



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

PANORAMA

of Food and Nutritional Security in Latin
America and the Caribbean

2014



**Millennium
Development Goals:**
**THE REGION
HAS ACHIEVED
THE HUNGER
TARGET**

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LIST OF ACRONIMS	vi
PROLOGUE	vii
INTRODUCTION	viii
MAIN MESSAGES	xi
CHAPTER 1.	
FIFTEEN YEARS OF CONTINUOUS HUNGER REDUCTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:	
THE ROLE OF POLITICAL COMMITMENT	2
Latin America and the Caribbean meet the 1C goal of the MDGs.....	4
Undernourishment at country level.....	6
Political commitment in a context of stability: the key to the region's hunger reduction success.....	8
Regional initiatives: the eradication of hunger as a priority.....	9
CHAPTER 2.	
STATE OF FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	12
FOOD AVAILABILITY	14
Food production and agricultural growth.....	17
Global cereal production outlook.....	20
Cereal production outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean.....	21
Agrifood trade.....	24
Policies to improve food availability in the 2013-2014 period.....	30
FOOD ACCESS	35
Economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean.....	35
Impacts on employment.....	38
International food prices.....	40
Food prices and inflation in LAC.....	42
Impact of price increases on the cost of the basic food basket and its relation to the minimum wage.....	46
Poverty and inequality.....	50
Food access policies in the 2013-2014 period.....	56
FOOD UTILIZATION	60
Malnutrition and poverty: Challenges in reducing vulnerability.....	60
Changes in food systems and their influence on malnutrition.....	63
Policies regarding the utilization of food in the 2013-2014 period.....	66
STABILITY OF FOOD AVAILABILITY, ACCESS AND UTILIZATION	68
Food price volatility.....	68
Natural disasters and their impacts on food and nutrition security.....	71
Food waste and losses.....	74
Public policies for stability in the availability, access and utilization of food.....	76

CHAPTER 3.**GENERAL OUTLOOK AND INNOVATIONS IN PUBLIC FOOD SECURITY POLICIES:**

A SUCCESS STORY	78
A new approach to eradicate hunger	80
Comprehensive policies and strategies for food and nutrition security	83
Food and nutrition security and the right to food have consolidated both legally and institutionally	83
Inclusive governance to eradicate hunger	86
Policies, plans and long-term strategies for food and nutrition security	89
Strengthening family farming	92
Specific institutions for family farming	92
Participation of family farmers for the development of the sector	94
Special policies for the promotion of family farming	96
Combating poverty and extreme poverty with emphasis in rural areas	101
Social and agricultural institutions become present in rural areas	101
Greater participation for inclusive governance in rural areas	103
Policies to address and overcome rural poverty	104
Domestic and intra-regional trade for food and nutrition security	109
Institutions for a more just and inclusive trade	109
Agrifood market chain governance	111
Trade policies that ensure food and nutrition security	112
Summary and conclusions: lessons learned and future challenges for the region	113
Differentiating characteristics of the hunger reduction process in the region	113
Challenges for a new development agenda	114

CHAPTER 4.**STATE OF THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND RURAL WOMEN**

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND RURAL WOMEN	116
The situation of indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean	118
Indigenous peoples, health and food and nutrition security	119
Poverty among indigenous peoples	122
Indigenous peoples are part of the solution	122
Food and nutrition security of women in rural areas of Latin America and the Caribbean, with an emphasis on family farming	123
Women have lower income and are “invisible” to public policies	123
Women and land administration	128
Women and access to productive support	129
The equality of women means progress for all	131

REFERENCES	132
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The 2014 edition was coordinated by Adoniram Sanches, Senior Policy Officer; Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Officer; and Luis Lobo, Coordination Officer of the support project to the HFLACI and Technical Officer of the Spain-FAO Fund. The FAO consultants Alfonso Alem, Giovanni Carrasco, María José Coloma, Cecilia Delgado, Pablo Faret, Francisca Nahmias, Valentina Ortiz, Rodrigo Pérez, Karen Rodríguez, Antonieta Surawski and Giovanna Zamorano redacted the contents of the Panorama. The final edit of the text was made by Giovanni Carrasco, Rodrigo Pérez and Francisca Nahmias.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

**Acronyms that do not have an English translation will be used in their original Spanish*

ALADI	Latin American Integration Association
ALBA-TCP	Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Treaty of Commerce of the People
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development
IBD	Inter-American Development Bank
CAN	Andean Community of Nations
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
WFS	World Food Summit
CRED	Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - German International Cooperation
GTA	Global Trade Atlas
HFLACI	Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MERCOSUR	Common Southern Market
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
MDG	United Nations Millennium Development Goals
ILO	International Labour Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
UN	United Nations
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
SICA	Central American Integration System
EU	European Union
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

PROLOGUE

Latin America and the Caribbean has become a world leader in the fight against hunger. It is not only the only region of the world that has achieved the hunger target of the Millennium Development Goals (goal 1C of the MDGs), reducing to less than half its proportion of undernourished people since 1990, but it is also the single region still on track to reach the more ambitious goal of the World Food Summit (WFS), which aims to halve the total number of people who suffer hunger in the region, a clear demonstration of the priority that it has given to the fight against hunger.

Regional achievements are not due to chance or mere economic development. They arise from an express decision to adopt the fight against hunger as a political commitment at the highest level, supported, embraced and backed by the whole of society. This commitment took shape almost ten years ago, when the then presidents of Brazil and Guatemala, Luis Inácio “Lula” da Silva and Oscar Berger, proposed the creation of the Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean 2025 Initiative (HFLACI), which was adopted by the thirty-three countries of the region and approved by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, CELAC.

The example of our region has inspired others: in 2014 Africa assumed a similar commitment to that of the HFLACI, pledging to eradicate hunger by the year 2025. This initiative reinforces the global call to end hunger with the combined force of both regions, which include 90 countries and more than 1.7 billion people. Given that the international community is discussing the work priorities for the post-2015 development agenda, this is a very strong signal, since it introduces a new approach in the fight against hunger, an approach that no longer simply seeks to reduce the number or proportion of undernourished: it calls for its eradication.

Hunger is a complex problem and there is no universal recipe for its eradication. Each country has to choose its own path. However, the positive experiences of Latin America and the Caribbean suggest that there are a number of common factors that serve as a roadmap: i) the political commitment of governments, ii) the mobilization of the whole of society, iii) a holistic approach that combines the strengthening of social protection systems with measures to support production, especially of family farming; and iv) the development and strengthening of



legal frameworks to consolidate progress and provide adequate budgets and resources to the fight against hunger, resulting from the active involvement of the region's legislators and parliamentarians.

Global and regional progress should not cause us to lower our guard. Although the region has taken a giant step ahead by achieving the hunger target of the MDGs, there are still 37 million people in the region who suffer hunger, so we must redouble our efforts. Besides malnutrition due to a lack of food intake, there is malnutrition due to excess food intake, something that has become a growing concern in the region. Overweight affects 23% of the adult population, while many countries in the region now face a double burden: hunger and overweight.

Eradicating both hunger and malnutrition is a commitment that requires the concerted effort of everyone, including governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, producers and parliamentarians. In recent years we have seen how this approach has evolved from a shared dream into a concrete action agenda at the highest level, materialized in initiatives such as the Program for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, CELAC, a sign that the region will try to maintain its leadership in the reduction of undernourishment in the coming years. FAO has supported the region's efforts for decades, and will continue to offer its international expertise and technical assistance so that the region can reach the goal of the Zero Hunger Challenge: that no child, woman or man should have to live with hunger in all of Latin America and the Caribbean.

José Graziano da Silva

Director General

Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

INTRODUCTION

The **Panorama of Food and Nutrition Security** is an annual publication of FAO's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean which includes, in a single document, the results of its ongoing analysis on the situation of hunger, malnutrition and poverty in the region.

Through its successive editions, the **Panorama** has attempted to provide a comprehensive overview of the four dimensions of food and nutrition security: availability, access, utilization and stability, by analysing its indicators: the situation of undernutrition and malnutrition, food production, agri-food trade, poverty and inequality and economic growth, among others. It is worth emphasizing that food and nutrition security is a complex and multidimensional issue that concerns several sectors and demands a holistic and integrated approach.

However, the **Panorama** does not merely present the region's socioeconomic and health indicators but also details and characterizes the public policies the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are implementing in terms of food and nutrition security. This allows the integration in a single analysis of the public demand –by which we mean the national and regional indicators that reveal problems and needs which have to be faced– and the public offer, reflected in the wide range of policies, programs and public investments that countries implement.

This general analysis of the situation of food and nutrition security, and the actions of the countries of the region support the main message of this year's **Panorama**: Latin America and the Caribbean have met the 1C target of the MDGs thanks to the countries overarching political commitment to address the problem of hunger, in a context of macroeconomic and political stability that has consolidated the development of the region in recent years.

The region has seen a positive trend in the reduction of undernourishment since 1990, and all dimensions that make up the food and nutrition security are in good standing.

The region has enough food to feed its entire population, which is an important achievement in food



availability; He has also held key economic growth rates, the pair of successive reduction of poverty and inequality at the regional level, which has been consolidating access to food in the country. Additionally, malnutrition deficit has been gradually reduced thanks to improved utilization of food; while the volatility of agricultural food prices have been falling steadily, contributing to the stability of the state of food and nutrition security.

