

LATIN AMERICA

NEWSLETTER

WOMEN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER



ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

JUNE 2023

LATIN AMERICA

WOMEN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

03



FOOD SECURITY



LIVELIHOODS



MIGRATION



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH



GENDER VIOLENCE

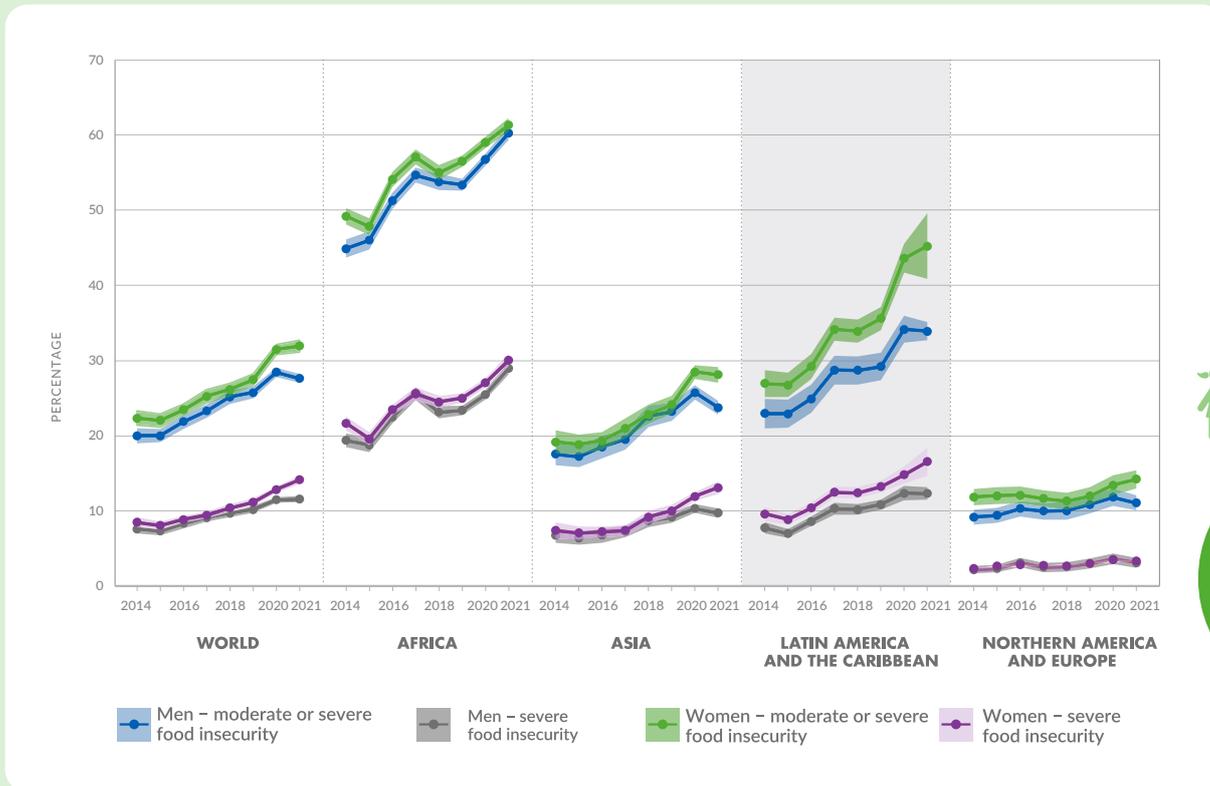
REGIONAL RESPONSE

38

STRATEGIC ALLIES

39

In no other region is the gap between men and women who are food insecure as high as in Latin America and the Caribbean. Globally the gap is more than 4 percentage points (31.9% of women vs. 27.6% of men), but in Latin America the gap is 11.3 percentage points, the widest in the world.¹



Women tend to be disproportionately affected by the crises.

SOURCE: FAO 2021

“Women tend to be disproportionately affected by health and economic crises in a number of ways, including but not limited to food security and nutrition, health, and productive and economic dimensions” and in Latin America the context behind this significant gender gap is a deep and multidimensional crisis that does not seem to have a solution in the short term. In fact, the prevalence of **severe food insecurity** in the region has nearly doubled since FIES² data were first collected in 2014¹, the prevalence of poverty has stagnated at levels of the past decade and extreme poverty is higher than it was 20 years ago³. Women are poorer than men, and the femininity index of poverty has not improved in 2021, on the contrary; similarly, there has been no significant progress in reducing inequality (ECLAC).

The situation of income inequality is marked in the region⁴: 27.6% of women have no income of their own, compared to 11.2% of men. In Guatemala, this percentage rises to 51%

(compared to 14% of men) and exceeds 30% in countries such as Honduras, Colombia and Venezuela. In fact, during the pandemic, there was an overwhelming exit of women from the labour force, which meant a setback of almost two decades, and in 2022 the participation of women in the labour market was 51% compared to 75% for men (ECLAC). In the same line, inequalities in the health system affect women more, and the pandemic has meant a major setback in the coverage of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) programmes.

All these data help us to understand the situation of exclusion and inequality experienced by women. However, it is the records on gender-based violence that show us the full extent of the vulnerability to which women in the region are exposed and the urgency to act.

¹ State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022 (SOFI)

² Food Insecurity Experience Scale

³ Panorama Social de América Latina y el Caribe 2022 (CEPAL)

⁴ CEPAL, Observatorio de Igualdad de Género de América Latina y el Caribe

In countries where there is some measurement of gender-based violence, there has been an increase in recent years.



Demonstration against gender violence in Colombia.

On the other hand, sexual gender-based violence remains invisible and continues to be under-reported and under-reported. Therefore, official information should be understood as only an incomplete sample of the problem.

In **Colombia**, for example, in 2021, 39,774 cases of violence against women were registered, and in 2022 this figure rose to 47,487. According to the Human Rights Report, in 2022 there were 5,501 cases of violence against LGBTIQ+ people, of which 145 were victims of homicide. Of the medico-legal examinations for alleged sexual crimes, the most alarming is that 60% were carried out on **girls under 15 years of age**. According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview, in Colombia, in the years 2021 and 2022, indigenous communities and girls "represented up to 70 per cent of the survivors of reported cases of Sexual Violence". According to the Colombian Observatory of Femicides, in 2022 there were 619 cases, of which 7.59% corresponded to Venezuelan people and 145 cases to LGBTIQ+ people. Between January and March 2023, 133 cases of femicides have been registered, of which 10% correspond to Venezuelan persons and 3% to LGBTIQ+ persons.

In **Peru** the situation is also alarming. According to the Women's Emergency Centres, 52,409 cases of victims of gender-based violence have been attended in the first four months of 2023. In this same country, nearly 70% of the cases of violence registered in 2023 have been against **girls and adolescents**. In 2022, almost 6,000 women were reported missing; it is presumed that in many cases these events are linked to gender-based violence, attempted homicides and sexual violence. The highest number of disappearances (more than 60%) is among **girls and adolescents between 12 and 17 years of age**. Likewise, in 2022, 27,362 cases of sexual violence were reported, and so far in 2023, 6,491 cases have been registered, of which 94.6% of the victims were women. Regarding femicides in Peru, 130 cases were reported in 2022, while by the first quarter of 2023, 59 cases had already been reported.

In **Guatemala**, 541 women lost their lives violently in 2022, according to the Women's Observatory of the Public Prosecutor's Office. Violent deaths of women increased by 3-5% in 2022 compared to 2021. On the other hand, in **Nicaragua** (where no official data is available) the organisation *Católicas*

por el Derecho a Decidir indicates that there were 57 women victims of femicide in the country in 2022. The organisation also reported the murder of 11 Nicaraguan women outside Nicaragua (Costa Rica, United States, Guatemala and Panama) for gender-related reasons. In the first 2 months of 2023, 16 femicides have already been reported, 8 of which were registered in the country and the other half abroad.

In **Honduras**, the Violence Observatory of the Autonomous University (UNAH) recorded 384 cases of gender-related killings of women between 2022 and March 2023. During 2022, the National Emergency System (911) registered 38,331 reports of domestic violence and 59,147 reports of domestic abuse.

In **Venezuela**, the NGO Utopix reports that there were 219 femicides in 2021, 240 in 2022 and 63 between January and April 2023. Likewise, it is observed that during 2020 femicides increased alarmingly: 1 femicide every 34 hours, compared to 2016, 1 femicide every 72 hours. So far in 2023, there has been a frequency of one femicide every 45 hours and one attempted femicide every 43 hours.



We need to make the needs and urgency of action visible, while promoting lasting change.

If we were to use this same way of visualising femicides for the other countries mentioned, we could look at the clock and start counting: every 15 hours a woman will be murdered in Guatemala or Colombia, every 20 hours a woman will be killed in Honduras and every three days in Peru.

We have made these calculations based on 2022 records, but we know that in 2023 violence and needs have increased. For example, Colombia's Humanitarian Needs Overview indicates that the risks of Gender-Based Violence would continue, and increase in 2023 in the contexts of humanitarian emergencies due to armed conflict and natural disasters, while the Regional Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants projects that in

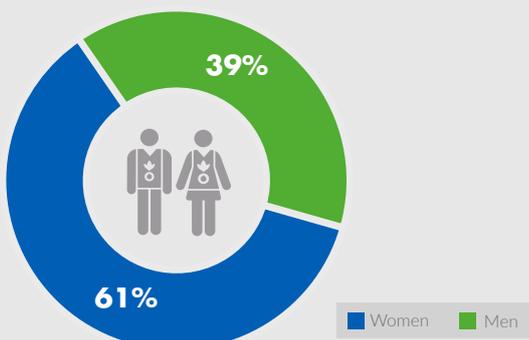
2023 close to 3 million people will require assistance due to Gender-Based Violence.

