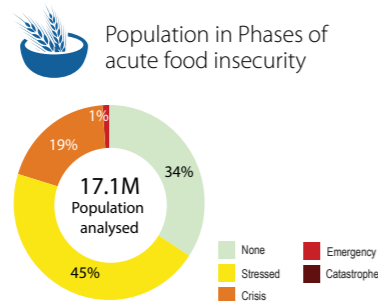


Key Figures | Current Situation | May - August 2021

3.5M
 Nearly 3.5 million people out of the 17.1 million people analysed are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) in Guatemala through August 2021.



Overview

Around 3.5 million people are classified in Crisis or Emergency (IPC Phase 3 or 4) during the seasonal hunger period of May to August 2021, and require urgent action. This figure is projected to decrease to 2.5 million during the period of lowest acute food insecurity between September 2021 and January 2022.

Through August 2021, 16 departments are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3): Alta Verapaz, Baja Verapaz, Chimaltenango, Chiquimula, El Progreso, Huehuetenango, Izabal, Jalapa, Quetzaltenango, Quiché, San Marcos, Santa Rosa, Sololá, Suchitepéquez, Totonicapán and Zacapa. From September 2021 to January 2022, five departments are projected to remain in Crisis (Phase 3): Alta Verapaz, Chiquimula, Huehuetenango, Quiché and Totonicapán; and 11 are projected to improve to a situation of Stressed acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 2).

The most vulnerable population are subsistence farming households with income losses due to damage caused by storms ETA and IOTA during the month of November 2020, small informal traders, and agricultural day labourers affected by the constraints resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These households are forced to use Crisis and Emergency coping strategies to bridge their food gaps, such as selling assets and using their savings. In departments classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), there is depletion of food stocks, difficulties in accessing markets mainly due to low purchasing power, and at least one in five households using Crisis coping strategies to feed themselves on a regular basis.

Factores clave asociados

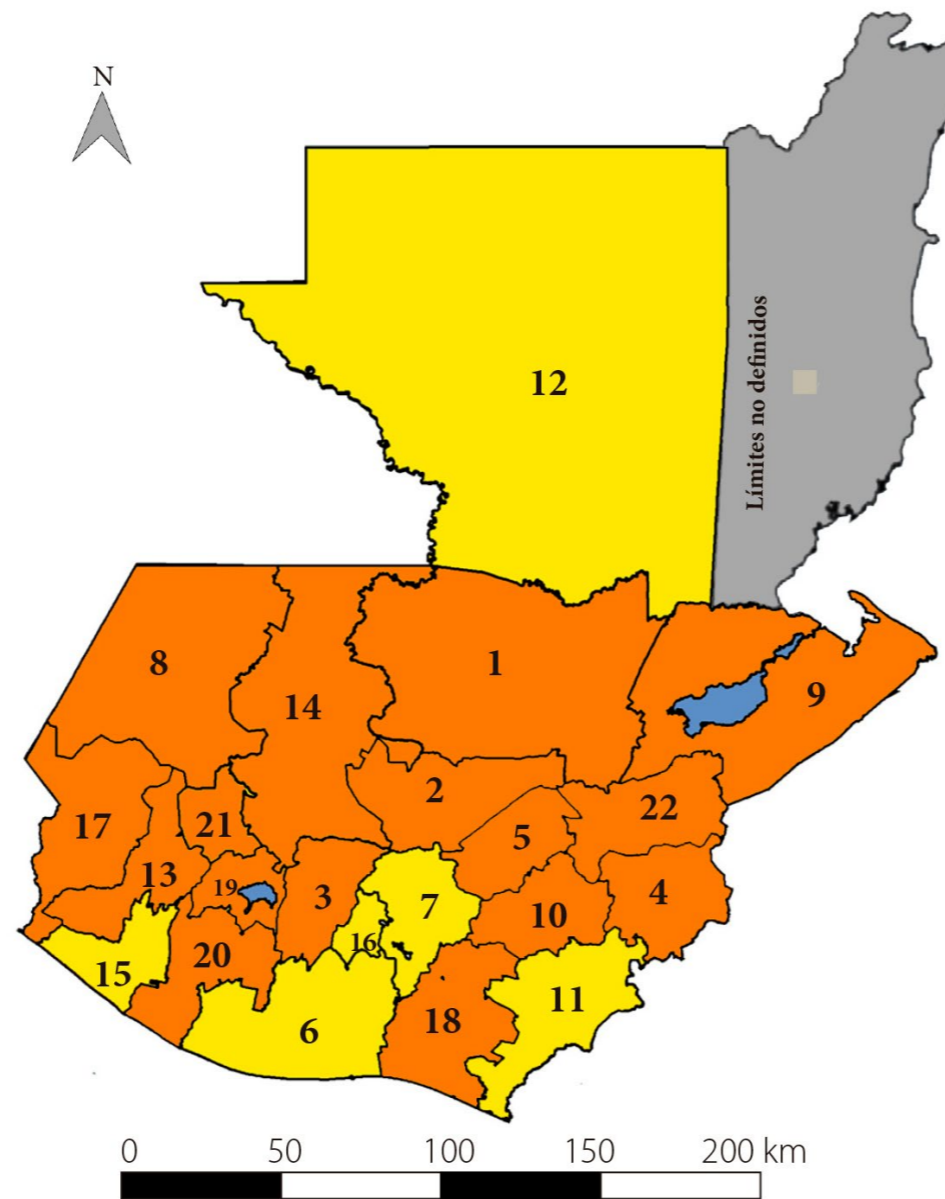
COVID-19
 The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in Guatemala in terms of mandatory mobility restrictions to limit transmission of the virus had a major impact on the country's economy in 2020 and continue into 2021. However, the increase in cases and the slow progress in the vaccination process could once again lead to some restrictive measures, especially in those departments with red and orange alerts.

