ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY | High levels of acute food insecurity persist albeit at lower levels than 2022.

**PEAK 2023 (JUNE–AUGUST)**

2.4M people or 25% of the total population faced high levels of acute food insecurity during the lean season. Of them, 0.4M were in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

The reduction of 0.23 million people since the 2022 lean season reflects slightly increased economic activities in sectors such as tourism and agriculture. But adverse weather, reduced income opportunities, and high food and fuel prices adversely affected poor households.

ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY | El Niño conditions and high food prices kept levels similar to 2022.

**PEAK 2023 (JULY–AUGUST)**

0.2M people or 3% of the total population faced high levels of acute food insecurity during the lean season.

This is similar to the levels in 2022, when 0.2 million people were estimated to face high levels of acute food insecurity during the lean season. Households experienced seasonal improvements in food availability and access from the Postrera harvest in December and increased incomes from higher labour demand in the agricultural, trade and tourism sectors.

DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS 2022–2024

- **Weather extremes** Rainfall deficits and above-average temperatures associated with El Niño mainly affected northern areas and to a lesser extent the Dry Corridor during the Primera crop cycle. The Postrera cycle benefited from normal rainfall conditions in most cropping areas (FAO, June & November 2022; IIRC, November 2023). Although El Niño was forecast to persist up to March–May 2024, weather forecasts pointed to favourable precipitation in the first half of 2024 (C3S, March 2024).

- **Economic shocks** Subdued economic performance following COVID-19 persisted in sectors such as construction and manufacturing, reducing incomes. Increased fuel and fertilizer costs reduced planting and incomes for rural households. Despite a decline in food inflation to single digits by mid-2023, fluctuating food prices restricted access to adequate diets for poorer households (FEWS NET, October 2023).

A protracted food crisis in Central America’s Dry Corridor crisis and recently on its own. Recurrent extreme weather events, especially consecutive episodes of drought and hurricanes, have exacerbated food insecurity among the most vulnerable groups, particularly during the 2020–2022 period, which saw the occurrence of hurricanes Eta, Iota and Julia.