The region produces enough food to feed its entire population, which represents a significant achievement in terms of food availability; it has also achieved and maintained an important rates of economic growth and successive reductions of poverty and inequality, which has consolidated food access at country level. Furthermore, malnutrition from deficient food intake has been progressively reduced due to improved food utilization, while agrifood price volatility has fallen progressively, contributing to stability of food and nutrition security.

Despite this positive outlook, there are still major challenges that, if addressed, will enable the region to improve the economic and social development of its peoples. The most important challenge is that 37 million still suffer hunger.

Although countries have enough food to meet their dietary needs, their supply comes from different sources, depending on the particular situation of each of them. In practice, this means that while some countries are surplus food producers, others rely on imports to ensure their food availability, which involves risks from potential food crises or sudden increases in the price of agrifood products.

In terms of food access, while poverty has been declining in recent years, the pace of decline has

slowed. Even more serious if the fact that, according to the latest available estimates, there has been a slight increase in the number of people who live in extreme poverty, which represents a significant risk to food and nutrition security if one takes into account that food prices are at a higher level than the historical average, even though they are far from the levels seen during the crisis of 2007 and 2008. The increase in the rates of obesity represents an emerging challenge which is gathering importance in the public agenda, while food waste can become a serious threat to food stability.

In sum, the **Panorama 2014** reports a positive view of the results of the fight against hunger in the region, one year before the deadline of the MDGs, and identifies the key factors that explain these important developments. However, it also shows the challenges and outstanding gaps that must be addressed by the countries of the region to consolidate the progress made and permanently eradicate hunger in the long term.

The document is structured as follows:

Chapter 1, Fifteen years of continuous hunger reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean: the role of political commitment, includes the latest FAO estimates regarding the situation of world hunger, highlighting LAC's achievement of the 1C goal of the MDGs while also coming close to the World Food Summit goal, followed by an analysis of the differentiating factor that has enabled this progress: the political commitment with the eradication of hunger, manifested in national and supranational spaces.

Chapter 2, The State of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, gives and in depth analysis of the state of the four dimensions of food and nutrition security: availability, access, utilization and stability. The chapter thoroughly reviews the main indicators that characterize these dimensions, as well as the major policy measures implemented by the countries during 2014.

Chapter 3, Outlook and innovations of public actions regarding food and nutrition security: a success story, is a detailed study of the factors relating to public policies that, according to the FAO, underlie

the region's success in reaching the 1C target of the MDGs. In the general context of great political commitment with the eradication of hunger, governments paid special attention to four innovative policy areas: i) the creation of comprehensive and wide reaching interventions in the form of regulatory frameworks, governance mechanisms and policies explicitly in charge of food and nutrition security; ii) strengthening family farming at all levels; iii) the fight against poverty, with special emphasis on rural poverty; and iv) the consolidation of agricultural trade, both regionally and domestically.

Finally, Chapter 4, The state of food and nutrition security of indigenous peoples and rural women, is a specific analysis of two groups that are a priority for FAO: indigenous peoples and rural women. The specific characterization of the socioeconomic and nutritional status of both groups aims to foster the full inclusion of indigenous and gender issues in the regional political agenda.

We hope that this institutional effort contributes to all relevant areas of regional debate. The conclusion that this year's Panorama of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean 2014: the region is firmly and constantly advancing towards the total eradication of hunger.

Raúl Benítez

Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - FAO.

Latin America and the Caribbean have managed to meet the hunger reduction target of the Millennium Development Goals before the 2015 deadline, due to the link between economic growth, high political commitment and the development of various public policies which had major impact on the most vulnerable populations.

Additionally, poverty and extreme poverty have also been declining in the region, although in recent years the rate of decline has been lower, especially in the case of extreme poverty. This represents a threat to the progress of hunger reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean so countries must redouble their efforts and implement labour, social and redistributive policies that allow the pace of poverty reduction to increase.

As part of the cross political commitment to eradicate hunger in the region, countries have implemented innovative strategies that coordinate public policies in different areas, with strong social participation and backed by sound legal frameworks. However, in some countries the fiscal limit restricts the implementation of universal policies free of charge.

Latin America and the Caribbean have enough food to feed their populations, even if there are net food exporters and others who rely heavily on food imports. Intra-regional trade, therefore, is a valuable tool that can ensure the stability of food supply in the medium and long term.

Malnutrition from deficit of excess food consumption remains a problem, although with varying degrees in the region. The eradication of both undernutrition and overweight and obesity are matters that transcend sanitary aspects, given the close ties between malnutrition, poverty and the diverse food systems that exist in countries.

The stability of food and nutrition security in the region is affected by food price volatility, natural disasters and food losses and waste. These phenomena must be addressed by public policies that integrate all stakeholders, in order to reduce the uncertainty they generate for producers and consumers.

Indigenous peoples and rural women make fundamental contributions to food and nutrition in each of the countries of the region; however, they have not yet received the attention required in terms of policies and programs that can benefit them in a broad and inclusive manner. Strengthening the food and nutrition security of these groups will be a key point in the future regional development agenda.





CHAPTER 1.

**FIFTEEN YEARS OF CONTINUOUS HUNGER
REDUCTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN: THE ROLE OF POLITICAL
COMMITMENTO**



II CUMBRE
CELAC
LA HABANA 2014

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One year before the deadline for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Latin America and the Caribbean have managed to halve the prevalence (%) of undernourished people since 1990, achieving the MDG target 1C referring to the reduction of hunger.

Additionally, Latin America and the Caribbean are close to achieving the target set at the World Food Summit (WFS), consisting of halving the number of hungry people since 1990. It is worth noting that South America has already achieved this goal during the 2012-2014 triennium.

These positive results can be explained by a combination of factors: a context of macroeconomic and political stability, the consolidation of democracy in the region and the factor that makes the region unique: crosscutting political commitment to tackle hunger and malnutrition.

Latin America and the Caribbean meet the 1C target of the MDGs

A year before the date set for the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have reached the first of the goals regarding hunger and malnutrition: halving the prevalence of hunger¹. This reaffirms the fact that when political commitment is expressed through the implementation of policies aimed at reducing poverty and inequality, applied in the context of a human rights approach and coupled with macroeconomic stability that has led to continued economic growth even in periods of crisis, the results are positive in terms of social development.

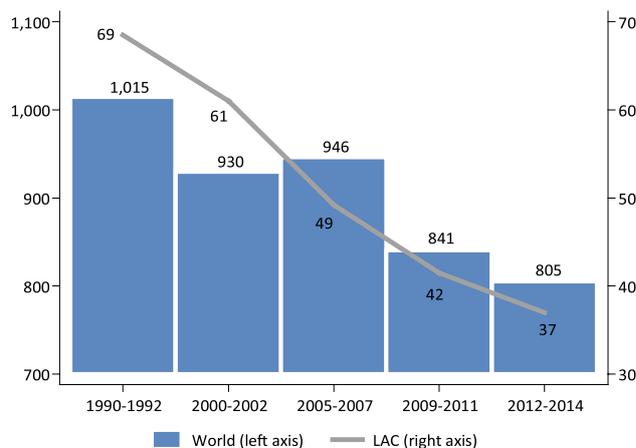
Despite this, 37 million people still suffer from hunger in the region, i.e., do not have sufficient means to access available food, or food is not available in the quantity and quality required. This means that 6.1% of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean suffer hungry daily. As already mentioned, this represents a significant improvement on the 15.3% (68.5 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean) which suffered hunger in the 1990-1992 triennium, but this improvement is still not enough. Although the region as a whole has fulfilled the 1C target of the MDGs in advance -as did Latin America- the Caribbean is still lagging behind. Figure 1 shows the change in the prevalence of hunger in the world and in the region.

Currently, in the Caribbean 7.5 million people are hun-

¹The concepts of "hunger" and "undernourishment" are used interchangeably throughout the document, referring, in both cases, to the measurement FAO makes so as to establish and follow the Target 1C of the Millennium Development Goals.

gry (see Figure 2). This represents a slight improvement over the 1990-1992 triennium, in which 8.1 million people were suffering hunger, but the improvement is still insufficient to meet the 1C goal of the MDGs or the World Food Summit (WFS) goal established in the 1996 Rome Declaration.

Figure 1. Hunger (millions of people) in the world and in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods

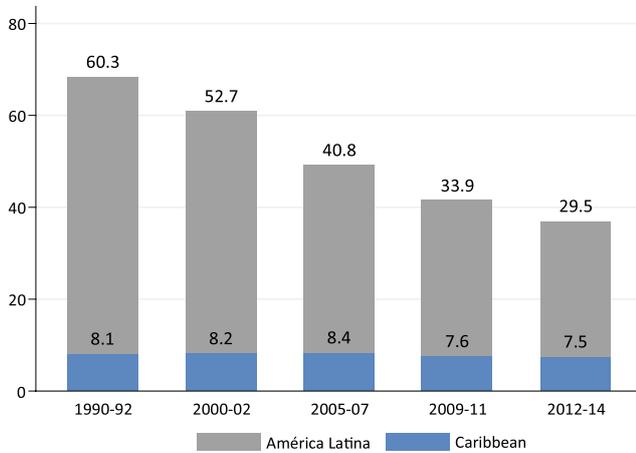


Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

The region cannot be satisfied with the progress achieved in hunger reduction while a significant proportion of the population in some subregions and countries still go hungry.