Hunger, a consequence of inequality, exclusion and violence, puts women at the centre of our work in Latin America. For this reason, we have decided to dedicate this publication to describing what we observe in the territories where we work. We hope that this will serve as a warning and contribute to making more visible the needs and the urgency to act from the perspective of immediate assistance, but also to **promote a deep and lasting change. A change that reduces inequalities and violence, a change for which many women and men in the region are already fighting.**

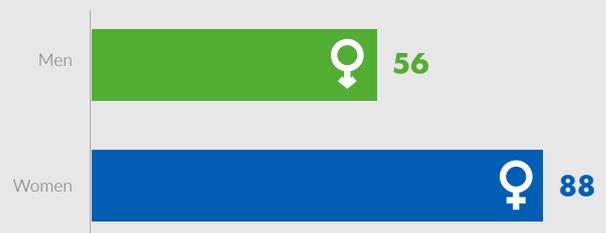
WOMEN WORKING WITH WOMEN GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF OUR TEAM IN LATIN AMERICA



EMPLOYEES BY GENDER



SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM



1.

FOOD SECURITY



Indigenous women and communities facing the cost-of-living crisis



Most Central American women are farming land that does not belong to them.

As the region was trying to recover from the impact of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine has generated global inflation resulting in a major [cost-of-living](#) crisis.

In **Guatemala**, the inflation rate has doubled in relation to the year 2022, reaching 13.2%, which has an impact on the purchasing power of families. This is the most pronounced price increase in the last 15 years. The cost of the basic food basket is US\$475 (April 2023), while the non-agricultural minimum wage ranges between US\$436 and US\$400, the latter being the most frequent wage in the maquilas (manufacturing industry), where mainly women work.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2022⁵, Guatemala is the worst country for women in Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the access to economic opportunities. In this context, it is, as usual, poor, rural and indigenous women who are most affected. Faced with the impossibility of earning sufficient income to acquire the basic foodstuffs a family needs, **food insecurity becomes a constant**. In women-headed households, food insecurity is added to other inequalities such as double and triple work shifts, disparity in access to land and employment, as well as education and health.

According to the latest available data, Guatemalan women own barely 15% of the land to farm. Most Central American women cultivate land that does not belong to them, but which they access by renting or borrowing. This means that they cannot freely decide what and how to produce, they do not know if they will be able to plant again the following year, and they must hand over part of the harvest or the profits to the landowner.⁶

⁵ <https://es.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2022/in-full>

⁶ Land for us. Central American rural women's policy proposals for access to land.

EVALUATION OF FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY IN VULNERABLE FAMILIES IN THE DRY CORRIDOR OF CENTRAL AMERICA

Data collection:

FEBRUARY - MAY 2023

department of Chiquimula, GUATEMALA

1.128 families surveyed



MAIN OBJETIVE

collected baseline information for the project *Humanitarian response to the needs of the most vulnerable populations affected by rising food prices and recurrent disasters in the Dry Corridor of Central America*, financed by ECHO, to learn about their food security and nutrition situation.

In the Ch'orti' region, a rural and indigenous area of eastern Guatemala, in the department of Chiquimula, the government and institutions working on food security estimate that by June-September 2023, some 81,000 people (30% of the population) will be in a situation of food crisis or emergency (Phase 3 or higher of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification - IPC).⁷

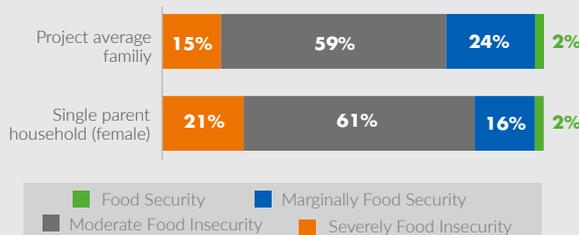
In this context, we collected baseline information from the most vulnerable families in the participating communities.

Among the variables evaluated were:

- The nutritional situation of children under 5 years of age in the families supported by the project.
- The situation in terms of food consumption and implementation of coping strategies.
- The presence of people with disabilities or chronic diseases within the family unit.



The families surveyed are large, with an average of 6 persons per household, and three minors. Single-parent families headed by women have an average of 4 persons, of which 2 are minors, and significantly present a more unfavorable level of food insecurity than the general average of families. More than 2 out of 10 families of this type are in a situation of severe food insecurity:



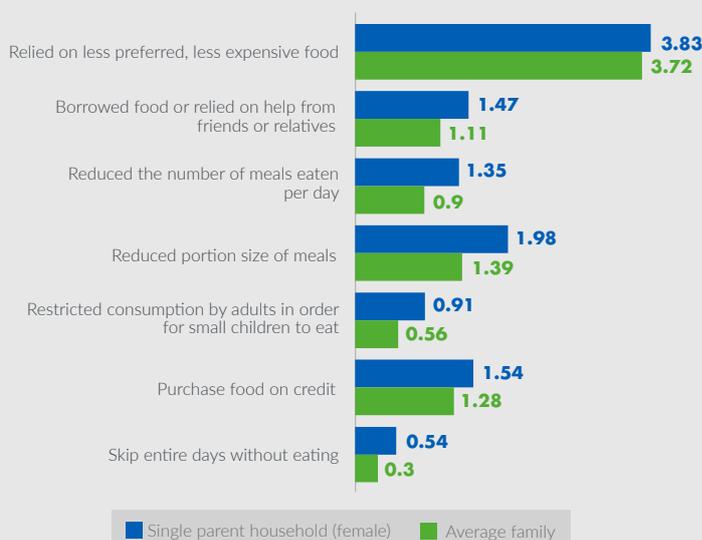
This is also reflected in the very high percentage of children with chronic malnutrition (50%), in single-parent families formed by women, well above the average observed in the project (32%); a high percentage of children with low weight (27%) and a higher percentage than the project average (4%) of children with acute malnutrition (5%), measured through the MUAC.



The diet in this type of families is very poor, based mainly on cereals such as corn, accompanied by beans, fats and sugar. Less than half of the days of the week they consume animal protein, and between 1 and 2 days per week they consume vegetables or fruits, which means that only 2% of the families have an acceptable consumption without implementing strategies that undermine their living conditions and future options.



The following graph shows the number of days per week that families implement survival strategies related to food consumption:



⁷ https://www.sica.int/documentos/informe-del-analisis-de-inseguridad-alimentaria-aguda-de-la-cif-mancomunidad-trinacional-fronteriza-rio-lempa-febrero-2023-enero-2024_1_131841.html



“I've felt a change in my life.”

María Magaly

María Magaly is a young nutrition counselor in her community La Puente, Department of Chiquimula, (Guatemala), where she promotes the active participation of young people in community activities. She is 18 years old and the oldest of six siblings. In 2022 she started a job that allowed her to continue her high school studies. In the absence of scholarships, and in the face of scarce family resources, working and studying is the only option for most Guatemalan youth.

"My life before I started training as a nutrition and health counselor with the support of Action Against Hunger was very

different, but now we know that everything we do is going well and is benefiting our community, especially children under two years of age and pregnant women."

Although she initially had doubts about participating in the counseling sessions, María Magaly says that she was convinced when she saw the benefits it would bring to her community: *"I have liked the fact that there are women who do practice everything they are taught during the visits, and that makes me very happy, because I know that this brings improvements for their children, who get sick less and grow better. For me it is a pleasure to be able to support the whole*

community and all those who come from the institutions, and that everything can be carried out", she says smiling.

María Magaly comes from a rural family with very limited means of living, so the economic remuneration she receives for her work helps in the purchase of food and other basic products for her family: *"It is a great help for me, because before I started I had no money to dress myself, my mother bought for us when she could or borrowed money from a lady. Now I can dress myself with the contribution they give us, and I also help a little at home".*



OUR SOLUTIONS

In our interventions aimed at improving the food security of the most vulnerable households:

- We promote joint decision-making within the family.
- The distribution of domestic and care-giving roles to facilitate women's participation in community and local spaces, so that this does not imply an additional burden for them.
- We also promote the economic autonomy of women by providing access to financial and technical resources that allow them to access decent jobs with their legal benefits.

Women have historically been socialized to assume domestic and care-giving roles in the family, which has implied a perennial burden for all the women in the house, sacrificing their food or the quality of their food to ensure that their children and husbands have food.



Women and girls suffer greater restrictions as a result of armed violence

30% of the Colombian population (15.5 million) face high levels food insecurity.⁸

In 2020, 43.4% of women (10.8 million) and 41.7% of men (10.1 million) were part of households living in monetary poverty.⁹ These gaps increased for women during the pandemic due to inequity in the distribution of care activities (50.6 weekly hours for women and 23.4 for men) and the loss of jobs in the most affected sectors by the pandemic and those with higher female participation, such as tourism and commerce.¹⁰

Food insecure households are mainly those headed by women (36%), compared to men (27%). This percentage increases for female-headed single-parent households, reaching 43%. Furthermore, according to WFP's Food Security Assessment Report (2023)¹¹, in 24% of single-parent households headed by women, women have had to use negative coping strategies in the face of food insecurity, such as asking for help in the street and selling belongings, among others. In rural contexts, where we develop 40% of our interventions, gender gaps also increase. According to DANE, rural women in Colombia (5.8 million) represent 12% of the country's total population and 48% of the rural population (12.1 million). Of the 3.8 million households in rural areas, women head 32% (1.2 million), whereas 69% are single-parent households (825,600 households).



⁸ Programa Mundial de Alimentos (2023) Evaluación de seguridad alimentaria para población colombiana.

⁹ Programa Mundial de Alimentos (2023) Evaluación de seguridad alimentaria para población colombiana. Pag 4.

¹⁰ ONU Mujeres (2021) Dimensión de género en la crisis del Covid-19 en Colombia: Impactos e implicaciones son directes para hombre y mujeres. Publicación. Bogotá.