Increased food prices
 The increase in the prices of the basic food basket, mainly basic grains, affects more than half of the population (57%) in accessing food through purchase, due to low purchasing power, presenting serious difficulties to support their families, and forcing them to use Crisis coping strategies to get food, either by selling their assets (40%) or spending their savings (68%).

Loss of jobs and income
 Mandatory restrictive measures in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to job losses. Between May and August 2021, a slow recovery of the economy is expected, which in turn will lead to a recovery of employment and wages, and a revival of formal and informal economic activities.

Depletion of basic grain reserves
 April through August corresponds to the so-called seasonal hunger period in rural agricultural areas of the country. During this period, stocks of staple grains are depleted, making households dependent on purchases when consumer prices are at their highest for the year, and the low demand for agricultural labour limits their purchasing power, impacting food consumption. Households in some departments saw their stocks of staple grains depleted earlier than usual due to crop losses caused by tropical storms ETA and IOTA in late 2020.

CURRENT: Acute Food Insecurity Situation | May - August 2021



Key for the Map
 IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification (mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)

Recommended Actions

Protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps
 Identify at the sub-national level populations and municipalities where a higher proportion of households have depleted their reserves and are employing Crisis or Emergency strategies (selling assets, spending savings, borrowing money, reducing non-food expenditures on health - including medicines - and education). In these areas, gear priority response objectives towards protecting livelihoods and reducing food consumption gaps in households in IPC Phases 3 or 4, through targeted interventions and intensification of strategic food aid and other actions to be defined in Government Action Plans in coordination with national and international actors and institutions.

Monitor and reduce risks
 Making use of the current structure of inter-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination at the local level, it is recommended to promote actions for risk reduction and specific response strategies jointly with local actors, municipalities and commonwealths; programmes and projects, in the short and medium term. Monitor risk factors such as: climate prospects (El Niño phenomenon, probability of storms, hurricanes, etc.), food and fuel price trends, disease trends, mainly COVID-19 and containment measures and their control, demand for agricultural and non-agricultural, temporary and permanent employment, mainly in the projected period.