Figure 2 illustrates an important aspect of the fight against hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, but especially in Latin America: this subregion has achieved, simultaneously and in advance, both the 1C goal of the MDGs by reducing the prevalence of hunger between 1990 and 2015, and also the WFS goal, by halving the

Figure 2. Hunger (millions of people) in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods



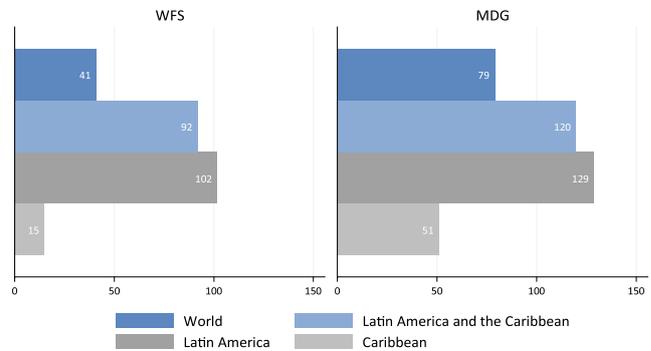
Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

number of hungry people. In 1990 more than 60 million people were hungry in Latin America -14.4% of the population- and in 2014, a year from the deadline for both hunger targets, hunger affects only 29.5 million people. Although it is true that the subregion cannot rest while there are people who suffer hunger, it is worth noting that the efforts made till now are giving the desired results.

While only Latin America has reached the WFS goal, the region as a whole is close to this goal, since LAC has made 92% towards it. As can be seen in Figure 3, the goal of the WFS is more demanding than the MDG goal, due to population growth, since it implies not merely reducing the prevalence (%) but the absolute number of people suffering hunger.

The fact that Latin America has already met both goals, pushing the whole region in that direction, has been a result of a stable and favourable macroeconomic environment and political commitment at the highest level to implement public policies to face hunger and poverty. Together, both of these factors explain the fulfilment of the goals in Latin America. The challenge for the future will be to maintain this positive development in Latin America leading towards the total eradication of hunger while working to ensure that the Caribbean catches up in terms of its hunger reduction. As can be seen in Figure 4, the Caribbean has made significant but still insufficient progress towards meeting the WFS and MDG hunger goals.

Figure 3. Percentage (%) of compliance (progress) towards the goals of the WFS and the hunger goal of the MDGs, worldwide and in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2014

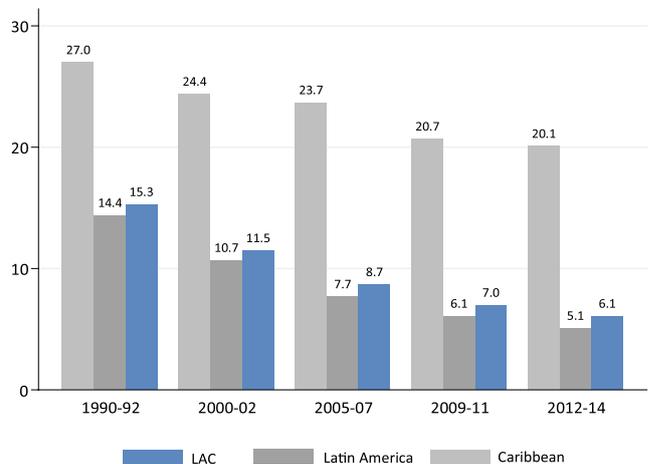


Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

While the Caribbean has only progressed halfway towards to 1C target of the MDG, it has shown steady progress in the fight against hunger: in the last 24 years the prevalence of undernourishment decreased by 6.9 percentage points in the Caribbean.

Despite this, it is not in the Caribbean where hunger is concentrated, but in Latin America: 80% (29.7 million) of the total (37 million) people suffering hunger in the region live in countries of Latin America. A large proportion of those who live with hunger do so in countries with levels of undernourishment lower than 5% which have already reached the MDG goal; indeed, almost 30% (11 million) of the total people who suffer hunger live in those countries.

Figure 4. Prevalence (%) of hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods



Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

This fact is particularly relevant because it demonstrates that the eradication of hunger remains a major problem in the region. Even if many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have reduced their hunger levels below 5% and/or have met the 1C target of the MDGs, it would be a mistake not to maintain and strengthen efforts in these countries, because in absolute terms, there are still people who cannot meet their daily food requirements throughout the entire region.

Undernourishment at country level

Fourteen countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have already met the MDG target 1C regarding the prevalence (%) of undernourishment (see Table 1). Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Guyana, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Uruguay and Venezuela reduced the prevalence of hunger by

Table 1. Number (millions of people) and prevalence (%) of hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods

Country	Millions of people				Prevalence of undernourishment			
	1990-92	2000-02	2009-11	2012-14	1990-92	2000-02	2009-11	2012-14
Argentina	ns	ns	ns	ns	<5	<5	<5	<5
Barbados	ns	0,0	ns	ns	<5	5,2	<5	<5
Belize	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	9,7	5,9	5,9	6,5
Bolivia	2,6	2,8	2,7	2,1	38,0	32,8	26,9	19,5
Brazil	22,5	29,0	ns	ns	14,8	10,7	<5	<5
Chile	1,2	ns	ns	ns	9,0	<5	<5	<5
Colombia	7,3	5,4	7,1	5,5	21,6	13,4	15,3	11,4
Costa Rica	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	5,2	5,1	5,3	5,9
Cuba	0,6	ns	ns	ns	5,7	<5	<5	<5
Ecuador	2,0	2,4	2,1	1,8	19,4	18,6	14,2	11,2
El Salvador	0,9	0,6	0,7	0,9	16,2	10,6	12,0	13,5
Guatemala	1,4	2,3	2,1	2,2	14,9	20,2	14,7	14,3
Guyana	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1	22,8	9,7	11,9	10,0
Haiti	4,4	4,8	5,0	5,3	61,1	55,2	50,5	51,8
Honduras	1,2	1,2	1,1	1,0	23,0	18,5	14,9	12,1
Jamaica	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	10,4	7,3	7,9	7,9
Mexico	6,0	ns	ns	ns	6,9	<5	<5	<5
Nicaragua	2,3	1,6	1,2	1,0	54,4	31,3	20,3	16,8
Panama	0,7	0,9	0,5	0,4	26,4	27,6	14,8	10,6
Paraguay	0,9	0,7	0,7	0,7	19,5	12,9	10,4	11,0
Peru	7,0	5,4	3,6	2,7	31,6	20,6	12,3	8,7
Dominican Republic	2,5	2,5	1,8	1,5	34,4	28,5	18,2	14,7
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	20,7	16,8	6,8	5,7
Suriname	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0	15,5	13,9	8,7	8,4
Trinidad and Tobago	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1	12,6	11,9	10,2	9,0
Uruguay	0,3	ns	ns	ns	8,5	<5	<5	<5
Venezuela	2,8	3,8	ns	ns	14,1	15,4	<5	<5
LATIN AMERICA	60,3	52,7	33,9	29,5	14,4	10,7	6,1	5,1
CARIBBEAN	8,1	8,2	7,6	7,5	27,0	24,4	20,7	20,1
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	68,5	61,0	41,5	37,0	15,3	11,5	7,0	6,1

Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP 2014.

Note: The abbreviation “ns” indicates values that are not statistically significant. The countries where undernourishment affects less than 5% of the population are signalled by “<5”.

more than half compared to the 1990-92 triennium. Of these, Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela show levels of undernourishment lower than 5%; but despite occupying a privileged position over other countries in the region and the rest of the world, there are not fully free from undernourishment, which stresses the need to maintain policies aimed at fighting hunger and poverty.

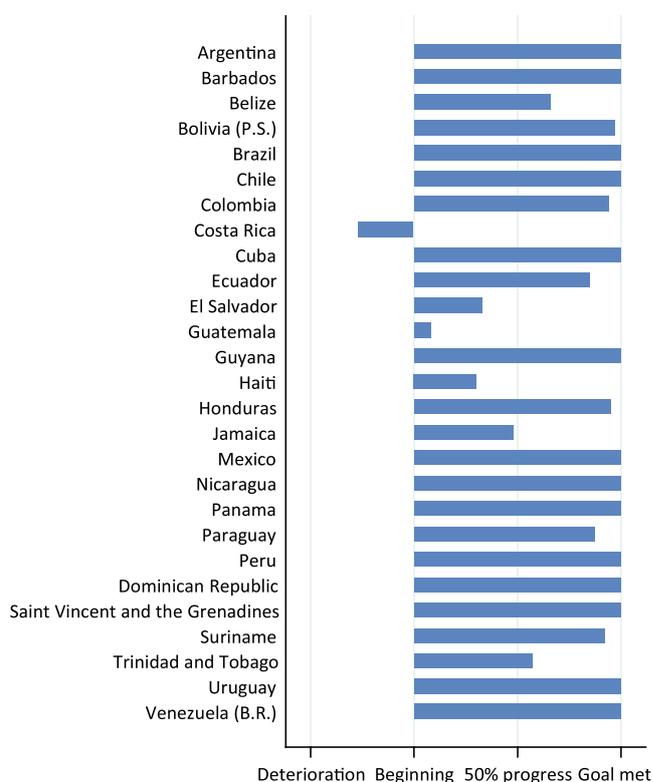
Four countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Honduras and Suriname) have advanced more than 90% towards the 1C target of the MDGs, Bolivia's progress being particularly noteworthy, with over 97% compliance with the goal. A little further down is Ecuador, with 85% compliance.