¹¹ Programa Mundial de Alimentos (2023) Evaluación de seguridad alimentaria para población colombiana. Pag 4



In rural areas of Colombia, one of the factors that affects food insecurity is the dynamics of armed violence, as we have been able to verify in the monitoring we carried out in the framework of the **"Hunger and Conflict" project**.¹²

The restrictions on mobility established by the Non-State Armed Groups have a high impact on the cultural dynamics of peasant and indigenous communities and their productive processes, as well as on the management of community and domestic dynamics, especially **affecting the security and autonomy of women and girls**.



- Restricting access to water sources, agricultural, and fishing areas, as well as exchange spaces, constitute one of the main effects in the current dynamics of the conflict under the confinement model and restrictions to mobility in communities.
- For women and girls, the restrictions linked to violence further reduce their mobility, already affected by the pre-established roles in rural communities, prioritizing the displacement of men and adolescent men due to the risks of the context and excluding them from productive or income-generating roles.



These factors decrease the economic contributions generated by women, increasing their dependence on male household members.

In fact, 100% of the people interviewed in the monitoring project mentioned that women, as responsible for consumption and feeding at home:



Had to adopt negative coping strategies such as reducing consumption of 1-2 meals per day.



63.2% identified that after meals, their families were still hungry.

Which generated a high level of concern and stress for women who felt that they were not adequately feeding the family nucleus.

The general perception is that **the reduction of food portions is much greater and more frequent for women as a function of prioritizing a greater volume of food for men (paid labor force) and children**, which makes them more vulnerable to problems related to their health and nutrition and food security in general.

¹² Project finance by AECID and ECHO since 2022.



“ I know that they come without breakfast and when they return home they don't eat a bite of food ”

Ángela - Teacher in Putumayo

In one of the communities of Putumayo, which has been constantly affected by the presence of different Non-State Armed Groups, lives Ángela, a teacher who knows that her work guarantees education and food security for the children. It was not easy for the school to find a teacher who would remain in the village, since violent events left an indelible mark on the community. In total, 14 students enrolled in the school, and only 5 of them have access to school meals, *"I also take from my remittance for them. I will not let them go hungry; if we have food for 5, we multiply it for 14. I know that they come without breakfast, and when they return home, they do not try a bite of food,"* says Ángela, who not only allocates her resources to feed the students, but also for educational materials.

The teacher has been in charge of

maintaining and financing the needs that exist in the school. Every day she spends 4 hours preparing food for her group of students: *"we are in a conflict zone, and it is difficult for women to take their children to school because there are many dangers. Besides, I know that they do not have to give all the meals to their children and many times they stop eating to feed them."*

Being in the middle of an area in constant armed conflict, which restricts mobility and access to food, puts people's food security at risk. For Ángela, financing and preparing food for the students affect the income for her own and her family's sustenance, leading her to live in the school's warehouse without the possibility of having access to decent housing, *"I skip breakfast because I have to make the food work, at lunch I always eat my rice and beans or lentils [...] I could*

pay for my lunch, but I also have my debts, and as I do not live with my husband or my children but live in the school, I must send them monthly money to cover the expenses". She knows she will never get paid for caring for and protecting her students, but she is also confident that she is fulfilling her vocation.

Angela and her school, as well as the community in which she lives, benefited from the "Alianza Amazonía" project and its delivery of 49 clay filters that give them access to drinking water. This project focuses on serving rural areas that are difficult to access in the Colombian Amazon region, connecting and attending populations where institutional humanitarian access and basic services are limited.

2.

LIVELIHOODS





Gender inequality and lack of economic and educational opportunities also limit personal and collective development.

The key role of women in agricultural cooperatives in Nicaragua

In Nicaragua, rural women play a key role as food producers, accounting for 44% of agricultural cooperative memberships¹⁶.

However, due to traditional gender roles, their contributions often go unnoticed. Women's primary role is considered to be in caring for the family, assuming full responsibility for domestic work. Gender inequality and lack of economic and educational opportunities also limit their personal and collective development.

Despite apparent advances in legislation and public policies in recent decades, approximately **65% of women do not**

own the land they work and therefore have difficulty accessing loans; only 11% of the credit allocated to rural areas is destined to or managed by women.

This year, agricultural production will be affected due to the El Niño phenomenon, which is estimated to cause extreme weather changes in the form of drought in Central America, which in turn will lead to another increase in food prices. This will have a notable impact on smallholder farmers who have already been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, according to the FAO/WFP report¹⁷.

Rising prices of fertilizers and agricultural inputs have significantly impacted rural communities, especially women involved in agriculture, increasing economic hardship, limiting their access to necessary inputs and thereby decreasing the productivity of their crops.



¹⁶ <https://www.unan.edu.ni/wp-content/uploads/unan-managua-semanario-cedmeb-no-37.pdf>

¹⁷ https://www.sica.int/documentos/global-report-on-food-crises-2023-grfc-2023-fsin-and-global-network-against-food-crises-2023_1_131940.html



1

Gender-based diagnosis focused on the priorities and problems perceived by cooperative members in Nicaragua in the economic-productive, organizational and community spheres

Data collection:

FIRST MONTHS OF 2021



49 people participated in focus group



86 people participated through surveys

Among the main findings of the study was the perception that women face greater limitations than men in accessing resources to support the production and development of their own enterprises, although most of the interviewees and participants in focus groups agreed that the decisions on the use of the resources obtained from their productive activities were made by them.



2

Baseline study was conducted in order to better understand the living conditions of rural women

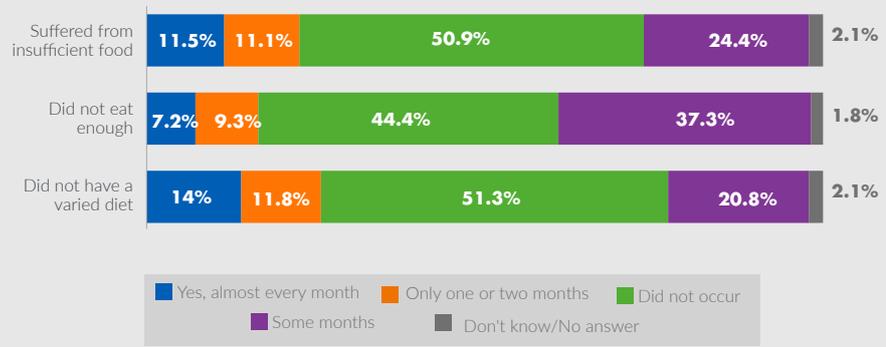
At the end of 2021, within the framework of the project Strengthening social economy initiatives and empowerment of rural women and youth in the Nicaraguan Dry Corridor, financed by the Generalitat de Valencia, to understand the living conditions of rural women participating in this initiative through cooperatives.



This project has helped strengthen the operation of four cooperatives with a total of 930 people, 53% of whom are women, which is an important achievement.

However, the daily life of the members of these cooperatives takes place in areas highly affected by climate variability, which has a negative impact on their livelihoods.

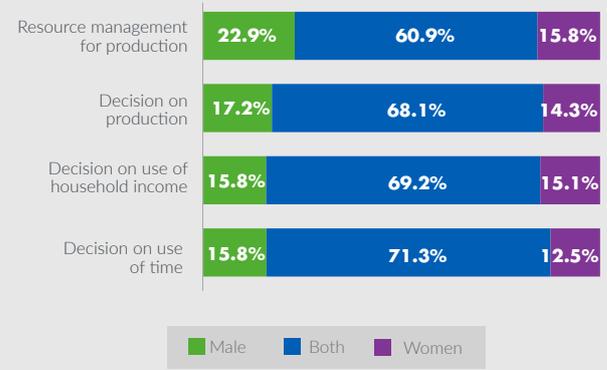
The fragility of these livelihoods and the low income they receive, especially the women participants, entails a risk of food deterioration, which is reflected in their food and nutritional security indicators:



Cooperativism arose as a response from small producers in order to obtain better benefits from their production. In general terms, cooperative members seek to guarantee the sustainability of their production systems while maintaining a balance between the needs and interests of their members.

- The initial general perception identified in the study is positive: it has been found that cooperatives favor economic activity and thus improve producers' results.
- 69% of those surveyed were aware of the gender policies of their respective cooperatives with the aim of increasing equity, which is evidence of progress compared to periods in which the subject was completely unknown, although there are still 30% of members who are unaware of the subject and its relevance.

In order to measure the empowerment of women farmers, the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) was used to measure the degree of inclusion of women in the agricultural sector. This index analyzes a series of dimensions that make it possible to ask for women's access to resources:



Although most of the decisions are made jointly, the man always appears in second place as the decision-maker. The project implemented, and the activities that Acción contra el Hambre and its partner cooperatives will continue to promote in the coming years, will strengthen leadership and autonomy to promote positive changes in women's decision-making within productive cooperatives.

Marbely González has been president of Cotucproma for six years, but she entered the cooperative world 10 years ago.

The journey has not been easy: "At the beginning it was a little hard, because we made proposals to the Assembly and they ignored those initiatives to improve the cooperative, but then I had to get a little stronger and propose ideas a little louder, empower myself a little more in front of the Assembly so that they could have confidence that we women could, and so I was winning spaces [...] and that was a way of raising awareness, because women can work and we can also govern".

Marbely adds that "the experience has been challenging, because on a personal level it has generated many changes, I have been empowered as a woman both in the cooperative and at home: it has been a great challenge for me, of which I now feel very proud".

She stresses that she has received training and that this has helped her a lot; "It has been a lot of learning, because I have been training [...] and it has given me strength to work in a cooperative that was starting up, because I needed a lot of knowledge, so the first year I was in the management bodies I faltered a little, because I felt that I was not empowered, but then I attended several training sessions and I did my own self-analysis [...], then from there I began to not be afraid to propose and do things [...] to be able to propose them [...], to be able to propose them [...], to be able to do them [...], to be able to do them [...] to be able to propose them and to lead their implementation".

Marbely believes that the participation of women strengthens the cooperatives "because we women are creative, we have good ideas, we are fighters and I believe that this strengthens and consolidates the vision of the cooperative".



