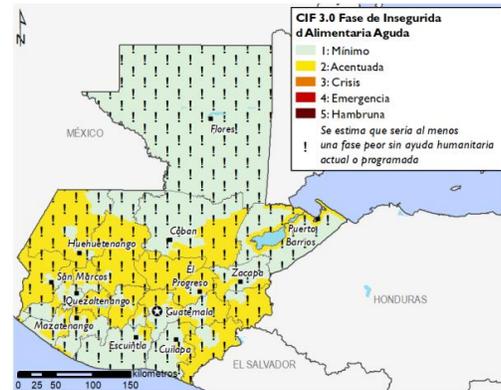


*Deterioration of food security after prolonged impact of COVID-19*

**KEY MESSAGES**

- The extension of government measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 continues to impact on the operational capacity of businesses and stores, which have been forced to cut employee numbers. The effect of international trade on domestic industry is also apparent in a fall in purchases of some export products, and the tourism sector is practically paralyzed since it depends on open borders and demand from international visitors.
- At the national level, the most affected households have a partial income while others have completely lost their source of income. As a result, they have been using negative coping strategies to meet their minimum food requirements. From June through September, these households will receive government support. This will improve access to food and place them in a situation of Minimal (IPC Phase 1!) food insecurity. However, the prolongation of the crisis will lead to a situation of Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity from October through January of next year.

Current food security outcomes, June 2020



Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

- At the height of the lean season, rural households, particularly in the dry corridor, are experiencing greater difficulty in food access as a result of restrictions on movement and reduced demand for local labor. Assistance from government and other institutions, from June through September, will avoid the need for households to use crisis strategies to meet their food requirements. They will thus be classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2!).
- October to January is the main period of seasonal employment. However, a lack of resources among small and medium-sized coffee growers, the fall in international demand for various products and possible cross-border restrictions will lead to reduced employment in the coffee sector in particular, but also in sectors such as vegetable production and tourism. These households will have to use coping strategies and face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity marked by high basic grain prices and a maize and bean harvest that will not meet household needs.

## NATIONAL OVERVIEW

### Current Situation

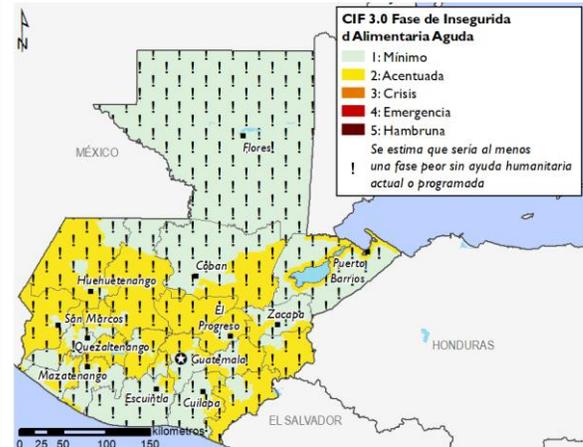
The country has been experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic since mid-March. June has seen the largest increase in cases with a steady growth curve. By June 29, a total of 16,930 cases and 13,049 active cases had been recorded. The restrictions implemented by the government since March to prevent the spread of COVID-19 have led to the disruption of almost all socioeconomic activities in the country: the permanent and partial closure of companies and businesses and the suspension of public transport have affected the entire country.

**Rainy season and crops.** Basic grain planting took place throughout the country during May, although in the Western Altiplano this began in February. Recent rains have helped plantings and the development of crops that are already growing. In some areas, storms Amanda and Cristóbal in early June caused localized flooding although without any major impact on crops.

**Food availability and access to markets.** The supply of food products in the country's markets and supermarkets remains stable. Despite additional health controls at the country's borders, freight transport is permitted and there is a constant flow. However, restricted public transport and market operating hours make accessing markets difficult and are hindering the normal flow to local markets. As a result, rural households far from municipal capitals are having to buy basic foodstuffs from stores within the community, often at higher prices.

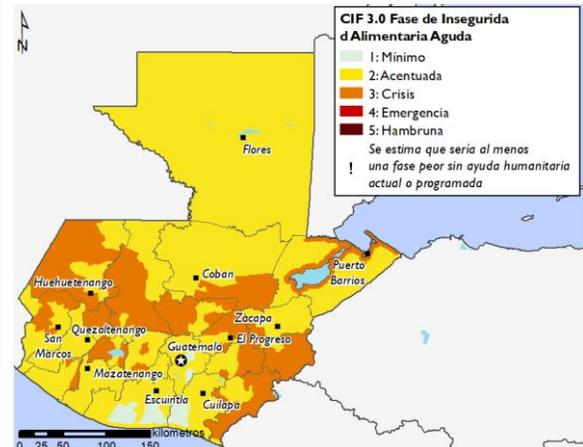
**Income sources:** Restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19 have impacted household income sources at both the urban and rural level. Restrictions on movement have prevented poor rural households who rely on daily agricultural work from traveling between communities, municipalities and departments in search of employment. Similarly, the low demand for labor from middle- and upper-income households hit by a reduction in income – whether from employment, trade or remittances – has also affected the already scarce opportunities to earn a day's wage. Urban areas dependent on formal and informal employment, trade and services, immediately suffered under the impact of restrictions: the lack of transport, the imposition of restricted hours for movement and the operation of sectors, the closure of small businesses and falling demand for non-essential goods and services impacted first on workers in the informal sector, who represent 70 percent of the employed population. These workers lack employment protection and their low daily income makes saving difficult. Unemployment subsequently affected employees in the formal sector, particularly those in services such as restaurants, hotels, tourism, personal care and retail. The fall in demand and sales affected a large number of companies and, following three months of inactivity, they have reduced operations and cut payrolls, through layoffs, part-time working, and suspensions. The decline in income has thus continued since mid-March. According to the third survey on the impact of coronavirus on businesses conducted by the *Comité Coordinador de Asociaciones Agrícolas, Comerciales, Industriales y Financieras* [Coordinating Committee of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial and Financial Associations – CACIF], with more than half of the participants linked to trade, industry and services, 46 percent of companies have suspended contracts, and 36 percent of those have done so entirely. In one month, the number of companies that resorted to suspension doubled and a quarter of companies lost half of their sales, demonstrating the impact of the prolongation of restrictive measures on companies' ability to stay afloat. Similarly, in its third survey on the impact of COVID on the sector, the Guatemalan Chamber of Agriculture reports that rubber, coffee, fruit and vegetables have suffered the biggest drop in sales due to lower demand, which is the biggest problem for 35

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2020



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 2021



Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

percent of respondents. The tourism sector is virtually paralyzed: according to data published in the second survey on the economic impact on the tourism sector conducted by the *Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales* [Association of Social Research and Studies – ASIES], 44 percent of companies report a complete cessation of activity and 33 percent an impact of over 80 percent, with restaurants, tour operators and hotels reporting temporary to permanent closure; in May, an average of 27 percent of workers had been dismissed from tourism-related jobs. The income of workers in the informal economy has fallen between 50 and 75 percent, while domestic workers and gardeners employed in private homes and offices have suffered a 100 percent drop in income. With the decline in economic activities and opportunities to earn income, poorer households have resorted to asking for food on the streets by waving a white flag. Although there are no official figures or studies that document this phenomenon, it shows the level of need in households.

