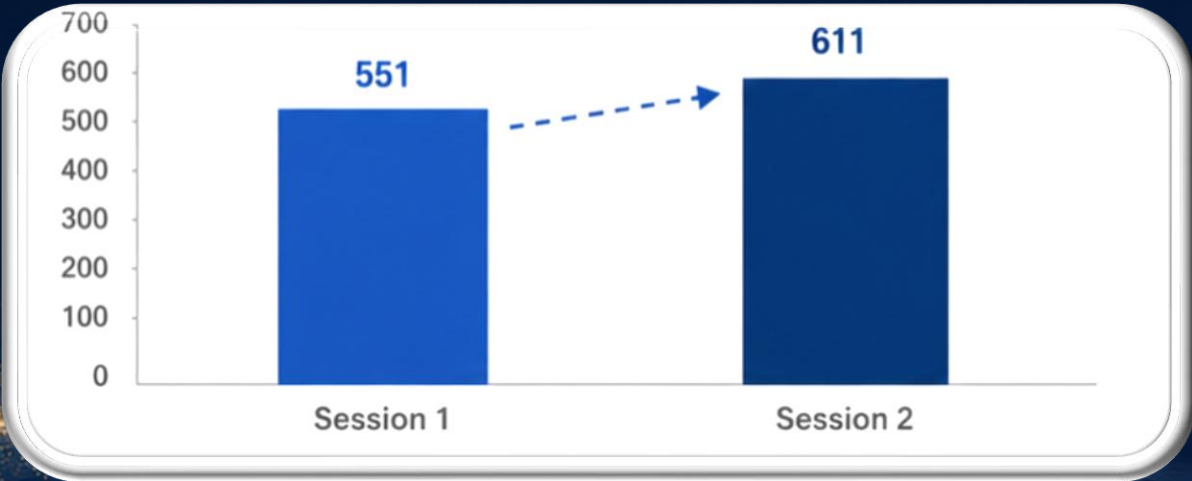


Participation overview

2 sessions

22
Countries

Argentina
Colombia Perú Guatemala
Ecuador
Brasil Chile México República Dominicana
Costa Rica El Salvador Uruguay
Panamá Paraguay Honduras



Available Resources

STAR-H

Strategic Toolkit for Assessing Risks
in Health Facilities



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Americas Region

Virtual Course on Evaluation of Health Facilities using the Hospital Safety Index (HSIv2)

Course Participants Grades Reports Question bank More ▾

- ▾

Virtual Course on Evaluation of Health Facilities using the Hospital Safety Index (HSIv2)

Collapse all



ACELERADOR REGIONAL

DE ALISTAMIENTO OPERATIVO
PARA EMERGENCIAS EN SALUD

ANTE EL FENÓMENO DE

EL NIÑO 2026-2027



Smart hospitals toolkit

Second edition



Organización
Panamericana
de la Salud



Organización
Mundial de la Salud
Región de las Américas

OPS

Post-disaster assessment tool for hospitals



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Thank you

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