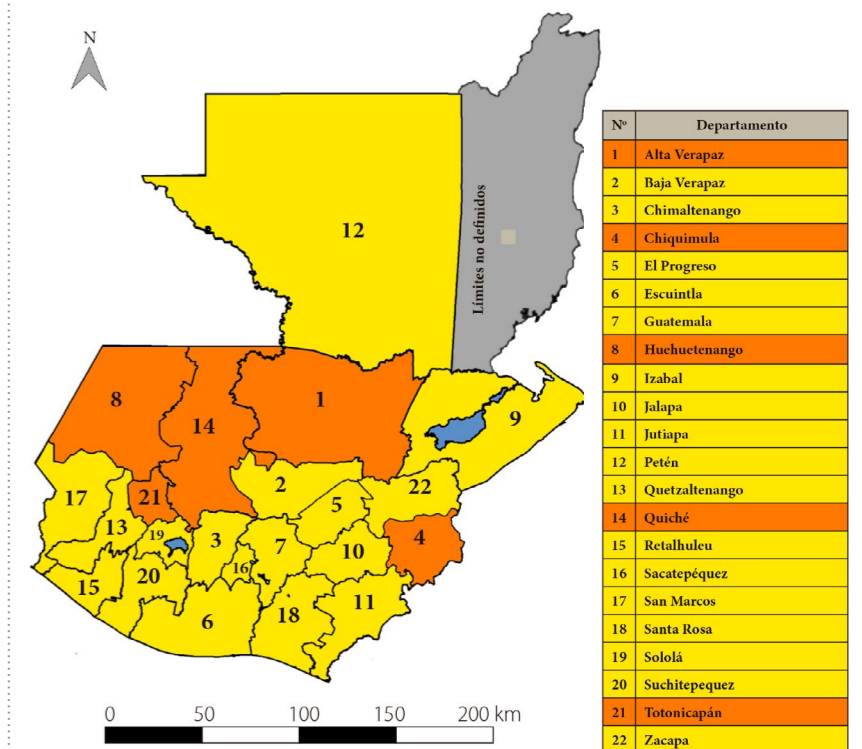
PROJECTION: Acute Food Insecurity

September 2021 - January 2022
2.5M
 Around 2.5 million people are likely to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) in Guatemala between September 2021 and January 2022.

Assumptions for the Projected Situation

For the projected situation, a scenario is presented in which, even if COVID-19 cases do not decrease substantially and vaccination progresses slowly, no additional restrictions will be imposed on economic activities and population movement. The climatic outlook is good for the establishment and development of postharvest crops. However, an active hurricane season is forecast, which could lead to heavy rains (tropical depressions, hurricanes) that would affect agricultural production and the livelihoods of the population. Basic grain prices are expected to remain high: so far this year, factors such as higher transport costs, higher fuel prices, higher international maize prices and droughts in other countries have influenced this behaviour. With the Primera harvests, prices are expected to stabilise but remain above the 5-year average. Transport service would remain irregular due to restrictions imposed under COVID-19, and the price would remain above average. Harvests of Primera and Postrera basic grains are expected to be in normal ranges, which will improve the availability of food for households. This period is the peak season for the hiring of seasonal agricultural labour. The various cash crops such as sugar, coffee, bananas, cardamom, vegetables and fruit trees would hire labour for several months. However, in some areas and for some products, hiring could be lower than usual as some producers are still recovering from the economic impact of COVID-19 and the damage caused by tropical storms ETA and IOTA. Continued economic recovery would allow jobs in both the informal and formal sectors to recover, and this increased income would improve households' access to food.

PROJECTION: Acute Food Insecurity | Sept 2021 - Jan 2022



Publication date: 14 June 2021 | *IPC population data is based on population estimate by Guatemala's National Institute of Statistics. | Feedback: IPC@FAO.org | Disclaimer: The information shown on this map does not imply official recognition or endorsement of any physical and political boundaries.