**Income from remittances.** About 6 million Guatemalans are beneficiaries of remittances from the United States and in some livelihood zones these are an important component. This income is used directly for family consumption, investment in small businesses, construction and to purchase inputs for planting. They indirectly benefit third parties through the purchase of products and employment in construction or agricultural day labor. At the national level, remittances have been steadily increasing for ten years, accounting for 13.8 percent of GDP in 2019. This trend was interrupted in March, when the effects of COVID-19 hit the US economy, impacting the sectors that are key sources of employment for immigrants: from February to April remittances dropped 14.5 percent. Figures for April 2020 showed a 20 percent reduction on April 2019. By May, there was a 21 percent recovery in the total amount compared to the previous month, however this was still 14 percent lower than in May 2019. The Bank of Guatemala forecasts a 9 percent reduction in remittances for 2020.

**Food prices.** The price of basic grains shot up in March as a result of panic buying and stockpiling. While prices fell within a few days, they have remained above the five-year average, and prices recorded for last year: white maize has increased in price by 10 percent and 19 percent respectively, while beans have increased by 53 percent and 36 percent respectively. The price behavior of beans is atypical due to stockpiling by intermediaries and the rise in demand. The cost of the basic food basket has been increasing since March, from GTQ 3,543.13 in February to GTQ 3,624.61 in May. The Consumer Price Index also registered an increase, with expenditure on communications, food and health showing the highest percentage changes, rising by 8.42, 4.83 and 2.01 percent, respectively. Among the basic food costs with the highest year-on-year positive impact on the CPI are potato, chayote, products for tortillas, eggs and maize.

**Government assistance programs.** The government has launched several aid programs through the Economic Rescue Act for Families Affected by COVID-19 (Legislative Decree 13-2020), aimed at mitigating and compensating for the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. One of the most significant in terms of value and coverage is the *Bono Familia* (Family Bonus), which will pay three monthly contributions of GTQ 1,000 per family to a total of two million households. One of the key prioritization criteria is electricity consumption of less than 200 kWh during February, however, a maximum of 10 percent of the total fund is also earmarked for households without electricity (200,000 households). Launched on 18 May, this program had reached approximately 1.5 million households by mid-June. The other two cash-transfer programs are the municipality managed *Apoyo al Comercio Popular* (Support for Informal Trade) for workers in the informal economy, which aims to make a single payment of GTQ 1,000 to 200,000 people, of which 51,500 from 104 benefiting municipalities had been reached by mid-June; and the *Fondo de Protección de Empleo* (Employment Protection Fund) aimed at suspended workers, who will receive GTQ 75 per day for three months; by June 112,000 people were registered for the fund, of which 44,000 are already receiving aid. The other major assistance program is the *Programa de Apoyo Alimentario* or *Bolsa Rural* (Food Support Program or Rural Parcel), aimed at rural populations who do not have access to electricity and who will receive food worth GTQ 590 to meet the caloric requirements of a family of five for one month, including a hygiene kit with soap and masks. This program began in mid-June.

**Nutrition.** At the national level, epidemiological week 24 (7–13 June) falls within the months of the year in which the Ministry of Health identifies more cases of acute malnutrition, coinciding with the lean season. During this week, the Ministry’s Department of Epidemiology reported a cumulative total of 15,998 cases (rate of 69.2) of acute malnutrition in children aged under five years, more than twice the figure for the same epidemiological week in 2019 (7,542 cases, rate of 32.6). The three areas of concern analyzed in this report contain nine of the twelve health areas with the highest risk of acute malnutrition and six of the ten health areas with the highest risk of severe acute malnutrition. The health area with the highest rate is Escuintla with 236.8, which is three times the figure for the same week in 2019. The Ministry of Health intends to initiate an active case search for acute malnutrition and other nutrition-related actions in the context of the COVID-19 emergency, with support from cooperation agencies. Protocols include the identification, treatment and timely follow-up of cases.

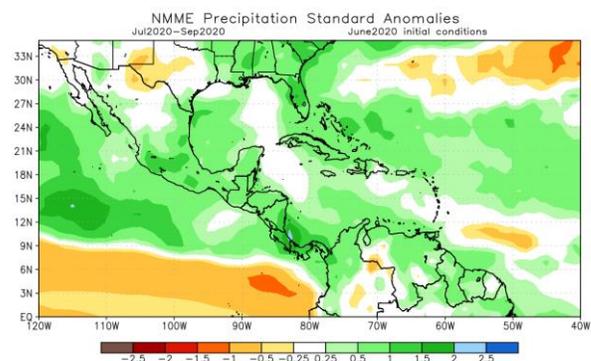
**Stages of reopening.** In early June, the Government published the national strategy to control the COVID-19 epidemic and the basis for the conditional easing of lockdown (Ministerial Agreement 146-2020). Phase 0 of the strategy addresses preparation for the de-escalation process and will begin once certain criteria have been met, including a decrease in new cases over a 14-day period, and will allow increased movement of the population. The plan may then move to Phase I, the beginning of the de-escalation period, following a further 14 days of a decrease in new cases, positive test results and suspected cases; it provides for the partial reopening of economic activities and places of work such as stores, restaurants, sports activities and tourist accommodation, apart from common spaces. Phase II of reopening could begin after 14 days of a decrease in new cases, suspected cases and positive test results, and would allow for the partial reopening of those activities that did not open under Phase I. One of the options announced by the Government is opening up by geographic area, provided that there is a steady decline in cases. However, by mid-June, the government had already authorized the opening of certain non-essential shops and services which are not located in shopping malls and which follow the distancing and maximum capacity regulations issued for their operation, although public transport restrictions and restricted hours of movement remain in force.

*National Assumptions*

**Evolution of COVID-19 and restrictions.** According to the report issued on June 16 by the Ministry of Health, cases are expected to continue to increase until the end of August. This projection may mark the peak by that date and the possible start of stabilization at the beginning of September. Based on this projection and the planned reopening stages according to the evolution of the disease, lockdown measures are likely to be gradually eased by September. The progressive lifting of restrictions would mean an improvement in people’s movement and income-earning opportunities. However, the epidemic will continue to have negative effects throughout the projection period, and this will be particularly prolonged in rural areas due to limited employment options in these regions.

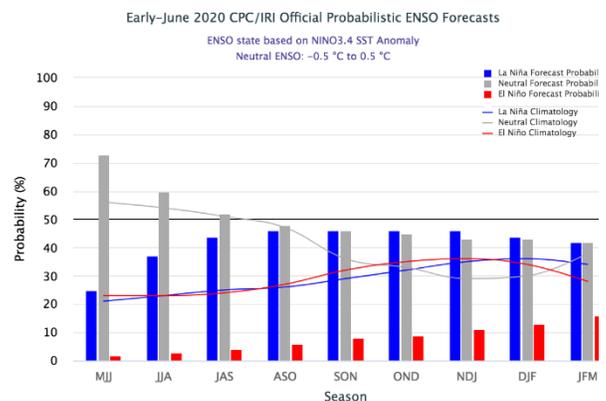
**Climate.** According to the forecasted El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral conditions, rainfall behavior will be average to above-average during the first rainy season, with a *canícula* [hottest, driest period] of average duration and intensity expected in July. For the second rainy season, forecasts show average to above-average rain; however, they also indicate slightly above-average temperatures that would favor evapotranspiration. An above-normal hurricane season is predicted for the region.

**Figure 1.** Accumulated rainfall forecast



Source: Climate Prediction Center/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (CPC/NOAA)

**Figure 2.** Official probabilistic ENSO forecast in early June 2020



Source: IRI/CPC

**Basic grain production.** At the national level, rainfall accumulations are expected to allow the normal development of both *Primera* and *Postrera* crops and an average harvest. The exception would be poor households that have not invested as usual in agricultural inputs due to COVID-19, and the production of these households would be slightly below average.