With the exception of Costa Rica, all countries in the region have made significant progress towards the attainment of MDG target 1C (see Figure 5). It is important to consider, however, that at the beginning of the series Costa Rica had undernourishment levels far below most of the other countries of the region (5.2%) and that while the country has only made moderate progress since then, it remains among the group of countries with the lower levels of undernourishment (in fact, Costa Rica's undernourishment levels are well below other countries that have met the MDG 1C target). In this regard, it is worth specifying that the MDG targets measure the evolution or progress of the indicators with regard to the levels of 1990-92, not current levels, hence compliance is more challenging for countries which had low levels of undernourishment in 1990-92.

By looking at the success stories of the region, one wonders what elements support the continued progress in the eradication of hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean; what characteristics inherent to the region have turned it into a leading global example in the fight against hunger; and what elements have allowed most countries to maintain this downward trend even in times of economic and financial crisis.

Along with the undeniable role that economic growth and political stability play in the region, the distinctive element in Latin America and the Caribbean is the consolidation of food and nutrition security in the regional public agenda, which has resulted in a great

Figure 5. State of progress towards the 1C goal of the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2014



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC with information from FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

commitment from all political and social actors, and the implementation of more comprehensive and inclusive public actions regarding this matter. When only a year is left for the world to reach the goals of the MDGs, we can say without doubt that the region is a world leader in the fight against hunger.

BOX 1.

FAO'S UNDERNOURISHMENT INDICATOR

FAO estimates the percentage of people who fail to meet their minimum daily energy requirements to lead a healthy life. This figure is determined by establishing a minimum consumption threshold necessary for a healthy life based on population structure (height, age, sex, etc.) and other parameters. Taking into account the caloric availability and food consumption of the population in all socioeconomic strata of a country, FAO determines what percentage of the population does not meet these minimum requirements. To prevent the impact of transient phenomena such as droughts, rising food prices or other factors that can increase the volatility of the estimate, FAO uses three year periods.

Undernourishment is an indicator of food energy deprivation that by itself does not fully reflect the complexity and multidimensional nature of food and nutrition security. This has led FAO to complement this undernourishment indicator with a set of other indicators to obtain an overview of all dimensions of food and nutrition security*.

Finally, it is important to note that the FAO makes estimates of the prevalence of hunger based on the information available at the time of calculation. This implies, firstly, that new available data produces changes in previously calculated hunger figures and, secondly, that new hunger series are not comparable with older series. In this sense, it is only possible to analyse the behaviour of hunger in a region or a country taking into account the last available series in its entirety. That is to say, each year's figures are not comparable to former hunger figures, since the whole series is continuously updated to reflect the latest information.

Methodological note: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/es/SOFI_2012/sofi_technical_note.pdf

* Food Security Indicators can be seen in <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/#.VBGLpVldV-e>

POLITICAL COMMITMENT IN A CONTEXT OF STABILITY: the key to the region's hunger reduction success

In the last two decades, the reduction of hunger and malnutrition has gained prominence in the international political agenda as a global development goal. In Latin America and the Caribbean it has also become a priority issue in the national and regional agendas.

Given this scenario, what are the keys behind Latin America and the Caribbean's success when compared to other regions of the world? The positive trend in hunger reduction of the last fifteen years is explained by a combination of factors, both in terms of the regional and global context as well as specific efforts at country level, particularly in those countries that have increased their efforts to consolidate and strengthen their food and nutrition security.

In particular, countries in the region have addressed their human rights obligations in a more explicit way, sanctioning various legal frameworks to ensure the human right to adequate food. As a rule, the countries that compose the region have consolidated democracies, which along with economic growth² and the political commitments that have facilitated the implementation of inclusive governance mechanisms to fight hunger and poverty have resulted in an important development of food and nutrition security policies with a more inclusive and cross-sector approach³.

At the supranational level, the human rights approach has led to agreements, commitments and framework laws on issues relevant to food and nutrition security. While they are not binding, they do embody a permanent and inescapable challenge for countries, regardless of how much progress they have made in the fight against hunger.

²/Based on data from ECLAC (online), the average growth in Latin America and the Caribbean in the last decade has presented more dynamic than during the previous one (3.8% versus 2.4%). The same can be seen when the region is compared to the behaviour of the global economy (3.8% and 2.8% in the same period).

³/Chapter 3 discusses in greater detail these developments at the country level.

The dynamics of the national and regional political agendas and the definition of their development priorities have occurred against the backdrop of the food price crisis. This crisis helped to position food and nutrition security, malnutrition and poverty in the public discussion. The human rights approach to food and nutrition security has also been enriched with a multidimensional vision, where the causes and solutions to these problems involve different sectors, actors and timeframes. This strategy has gained strength due to the evidence that economic growth by itself is not necessarily accompanied by more welfare, or that the new level of welfare is not enjoyed by everyone, which has led the way to a new (or at least a renewed) political approach, with various commitments and actions at national, supranational and regional level.

In the last fifteen years, countries in the region have recognized the political significance and central importance of the struggle against hunger, malnutrition and poverty for human development and quality of life. In different ways and with different degrees of intensity, both in individual countries and in the region as a whole an environment conducive to progress in strengthening food and nutrition security has been created through increased political commitment, coupled with regulatory frameworks, social participation and governance bodies along with the development and use of resources commensurate with the task. These manifestations of political will are what have allowed a leap from mere talk to the concrete actions that are behind the recent achievements in the improvement of food and nutrition security the SAN in Latin America and the Caribbean.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES: the eradication of hunger as a priority

Already in 2005 the region became a pioneer by proposing to eradicate hunger by 2025, shaping the Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (HFLACI), a political commitment made by all countries in the region that has been adding members and which to this day gathers support and is promoted in high-level meetings. Additionally, the Santiago Declaration of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC, in Spanish) made in January 2013 (and endorsed in January 2014 at the Second Summit

of CELAC held in Havana), led to the creation of an Action Plan of Public Policies on Social Matters, a framework within which FAO was requested to prepare a draft Action Plan for Food Security, Nutrition and Hunger and Poverty Eradication, with the support of ECLAC and the Latin American Integration Association. Meanwhile, The Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-Treaty of Commerce of the People (ALBA-TCP) and Petrocaribe adopted the Hugo Chavez Action Plan for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty.

Based on these experiences, other sub-regional integration bodies such as the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Community of Andean Nations (CAN) and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) are working on strategies and action plans to address food and nutrition security from a supranational perspective, based on the common realities of their countries and adapting these strategies to the different contexts and problems of food insecurity, to responding to their causal relations.

At the regional legislative level, the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino, in Spanish, from now on) has assumed a fundamental commitment with the integration of food and nutrition security into the public agenda of Latin America and the Caribbean, through discussions and consultation processes that led to the adoption of the Framework Law of the Right to Food, Food Security and Sovereignty in 2012, and the Framework Law on School Feeding in 2013. These legal frameworks, while not binding, legitimize the concepts of the right to food and food and nutrition security for the whole population at a regional level. They are also a symbol of the commitment shown by national parliamentarians, which can also be seen in the active development of the Regional Parliamentary Front Against Hunger and its national chapters, which continually create and develop multi-stakeholder dialogue processes, promoting the conceptualization and incorporation of the right to food in their parliaments, supporting the development of laws, norms and policies related to the fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

The articulation and convergence of positions and interests with regard to food and nutrition security

has been strengthened through the establishment of various bodies and mechanisms of formal and informal participation. These new spaces in which public, private and civil society actors are involved, are dedicated to food and nutrition security concerns as well as other emerging issues, deepening the discussion between countries and their respective approaches, and helping to validate and legitimize positions that lead to decision making and implementation. Forums and spaces for dialogue at the executive and legislative level, including regional integration organizations have worked in the same way, facilitating dialogue, showcasing experiences, sharing knowledge and promoting South-South cooperation. The agreements and actions driven by these agencies have also contributed to the integration of the right to food in national political agendas, as has happened in the last two years within the CELAC and ALBA-Petrocaribe, to cite two examples.

Advances in governance include the gradual acceptance and implementation of principles such as participation, transparency, equity and accountability. It is worthwhile, in this regard, to note that the commitment to food and nutrition security does not merely come from governments. Parliamentarians, academics, social organizations and civil society leaders have joined the debate, highlight emerging issues and enriching the common analysis, each from their own perspective. Some of these actors have become voices even at a formal level, as can be seen in the reformed Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which now includes civil society as a member after recognition in 2009 of the Civil Society Mechanism, the largest international integration mechanism for organizations from civil society, which aims to influence policies and actions on agriculture and food and nutrition security at national, regional and global levels. Broad participation and partnerships not only legitimize policies for food and nutrition security, but also promote equity, transparency, and the development of monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

In keeping with the prioritization of food and nutrition security and the fight against poverty in national agendas, countries have developed various instruments of public policy to address social problems both in the short term as well as to produce structural changes that deliver permanent solutions in the long term. These policies include initiatives in the areas of social

protection, family farming, the labour market and agri-food trade, among others.