Women can work and we can govern too"

Marbely Salvadora González González president of the Community Tourism Cooperative Protectores del Medio Ambiente (Cotucproma)



OUR SOLUTIONS

At Action Against Hunger, we are committed to continue working with cooperatives, which we consider to be the best instrument for economic and social inclusion in rural territories since, compared to individual producers, cooperatives improve management, reduce transaction costs and increase productivity, while generating greater volumes and strength in negotiations.

- In addition, they operate democratically, which gives women farmers and young people the opportunity to participate on an equal footing.
- Cooperatives are recognized for their capacity for influence and leadership in the territories, representing the interests of hundreds of families. Often, they also function as platforms for basic services in isolated areas, offering technical assistance services, access to credit, the possibility of purchasing inputs and food, or interaction with productive innovations.



Strong women in difficult territories



According to the report "Peru: Gender Gaps 2020" (INEI), **43,5% of rural women declare that they have no income of their own**, while among men this figure was 12,7%. In the same lines, FAO reports that women in rural areas have less access to land tenure, as well as less access to credit and

insurance to enhance their agricultural work¹⁸. For this reason, it is important to promote women's access to rural livelihoods, starting with strengthening their technical skills.

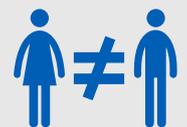


Ayacucho, located in the southern Peruvian Andes, is one of the places most threatened by food insecurity in the country.

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, in 2022, 50,7% of children under 5 years old presented anemia, and chronic child malnutrition has reached 19,2%. Both figures are higher than those registered in 2021.

In Santillana district, where we implemented the project "Food, Health, Gender Equity in Vulnerable High Andean Families", in recent years fathers (55,3%) and other male members of the household (17,4%) have had greater participation in training activities than mothers (40,9%) and other female members of the household (7,6%). While in urban areas it was mothers who reported greater participation (59,1%), in rural areas, it was fathers who attended training more frequently (58,0%).

This unequal distribution was also observed in the decision-making processes. According to our study, 45,2% of the women consulted reported that they did not participate in 100% of the decisions and 24% participated in less than half of them. These figures were considered when redesigning Action Against Hunger intervention, to ensure that women had the opportunity to participate and make decisions.



Grassroots organizations play a fundamental role in rural women's access to livelihoods. However, these organizations may have weaknesses, and it is necessary to incorporate management tools, as well as capacities for the development of technical proposals and coordination mechanisms among local actors, to gain access to a greater diversity of financial resources and human capital.

¹⁸ <https://www.fao.org/3/ca5092es/ca5092es.pdf>
<https://www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/es/c/320313/>



I dedicate myself to agriculture and livestock farming to support my four children"

Dora Prado



In some rural areas, poverty is compounded by the difficulties caused by low temperatures and the traumas of terrorism. One of these places is the village of Porta Cruz (in the province of Huanca Sancos - Ayacucho), where Mrs. Dora Prado is trying to support her four children by selling dairy products that she produces, thanks to the economic boost given by the entrepreneurship project (Vives) of Action Against Hunger.

"I work in agriculture and livestock farming to support my four children. My husband has been ill in Lima for some time," she says. She has had her partner in treatment for three years and has overseen being

a father and mother at home. She sells yogurt, cheese, blancmange, and milk liqueur, and is looking for opportunities to grow as an entrepreneur, as she only manages to sell in a nearby community.

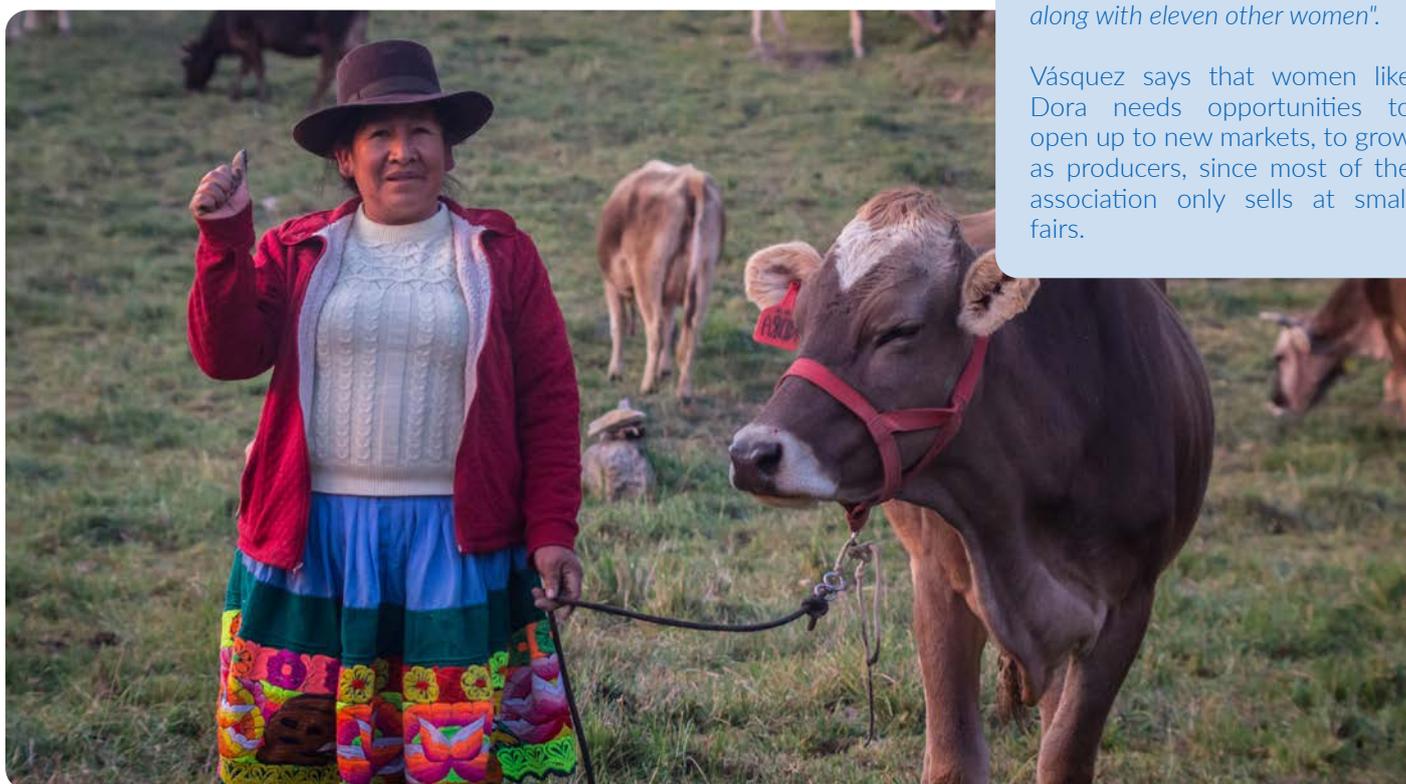
Dora faces the absence of her husband, the harshness of the frosts that hit her animals, as well as the lack of infrastructure and money to take her products to cities with more potential customers. Despite this, she looks for ways to provide education and food for her younger children, since the older ones are in charge of supporting the business.



One of the people who knows Dora's case is Conny Vásquez, a professional administrator, who is a facilitator of the entrepreneurship program. She recognizes the persistence of the producer for not giving up, despite facing difficulties.

"Dora belongs to an association of enterprising mothers that started with 60 members, and despite the adversities, she is still going strong along with eleven other women".

Vásquez says that women like Dora needs opportunities to open up to new markets, to grow as producers, since most of the association only sells at small fairs.



Dora grazing her cattle in Ayacucho in the province of Huanca Sancos, in the district of Portacruz.

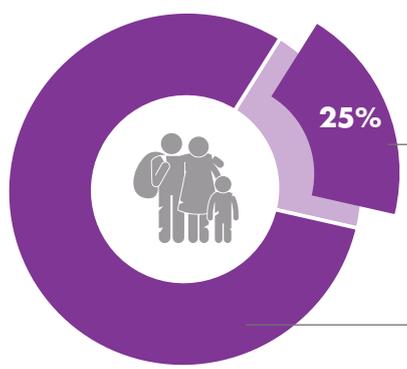
3.

MIGRATION





MIGRANTS ATTENDED BY ACTION AGAINST HUNGER IN THE REGION



25%
43,189 people migrant attended

173,647 persons attended in transit and destination countries



Migrant women and girls are exposed to multiple risks

"Human mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean shows that the presence of women, girls, youth and LGBTIQ+ adolescents living in situations of vulnerability with specific needs is more intense every day".²¹

The migration phenomenon in Central America especially affects women and girls, who face challenges at all stages of their journey.

These people face various risks and violations of their rights both in their country of origin and during the migration process. **Among the main risks are gender-based discrimination and violence**, human trafficking for sexual and labor exploitation, unemployment, poverty, begging, lack of access to food and medicine, among others. These risks are intensified if women, girls and adolescents are in an irregular migratory situation.

Among women's motivations for migrating is their desire to provide a better future for their children. Almost 40% of the women have had to take out a loan to make the migration journey or have used their savings from work (25%) and savings from the sale of possessions (17%).²²

Generally, given the high charges to which they are subjected in transit countries or the assaults, they end up without money to pay for the trip, so **they are forced to work or become beggars, which aggravates the painful situations** and traumas they already experience during a migratory journey of up to 7,000 km in some cases, which extends over a period of weeks.



Women migrate motivated by the desire to provide a better future for their sons and daughters.

²¹ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/es/latinamerica/mujeres-ninas-migrantes-buscan-futuro-mejor-centroamerica>

²² https://www.linkedin.com/posts/acci%C3%B3n-contra-el-hambre-centroam%C3%A9rica-2a92b6176_informe-de-situaci%C3%B3n-consorcio-life-honduras-activity-7065138943784038400-3TFy?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

Liriana and her family will continue the journey despite the difficulties



"I am Liriana, I am 24 years old, I have 2 children and we come from Ecuador, with my husband, we are Venezuelan, we were living 4 years in Ecuador. My oldest son is Venezuelan, my youngest son is from Ecuador. In Ecuador I worked in health statistics and my husband, in whatever he could get." Liriana and her family's decision to emigrate was not easy, on the contrary "it has been complicated, because leaving our family is hard. It was a difficult decision to make for both of us."