**Markets and basic grain prices.** Both the country’s food production and the supply chain and delivery in all markets and supermarkets will remain stable. The *Primera* maize harvests from the eastern, northern and southern coastal regions of the country, as well as formal and informal flows from Mexico, will keep the market supplied. However, prices will remain above average during the entire period covered by this outlook.

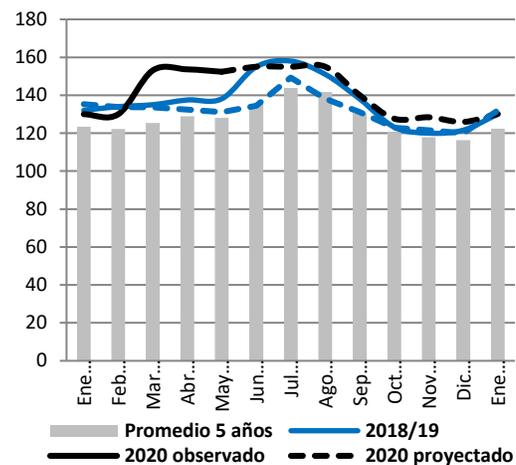
**Reopening of economic activities.** According to the National Reopening Strategy and the projected evolution of the pandemic in the country, a partial reopening with restrictions on economic activities and public transport is expected in September.

**Income.** In addition to food- and health-related businesses that were already operating, in June the government authorized the opening of certain non-essential shops and services, which, despite limited operating hours, will continue to provide employment. In some areas, restrictions on movement between municipalities and departments began to be eased in mid-June. It is expected that this will continue and be gradually extended to other regions if there is no new spike in the disease. Public transport could partially resume in September/October once the infection peak has been reached. However, the imposition of distancing measures and reduced passenger capacity may cause irregularities in the service throughout the year. It is expected that various economic activities in the formal and informal sector linked to trade, transport and storage, food and personal services, construction and manufacturing industries – which account for a large proportion of the working population – will begin to resume operation between September and October. Many will do so slowly and partially, however, meaning that there will be no immediate improvement in income for some households. Other activities associated with international demand for specific products and tourism services would take longer to reactivate and may not fully resume until next year. In rural areas, the primary source of income is agricultural day labor, whose behavior depends on the economic capacity of middle- and upper-income households, labor demand for commercial crops (coffee, sugar, vegetables, etc.), and the ability to move freely between municipalities and even neighboring countries such as Honduras and Mexico. Cross-border movement restrictions are expected to be maintained. In addition, reduced resources due to the decline in remittances, trade and formal employment will affect the hiring of local day labor throughout the year. For coffee, the demand for labor for fertilization and harvest could be lower than usual due to reduced grain purchases on the international market as a result of the pandemic, and the required biosecurity and distancing measures on farms. Income from this source, especially during the months of high labor demand (October-January/February), would thus be partial.

**Income from remittances.** The decline in remittances will continue to affect middle- and upper-income households, since the income-generating potential of migrants in the United States is dependent on the possibility of re-employment. However, the United States is undergoing a critical period of unemployment, with the sectors that employ migrants the most affected.

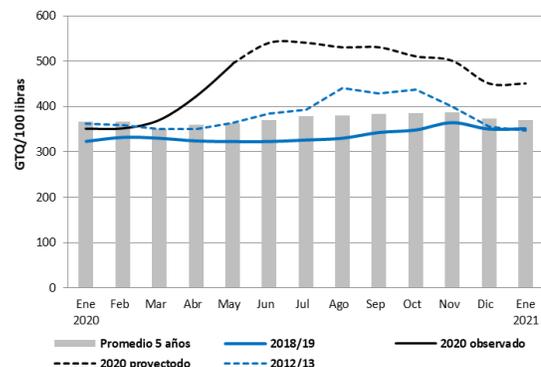
**Government assistance programs in response to COVID.** The Family Bonus program began in mid-May and the first cash transfer was made between the end of May and the end of June. The next two instalments will be paid in July and August, covering 2 million families. It is also expected that the employment protection fund will be used in full and that it will cover

**Figure 3.** Observed and projected prices to January 2021 for white maize at La Terminal market, Guatemala, Guatemalan quetzal (GTQ) per 100 lbs



Source: FEWS NET based on data from the MAGA Planning Directorate

**Figure 4.** Observed and projected prices to January 2021 for red beans at La Terminal market, Guatemala, Guatemalan quetzal (GTQ) per 100 lbs



Source: FEWS NET based on data from the MAGA Planning Directorate

suspended employees. The food support program will cover needs in rural areas for at least one month between July and August.

### *Most Likely Food Security Outcomes*

Government measures to halt the spread of COVID-19 have had a critical impact on access to food due to a combination of factors including reduced income up to total loss of income, rising prices of basic foodstuffs, suspension of public transport and restrictions on movement. The livelihoods of those who work in the informal sector, accounting for 70 percent of the population, were immediately affected, with daily income reduced by more than half; this sector includes those employed in agricultural activities whose income was also affected by lower recruitment due to the drop in employers' incomes and the impossibility of traveling to places of work. Employees in the formal sector have suffered from suspensions, dismissals and the closures of stores and businesses that, after three months of inactivity, lack the resources to survive. This situation is exacerbated by the increase in the price of maize and beans; of the basic food basket, which increased 2.3 percent from March to May; and of the Consumer Price Index, which also recorded an increase of 4.83 percent in the food category, with tortilla products one of the items showing the greatest upward change.

In urban areas at the national level, workers in the informal economy – who were first to be affected and who lack the protection networks that might enable them to survive the decline in their daily income – are modifying the quality and quantity of food in their diet and using coping strategies to meet their basic food needs. Formal sector employees have also had to resort to credit, loans, assistance, and non-traditional employment-generating activities to meet household needs. Government assistance programs will provide these households with income that will enable them to improve the quality and quantity of their food and avoid the strategies previously used to meet minimum dietary requirements. They will therefore be classified in Minimal food insecurity (Phase 1!) from June to September. From October to January, the resumption of transport and the lifting of restrictions will mark the re-start of operations for various economic activities in the formal and informal sector related to trade, transport and storage, catering and personal services, construction and manufacturing industries that employ a large proportion of the working population. However, commercial and financial recovery will be slow for many of these companies, and reinstatement of the workforce will thus be gradual and partial. In addition, other activities related to international demand for specific products and tourism services will take longer to recover due to the severity of the impact. Continuing travel restrictions in several countries has led to an almost total cessation of tourism. Since government assistance programs will last until August/September when incomes will only just have begun to recover and will not have reached pre-pandemic levels, from October onwards households in both the metropolitan area and municipal capitals will be in Stressed food insecurity (IPC Phase 2), with pockets of the population that will have difficulty in meeting their food requirements without assistance, forcing them to use negative coping strategies that would place them in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

The primary source of income for households in rural areas is agricultural day labor, whose behavior depends on the economic capacity of middle- and upper-income households, labor demand for commercial crops (coffee, sugar, vegetables, etc.), and the ability to move freely between municipalities and even neighboring countries such as Honduras and Mexico. In March, the emergence of COVID-19 in the country and the subsequent restrictions affected recruitment of agricultural day laborers and the ability to travel to find employment and to visit markets to stock up. These factors hampered access to food and led to the use of negative coping strategies to ensure the basic family food intake. Poor households located in the dry corridor were already experiencing difficulties in accessing food due to prolonged reliance on food purchases, rising prices of basic grains and premature use of income earned during the 2019 high labor demand season. Households had already begun to make adjustments in the quality and quantity of food in their diet to make sure they could feed themselves, and were using crisis coping strategies. From June to August, many rural households will receive the Family Bonus from the government, improving access to food. In addition, they will receive government food support during these months, while in some eastern and western municipalities cooperation organizations will provide food assistance. These assistance programs will enable rural households to improve the quality and quantity of food in their diet, improving food security outcomes to Minimal (IPC Phase 1!) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2!), particularly in the dry corridor.