To improve the food and nutrition security of the population, legal, legislative and institutional frameworks have been created, as well as policies, strategies and programs at regional and national levels. Several countries have enacted legal frameworks relating to food and nutrition security and the right to food and have national policies in this area. In addition, countries have adhered to the commitments of the major supranational organizations that represent them, such as CELAC, SICA, UNASUR, MERCOSUR and CARICOM, and these forums have led to the search for novel ways to further South-South cooperation in support of food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development, in which national cooperation agencies seek opportunities to contribute their experience and expertise so other countries can move faster towards the hunger and poverty eradication goals.

Summing up, the incorporation of food and nutrition security in the regional public agenda, together with the growing commitment to the human right to adequate food in supranational and national forums have been the foundation of a broad political commitment to address hunger, malnutrition and poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean. Additionally, the emergence of new players and leaders involved not only the diagnosis but also in the development of solutions, have contributed decisively to achieving progress.

The next chapter analyses the state of the four dimensions of food security and nutrition, showing clear evidence for these achievements reached so far while also highlighting the challenges ahead and setting the basis for the future search of new processes that will allow not only the fulfilment of the MDG targets but the realization of the dream of guaranteeing that the current generation be the last to suffer hunger in Latin American and Caribbean.



CHAPTER 2.

**STATE OF FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**





FOOD AVAILABILITY

Latin America and the Caribbean has enough food to meet the caloric needs of its entire population, both in terms of the region as a whole and in each individual country.

The region has become a net food exporter, which demonstrates its potential for food production. However, the situation varies from country to country and Caribbean countries continue to import most of their food destined for human consumption.

This scenario is a great opportunity for the development of intraregional trade, which shows steady growth, but still has plenty of room to increase. The region has the potential to become its main food supplier, its “own best trade partner”.

Food availability⁴ is one of the four dimensions of food security and nutrition, and the first pillar of food and nutrition security in as much as it is defined as the action or actions oriented to ensure the availability of sufficient food for people’s needs. However, food availability by itself is not sufficient to overcome the problem of hunger, something which is particularly true in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this sense, a broad availability of food does not necessarily lead to improved access or adequate food utilization, despite the fact that the existence of enough food to meet the demand of the population as a whole is the first requirement of food and nutrition security.

In recent decades, production and overall food availability has increased faster than population growth and food consumption, which consequently has result-

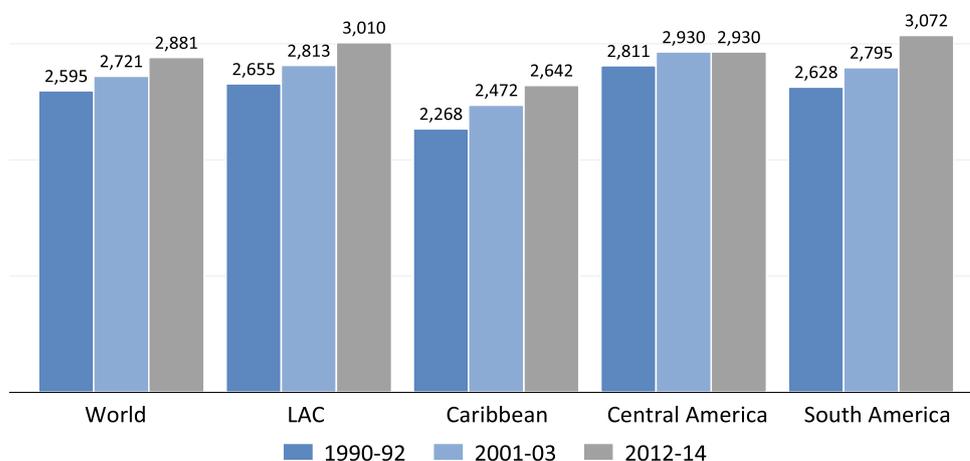
ed in an increase in per capita food availability, which is higher than the minimum food requirements of the population.

Worldwide food availability today is 11% higher than during the 1990-1992 triennium, reaching 2,881 calories per day per person, which exceeds by 56% the average minimum daily calorie requirement (see Figure 6).

In this regard, the progress in Latin America and the Caribbean is evident. In the early 90s food availability in all countries except for Haiti exceeded the minimum requirements by relatively narrow margins. Currently, all 33 countries in the region have food to fully meet the minimum requirements in terms of energy: Latin America and the Caribbean’s calorie supply for the

⁴Food and nutrition security is composed of four dimensions or pillars: availability, access, stability and utilization. Following the traditional format of the Panorama of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the second chapter of this document the four dimensions are analyzed separately, although all these dimensions are closely linked

Figure 6: Food availability in the world, Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole and by sub-region, 1990-92, 2001-03 and 2012-2014 (kcal/person/day)



Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

2012-14 triennium reached 3,010 calories, which means an increase of 13% since the 1990-92 triennium, much greater than the global average.

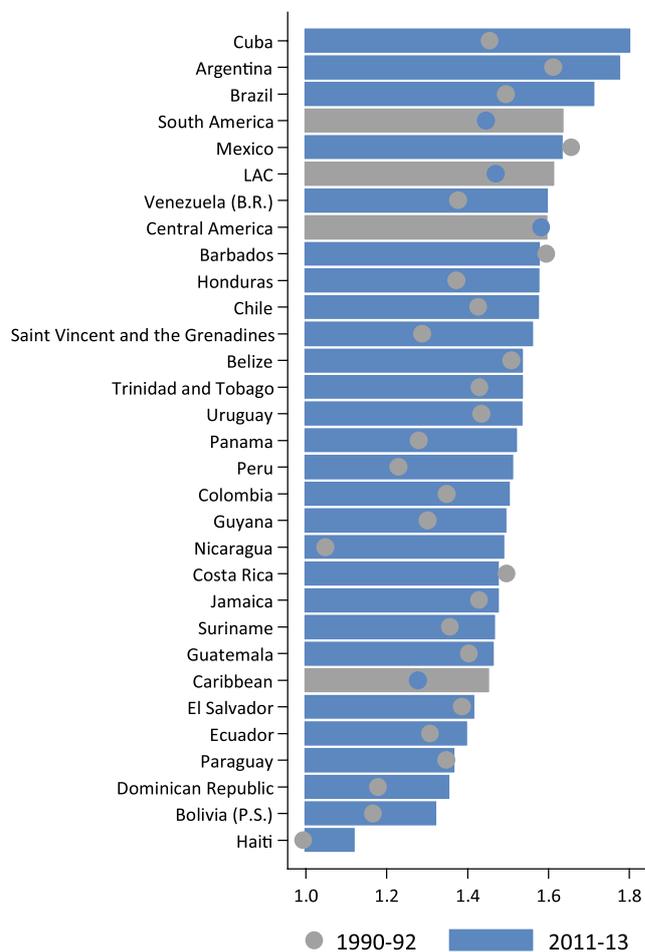
This same trend is observed in the subregions. South America, which accounts for 67% of the regional population, has on average 3,072 calories a day per person, 17% higher than its caloric availability two decades ago. In Central America caloric availability reaches 2,930 calories, an increase of 4% in the same time period; while in the past twenty years the Caribbean presents a growth of 17% in its available calories, although it exhibits the lowest levels in the region, with only 2,642 calories per day per person, on average.

As mentioned above, in terms of caloric availability the region has more food than is required by its population. In particular, the availability of calories in the region exceeds by 62% the Minimum Energy Daily Requirements (MDER). The Caribbean exceeds by 46% the minimum requirements, Central America by 60%, and South America by 64%. However, despite the favourable results seen in these subregional averages, there are wide disparities from country to country.

Both the minimum and maximum MDER of the region are in the Caribbean: Haiti's food availability exceeds by only 12% the minimum requirements, while in Cuba availability surpasses 81%. Argentina and Brazil follow with a caloric availability which exceeds by 70% the MDER. At the other end of the spectrum after Haiti, come Bolivia, the Dominican Republic and Paraguay are the countries with the smallest difference between availability and the minimum requirements in caloric terms, although they surpass these by more than 30% per person (see Figure 7).

