

Central America and Caribbean

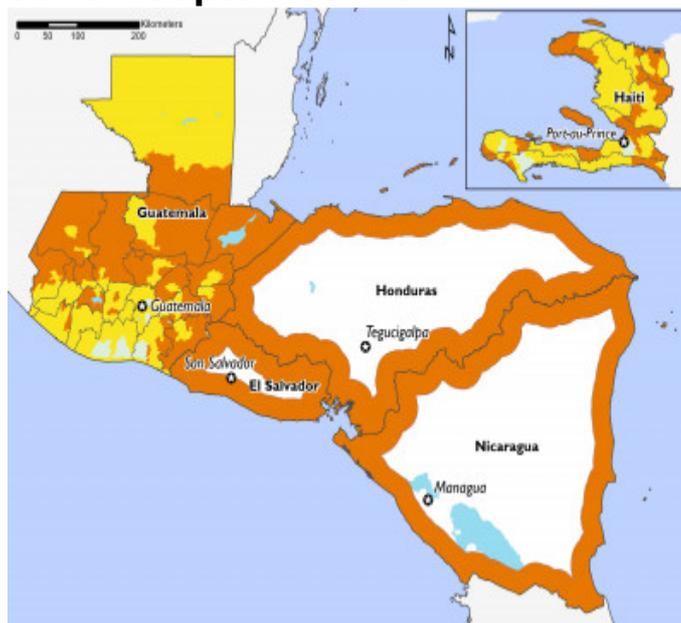
Key Message Update

Access to food remains low, driving Crisis (IPC Phase) outcomes in many areas

May 2021



June - September 2021



IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase

Presence countries:

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine

Remote monitoring countries:

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3+: Crisis or higher

! *Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance*

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.

June 2021

Key Messages:

In Central America, where the lean season will continue until the next harvest in August/September, household access to food remains limited. At this time of year, both rural and urban households purchase most of their food. However, food prices show a rising trend, while labor demand during the pandemic remains atypically low, resulting in reduced household purchasing power. Additionally, hurricane-affected households have not yet fully recovered their livelihoods from the impacts of Eta and Iota. The population experiencing food consumption gaps or utilizing negative coping strategies remains high, resulting in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes in several areas. The areas of highest concern include northern and southern Honduras, the Dry Corridor in Guatemala, northeastern Nicaragua, and coffee-producing areas in western El Salvador.

Prospects for *primera* crop production remain favorable in most of Central America. In Guatemala and El Salvador, rainfall performance has supported the establishment of maize crops. However, there is some concern for an erratic start of the rainfall season in eastern Guatemala. In contrast, below-average rainfall in parts of southern Honduras and northern Nicaragua in late April and May led to localized soil moisture deficits. There is potential for *primera* maize losses in these areas, especially among subsistence farmers. According to weather forecasts, mid-season rainfall should support planting and short-cycle crop development, which will mitigate the total impact on national crop production.

In Haiti, where the peak of lean season occurs in May, household access to food also remains low. Although markets are well supplied, sources of income are currently inadequate for households to purchase their minimum food needs in many areas. Local yellow maize and black bean prices have risen seasonally, while the price of imported foods such as rice – which are strongly correlated to the informal market exchange rate – remain significantly above average.

Although crop development for the *printemps* harvest in June is broadly favorable, food security will likely only marginally improve from June to September. The socio-political and security climate remains unstable, and demonstrations could have negative consequences on informal labor and trade and market supply, reducing the income of poor households. Most poor households will likely continue to adopt negative coping strategies to maintain cover their food needs, such as consuming green harvests or seeds, reducing meal quantities, purchasing food on credit, and selling more cattle than usual. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes will most likely remain widespread through September.

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