The second period of the outlook (October–January) coincides with the season of high labor demand. However, employment opportunities are expected to be lower than usual as a result of reduced income due to job suspensions, declining trade and

remittances in the middle- and upper-income households that usually hire local day laborers for agricultural activities, particularly those related to coffee and construction. Opportunities for employment in coffee harvesting may be reduced by the distancing and biosecurity measures imposed on farms and the fall in international sales, while controls on the borders with Honduras and Mexico may hinder the movement of those who usually migrate for employment during coffee-harvesting months. Added to this is the decline in tourist activity, which generated small-business income for portions of the population in tourist locations in different parts of the country. Between October and January/December, basic grain harvests should improve food availability for some months. However, due to lack of resources, poor households have reduced planting areas and/or stopped using inputs, which will result in partial yields and below-average reserves. It is expected that the COVID-19 emergency programs implemented by government and international cooperation will have ended by this time, placing households in a Crisis situation of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) as a result of the continued use of negative strategies to meet minimum household food requirements, or in a Stressed situation (IPC Phase 2) in other rural areas hit by the decline in income, predominantly derived from tourism and informal trade.

### *Events that Might Change the Outlook*

Possible events over the next eight months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
National	Hoarding of maize or beans	Increased prices for these basic grains would impact food access for the poor and very poor, and more households would implement coping strategies, increasing the population in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity.
Area affected	A Hurricane or Tropical Depression	Harvest, human and material damage at the national level would impede access to and availability of food, and more households would be placed in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
National	The prolongation of restrictive measures to control COVID-19	A continuing lack of income for households in informal economy activities and for formal employees in non-essential sectors means they will stay in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) as long as measures are maintained.
National	Reduced coffee output from other countries and a rapid revival of major international consumers	This would improve the demand for labor on coffee plantations and a greater number of households would improve their food security situation to Stressed (IPC Phase 2).
National	The suspension of the Family Bonus program and the COVID food assistance program during the first months covered by this outlook	A deterioration of the food security situation, meaning households would be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
National	Food assistance for the second period covered by this outlook (October–January)	An improvement in food security outcomes; a greater number of households would improve their food security to Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) or Minimal (IPC Phase 1!).

### **AREAS OF CONCERN**

#### ***Extremely poor households in livelihood zone GT10. Zacapa, Chiquimula, Jalapa, Jutiapa, El Progreso***

In this zone, two cycles of rainfed cultivation are possible each year: the Primera cycle, which is devoted mainly to the cultivation of white maize, and the Postrera cycle for beans. However, access to land is limited in quantity and quality, and many households have to lease land to be able to cultivate crops (at a cost of approximately GTQ 1,430 per hectare, or paid for through share-cropping). On average, poor households sow two to four *cuerdas* (0.09 to 0.18 hectares) with native *criolla* seed, usually with minimal agricultural inputs, giving a yield of 2.3 to 4.5 quintals per hectare of maize and 57 lbs per hectare of beans. The main source of income is agricultural labor both at the local level and outside laborers' areas of residence. Given

their limited capacity for production for self-consumption, households rely on the market for their food almost throughout the year. This area is part of the dry corridor characterized by irregular rainfall and intense *canículas*. For more than five years there have been prolonged periods of lack of rainfall, leading to a series of failures of basic grain harvests that, while limited, were sufficient to cover a few months' consumption.

### Current Situation

**Reserves and the lean season.** Since February, households have been faced with the lean season, marked by the scarcity of opportunities for day labor and the lack of basic grain reserves as a result of poor harvests in 2019. Throughout this period, they have only been able to include maize and beans in their diet by relying on the market.

**Basic grain crops.** The Primera plantings dedicated primarily to maize cultivation took place between May and June. Rainfall was generally favorable, with the exception of some localized areas on plains where floods were recorded.

**Income sources.** The main, and usually the only, source of income for very poor households is selling their labor in agricultural activities, and in some cases working in non-agricultural activities such as making tortillas, construction, caregiving, and cleaning, commonly outside their communities. Local work is generated by middle- and upper-income households that own land, whose income is diversified between the sale of agricultural products, business, remittances and wage labor, which are sources that were hit by restrictions. Within and outside this region there are large producers of melons, watermelons and vegetables whose activities were also affected and which workers had difficulty in traveling to due to lack of public transport and restrictions on movement. Meanwhile, workers who used to migrate to Honduras for coffee fertilization jobs have not been able to travel due to the closure of the border. As a result, these sources of income, as well as those provided by non-agricultural activities in urban centers, have been seriously reduced.

**Markets and prices.** While markets at the national level have supplies, they have been hampered by restricted opening times, and physical access has been disrupted by the lack of public transport. This has forced households to make purchases in the community at higher prices. Maize and bean prices rose following the announcement of restrictions in mid-March and remained high: according to data from the Planning Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (DIPLAN-MAGA), in Chiquimula the retail price of maize in May was GTQ 1.70 per lb and that of beans was GTQ 5. This represents a 20 and 25 percent increase from last year, respectively.

**Food intake.** The diet staples are maize and beans. Households now depend on the market for the purchase of basic grains. According to information collected by the *Alianza Cristiana para los Huérfanos* [Christian Alliance for Orphans – ACH] in late May in Camotán, Chiquimula, most households obtained their supplies from community stores due to limited access to the municipal market. The household diet is basically made up of carbohydrates and includes very little protein or vegetables (less than 30 percent report an egg per week, and 27 percent greens or vegetables). Households report consumption strategies such as (i) eating less preferred/cheaper foods and (ii) reducing portion size; (iii) reducing the number of meals per day, (iv) borrowing food; and (v) restricting adult consumption. The recurrent use of these strategies allows the diet to be maintained, even if it is basic and not varied.

**Livelihoods.** Employment options during this period are limited and households depend on income generated during the season of high labor demand. However, continued reliance on the market as a result of reduced 2019 harvests, as well as debt and high prices, have led households to use this income earlier. As a consequence, they have had to adopt coping strategies such as buying food on credit, borrowing food and money, relying on family support, reducing health expenditure, spending savings, selling small animals, reducing spending on agricultural inputs, and consuming seeds. Migration outside the community or municipality to seek employment is common among poor households; however, restrictions on movement and lack of public transport mean this is not a viable option. Households have made early use of negative coping strategies and have entered the lean season, which has been exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 on traditional sources of income, market access, and rising basic grain prices.

**Nutrition.** According to the National Epidemiology Center of the Ministry of Health, during the epidemiological week of 7–13 June, malnutrition rates (cumulative rates per 10,000 inhabitants) in Chiquimula (68.8) and Zacapa (94.1) increased by 72 and 31 percent respectively from last year and in Zacapa are above the national rate of 69.2. While the rate in Jalapa (43.2) is below average, it represents an increase on last year. There is also an increase in Jutiapa (25.7).