The improvement in supply has not increased food availability, but also the diversity of the diet (see Figure 8). As can be seen below, that diets improve on average does not necessarily indicate that the total population consume enough food both in caloric terms and in terms of vitamins, or that the diets of the poor have consequently improved. It is, however, indicative of more and better food availability at the aggregate level, and that there are greater chances of maintaining more balanced diets from a nutritional point of view. The regional gap between the availability of some cereals and their utilization has increased in the aggregate,

Figure 7: Index of dietary energy supply, 1990-92, 2011-13 (ratio between supply and minimum daily requirements)

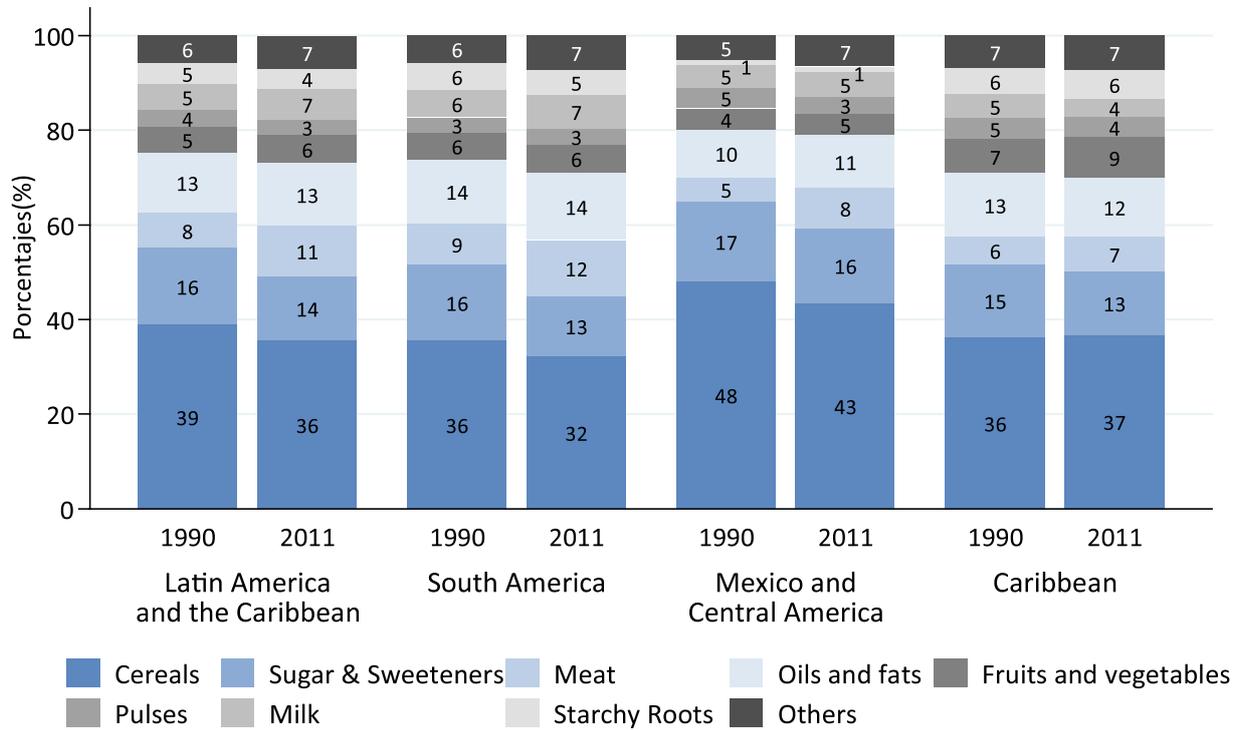


Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC with information from FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2014.

with much more cereals being produced that are used. This phenomenon shows that LAC's food availability of food has consolidated in the last two decades. Indeed, in early 1990 the difference between availability and utilization of cereals in total was 12 billion tonnes while now exceeds it 30 billion tons (see Figure 9).

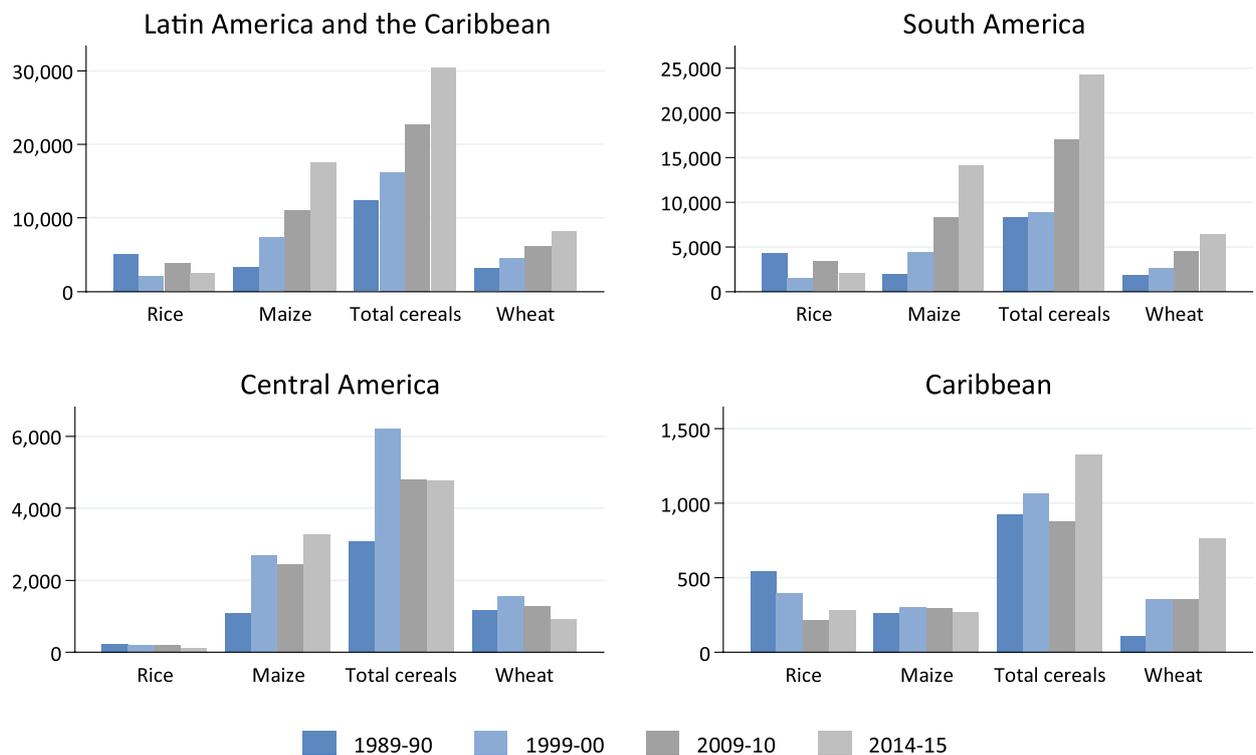
South America is largely responsible for the figures of Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, although both in the Caribbean and Central America there are more than enough cereals to satisfy both direct human consumption and other uses. From the early '90s to date, the gap between availability and utilization increased by 43% in the Caribbean, exceeding 1.3 billion tons, and by 56% in Central America, reaching 4.8 billion tons.

Figure 8: Composition (%) of caloric availability, 1990 and 2011



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC based on FAOSTAT (online).
 Note: the total may not add to 100% due to the rounding of figures.

Figure 9: Difference (thousands of tons) between food availability and utilization of cereals in Latin America and the Caribbean and its subregions, different periods



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC.

Food production and agricultural growth

Responding to increases in the world's demand for food, global agriculture has grown steadily in recent decades. This can also be seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, which produces more food than is needed to feed its whole population, which, in conjunction with the level of food production and its great variety of agricultural goods make the region a world power in the export of food products.

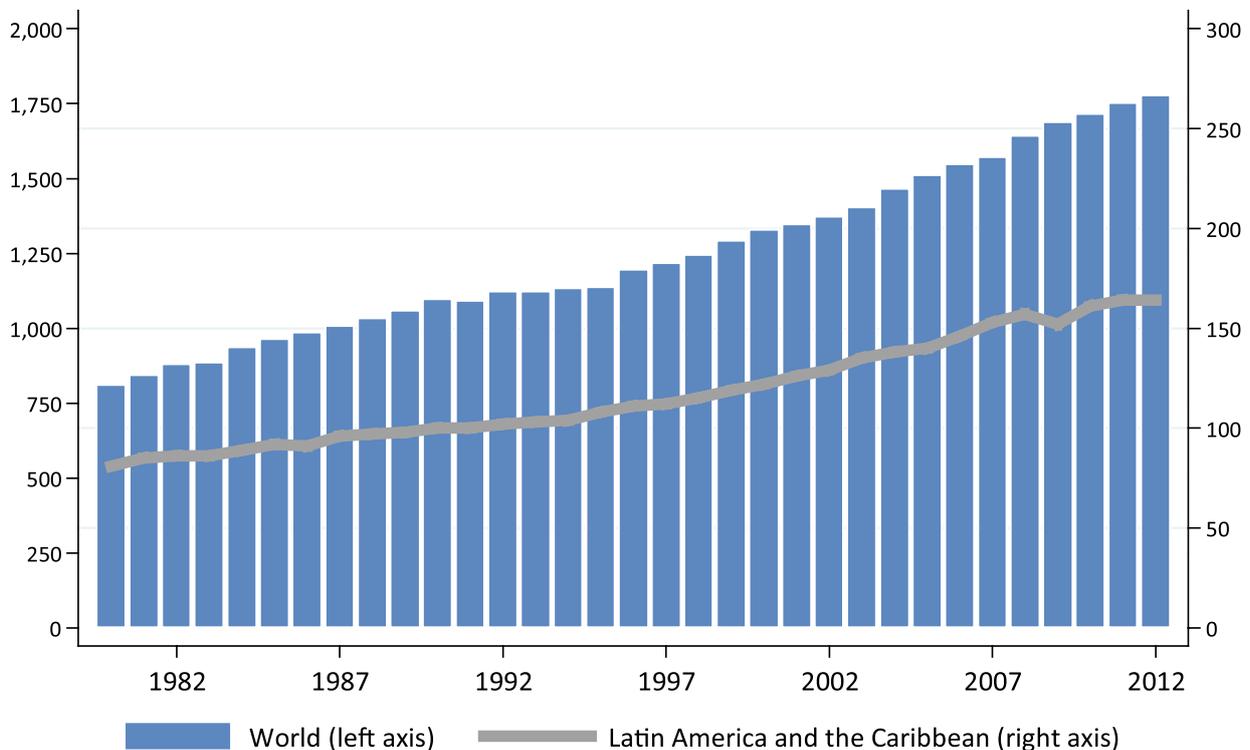
Although the average growth of Agricultural Value Added (AVA) has been constant over the last 30 years (see Figure 10), and that in the last decade there has been even greater dynamism both regionally and globally (see Figure 11), the share of agriculture in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been declining over the years, coming to represent a relatively small proportion of the global economy. Other economic activities such as the service sector currently contribute more to GDP. Still, ag-

riculture remains especially important for a third of the world population, whose livelihoods depend on this activity, which is also particularly important in rural areas and for the most vulnerable sectors of the population of the Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO, 2013a).