They left with US\$100 in their pockets, the amount they managed to raise to

emigrate. They had never set out to travel to the United States through legal channels but decided to try "when they put the benefit of traveling when one had relatives in the United States", but they did not succeed. "I tried and had no response from my relatives there. That's why I never submitted the application with the program," Liriana explains.

According to her, the journey from Ecuador to Honduras "has been complicated, because right now everything is money and we don't have the resources to move forward," says Liriana. She adds

that the hardest thing for her family has been "getting sick, because we can't go on like this". The entry into force in May of Title 8, a rule that applies to irregular migrants arriving in the US, increases the risk of deportation to their countries of origin for migrants who cross the US-Mexico border, but this does not stop families like Liriana's; they will continue their journey.



“

We sell pens in order to keep going"

Ruth Mari Segovia

"My name is Ruth Mari Segovia, I am 27 years old and I am traveling with my daughter and son. I made the decision to leave my country, because the economy is not doing well. I went to Colombia first, then to Ecuador, it didn't go very well either and I made the decision to emigrate to the United States".

Ruth crossed the Darien jungle and when she left her daughter had a high fever, diarrhea, and vomiting. "We drank water from those rivers, which were really contaminated, and I had to take her to the doctor in Panama".

She recalls that she received support from the police so that her daughter could receive medical attention and medicine. "Her fever went down; they gave her medicine. He (her son) didn't get anything, thank God I didn't either."

Ruth Mari and her children joined a group on the road to Honduras. She says they crossed Nicaragua in one go, because they were told it was better to rest in Honduras, where she could find shelter and support.

"In every country we were sleeping in the

street. In the towns of Costa Rica we slept in tents, until we arrived in the capital and there we were in a shelter for three days, and we continued to the border, they helped us to go by bus."

"We sell pens, so little by little we have been advancing, or we give away the pens for any currency that will support us. There were times when I made \$20, \$15, \$30, it depends. I use this money for food, tickets (transportation) and things like that," she explains.



In partnership with UNICEF, since September 2022, we are serving the migrant population on the southern border of Honduras.

In May 2023, we conducted **more than 3,400 surveys** mainly to family groups passing through the offices of the National Migration Institute in Danlí and Trojes, and families staying overnight in the Temporary Rest Centers managed by partner organizations of the Consortium LIFE.



An outstanding fact is the way women travel:

- While only 41% of men travel in family groups, this percentage rises to 72% in the case of women.
- Only 15% of women travel alone, and 4% travel with strangers.

Furthermore, within family groups, 25% of women travel alone with their sons and daughters (compared to 15% of men who travel alone with their children).

Women are more vulnerable to hazards during the trip.

On average, family groups are composed of two adults and two minors.



Men traveling without adult women travel together with another adult man and a child.



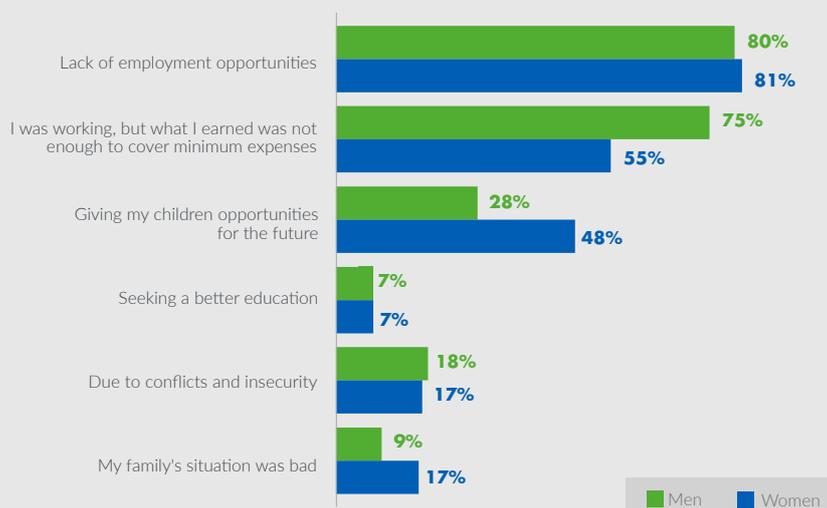
In the case of women traveling as single parents, they do so with two children.

75% of women traveling alone with their children carry at least one child under 5 years of age, and 8% travel with a child with a disability.

The percentage of children under 5 years of age is very similar to the case of two-parent families, but the percentage of people with disabilities is higher than that observed in two-parent families (5%) or single-parent families with a man (4%).

In addition, a quarter of the women traveling alone have opted to hire coyotes to guide them along the way.

Differences in the way they travel are also reflected in the main motivations between men and women. Almost half of the women are traveling to provide better opportunities for their children, although the main motivations are economic:



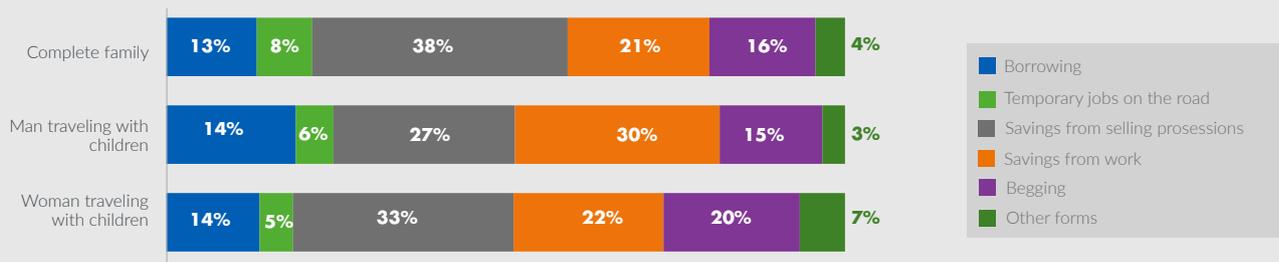
In addition to the lack of resources to make the journey, migrant women are vulnerable. According to the survey, most of them finance their journey through loans.

However, in the case of family groups, they had to sell all their possessions to start the journey. This means that, even if a small percentage of respondents consider returning home due to U.S. legislative changes, they have no assets or resources in their places of origin to be able to settle down and start a new life.



Of notable concern is the fact that a significant percentage of single-parent families headed by women are resorting to begging in order to continue their journey:

• HOW TRAVEL IS FINANCED BY THE TYPE OF FAMILY SURVEYED

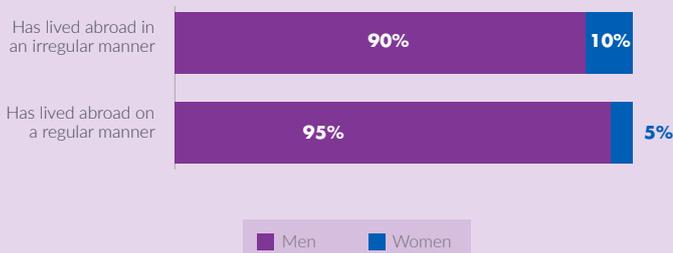


OUR SOLUTIONS

In general terms, between 30 and 40 percent of the families living in the Western Region of Guatemala have at least one of their members emigrated to the United States. Emigration has become one of the most common alternatives among Guatemalans in the face of the difficulty of accessing employment and decent living conditions.

According to research carried out by Action Against Hunger at the end of 2022, with support from IOM and USAID to determine the impact of migration experiences on the living conditions of households and communities of origin, only 1 out every 10 irregular migrants is a woman. When emigration occurs on a regular basis, with a visa and a fixed-term labor contract after which one returns to the country of origin, the participation of women decreases to a proportion in which only one woman out of every 20 male migrants has access to the regular and secure channels linked to temporary or circular migration programs.

• WAYS OF MIGRATING



Challenges and opportunities for migrant women in Colombia



There is increased risk of discrimination in the workplace for migrant women.

In Colombia, there are more than 2.4 million migrants, 14.9% of them are girls and adolescents and 37.7% are adult women, who are usually more exposed to acts of violence, including gender violence.

In fact, situational analyses show that for migrant women in Colombia there is a greater risk of discrimination at work and an additional difficulty in accessing fair working conditions. According to information published by DANE²³ regarding employability, migrant women have a workload in the home (unpaid) greater than the burden faced by Colombian women in general, with 53.1% stating that they dedicate

more than 20 hours per week to caring for children, compared to 30.6% in the case of Colombian women. 55.4% of migrant women say that they cannot move to find employment because of family responsibilities and, therefore, cannot access better living conditions.

²³ DANE. From: <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/enfoque-diferencial-e-interseccional/enfoque-de-genero>



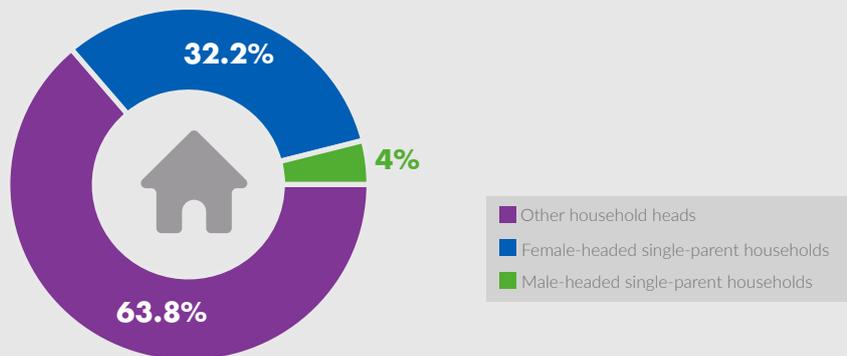
Between August and September 2022, the Cash for Urban Assistance Consortium (CUA), led by Action Against Hunger, in collaboration with the firm ISEGORIA, conducted a gender analysis to recognize the differentiated positive and negative effects on the participant population of the ADN Dignidad program²⁴, which supports the migrant and returning population from Venezuela and the communities hosting them in Colombia.

