Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Guatemala

Humanitarian Response Plan 2023

In Guatemala, **food security and nutrition needs are at their highest in recorded history.** The most food-insecure populations are made up of subsistence farmers whose reserves have been depleted and who face difficulties in planting due to high costs of inputs and fuel. Heavy floods have also caused extensive damage to crops and livestock, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. Restoring household food production is essential to reduce hunger in Guatemala. However, **less than 1 percent of humanitarian funding to food sectors goes to support the agricultural livelihoods of families in need.**

TO ASSIST
119 600 people

FAO REQUIRES
USD 6.9 million

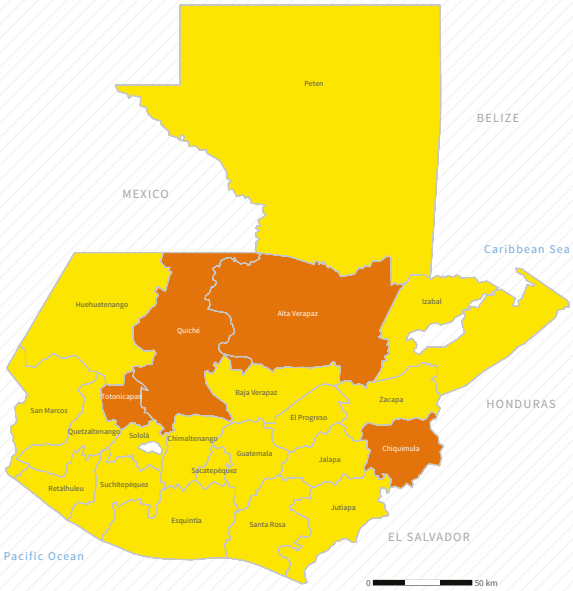
JANUARY–DECEMBER
2023

What investments in agriculture can achieve

USD 150	=	With a poultry-raising package, a household can produce around 72 eggs per week worth USD 14.40 on the local market, to consume and sell throughout the year.	=	**Enable a family to regularly consume protein* and sell eggs throughout the year**
USD 90	=	Through the provision of seeds, each household can cultivate 1.25 ha of land and produce an estimated 0.5 tonne of maize and 0.25 tonne of beans, worth USD 520 on the local market.	=	**Support a family of 5 to produce enough staple food for 4 months**
USD 40	=	A market-gardening kit enables a household to produce 6 types of vegetables (amaranth, chipilín, herbs, onion, radish and tomato) ready for consumption in 6-8 weeks, worth around USD 60/month on the local market.	=	**Allow quick access to nutritious food and to generate income**

* or potential use of alternative source of protein available in each territory

Projected acute food insecurity situation (October 2022–February 2023)



Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

- 1 – Minimal
- 2 – Stressed
- 3 – Crisis
- 4 – Emergency
- 5 – Famine
- Not analysed

Source: IPC. 2022. *Guatemala: IPC acute food insecurity snapshot, March 2022–February 2023*. Guatemala City, Guatemala. https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Guatemala_AcuteFoodInsec_2022Mar2023Feb_Snapshot_English.pdf

Urgency of humanitarian agricultural assistance

The combined effects of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine have led to price spikes in food, fuel and fertilizers significantly affecting the livelihoods of vulnerable rural communities in Guatemala. The increased cost of basic grains has been the highest in the last 15 years and, in a context of rising inflation, the cost of the basic food basket nearly doubled in just one year.

Furthermore, heavy rains induced by a third consecutive year of La Niña events severely impacted Central America, including Guatemala. The country suffered significant damages and losses to agriculture, livestock and infrastructure, particularly in areas that had already been hit by Hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020.

Needs linked to food security and nutrition assistance are at their highest in recorded history, with 17 percent of the population projected to be acutely food-insecure, who are mainly subsistence farming families and with little or no income. In addition, Guatemala is the first country in Latin America and the sixth in the world in cases of child malnutrition, with nearly half of the children under five suffering from stunting.

Supporting vulnerable farming families to recover their production capacities can help them to better cope with shocks and quickly improve their food security. For example, investing just USD 12 to vaccinate ten hens protects vital food assets, providing a family with around 60 eggs per week, to consume and sell throughout the year.

Drivers of food insecurity

- Natural disasters
- High food and fuel prices
- Depletion of basic grain reserves
- COVID-19 pandemic

Key facts

Country population: **18.7 million**

- **3.2 million** people projected to be in high acute food insecurity
- **1.9 million** people acutely malnourished

Due to the torrential rains in 2022:

- **6.1 million** people affected
- **147 000 ha** of cropland damaged

USD 0.60 out of 100 in humanitarian assistance to food sectors went to support agriculture and livelihoods (2016–2021)

In 2022, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reached over 22 800 farming families with support for vegetable production, coffee production management and technical assistance to ensure sustainable production as well as women's participation in agricultural activities. An additional 6 280 families, mainly female-headed, now have increased availability and access to healthy food thanks to support for sustainable agrifood systems. Families were able to apply good crop management practices for the cultivation of beans, cassava, maize, sweet potato, local herbs and fruit trees. A further 960 people, of whom 44 percent women, developed good practices to adapt their livelihoods to climate change or better manage natural resources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Coordination

While Guatemala does not have an activated Food Security Cluster, FAO coordinates its interventions closely with a wide range of food security partners in country, including government counterparts, local and international non-governmental organizations and other United Nations agencies.

FAO priorities

Priority	Type of assistance to be provided/content of assistance package	Cost per beneficiary household (USD)	Number of beneficiary households	Total cost (USD)	Funds needed by	Planned implementation period
Improve basic grain production	10 kg certified maize seed, 10 kg certified black bean seed	89	23 000	2 047 000	April	May–July
Promote and protect poultry production	12 laying hens and 50 kg of concentrate feed	150	10 000	1 500 000		May
	Community vaccination kits (vaccines, cooler, dry ice, syringes) against Newcastle, avian bronchitis, avian cholera and Gumboro diseases	266	1 000	266 000		
Increase availability of and access to food through vegetable production support	450 g of vegetable seeds (amaranth, chipilín, herbs, onion, radish and tomato)	40	23 000	920 000		May–June
Improve access to water for irrigation	Construction of basic rainwater harvesting systems (15 000-litre capacity per household)	650	3 370	2 190 500		May

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