The importance of agriculture in LAC, measured as its share of the GDP, has been declining since the 80s, in line with the global trend. Globally, the contribution of the agriculture sector to the economy has gone from 7.6% in the 80s to 3.1% in 2011. While the region follows this trend, the contribution of agriculture in LAC is higher than the world average, falling from 10.1% in 1980 to 5.4% in 2011.

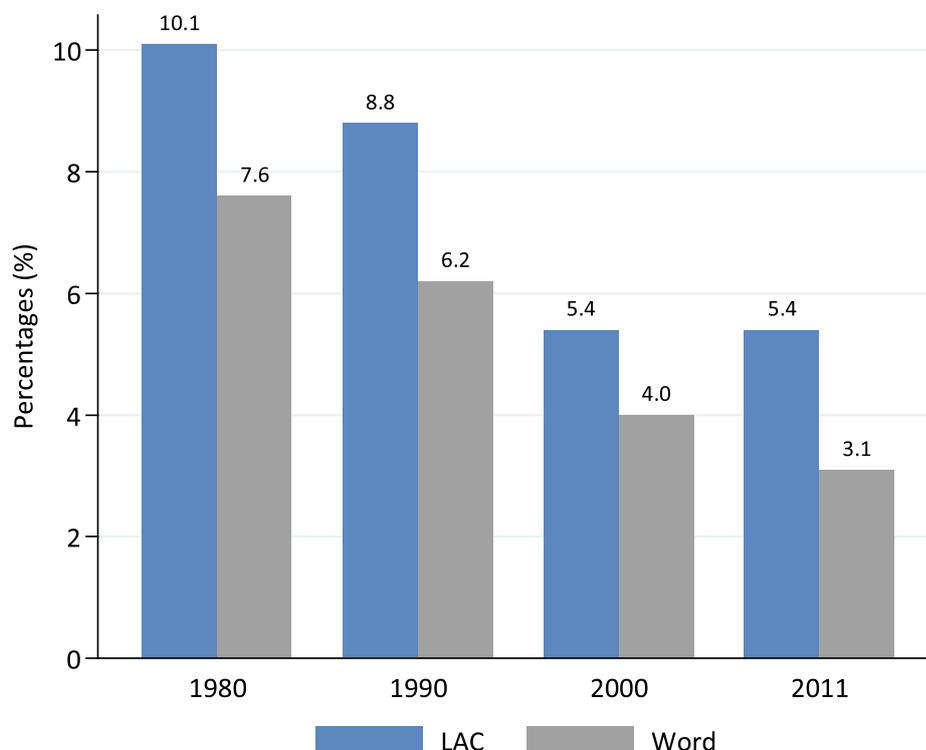
As is usually the case in the region, regional averages hide large differences (see Table 2). In Guyana, Nicaragua and Paraguay agriculture has greater relative importance in the national economy, with a contribution of 22%, 20% and 21% of GDP, respectively. On the contrary, in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados

Figure 10: Evolution (in billions of constant 2005 dollars) in agricultural value added in the world and in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1982-2012



Source: World Bank (online)

Figure 11: Share (%) of agriculture in the GDP of Latin America and the Caribbean and the world, 1980-2011



Source: World Bank (online)

and Trinidad and Tobago, the contribution of agriculture does not exceed 2% of GDP.

As in all average figures for the region, the diversity of the countries of the region is worth considering. One example is Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, countries that account for over 60% of regional agriculture, with individual shares of 33%, 18% and 11% of the total, respectively.

Agriculture in Brazil during 2012 contributed close to USD \$53 billion, i.e. 5.2% of its economy. In Mexico agricultural value added was USD \$ 31.6 billion, 3.6% of GDP. In Argentina agricultural value added was \$ 16.5 billion, which accounted for 9.1% of GDP in 2012. It is noteworthy that in Argentina the share of agriculture increased in 2000 compared to the previous decade. In other countries the magnitude of value added is relatively minor. Agricultural value added in Colombia in 2012 reached USD \$ 12.5 billion, Peru exceeded USD \$ 7 billion, Venezuela and Chile stood at around USD \$ 6.3

billion, in Ecuador it was close to USD \$ 4.8 billion, and in Guatemala it was USD \$ 4.2 billion. In the Dominican Republic it exceeded USD \$ 3.2 billion, and in both Cuba and Costa Rica it was above USD \$ 2 billion, while the rest of the countries of the region did not exceed this last value.

This regional trend, which on the one hand shows a steady growth of agricultural production and value added versus a decreasing importance of the sector in GDP, is also related to increased productivity of agricultural labour, which has been growing in the last 30 years both globally and regionally.

Compared with the world, agricultural value added per worker in Latin America and the Caribbean has been greater: at the beginning of the 80s the AVA in the region was close to USD \$ 2,000 per employee, more than double the world average, while in 2012 this value exceeds USD \$ 4,200, being 3.6 times higher than the global average (see Figure 12).

Table 2: Share (%) of agriculture in GDP, 1993, 2003 and 2013

	1993	2003	2013
Antigua and Barbuda	4,1	2,0	2,1 a
Argentina	5,5	9,8	6,7
Bahamas	2,8	2,8	2,1 a
Barbados	3,6	2,3	1,5 a
Belize	16,7	16,8	13,1 b
Bolivia (E.P.)	16,3	15,4	13,0 a
Brazil	7,6	7,4	5,7
Chile	9,2	5,3	3,4
Colombia	13,9	9,0	6,1
Costa Rica	13,0	8,7	5,6
Cuba	10,3	7,8	5,0 b
Dominica	21,5	12,9	14,9 a
Dominican Republic	11,2	6,4	6,1
Ecuador	24,3	11,7	9,9
El Salvador	14,9	9,0	10,8
Grenada	10,6	6,8	5,4 a
Guatemala	...	14,4	11,3
Guyana	36,2	31,4	21,5 a
Haiti
Honduras	20,6	12,8	13,4
Jamaica	8,0	5,9	6,7 a
Mexico	4,5	3,6	3,5
Nicaragua	...	17,1	19,9 a
Panama	8,1	7,8	3,5 a
Paraguay	17,8	18,3	21,0
Peru	9,5	8,2	7,4 a
Saint Kitts and Nevis	6,8	2,1	1,5 a
Santa Lucia	10,9	4,9	3,6 a
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	14,9	6,4	7,5 a
Suriname	19,2	7,2	9,3 a
Trinidad and Tobago	2,6	1,0	0,6 a
Uruguay	7,4	11,1	10,0
Venezuela (R.B.)	5,5	4,6	5,8 c

Source: World Bank (online).
Notes: / a figures for the year 2012.
/ b figures for the year 2011.
/ c figures for the year 2010.
/ ... Figures not available.

The growth rate of value added per worker (Figure 13), shows that the growth of the region exceeds that of the world⁵ for the past three decades, which also shows the apparent paradox of a dynamic and growing agricultural sector which despite this has an increasingly minor importance in economic terms, while still being very helpful in terms of food and nutrition security of the region.

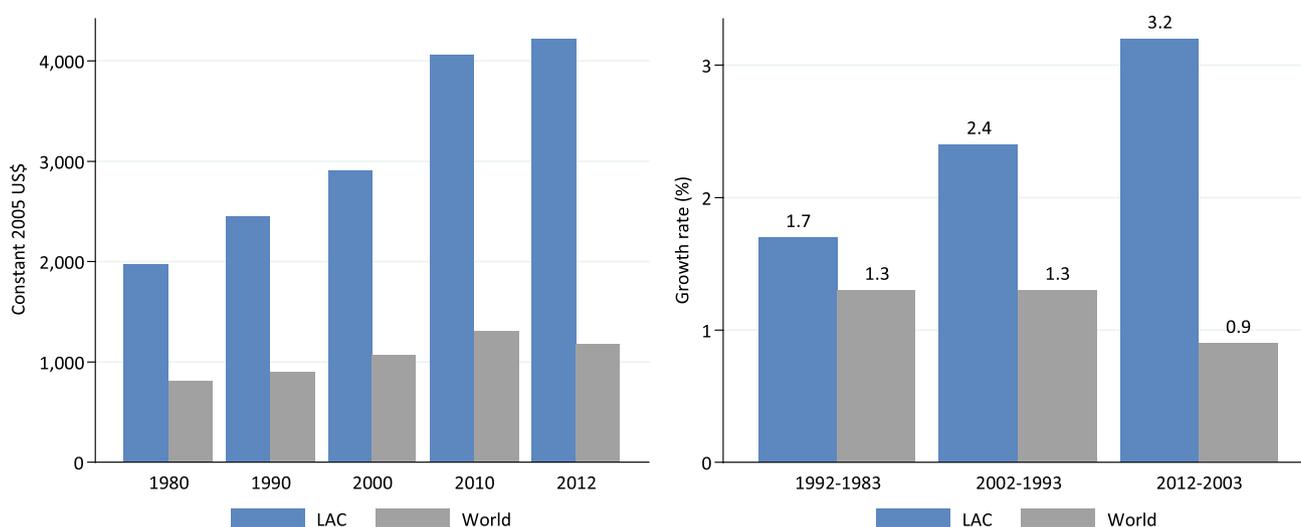
Global cereal production outlook

The latest FAO estimates, available up to mid-2014 (FAO, 2014a), show a favourable outlook for world cereal production. The forecasts point to a production of 2.498 million tonnes for the current season (2014/15), a reduction of 0.9% from the record levels of the previous season (see Figure 14).

