

Alert note

Food Insecurity and Drought Emergency – Honduras (Corredor Seco), 28 July 2026

Completed by: Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH) y La Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM)

Date completed: 28/07/2026

Forum: Honduras

Type of emergency: Slow-onset – food insecurity and drought

Date of emergency (if rapid onset): Ongoing – 2026 lean season and prolonged mid-summer dry spell

1. The nature of the emergency
Honduras is facing one of its most severe food crises in recent years, with a rapid and verified deterioration in food security that is having a particularly severe impact on the country's Corredor Seco. The combination of drought associated with El Niño, a rainy season that began late and remained erratic, and an exceptionally prolonged mid-summer dry spell has left thousands of farming families watching their crops wither and their food reserves run out. According to COPECO/CENAOs (Secretariat for Risks and Contingencies management), the 2026 mid-summer dry spell is characterised by low rainfall conditions that could persist until 10 September, with rainfall deficits exceeding 40%. The emergency coincides with the lean season, when households have already exhausted their food reserves and face high market prices that they simply cannot afford. In addition, the 2026 El Niño event, described as a “super El Niño” due to its intensity, has already disrupted rainfall patterns and, according to projections by the National Weather Service (NOAA), could persist into the first quarter of 2027. This would further exacerbate the already precarious food insecurity conditions faced by affected families. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis for the period from April to July 2026 identifies 95,000 people as facing Emergency levels of acute food insecurity, classified as IPC Phase 4. Approximately 37% of these people are located in the departments of Lempira, Copán and Santa Bárbara, which have been prioritised by the ACT Honduras Forum for its intervention. Key dates: Green alert issued by COPECO for 60 municipalities in May 2026; alert level raised to yellow for 75 municipalities in July 2026; water emergency declared in the capital in July 2026; ENSO Alert System status: El Niño Watch, issued on 9 July 2026.
2. The impact and scale of the emergency
According to the initial assessment conducted by the ACT Alliance Honduras Forum, the food insecurity crisis is considered medium-scale, based on the severity of its impact and its geographical reach across 8 of the country's 18 departments. In the areas prioritised under this alert, subsistence farming families have partially lost their staple crop harvests, particularly maize and beans, with production expected to decline by more than 40%. They have also exhausted their food reserves and are facing rising prices for essential consumer goods. The emergency is having a particularly severe impact on women and girls. In addition to pre-existing patterns of violence, including femicide and forced displacement, they are now also facing drought and food insecurity, further increasing their exposure to gender-based violence, exploitation and inadequate protection. However, the most severe impact is being felt by children. Food insecurity in Honduras is creating a high risk of child malnutrition, particularly among children under five and in the country's most vulnerable areas. This includes the western region prioritised by the Forum, where 30% of children already suffer from chronic malnutrition. The longer-term impact may include a sustained decline in productivity and household income, perpetuating cycles of poverty and internal migration. It may also result in the loss of livelihoods among agriculture-dependent households, as families are forced to sell productive assets and their capacity to recover and produce food is reduced. Additional consequences may include chronic malnutrition among children, poorer educational performance, higher school dropout rates, and increased migration and displacement.
3. Local and national capacity
By July 2026, households affected by drought and food insecurity had exhausted their coping mechanisms and were resorting to reducing food consumption, selling productive assets, taking on debt and seeking temporary employment to meet their basic needs. This situation increases the risk of further deterioration in food security and exacerbates the risk of malnutrition, particularly among children, women, older people, persons with disabilities and other groups in vulnerable situations.

At the local level, the response is supported by community structures such as the Local Emergency Committees (CODEL), Municipal Emergency Committees (CODEM), community councils (Patronatos), Water Administration Boards and producer networks. These structures coordinate with local authorities to identify needs and assist the affected population. CASM and OCDIH also have technical teams, an established presence in the affected areas, and the support of community networks and local churches, strengthening the coordination and implementation of a locally led humanitarian response.

The Government of Honduras continues to operate the National Risk Management System (SINAGER), coordinated by the Secretariat for Risk Management and National Contingencies (COPECO), which provides the national framework for emergency preparedness and response.

In April 2026, the United Nations and humanitarian organisations, together with the Government of Honduras, launched a USD 63.2 million [anticipatory action strategy](#) to assist more than 762,000 vulnerable people in 33 municipalities. These municipalities do not correspond to those prioritised by the ACT Honduras Forum. Nine projects will be implemented in the areas of food security, nutrition, water and sanitation, health, protection and shelter, led by four United Nations agencies and two international NGOs. [FAO](#) is implementing emergency interventions aimed at saving lives and protecting the livelihoods of 4,000 vulnerable households, comprising approximately 20,000 people, in the departments of Choluteca, Valle and Comayagua.

