



## IN NUMBERS



**1.6 million**

people food insecure



**3.5 million**

people in need of humanitarian assistance (total population of the Dry Corridor: 10.5 million)



**50–90 %**

loss of crop harvests



**USD 17 million**

funding gap

## MAP



Diagrama de ubicación



El Corredor Seco Centroamericano y Arco Seco de Panamá

Nota: el criterio utilizado para la delimitación del Corredor Seco Centroamericano y el Arco Seco de Panamá está basado en las zonas cuya época seca es mayor de cuatro meses.

## BACKGROUND/KEY MESSAGES

The Dry Corridor in Central America, in particular **Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador**, is experiencing one of the worst droughts of the last ten years with over **3.5 million in need of humanitarian assistance**.

Smallscale producers and rural communities remain the most vulnerable to drought, an important socio-economic phenomenon given its effects on the loss of livelihoods, decapitalization of household economies, impoverishment and migration to overpopulated urban centres.

The significant **reduction in agricultural production** causes a risk of the **depletion of food stocks**, decreasing dietary diversity and energy intake of the affected population, while increasing cases of malnutrition in children under five.

FAO constantly monitors the El Niño phenomenon that although has weakened its consequences are still dramatic regarding the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations following the loss of two consecutive crop harvests.

The impact of the El Niño phenomenon exceeds the capacities of a single organization or government and requires strategic partnerships among the international community. According to climate forecasts, in line with trends, the weakening of a strong El Niño phenomenon triggers La Niña.

La Niña, associated with above-normal rainfall during June to August, could benefit the *primera* harvests as crop seeds are being planted in drought conditions. However, the probability of excessive rainfall coupled with a more active Atlantic hurricane season (June–November) – typical of an episode of La Niña – in the region, could have serious consequences for the agriculture sector.

### Guatemala

#### Overview



**1.5 million people**  
need humanitarian assistance

Recent joint assessments indicate that some 915 000 people are moderately to severely food insecure, as drought has led to a third consecutive year of decreased harvests.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food has reported that 82 000 tonnes of maize were lost, representing a total financial loss of USD 30.8 million, while 118 200 tonnes of black beans were lost, representing a total financial loss of USD 102.3 million.

Until the next harvest (August 2016), the food security situation is going to deteriorate due to the reduction of household stocks of basic grains.

Late and irregular onset of rain could affect the *primera*. Rainfall levels have improved particularly in the first dekad of June. However, accumulated precipitation levels remained below average due to the weakening of El Niño. The *primera* maize harvest will depend on a continued improvement in precipitations through June.

#### FAO's response

- ♦ Implementing an emergency response programme targeting 7 000 beneficiary families.
- ♦ USD 500 000 through the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) has been committed to the Dry Corridor (Guatemala and El Salvador) to promote actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and to increase livelihoods' resilience in the agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries sectors.
- ♦ Implementing a resilience programme in the Dry Corridor to strengthen the disaster risk management capacities of the national and local authorities, establish information and early warning systems and through the watershed management plan — promote good practices and technologies, reducing the impact of extreme climate events (short cycle and drought-resistant crops, water harvesting systems, community contingency funds, agroforestry, etc.).



**Funding gap: USD 7 million**

### Honduras

#### Overview



**1.3 million people**  
need humanitarian assistance

Recent estimates indicate that about 461 000 people suffer from moderate or severe food insecurity.

Preliminary estimates in the Dry Corridor indicate that crop losses are in excess of 60 percent in maize growing areas and 80 percent in bean growing areas.

Until the next harvest (August 2016) the food security situation is going to deteriorate due to the reduction of household stocks of basic grains.

Late and irregular onset of rain could affect the *primera*. Rainfall levels have improved particularly in the first dekad of June. However, accumulated precipitation levels remained below average due to the weakening of El Niño. The *primera* maize harvest will depend on a continued improvement in precipitations through June.

#### FAO's response

- ♦ Implementing a regional resilience programme in the Dry Corridor that aims to strengthen disaster risk management capacities of the national and local authorities, establish information and early warning systems and — through the watershed management plan — promote good practices and technologies, reducing the impact of extreme climate events (short-cycle and drought-resistant crops, water harvesting systems, community contingency funds, agroforestry, etc.).



**Funding gap: USD 7 million**

## El Salvador

### Overview



**192 000 people**

**need humanitarian assistance**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock estimates that 85 858 ha of maize were lost or damaged. Due to irregular rainfall during 2015, 60 percent of the maize crop was destroyed. The current impact of drought on the economy has increased with respect to the 2014 drought to approximately USD 100 million in 2015. This includes investment losses, which are estimated at USD 29 million in seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and land preparation.

Currently, an estimated 190 000 people are moderately to severely food insecure.

River levels are 20 to 60 percent lower than normal. In eastern areas, rivers are up to 90 percent lower, rainfall is below average and temperatures are above average.

Until the next harvest (August 2016) the food security situation is going to deteriorate due to the reduction of household stocks of basic grains.

Late and irregular onset of rain could affect the *primera*. Rainfall levels have improved particularly in the first dekad of June. However, accumulated precipitation levels remained below average due to the weakening of El Niño. The *primera* maize harvest will depend on a continued improvement in precipitations through June.

### FAO's response

- ♦ FAO is supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in its long-term strategy to adapt local agriculture to the effects of climate change. Assistance focuses on local capacity development, agro-climate risk management and support for research, innovation and transfer of new technology for climate change adaptation. Other assistance includes supporting sustainable management of local basins and land tenure, outreach and education and resource mobilization for adaptation, mitigation and resilience to climate change.
- ♦ A Central Emergency Response Fund project is being implemented by FAO to rehabilitate and diversify the agricultural production of 17 785 people affected by drought.
- ♦ USD 500 000 though SFERA has been committed to the Dry Corridor (Guatemala and El Salvador) to promote actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and to increase livelihoods' resilience in the agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries sectors.
- ♦ Implementing a resilience programme in the Dry Corridor to strengthen disaster risk management capacities of the national and local authorities.



**Funding gap: USD 7 million**

### CONTACT

Tito Diaz | Subregional Coordinador for Central America | Panama City, Panama | [Tito.Diaz@fao.org](mailto:Tito.Diaz@fao.org)

Dominique Burgeon | Strategic Programme Leader, Resilience | Rome, Italy | [Dominique.Burgeon@fao.org](mailto:Dominique.Burgeon@fao.org)