**Social protection measures.** The Ministry of Development has a regular social assistance program – the *Bono Social* – aimed at families in extreme poverty and poverty, pregnant women and children aged under 15 years. Assistance is conditional upon children attending school and on younger children attending routine medical checks. However, due to the COVID-19

emergency, conditionality has been waived during these months. The other national coverage program is the school meal program, organized by parent school boards, which provide a snack and meal to children during the school period. Classes were suspended due to COVID-19; however, the Ministry of Education has transferred funds allocated to school meals to families, equivalent to GTQ 4 per child per day. By June, three instalments had been paid.

**Food assistance:** Various organizations provide food assistance in the form of transfers to part of the population. In June and August, the World Food Programme, ACH and Plan International will cover different municipalities in the area. The government launched a series of initiatives to mitigate the economic impact caused by COVID-19. One of the most important is the Family Bonus, rolled out in late May and providing monthly payment of GTQ 1,000 for three months to families that consume less than 200 kWh of electric power. Approximately 90 percent of households in the municipalities included in this area have access to electricity. The other program designed to assist the most vulnerable families, which will include families that do not have access to electricity, is the COVID food support program *Bolsa Rural* (Rural Parcel), which provides food to the value of GTQ 590 to meet the caloric requirements of a family of five for one month, including a hygiene kit with soap and masks. This program could start in late June/early July.

### *Assumptions*

This regional outlook for June 2020 to January 2021 is based on the following assumptions, which are additional to the national assumptions set out in an earlier section of this report:

- **Primera basic grain production.** Restrictions on movement and decreased income meant that households planted a smaller area and, in other cases, could not travel to land they usually lease outside their area of residence to plant their crops. According to information provided by ACH, in Camotán, Chiquimula, households reduced the area planted by 25 to 50 percent due to a lack of resources for buying inputs, particularly seeds. This situation is common to other poor households in the area.
- **Postrera basic grain production** Climate conditions will allow favorable crop development; however, lack of income may reduce investment in necessary inputs, leading to slightly below-average production levels.
- **Income from employment.** From June to August the area will still be in the lean season, when employment is limited. Restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 will further reduce these opportunities. Although regional demand for labor in activities related to the cultivation of melon, watermelon, vegetables, coffee and tobacco increases from October to January, this may be affected throughout the season by reduced working capital, low international demand for coffee, lack or irregularity of public transport, and the distancing measures that may be taken in agricultural production. In September, the daily wage for the preparation and planting of Postrera beans may be below average, due to the loss of income in middle- and upper-income households. A large part of the population from this region travels to Honduras from June/July to March to work on coffee farms. This migration may be affected by controls on and closures of borders, which may be reopened toward the end of the year. Other non-agricultural income-generating activities, particularly at the urban level, will continue to be reduced and/or suspended until September.
- **Food assistance:** The assistance programs of international organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP), ACH and Plan International have resources for the distribution of food assistance (in-kind and in the form of cash transfers) until August.
- **Government assistance programs in response to COVID-19.** In June, July and August, households may receive the Family Bonus payment of GTQ 1,000. Between July and August, the Rural Parcel program is expected to reach poor rural households that lack access to electricity. These two programs would reach the vast majority of poor and very poor households in the region and allow them to purchase and access food.

### *Most Likely Food Security Outcomes*

Households in this region of the country's dry corridor have been dependent on purchases since the beginning of the year, due to basic grain crop failures in the previous crop cycle. As a result of declining purchasing power, caused by the premature use of income generated during the season of high labor demand and basic grain prices above the five-year average, households had already begun to modify the quality and quantity of food in their diet and to use negative coping strategies to meet basic food needs. The emergence of COVID-19 in the country in March led to restrictive measures that have limited households' movement to seek employment and go shopping at municipal markets, as well as leading to suspension of

employment-generating activities in the informal sector and the closure of formal economic activities. This has resulted in lower incomes that have made it more difficult for households to maintain food security, and they continue to reduce daily consumption of food, meeting requirements only through coping strategies. However, during the first months covered by this outlook, assistance from government programs and from international organizations in targeted areas will allow households to avoid the use of negative strategies and to have money and food to improve consumption, and will thus be classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2!). While basic grain harvests should be available to households by October, the reduction in the areas planted makes it unlikely that production will cover more than one to two months. This second period of the outlook (October–January) coincides with high labor demand. However, employment opportunities are expected to be lower than usual as a result of the fall in income due to job suspensions, and decreased trade and remittances in the middle- and upper-income households that usually hire local day laborers for agricultural activities and construction. Opportunities for coffee harvesting work may be affected by lower international sales and by the investment producers will have to make to implement the health protocols set by the Ministry of Health to curb infection; this is in addition to the distancing measures imposed for harvesting work and border controls with Honduras that could restrict the movement of those who usually migrate to that region for employment during the harvest season. The COVID-19 emergency programs set up by the government, which would have prevented poor households falling into a Crisis situation of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) despite a decline in daily wages and high basic grain prices, are expected to have ended by this time.

### ***Poor households in livelihood zone GT09. Central Industrial, Commercial and Service Zone – Guatemala, Sacatepéquez***

Located in the center of the country, the industrial, agro-industrial, trade and services zone of the central area includes the Department of Guatemala as a whole, much of Sacatepéquez and some areas of Chimaltenango, as well as a small portion of Escuintla. The area is mainly urban and peri-urban and economic activity is related to industry and manufacturing, services and commerce. However, it also includes areas with subsistence plantings of maize and beans, mainly on the slopes of volcanoes. Population density is very high and most people in this area earn their main livelihood by working for someone else. The local economy is based around the largest industrial complex in the country. Companies in this region produce vegetables, cut flowers, textiles and a wide range of manufactured products for domestic and export consumption, as well as services in the formal and informal sector. The industrial complex and service sector offers job opportunities of various skill levels to the local population living in surrounding areas.

Education levels and professional skills determine the type of employment that can be obtained. In general, the poorest households generate their income from occasional or part-time labor, while poor households may work full time, although conditions remain precarious. Work in factories, transport and loading/unloading of goods, passenger transport, domestic services, and construction are the main sources of employment for such households. Meanwhile middle-income households work in more stable full-time jobs that require a certain level of education, and upper-income households hold the highest positions in these industries.

Stores and small businesses are also an important source of livelihoods in the region, from small informal businesses operated by poor households (mostly street selling and small street food stalls etc.) to well-established small-scale businesses, such as restaurants, grocery stores, beauty salons, taxis and motorcycle taxis. In addition, there is high demand in this area for services associated with urban life and industrial settings: transport services, courier services, domestic services (for individuals and businesses), security services (businesses and households), financial services and call centers.

According to the May 2019 National Employment and Income Survey, in the metropolitan urban area (comprising the sample of urban areas in the department of Guatemala), 44 percent of the employed population works in the informal sector, lacks job protection and generally depends on daily wages, and 56 percent works in the formal sector. In the informal sector, 39 percent are private employees and 38 percent are self-employed, while in the formal sector 84 percent are employed in the private sector. Commerce, transport and storage, accommodation and catering services account for 35 percent of the employed population, while 21 percent are employed in the manufacturing industry and other industrial activities. The average wage in these activities is GTQ 3,100, which is equal to or slightly above the minimum wage. However, very poor households living on a daily income from informal activities barely generate enough to cover basic expenses and usually resort to informal loans and purchasing on credit.

In this livelihood zone, purchasing at supermarkets, markets and local stores is the only way to obtain food, and long working days mean there is a lot of street food consumption. Families have very low savings capacity and low income, which, combined

with housing, transport and education costs, means that the poor and extremely poor live from day-to-day and, in many cases, in debt.