In addition, the Government of Honduras launched an assistance plan covering 38 of the 75 municipalities placed under Yellow Alert, with an initial estimated investment of [HNL 62 million](#). However, these municipalities are not located within the area prioritised by the ACT Honduras Forum.

4. Key needs and gaps

According to the [IPC](#) acute food insecurity analysis, response efforts will need to continue prioritising interventions aimed at protecting families' lives, reducing food consumption gaps and malnutrition, and restoring livelihoods. This should be supported by a response plan combining humanitarian assistance with productive recovery measures, in line with the key drivers and constraints identified.

To address these needs, the Government of Honduras, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, is implementing the [Productive Technology Voucher programme](#), which provides inputs and seeds to small-scale producers, alongside the promotion of soil conservation practices to support agricultural production. COPECO technical teams are also [conducting assessments in the municipalities most severely affected](#) by drought to determine the impact of El Niño and strengthen response measures in vulnerable communities.

Although the Government, the Humanitarian Network and United Nations agencies have initiated anticipatory and response actions, these efforts are primarily concentrated in 38 municipalities across the affected departments in the central and southern regions of the country. This creates a risk of geographical fragmentation and the exclusion of communities facing high or moderate levels of risk across the Corredor Seco.

The ACT Honduras Forum has therefore prioritised the three departments mentioned above in the western region of the country, where the main response gaps have been identified and are not currently covered by government assistance. These gaps include access to food, water for household consumption, and inputs to support productive recovery, through a community-led response approach.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund (<i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i>)	X
Appeal (<i>intended for large scale emergencies</i>)	

5. Forum Capacity and members intention to respond

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise and experience
OCDIH – Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (miembro de ACT Alliance; fundado en 1993)	Lempira, Copan and Santa Barbara departments	OCDIH and CASM have implemented humanitarian assistance activities since their establishment. Their most recent responses have addressed the COVID-19 pandemic, Hurricanes Eta and Iota, and other tropical storms that have affected Honduras. They have used various humanitarian assistance modalities, including the direct procurement and distribution of relief items to affected families, food vouchers, and cash transfers, which provide households with greater
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		flexibility and decision-making power over their purchases. They have also supported the reconstruction of homes and household water supply and irrigation systems damaged primarily by floods and landslides, as well as the recovery of affected families' livelihoods. Their most recent interventions have incorporated community-based anticipatory action approaches. All these activities have been implemented through rapid coordination with first-response structures operating at the local level, including Municipal Emergency Committees (CODEM), Local Emergency Committees (CODEL), and local governments.	
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6. Potential responses

The main triggers of this food crisis are the prolonged drought, widespread crop losses, and the number of people and families affected. According to the IPC analysis, 95,000 people are currently classified in Phase 4. Furthermore, given the current agricultural season, the impacts could worsen significantly unless immediate action is taken.

The proposed intervention model consists of an integrated humanitarian response that promotes local leadership in coordination and management, strengthens food security and productive livelihoods, and supports a community-led response. It will activate existing community-based mechanisms, strengthen inclusive response capacities, and coordinate closely with municipal authorities and other humanitarian actors operating in the area to ensure complementarity.

The intervention will focus on municipalities in the three western departments of Copán, Santa Bárbara and Lempira, located within the Corredor Seco. Neither the central government nor United Nations agencies are currently responding in these priority areas. OCDIH and CASM have an established field presence and operational capacity in these locations, enabling a rapid, coordinated and inclusive response.

The intervention is expected to assist approximately 960 families, equivalent to around 3,840 people, through a comprehensive package of support comprising:

- **Food assistance:** Assistance will be provided through cash transfers or direct food distributions, depending on the availability and functioning of local markets and the accessibility of the targeted communities. Priority will be given to families most severely affected by shortages of staple crops, particularly maize and beans, especially in rural and isolated areas. Priority will also be given to single-mother households and families that include children under five, persons with disabilities, older people and people of advanced age.
- **Access to safe water:** Households will receive water-storage containers for domestic use, including plastic tanks and water basins, together with household water-treatment supplies such as chlorine or filters. This support is intended to prevent acute diarrhoeal diseases, particularly among children under five.
- **Recovery of productive livelihoods:** Small-scale producers will receive agricultural inputs and drought-resistant crop varieties to enable them to take advantage of the postreña planting window from October to November. Without this support, they would have to wait until the next agricultural cycle in June 2027, increasing the risk of further deterioration in food security.

Support requested: The planned response is expected to be implemented through the Rapid Response Fund by OCDIH and CASM, in close coordination with the Government of Honduras, the United Nations in Honduras and the Humanitarian Network.