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with a total of 87 individuals who participated in 35 activities, consisting of 59.7% women and 40.3% men.

At the same time, the information was cross-referenced with secondary sources such as documents on cash transfer programs worldwide and risk identification, studies on employability, entrepreneurship, access to savings and financial services, and operational manuals of the program itself.

The review of this extensive literature indicates that the differential labor barriers faced by migrant women in Colombia are: motherhood and/or caregiving responsibilities, lack of support networks, xenophobia, and stereotypes about women's roles in the labor market. The following are the main findings of the study:

- HOUSEHOLD HEADSHIP



- Roles and responsibilities:** 36.2% of the households participating in the program are single-parent households. Within these households, the headship is exercised mainly by women with 32.2% compared to 4% of men. Most of the persons registered as household representatives in the program are women. Ownership of the program has allowed women to participate more in decision-making about the use of resources and management of cash transfers in their domestic space. However, one recommendation identified is to work on changing the perception that they are the ones who attend the activities related to the program, since they are considered to be the ones who have more free time.

- Regarding LGBTIQ+ migrants:** The roles and responsibilities are diffuse in their daily lives since they need to generate income in the informal sector, which leads them to establish agreements or pacts of solidarity with those around them. This is a population that is located in predominantly non-inclusive and unsafe contexts.

- Protection risks:** When asking participants about the security risks faced by girls, adolescents, and women within their households, they report cases of intimate partner violence as well as instances of child abuse, mainly physical punishment. Women, adolescent girls, and girls are at a higher risk of experiencing sexual violence both inside and outside their homes.

- Access to financial services, employability, and entrepreneurship:** It is common for men to work as construction assistants, delivery of goods and services at home, taking care of vehicles on the streets, as recyclers, making street sales, as mechanics, motorcycle or bicycle, or as taxi drivers. As for women's paid activities, they tend to engage in domestic service, work in restaurants or cafeterias and start informal personal enterprises, such as food sales, tailoring and manicure or hairdressing services, among others.

²⁴ <https://www.adndignidad.co/>



Another study conducted by the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) to measure the impact of the ADN Dignidad program on participants up to 3 months after the end of humanitarian assistance provision, showed that the monthly incomes of those who participated in the program increased by an average of 15%.

The study revealed a significant and positive impact on participants' savings and a noticeable reduction in their debts, as well as a higher likelihood, particularly for women, of establishing or owning their own business.



You face a lot of dangers [...] they are looking for women to take advantage of them"

Estrella



Estrella is a 30-year-old woman, mother of two girls, with an immense desire to get ahead.

She came to Colombia from her native Venezuela. In her transit to the country, she overcame many difficulties as she had to face xenophobia and other risks associated with being a migrant woman, such as the lack of access to official documentation and abuses on the "trochas" or illegal border crossings by people who take advantage of them.

"When you travel, if you do not have a passport, you face many dangers; some abusers seek women to take advantage of them. There are migrants who never reach their destination".

When she traveled with her mother, Estrella was pregnant and had to leave her oldest daughter in Venezuela. When she arrived in Colombia, she could not guarantee the basic living conditions of her family, such as accommodation or food. Getting a job was not easy, so Estrella used a small box full of nail polish that she brought with her, and she began to work offering her services

as a manicurist.

"After receiving assistance and addressing the needs of my home, I started offering nail stylist services and gradually I have had more clients. Initially, I would come home with an average of 2USD earned in a day, but things have improved". Says Estrella, a participant in the ADN Dignidad program.

Estrella is part of the more than 184,000 women participating in the ADN Dignidad program, which between 2019 and 2023 received humanitarian aid through cash transfers for food security and complementary nutrition and protection services. Of these, more than 1,000 women have participated in the component of entrepreneurship, employability, and access to financial services and savings groups.



Beneficiary of the cash transfer program receiving the card.

Access to support programmes boosts migrant women in Peru

According to the R4V platform, there are 6.1 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2023, 1.5 million in Peru, the second largest receiving country in the region after Colombia and well above Ecuador, the third with about half a million refugees and migrants. According to the results of the "Survey targeting the Venezuelan population in the country ENPOVE 2022" (INEI), **the female Venezuelan migrant population has increased in recent years, from 47,7% in 2018 to 50,6% in 2022.** Fifty-nine percent of migrant women in Peru are in irregular migratory status, which can limit their access to employment and services such as education, justice, and health, in addition to increasing the risk of being captured by criminal gangs dedicated to human trafficking and exploitation.

For migrant women, the lack of access to protection programs can hinder their incorporation into the labor market and

increase their risk of food insecurity; according to ENPOVE, 65% of men would have more income than their spouses, in addition to twice the savings capacity of migrant women.

Lack of access to protection programs can make it difficult for them to enter the labor market.



The "Study on food security in the Venezuelan refugee and migrant population" conducted by IOM and Action Against Hunger (2022), shows that one of the main factors of food insecurity in the Venezuelan migrant population is their economic situation, as they do not have sufficient resources to buy food.

The local population can access social and food protection programs, however, access for the migrant and refugee population is limited (even to common pots) due to the documents required to be registered.

- Migrant families must implement negative coping strategies such as reducing the number of daily meals, reducing portions, prioritizing the feeding of some family members or choosing inputs under an economic logic.
- The multisectoral study that Action Against Hunger did on the Venezuelan refugee and migrant population in Metropolitan Lima showed that, in 2021, 76,3% of households were food insecure, while 32,8% were severely food insecure. By 2022, the situation had not changed significantly, since although the percentage prevalence of food insecurity was estimated at 70,5% (5.8% less than the previous year), severe food insecurity remained almost the same (32,2%).
- The results of the Friendly Spaces for refugee and migrant children implemented by Action Against Hunger in Metropolitan Lima shows that women who receive support and access to protection programs have increased their access to livelihoods and income. According to the results of the project, access to employment for mothers whose children participated in the Friendly Space increased by 42 percentage points (from 28% to 70%), and the income of those who were already working increased by 26.3% (from S/. 997.7 to S/. 1,260.5).
- This improvement in their access to income and economic independence could help reducing their vulnerability not only to food insecurity, but also to Gender-Based Violence, which is accentuated in Venezuelan women, who have seen violence against them increase by 31% between 2019 and 2020. Factors such as xenophobia, their irregular migratory status, or prejudices related to women's perceived sexuality, place them in a highly vulnerable situation.



Having a childcare service allows women to have a greater capacity to generate income

For migrant families staying in shelters, having access to friendly spaces where their children receive care and comprehensive development services, while the adults can go out to look for work, is invaluable.

That is why, in January, when the spaces had to stop working for a few months, Deima and Yanelia, volunteer mothers, decided to take over the temporary management until it reopened its doors on a regular basis. The benefits of such a place are a boost to building child and family wellbeing. As long as parents depend on external help to cover at least one basic need, this space is understood and valued as fundamental. *"That is why we came here to help the children, besides that is my vocation, because I am a special education teacher. We made our duo: Yaneila was in charge of recreation and I was in charge of the children's pedagogy",* explains Deima.

Of the total number of Venezuelan children between 3 and 5 years old living in Peru, 74,7% did not attend school before the pandemic (INEI). Some of the main reasons are lack of income and lack of knowledge about the education system in the country.

For Deima the resources available in the space are enough and more than enough if, above all, the desire to contribute

and generate a change prevails. Leiner did not know how to write his name, he felt very bad because he was already 10 years old. *"I used to put sticks for him to review his name and he was very happy. When he finally succeeded, he ran to his mother to tell her "Mom, I wrote my name, I wrote my name! These are things that really fill you up."*

To read more click [HERE](#)



Children participating in the learning sessions in the friendly spaces.

4.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH



Maternal mortality and teenage pregnancies in Colombia

Despite the existence of a robust framework of public policies in Colombia, recognizing and guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health as a fundamental right for all individuals (regardless of their life cycle, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, ethnic background, or vulnerability status)²⁵, the reality is that gaps in access to these services are evident. Specifically, these gaps affect the poorest populations living in remote rural areas, victims of violence, displacement, people with disabilities, and those who have been forced to migrate from their places of origin.

According to Profamilia and the most recent National Demographic and Health Survey, **the greatest gaps in access to modern contraceptive methods affect younger women** in the lowest wealth quintile and with lower educational levels²⁶.

This situation is intensified in the migrant and refugee population from Venezuela. According to the Joint Needs Assessment of the GIFMM Colombia (June 2021), 24% of the interviewed individuals stated that someone in their household needed sexual and reproductive health care in the 30 days prior to the survey. Among these households, 51% did not manage to access the service, and the services with the greatest gaps in access were gynecology, contraception, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections and/or HIV, in the departments of Atlántico, Nariño, and Santander²⁷.

Regarding the reduction of maternal mortality, in 2021, deaths reached

83.2 deaths per 100,000 live births, representing a setback of almost ten years of progress in reducing this indicator²⁸. This setback was associated with the effects of COVID-19 and the measures adopted to mitigate the impact of the virus. This affected the availability of services and health personnel, the socioeconomic situation of women, particularly those located in rural areas who were not using modern contraceptive methods, and the indigenous women, whose Maternal Mortality Ratio is five times higher than the national average²⁹.

In terms of teenage pregnancy, based on data from the DANE reported by Profamilia, there was an increase in the Specific Fertility Rate among girls aged 10 to 14 by 0.2 points in 2021 (from 2.2 in 2010 to 2.4 in 2021)³⁰.