### *Current Situation*

**Decline in economic activity due to COVID-19.** Restrictions imposed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 interrupted almost all economic activities in the country, due to company and business closures and the suspension of public transport. This particularly affected the metropolitan urban area, due to the concentration of economic activity there. According to CACIF, by the third week of May, the number of companies that resorted to suspension doubled in one month and 25 percent of companies had lost 50 percent of their sales, demonstrating the impact of restrictive measures on businesses. The Bank of Guatemala's monthly economic activity index recorded a change of -10.2 percent compared with April 2019 (3.9 percent). According to the Bank, this is the result of the impact of the measures taken on the economic activities of commerce and vehicle repair, manufacturing industries, accommodation and catering services, education, construction, leisure and recreational services, sports, and personal services (laundry, hairdressing, beauty salons, etc.). This is in addition to other activities in the informal sector, such as domestic cleaning services, gardening services, and caregivers, who, due to their work in private homes and fear of infection, were mostly dismissed or suspended without pay. Due to the nature of their employment, these workers do not have social protection. This in turn impacts the remittances these people send to their families in rural areas.

**Stages of reopening.** While the peak of the epidemic has not been reached and thus the government's reopening plan has not been initiated, by mid-June certain non-essential shops and services not located in shopping malls and that follow distancing and maximum capacity regulations had already been allowed to open. However, restrictions on public transport and hours of movement remain in force.

**Income sources.** The impact on income has been felt by both those employed in the informal sector, due to the closure of small businesses and the low demand for the products and services they offer, and by those employed in the formal sector, since reduced activity has resulted in staff cuts, part-time employment, suspensions and redundancies. According to a recent ProData survey, 69 percent of households interviewed reported a drop in income since the start of the crisis. Of these households, 44 percent said their income had declined by 25 to 50 percent. Only 31 percent of households believe that their income has not declined. The two most affected segments of the population are those at the lower level, for whom the impact was immediate with a 73 percent reduction in income by April, 79 percent in May and 70 percent in June; and those at the middle level, who have seen a fall in their income as the crisis continues, amounting to 56 percent in April and 71 percent in June. The lower level includes the population that works in the informal sector, who suffered the immediate effect of the restrictions, while the middle level encompasses those workers in stores, tourism, personal services and restaurants that have been most affected.

**Markets and prices of food and basic expenses.** Although it is an area with a variety of markets, supermarkets and stores, the main markets are La Terminal, El Centro Nacional de Mayoreo (CENMA) and La 21 calle. The supply of basic grains, fresh products and processed foods is generally stable. Food prices were affected at the beginning of lockdown due to panic buying and stockpiling. Prices later stabilized; however, the price of maize remains above average at GTQ 152 in June, and beans continued to rise from mid-April to early June, increasing 54 percent to GTQ 540 per quintal. Important foods in the basic family diet such as potato, chayote, products for tortillas, eggs and maize showed a greater year-on-year positive impact. As well as food costs, the urban characteristics of this area mean that many of the poor and extremely poor rent their homes, and their basic expenses include electricity, water, and transport. Transport costs have tripled: the lack of public transport and the need to reach their places of employment mean that they have to pay much higher rates for motorcycle and shared taxis.

**Food assistance:** The government has begun implementing a series of actions to mitigate the impact of falling household incomes. The government's main program, the Family Bonus, consists of three payments of GTQ 1,000 to households in June, July and August. For those in the formal employment sector, the majority of which are in this livelihood zone, there is the Employment Protection Fund, which, as of 22 May, had paid only 23,829 workers out of a target of 300,000. By 9 June, a further 88,116 workers were added, giving a total of 111,945, one third of the target. The other program being implemented, which is managed by the municipalities, is the informal employment assistance program. This provides GTQ 1,000 to those affected by the measures imposed, specifically in the municipality of Guatemala. A total of 2,126 persons had benefited as of 18 June. The government's first response to the crisis was the delivery of a food parcel, essentially consisting of sources of carbohydrates and fat. This was distributed almost entirely in this livelihood zone and, for a family of five, was enough for

five days. Alongside this government program are initiatives launched by citizens, civil society, and others, such as churches, which have provided food assistance to affected families. Due to price and durability, these always contain sources of carbohydrates: maize flour, sugar, oil, rice, pasta and beans.

**Food intake.** In a region where household food comes almost entirely from markets, the drastic reduction or loss of income for food purchases has led to a significant decline in the consumption of varied foods, and adjustments to the quantity and quality of food included in the diet.

**Livelihoods.** Poor and very poor households in this region generate the minimum to cover their basic needs, and often use loans and credit to meet their daily expenses. After three months of the crisis, households had intensified their use of loans and credit to purchase food and had also turned to selling household assets, pawning goods and even, to a lesser extent, to asking for money or food in the streets (white flags).

**Nutrition.** According to data monitored by the Ministry of Health during epidemiological week 25 (7–13 June), the department of Guatemala recorded a total of 2,276 cases of acute malnutrition (72.4 per 10,000 inhabitants), more than double that of the same week in 2019, when there were 945 (30.1 rate).

#### *Assumptions*

This regional outlook for June 2020 to January 2021 is based on the following assumptions, which are additional to the national assumptions set out in an earlier section of this report:

- **Markets and basic grain prices.** Essential sectors, including food, will continue to operate normally, and will ensure food supply in markets and supermarkets. However, basic grain prices will remain above average. According to the National Institute of Statistics, prices of the other basic food basket items will remain stable, as will other essential non-food products, such as electricity, water and telephone bills. This would allow the gradual reactivation of companies and businesses, which, due to the economic impact suffered, would slowly and partially begin to reinstate their suspended workforce. This recovery would be particularly difficult for tourism-related activities, such as the transport of tourists, tour operators, and hotels, whose impact and recovery are linked to international demand, the possibility of travel and the reopening of borders. Some employees in the formal and informal sector would be expected to recover their sources of income. While this may not be at pre-COVID-19 levels, it would be at levels that allow them to access food of sufficient quantity and quality, and to regain their livelihoods. But other households dependent on sectors that suffered the greatest damage to their activities will take longer to return to employment. Companies report few recruitment plans for the quarter from July to September, and at least 2 in 10 expect to reduce employee numbers.
- **Government assistance programs in response to COVID-19.** From June to August many households in the Q zone will receive GTQ 1,000 per month from the Family Bonus program, since this is the region with the largest number of households connected to the electricity grid. In addition, most of the 112,000 suspended workers in the formal sector should receive GTQ 2,250 from the employment protection program and those who are still awaiting payment from the informal sector support program should receive GTQ 1,000. Finally, the poorest families not in receipt of the family bonus will be able to receive food assistance for a month from the Ministry of Social Development, expected in July–August.

#### *Most Likely Food Security Outcomes*

Much of this area is urban and peri-urban and the main livelihood is both formal and informal work for third parties. Poor households in this area are mostly employed in jobs that do not guarantee employment protection and where they are paid on a daily basis, with an unregistered income below the minimum wage. The restrictions imposed by the government to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 affected a large majority of companies, businesses, and services in this region, and these were forced to suspend or even shut down operations. The prolongation of the crisis has meant that the companies that had managed to sustain themselves for three months have not been able to do so over the last month. This has forced them to adapt accordingly, through part-time contracts, suspensions, and even redundancies. The first to be affected were workers in the informal economy, since restrictions to hours and on movement had a direct impact on their income sources. Subsequently, the repercussions of this crisis affected workers in the formal economy employed in non-essential activities, services and businesses. Households started using savings to cover their expenses, or resorted to loans and credits, while some opted for additional atypical income-generating activities. In this area food is purchased, and income reduction has also affected the quality of food included in the diet. Through the use of coping strategies, households have managed to meet

their dietary needs. For three months, starting in June, households will receive support from government emergency programs. This contribution will enable households to meet their food needs without resorting to coping strategies, placing them in Minimal food insecurity (IPC Phase 1!). From October to December, the gradual reopening and recovery of income sources may allow some households to remain in Minimal food insecurity (IPC Phase 1). However, others who have not been fully reinstated, and whose employers have had to close (such as those in activities linked to tourism, trade and personal services) and who do not immediately find employment will have to resort to negative coping strategies to meet household food needs, and will enter Stressed food insecurity (IPC Phase 2), with pockets of the population in this area classified as in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

### ***Extremely poor households in livelihood zone GT06. Temperate area of Quiché, San Marcos, Huehuetenango and Totonicapán***

#### *Current Situation*

Households in this region have only one production cycle of basic grains, maize and black beans that they plant together and which form the basis of their food. Planting takes place on their own and/or leased land between April and May in the highlands, and in May and June in the dry regions, for harvest in December and January. With the exception of 2017, the area has obtained lower yields in consecutive years due to climatic effects, and coffee has been affected for several years by leaf rust and low international prices. People living in these regions rely on agriculture, trade and remittances for their income. Agriculture is essential in this region for food for self-consumption as well as providing a source of income. Trade and remittances from the United States and Mexico are also important sources of income for a sector of the population.

**Reserves and the lean season.** Partial crop losses in 2019 led to the early depletion of stocks of basic grains. In most cases, stocks have been depleted since the beginning of the year. Families started to rely on the market months sooner than usual, marking an early start to the lean season.

**Basic grain crops.** Basic grain plantings mostly took place from February to March, and crops are now in the growth phase; in the drier areas of the region, planting was carried out until late May/early June. Rainfall behavior has so far favored the development of recent crops and plantings. However, restrictions on movement and lack of resources have hampered the planting process for many households. This is evident in a survey carried out by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) at the end of April in different regions of the country, including the Western Altiplano: more than 95 percent of respondents indicated difficulties in accessing production inputs, with lack of money, lack of transport and increased product prices the biggest obstacles.

**Impact of government restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19.** As of 24 June, departments in this region represent a small percentage of cases positively identified as COVID-19, with less than 1 percent of the total cases at the national level, with the exception of San Marcos, where 4.37 percent of the total cases at the national level have been reported. Restrictions have impacted trade and income-generation due to restrictions on both the hours of movement and the places to which households may travel in search of employment and business. As a result of the increase in cases in San Marcos, the Government has tightened its border controls with Mexico.

**Income sources.** The main source of income for households is agricultural labor. Intra- and interdepartmental trade is important in the region for both traders and the rural communities they supply, and this has also been affected by restrictions. Migration to the nearest departmental capitals and to the capital in search of employment has been suspended. Although there has been a steady upward trend in remittance income in recent years, this dropped off in March and April, affecting the middle- and upper-income households dependent on this resource. Work in some agricultural export activities, building and small informal businesses has been affected since mid-March, when restrictions began and, although these sectors offer limited employment, they are the source available during these months.

**Markets and prices.** Since the start of COVID-19 restrictions, supplies in some local markets have been partially disrupted by consumers buying more items than usual and by restrictions on movement. Overall, however, maize and beans are available in local markets, both at major markets and in community stores. The retail price at the Huehuetenango market for white maize during May was GTQ 1.67 per lb, which represents a 30 percent increase compared with last year's price, while the price of black beans was GTQ 6 per lb, a 22 percent increase over 2019. Physical access to markets has been restricted, particularly for communities furthest from municipal capitals. This was confirmed by studies carried out by Plan Internacional and CRS, in which more than 90 percent of the interviewed population (including West Altiplano households) reported problems of access to basic basket products, with maize, beans, and fruit and vegetables less available on the market since restrictions started. Lack of transport to and from the community, rising prices, and falling incomes are the main reasons for decreased availability.

**Food intake.** Households have been restricted to a basic diet since last year. Food consists primarily of maize and beans, with barely any animal protein and the occasional inclusion of eggs in the diet. Sugar, maize, beans and coffee are the staples of the rural diet in Guatemala. However, lower sugar consumption has recently been reported in order to ensure access to the staple maize. The pandemic led to a rise in maize and bean prices and restrictions on movement that prevented households from traveling to earn some daily income. Restrictions on access to food led households to modify the amount of food consumed as their purchasing power diminished.

**Livelihoods.** Households have experienced successive years of crop failures. This has led them into debt to ensure access to food during the period that they do not earn income, with debt paid off with what they generate during the season of high labor demand. Households are using coping strategies such as incurring debts, reducing the diversity of their diet, selling more small domestic livestock, such as chickens and turkeys (which are the source of household eggs) to generate income and reducing purchases of agricultural inputs. Families have also started to reduce their maize consumption.

**Nutrition.** In the department of Huehuetenango, the rate in the week from 7 to 13 June in 2019 was 33.5. The rate for the same week in 2020 was more than double that, at 82.4. For Quiché, the rate for the week from 7 to 13 June in 2019 was 20.5; the rate for the same week in 2020 was 26.3. At both the national and departmental levels, the substantial worsening of the acute malnutrition rate is clear.

**Social protection measures.** In April, the Ministry of Development made conditional cash transfers from the *Bono Social*, one of its regular programs, to a total of 19,176 families in Huehuetenango, 19,287 in Quiché, 2,945 in Totonicapán, 13,055 in San Marcos, 722 in Quetzaltenango and 389 in Chimaltenango. The transfers, ranging from GTQ 300 to GTQ 500, could be sufficient to cover 40 and 76 percent, respectively, of the minimum energy requirements of a family of five. The other national program still in operation is the school meals program, which provides a bag of food equivalent to the cost of school meals per child for 20 days. Three deliveries of bags have now taken place since classes were suspended in March.

**Food assistance:** Various organizations providing food assistance are present in the region. In June, the government began payment of the Family Bonus, worth GTQ 1,000 per month for three months. The basic selection criterion is electricity consumption of less than 200 kWh. Between 70 and 80 percent of the households in the municipalities covered by this area have access to electricity, many of whom will benefit from this program.

#### *Assumptions*

This regional outlook for June 2020 to January 2021 is based on the following assumptions, which are additional to the national assumptions set out in an earlier section of this report:

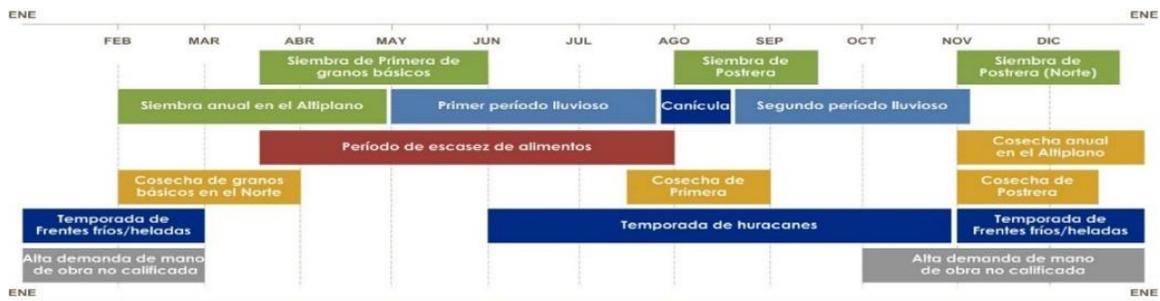
- **Climate.** The second season is expected to bring above-average rain accumulations and slightly above-average temperatures. From November climatic conditions in the area are dry and colder, meaning that above-average rainfall would not harm crop development.
- **Basic grain production.** Close to average maize and bean production volumes are generally expected in this region, although some households may reduce the inputs used due to lack of income, which would slightly reduce yields.
- **Employment income.** From October to January, there is a high demand for labor (coffee, sugar harvesting, tropical fruits, vegetables, etc.) that may be reduced due to the fact that middle- and upper-income households, which generate employment, have experienced a loss or reduction of income. This is particularly true for those who depend on a formal salary or remittances. For those who migrate to Mexico for farm work, mainly for the coffee harvest, employment opportunities will be curtailed by border controls and restrictions. They will also be affected by the distancing measures and other health requirements that the government may impose at the time of the coffee harvest. Other sources of non-agricultural employment within the informal economy, such as domestic work, stores, and tortilla production, would continue to be affected by restrictions on movement and distancing until the end of the year when reactivation of sectors of the economy begins; it is important to note that employment is usually generated in the urban areas of municipalities and in the capital, to which people travel on a daily or seasonal basis to work.
- **Income from remittances.** Remittances help maintain some income-generating sectors, such as construction and basic grain planting, and these activities have also been affected. While remittances are expected to recover in the coming months, they will not reach 2019 levels.

- Food assistance:** The assistance programs of international organizations such as Project Concern International, Cooperazione Internazionale, and Plan International have resources for the distribution of food assistance (in-kind and in the form of cash transfers) until August. These organizations have modified their cash transfer programs to provide in-kind support and thus prevent families from moving to urban centers.
- Government assistance programs in response to COVID.** From June to August, households are expected to receive three payments of GTQ 1,000 from the Family Bonus, and from July to August the Rural Parcel will be provided to poor rural households without access to electricity. The coverage ranges from one month for those who receive the Rural Parcel, to three months for those who get the Family Bonus.

*Most Likely Food Security Outcomes*

Households in this region of the dry corridor continue to depend on the market to purchase their food, following another basic grain crop failure due to climatic effects. Heavy market dependency, lack of reserves, declining incomes and rising prices have not allowed them to improve the quantity and quality of their diet without resorting to coping strategies. This is because the income received during the last high labor demand season was not sufficient, since it was used for debt payments and immediate food purchases. The first months covered by this report coincide with the season of limited employment options. However, due to the restrictions imposed on both hours of movement and travel to curb the spread of the COVID-19, even these options are not available, since they require travel between municipalities and/or departments. The impossibility of traveling to municipal markets due to restricted hours of movement and the constant increase in basic grain prices has made access to food difficult for poor households, which since more than two months ago have been forced to adjust their diet to meet their minimum food needs. Households have resorted to the use of increasingly drastic strategies, risking loss of productive assets to purchase food. It is expected that more than half of the households in this region will receive the Family Bonus for three months and the Rural Parcel of COVID food assistance, plus the specific assistance from international cooperation already planned for the lean season. This would allow households to ensure their minimum diet, albeit not to diversify it, and to avoid using consumption-based coping strategies that limit the quality and quantity of food consumed at home. This will place them in Stressed food insecurity (IPC Phase 2!). From September this assistance will no longer be available, so household food consumption will be restricted to basic food. Even if households are able to take advantage of the season of high labor demand to generate income from October onwards, they will not obtain the usual amount of employment due to restrictions on movement and biosecurity measures that will limit employment options and customary migration to Mexico for employment. In addition, employment by wealthier farmers is expected to be reduced, since their income was also affected, either by lack of business and employment, or by a reduction in remittances. In addition, basic grain prices will remain above average, which will limit purchases. These conditions, most strongly characterized by the end of government assistance programs, and the continued reduction of employment options due to the suspensions and closures of businesses caused by COVID-19, will cause households to fall back into Crisis (IPC Phase 3), despite expectations of an average maize harvest in December/January, since this would only cover one month of this outlook.

**SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR**

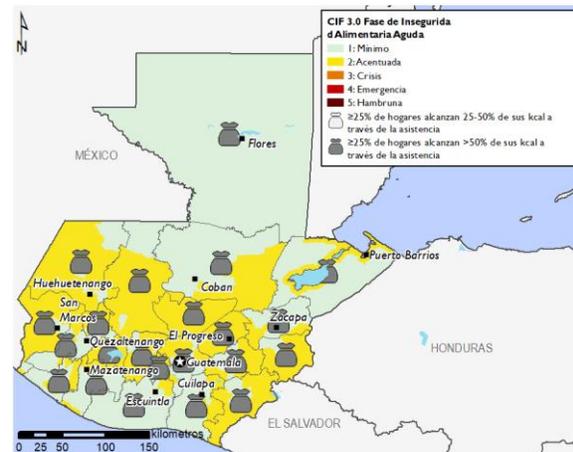


Source: FEWS NET

**MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES AND AREAS RECEIVING SIGNIFICANT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE\***

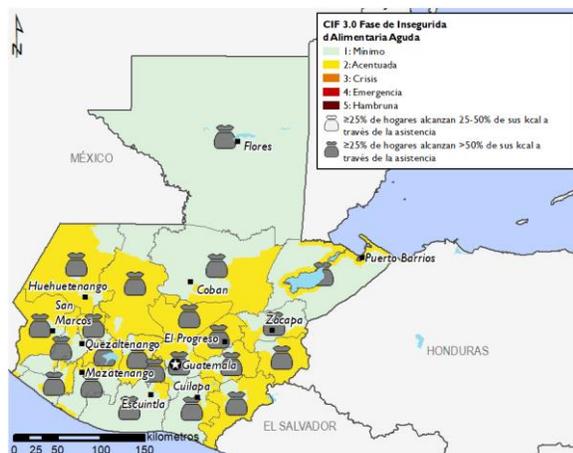
Each of these maps adheres to IPC v3.0 humanitarian assistance mapping protocols from version 3.0 of IPC’s technical manual and flags where significant levels of humanitarian assistance are being/are expected to be provided. 🍲 indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average 25–50 percent of caloric needs through food assistance. 🍲 indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average over 50 percent of caloric needs through food assistance. This mapping protocol differs from the (!) protocol used in the maps at the start of the report. The use of (!) indicates areas that are likely to be at least one phase worse in the absence of current or programmed humanitarian assistance.

Current, June 2020



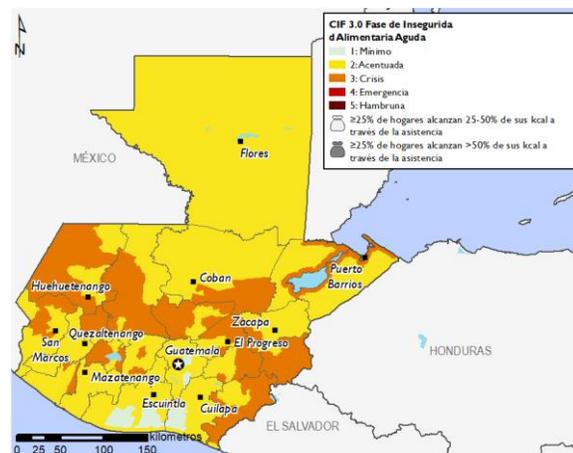
Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2020



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 2021



Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

**ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT**

To project food security outcomes, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to arrive at a most likely scenario for estimating food security outcomes. FEWS NET typically reports the most likely scenario. Learn more [here](#).