Finally, the Humanitarian Response 2022 Report on Humanitarian Emergencies in Colombia alerted about the situation in areas such as Putumayo, the Pacific coast of Nariño, and the border regions of Ecuador and Norte de Santander, regarding gender-based violence practices exercised by armed groups that control the territory, the commission of sexual crimes, human trafficking, survival sex, and an increase in the transmission of sexually transmitted infections and/or HIV, which is further complicated by a deficiency in the provision of services in these areas of the country³¹.

Gaps in access to these services are evident. Specifically, these gaps affect the poorest populations living in remote rural areas, victims of violence, displacement, people with disabilities, and those who have been forced to migrate from their places of origin.



²⁵ Ministerio de Salud. Marco Político de la Salud y los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos. En: Marco político de la salud y derechos sexuales y reproductivos (minsalud.gov.co)

²⁶ Profamilia. 6 ideas para que el nuevo gobierno garantice los derechos sexuales y reproductivos de todas las personas en Colombia. En: DOCUMENTO_CANDIDATOS PRESIDENCIALES_PAGINAS-1.pdf (profamilia.org.co). Pág. 4.

²⁷ GIFMM Colombia. Evaluación conjunta de necesidades. Junio 2021. Ronda 5. En: 0821_ESPA%C3%91OL_5RONDA_Informe_JNA__022.pdf. Pág. 19.

²⁸ Profamilia. 6 ideas para que el nuevo gobierno garantice los derechos sexuales y reproductivos de todas las personas en Colombia. En: DOCUMENTO_CANDIDATOS PRESIDENCIALES_PAGINAS-1.pdf (profamilia.org.co). Pág. 6

²⁹ Ministerio de Salud y Protección Social e Instituto Nacional de Salud. (2018). Informe de evento. Mortalidad materna Colombia año 2017. <https://www.ins.gov.co/buscador-e33>

³⁰ Profamilia. 6 ideas para que el nuevo gobierno garantice los derechos sexuales y reproductivos de todas las personas en Colombia. En: DOCUMENTO_CANDIDATOS PRESIDENCIALES_PAGINAS-1.pdf (profamilia.org.co).

³¹ [1] Humanitarian Response. Emergencias Humanitarias en Colombia. Enero a mayo de 2022.



During 2022, as part of the implementation of different projects by Action Against Hunger in Colombia, gender situational analyses were conducted in 4 departments of the country: Putumayo, Atlántico, Guajira, and Nariño. As a result, it was possible to conclude that there are 4 major barriers faced by populations in accessing timely and quality Sexual and Reproductive Health services:

1. Cultural constraints associated with ancestral practices and other dynamics within communities that affect individuals' autonomy to make decisions about their sexuality and reproduction:

In the department of Putumayo, information was gathered from women belonging to indigenous communities, of whom nearly 50% reported using modern contraceptive methods such as subdermal implants and injections, while the remaining 50% expressed that this was a matter to be addressed within the household and negotiated with their partners, parents, and, in some cases, community authorities. Regarding the perception of whether adolescents have full autonomy to choose their preferred family planning method, 49.5% indicated that they do not, while 42.9% considered that they do (5.61% did not know or did not respond to the question). When asked about the reasons for this potential lack of autonomy, individuals stated that there are still taboo topics or stigmas within the communities, leading them to prefer not to discuss such matters.

2. Migration status of the migrant and refugee population:

In the department of La Guajira, it was evident that the migratory situation is one of the major barriers they face in accessing healthcare services in general, including Sexual and Reproductive Health services. Individuals in an irregular migration status are

excluded from the healthcare system, and their only option is to seek care through emergency medical services, which are limited to specific health conditions, excluding many essential services related to sexuality and reproduction.

3. Lack of awareness about sexual and reproductive rights, referral pathways, and mechanisms to access Sexual and Reproductive Health services among individuals, communities, and healthcare providers:

This aspect was highlighted by the groups in the four departments studied, particularly by individuals in Nariño.

4. Long distances and transportation costs to reach the nearest healthcare centers:

In the case of Barranquilla (Atlántico), when asked about accessibility to other healthcare services, 89% of the surveyed individuals reported having a healthcare center near their place of residence. However, 9.3% do not have a nearby healthcare center. It is worth noting that 61% of women considered it easy to receive SRH guidance and care, while 30% considered it difficult (the rest do not know or did not respond). Meanwhile, in La Guajira, long distances, and transportation costs to reach the nearest healthcare center are a significant barrier identified by the participants in a generalized manner.



I have the time against me to get to Panama, I only have 4 months before my baby is born"

*Yorgelis Seijas,
pregnant migrant woman*



"I love my baby, but if I had known that the advice from my friends on how not to get pregnant did not work, I would have taken care of myself differently, because now no one will hire me because I am pregnant.

I do not know how many medical exams I should have already done; But what I do know is that in my fifth month I will have my first ultrasound, and so far. I have started taking some vitamins to ensure my baby's well-being, thanks to a health

brigade I participated in.

We have been stranded on the beach of Necoclí (Darién, Colombia) for a month. We must ask people for food; Sometimes they help us, sometimes they do not, but that does not discourage us because we believe in a better future. Sleeping on the beach is uncomfortable. We suffer from hunger and heat, there are mosquitoes and my hips hurt a lot, my feet swell and sometimes, I go up to 20 hours without

eating [...] the nausea is very strong, and I know it harms the baby.

Time is against me to reach Panama; I only have 4 months before my baby is born; but the bigger my belly gets, the harder it will be to walk. I know this is temporary, that everything will get better, traveling while pregnant has been more difficult, but my goal is to reunite with another part of my family who is there".

5.

GENDER VIOLENCE





Difficult access to justice and protection for women in Guatemala and Honduras



95% of impunity for femicides in Honduras

During 2022, in **Honduras**, 297 women were assassinated, according to figures from the Women's Rights Center, one every 29 hours in a country of 10 million people, 4.6 cases per 100,000 women, and this makes Honduras the country with the highest rate of murders of women in the region³³. The impunity rate is 95% and the lack of adequate investigations is striking: in 44% of the cases there is no data on the relationship with the aggressor, and in 30% there is no information on the age of the victim.

According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview, the alarming levels of sexual violence are also related to the high rate of adolescent pregnancy and childbearing. 23% of adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age have

been pregnant at least once in their lives and a high number of these pregnancies are the result of sexual violence.

In **Guatemala**, femicides have increased in recent years, reflecting a situation of extreme violence against women. According to the Public Prosecutor's Office and its Women's Observatory, 541 women were victims of violent deaths in 2022, an average of two per day. Guatemala ranked ninth in the rate of femicides in Latin America.

Only 1 out of every 3 women of working age works or is looking for work in Guatemala, while the remaining women tend to work only in domestic and family care. In the poorest areas of country, only 1 in 10 women work outside the home. This underutilization

of the female labor force represents a huge cost to the country's growth rate and to its socioeconomic and inclusion outcomes. According to recent World Bank³⁴ research, women's participation in the labor market is higher when domestic violence rates are lower.

For rural, indigenous, and afro-descendant women, access to protection and justice even more difficult due to a lack of political will and capacity gaps within the region's criminal justice systems. Women are the main breadwinners in single-parent households, yet gender-based violence and impunity force many to flee their homes to other cities and towns or to leave their countries in an attempt to reach others, including the United States.

³³ <https://oig.cepal.org/es/indicadores/femicidio>

³⁴ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/es/latinamerica/los-principales-impulsores-para-que-mas-mujeres-trabajen-fuera-de-casa-en-guatemala>



At the end of 2022, a rapid gender assessment was conducted in:

4 communities in the municipalities of Chiquimula and Jocotán, with the participation of 54 women and 24 men from indigenous communities.

In this diagnosis it was possible to verify:

The distribution of work in the families of the communities visited is unequal because women are completely responsible for domestic and care work. The only domestic work that men do is fetching firewood for the preparation of food, while activities such as fetching water is the exclusive task of the women and adolescent girls of the household, even if the distances are long or they are in danger on the way.

"We women have an obligation to take care of our children and serve our husbands because they work."

This conception of women's role responds to the intergenerational patriarchal system in rural Central American communities, where women are often seen as servants and caretakers of the family.

Discrimination against women because they are women is reflected in their almost non-existent participation in public spaces such as COCODE and other areas of community participation. Both women and men perceive that they, along with adolescent girls and young women, are more vulnerable to suffering some type of violence, whether physical, sexual, or psychological.

Regarding the reporting of rape, violence and sexual abuse, people are afraid to report acts of violence that occur in their homes or at the community level. The main obstacle is due to the previous experience of those who have denounced to find, later on, that the aggressor returns to the community exerts even more violence towards his victims.

On the other hand, and in general, people in the communities do not recognize the types of violence that exist, are unaware of the mechanisms for filing a complaint and even less aware of the protection options.



Now I can smile with freedom"

Yahaira Pamela Ochoa Gómez

"For many years I was insulted and beaten by my ex-partner; he mistreated me, telling me that you are good for nothing, you are nobody. I went through very difficult times; I even thought it was normal to live like that. Now I understand that it is not normal at all, it is an experience that I do not wish to anyone", Yahaira Ochoa recalls the violent incidents she experienced in front of her 3- and 7-year-old sons and 11 year-old daughter.

"My children witnessed all this abuse. My ex-partner would sit my three children down and in front of them he would tell me that I was useless. He would always refer to me with bad words".

They lived in a neighborhood in the municipality of La Lima (Cortés), when the floods caused by hurricanes Eta & Iota in 2020. Yahaira found support in her siblings, who live in San Pedro Sula. She felt less anxious with their company, and she recalls *"I always told myself that you can get out of anything, but if I stay in my house, I won't get out of a grave".*

She participated in self-help groups in her community. *"They helped me a lot, they came to change my mentality, I understood that it was not normal what I was going through, that I had the right to be happy and not to be bitter, I can say that now I can smile with freedom, now I*

feel that this is life, not the one I had".

Currently Yahaira is not gainfully employed, she is taking care of a sick relative. *"I consider myself that I am capable of fighting and working in whatever comes, the mentality of many women is that we cannot. We must get rid of that, face life as it comes, life is not going to present us with easy things, we have to move our families forward always in an honest way".*

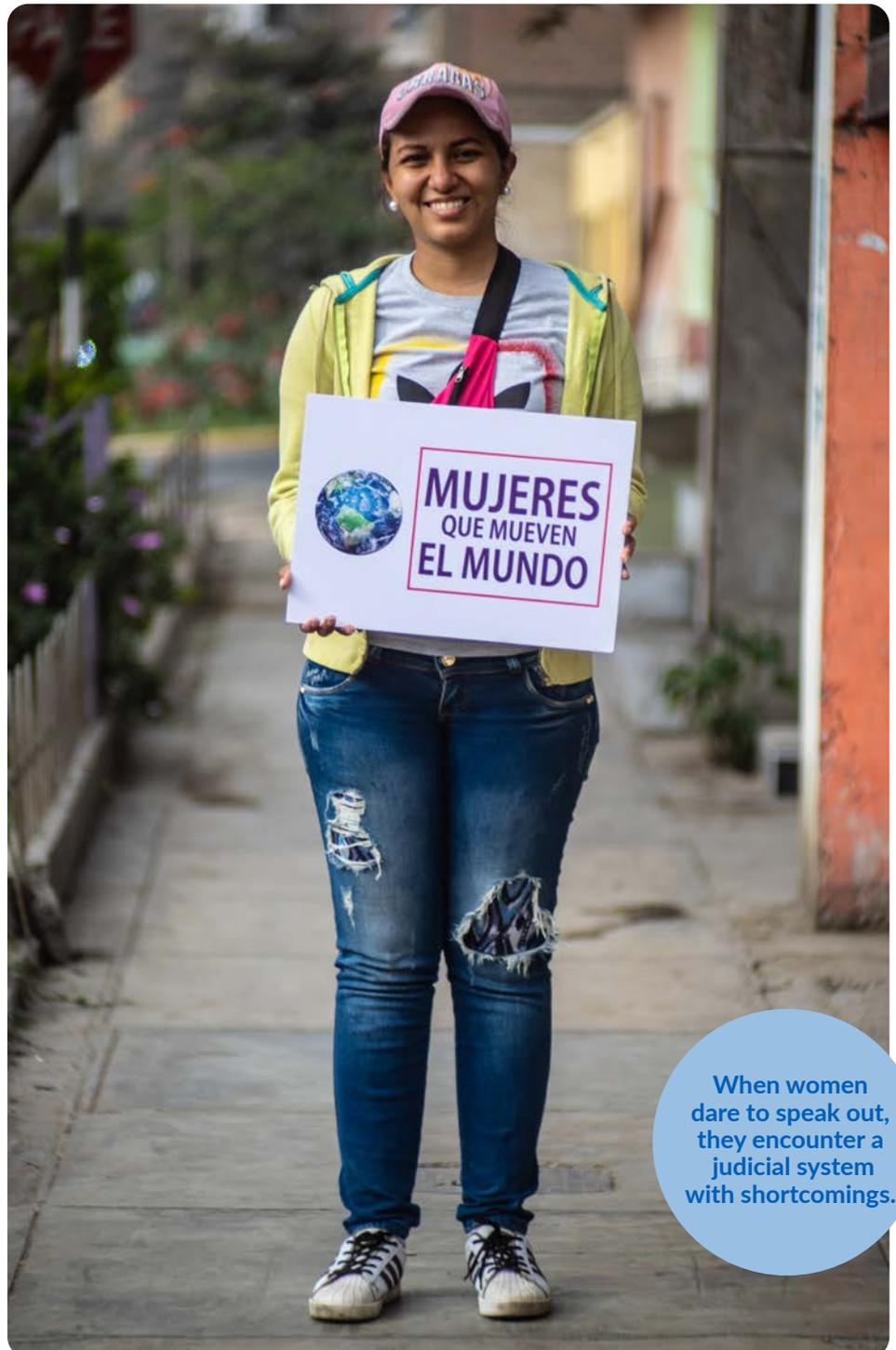
Eradicating gender violence cannot be postponed according to social actors

Peru is a country where 47% of population thinks a woman is guilty if she wears a miniskirt and a man harasses her, and 24% believe that a man has the right to use force to "correct" his partner if she "flirts" with other men, according to Ipsos (2019).

This year the country has experienced cases of extreme violence, such as the young woman from Lima burned in the street by her ex-partner, or the nurse who died from deep wounds caused by resisting a gang rape in Juliaca.

From childhood, girls are the main victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation (they represent 80% of the cases attended by the Women's Emergency Centers - CEM) and suffer sexual violence in an incremental way (in 2021 the CEM attended 7,738 cases against girls, 30% more than 2019), in addition to suffering the increase of teenage pregnancy and maternity, already warned by UNFPA in 2022; **every day 4 births occur in girls between 10 and 14 years old, which present an increasing trend**, despite the fact that according to Peruvian legislation these pregnancies would be the result of rape.

When women dare to denounce, they find a judicial system with shortcomings. According to the Ombudsman's Office (2018), three out of four judges specialized in criminal matters were not aware of the norms and international jurisprudence on judicial processes with a possible violation of women's rights.



When women dare to speak out, they encounter a judicial system with shortcomings.



According to the multisectoral study (Action Against Hunger, 2022) we carried out of with refugee and migrant population living in Metropolitan Lima:

- 27,2 % of the women had suffered some type of violence during the pandemic; the same percentage indicated having suffered psychological and/or verbal violence and 6 % responded that their partner exercised some type of physical violence against them. Of the total number of Venezuelan women who suffered violence, 81% did not seek institutional help and of these, 75% did not consider it necessary to ask for it.
- The main reasons for not seeking help are institutional distrust, lack of information, fear of their irregular migratory status and reprisals, or economic and emotional dependence on their aggressor. One woman told us: "when a Venezuelan woman goes to file a complaint, the police want to charm them, they don't take us seriously".



Regarding the situation of Peruvian women in rural areas, according to data collected in Ayacucho (project "Food, Health and Gender Equity in vulnerable high Andean families in the district of Santillana"):

- In 24% of households, wives have been abused by their husbands in some way during the last 12 months, a figure that rises slightly in households with mothers over 30 years of age (28.1%). The most recurrent forms of violence are verbal (20.4%), physical (5.3%) and sexual (1.8%).
- In this situation, new leadership has emerged from grassroots organizations and networks such as the Inter-institutional Network for the Prevention of and Attention to Domestic and Sexual Violence, which has carried out advocacy actions before the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP) and the regional government of Ayacucho, and promoted initiatives to "guarantee attention and protection for victims of violence against women and family members during the state of emergency due to Covid-19".



The image of Venezuelan women has been hypersexualized"

Martha Fernández



Martha Fernández, director of the NGO Asociación Protección Población Vulnerables (APPV), knows well the stories of women victims of violence. As a Venezuelan who arrived as a refugee in Peru with her husband and children in 2007, for years she has supported her compatriots: "Today the image of Venezuelan women has become hyper-sexualized," says Fernández, who began to receive cases of violence and harassment during her time with the

NGO Unión Venezolana. When she saw the great growth of these cases, she founded the organization she leads today to protect and empower vulnerable people, among them migrant women.

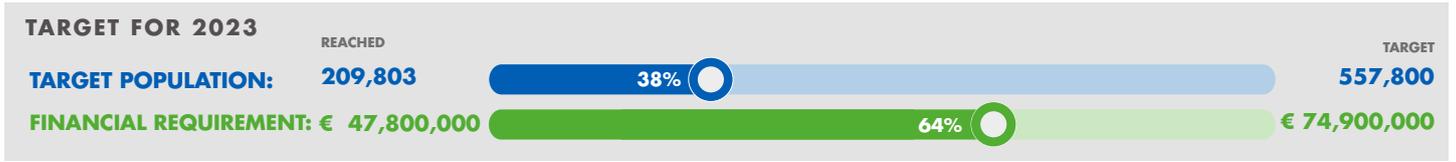
She points out as causes of violence against Venezuelan women the lack of empathy of Peruvian women who see them as "husband-stealers", and the lack of protection by the authorities

to receive their complaints. Fernández has accompanied cases in which young victims of violence have not been assisted only for lack of documents. Today she recommends that the complainants go to the CEM so that an official can accompany them to the police station, proving their case.



REGIONAL RESPONSE

JANUARY - MAY 2023



CENTRAL AMERICA



COLOMBIA



PERU



OTHER COUNTRIES



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR OUTREACH, VISIT OUR WEBSITE



FOR ACTION AGAINST HUNGER.

STRATEGIC ALLIES



Unión Europea
Protección Civil y
Ayuda Humanitaria



USAID
DEL PUEBLO DE LOS ESTADOS
UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA



Suecia
Sverige



In partnership with
Canada



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Agencia Suiza para el Desarrollo
y la Cooperación COSUDE



**Cooperación
Española**



**UNHCR
ACNUR**
La Agencia de la ONU
para los Refugiados



unicef
para cada infancia



OIM
ONU MIGRACIÓN



BID
Banco Interamericano
de Desarrollo



FCAS Fondo de Cooperación
para Agua y Saneamiento



**Gobierno de Navarra
Nafarroako Gobernua**



**GENERALITAT
VALENCIANA**



Junta de Andalucía
Agencia Andaluza de Cooperación
Internacional para el Desarrollo



Fundación "la Caixa"
Work4Progress



**Pathy Family
Foundation**

LA IGLESIA DE
JESUCRISTO
DE LOS SANTOS
DE LOS ÚLTIMOS DÍAS

ferrovial

Scotiabank

worldcoo®



FIND MORE:
accioncontraelhambrelatinoamerica.org



**ACTION
AGAINST
HUNGER**