This decline is due to the expected performance of the production of coarse grains⁶ and wheat, for which reductions of 1.5% and 1.4% respectively are forecast, reaching 1.287 million tons for coarse grains and 707 million tons for wheat this season.

The decline in wheat is mainly due to a decrease in production in the United States, caused by severe drought, and Canada, where plantings were drastically reduced due to low prices. With the harvest almost finished in the Near East, the latest figures show a decline of 7.3% in the total wheat production in that subregion, mostly due to drought, which led to a contraction of 10% in Turkey's wheat production. It is also expected that North Africa's wheat crop should be lower this year due, among other factors, to lower production in Morocco. These declines are expected to outweigh the increases in other countries,

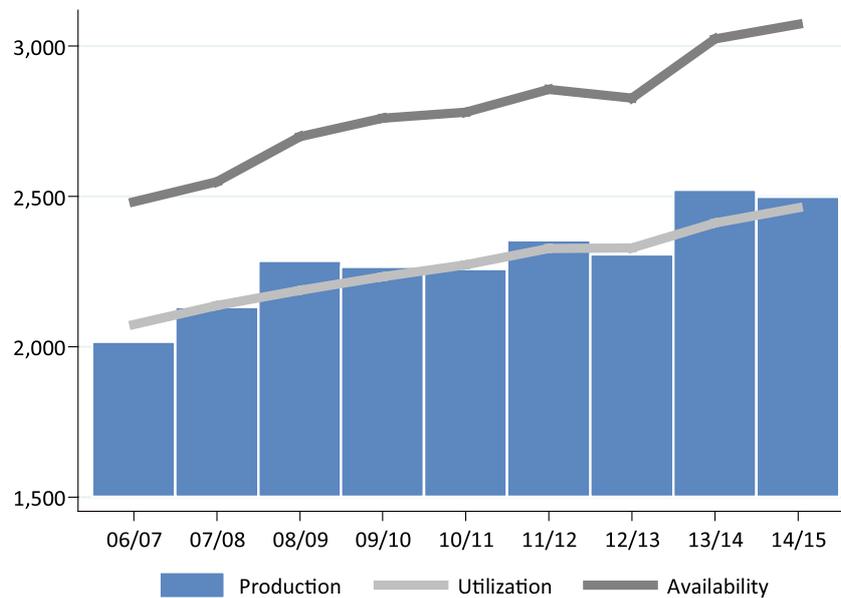
Figures 12 and 13: Evolution agricultural value added per worker and average value added per worker in Latin America and the Caribbean and the world, different periods [in 2005 constant dollars and growth rate (%)]



Source: World Bank (online)

⁵By comparing the productivity of the agricultural sector in Latin America and the Caribbean with other regions of the world, measured as value added per worker, it is evident that the region exceeds by far many of the developing regions. On average, for the period 2010-12, LAC productivity is more than 5 times the agricultural productivity of East Asia and the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa and more than 6 times the agricultural productivity of South Asia. However, comparing the region with the United States or the European Union, the great challenges that the region faces to expand its productivity and agricultural production become evident. Indeed, the value added per worker in LAC is only 8% of that of the United States and only 20% that of the European Union.

⁶Coarse grains include barley, corn, rye, oats, millet, sorghum, buckwheat, quinoa, fonio, triticale, canary seed, mixed grains

Figure 14: Balance of the world grain market (million tons), 2006-07 to 2014-15

Source: FAO (2014a)

particularly India and China, where record outputs are forecast, and the European Union (EU), where moderate increases are expected in crops.

Rice production is expected to increase by 1.2%, up to 504 million tonnes. By mid-2014, the southern hemisphere countries have harvested their main rice crops, while the rice season this year is less advanced in the northern hemisphere countries, which include the main producers.

In the case of maize in Asia, where China provides most of the crop, a slight increase in production is expected. In Africa, total maize production is expected to increase by 3%, largely due to large increases in Southern Africa, in relation to the low levels caused by droughts last year. However, despite some positive figures in cereal production, FAO (2014a) estimates that worldwide 33 countries, including 26 in Africa, require external food aid due to conflicts, poor harvests and/or high domestic food prices.

Moreover, there are still concerns about the potential impacts that the El Niño phenomenon may have on global cereal production. Given the current weather forecasts, there is a 70% probability that such an episode could occur during the summer in the northern hemisphere,

because of potential climatic variations including reduced rainfall in parts of Asia.

In short, although the outlook for grain production worldwide is positive and global availability is ensured, production efforts should not decrease if this positive trend of growth is to be maintained in coming decades, wherein the region will surely play an important role.

Cereal production outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean

In Latin America and the Caribbean forecasts indicate a total cereal production of close to 211 million tonnes for the 2014/2015 season, a decrease of 1.6% from the previous season (FAO, 2014a). Despite this, production volumes remain at high levels, even above the average of the last five years. The drop corresponds to a lower output of maize by large cereal producers.

Table 3 shows production forecasts for the current season and last season's production. For this season, it is estimated that maize production in the region should reach 145.4 million tons, 5.4% less than the

Table 3: Cereal production (thousands of tons) in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2013-14 and 2014-15

Country / region	Wheat		Rice*		Maize		Total	
	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15
Brazil	5.718	7.804	7.919	8.208	80.517	76.180	97.150	95.006
Argentina	9.200	11.500	1.061	1.088	29.000	27.000	48.087	48.306
Paraguay	702	1.000	420	434	3.700	2.500	4.854	3.965
Peru	230	223	2.064	1.904	1.671	1.585	4.213	3.964
SOUTH AMERICA	19.079	23.764	16.241	16.435	123.504	115.388	173.017	169.588
Mexico	3.518	3.674	140	147	22.408	22.379	34.121	34.103
Guatemala	8	8	20	19	1.732	1.750	1.803	1.819
El Salvador	–	–	20	20	953	960	1.117	1.121
Nicaragua	–	–	299	312	498	529	857	910
MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA	3.527	3.683	833	845	26.230	26.271	38.937	38.997
Cuba	–	–	449	467	305	302	753	769
Dominican Rep.	–	–	548	548	41	37	590	587
Guyana	–	–	535	553	4	4	539	557
Haiti	–	–	87	87	289	302	497	513
CARIBBEAN	–	–	1.783	1.815	680	687	2.586	2.628
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	22.606	27.447	18.857	19.095	150.414	142.346	214.540	211.213

Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC

production of the 2013/14 season. This is largely due to the performance of this crop in South American countries. Preliminary estimates for the production of this year point to a drop of 6.6% from the record levels of last year, but will remain well above the average of the past five-years, reaching 115 million tons. The decrease in production is mainly due to lower production volumes in Brazil and Argentina.

It is estimated that Brazil, the largest producer of maize in the region, will see a 5.4% reduction in when compared with the bumper crop of the previous season, surpassing 76 million tonnes for the 2014/2015 season. This reduction is largely explained by a de-

cline in plantings in response to low prices and a fall in expected returns due to early season drought.

Argentina, the second largest producer of the region, will also see maize output fall by 2 million tonnes compared to the good crop of the previous season. Maize production should reach 27 million tonnes, still above the average of the last five years. This reduction reflects a decrease in yields due to climatic factors at the start of the season.

In Paraguay, initial forecasts for maize production point to a drop of almost one third compared to the previous season, following a decline in plantings and

a shift to more profitable crops, such as soybeans. In Peru, although initial conditions raised expectations of increased production, early season drought could have an effect on yields in the major producing regions of the country.

In Central America and Mexico, meanwhile, the situation is also varied. Mexico, the main producer of Central America, is expected to produce less maize with regard to last year's bumper harvest due to reduced plantings of white maize as a result of low prices; by contrast, projected plantings of yellow maize increased due to more favourable prices. However, total production nationwide is still forecast well above the five-year average, at nearly 22.4 million tonnes. Thus, maize production in Central America should slightly exceed last season's output, reaching a volume of 26.2 million tons.

In the case of wheat production prospects are favourable for the whole region, mainly in the countries of South America. After increases in the planted area and good weather conditions a strong increase in production for this season is expected in Latin America and the Caribbean, reaching a volume to 27.5 million tonnes, 21% higher than last season.

The increase in plantings, seen mainly in Argentina and Brazil, respond to strong regional demand and higher prices. It is expected that wheat production should reach 11.5 million tons in Argentina, and 7.8 million tons in Brazil, an increase of over 25% and 36%, respectively compared to the previous season. Thus, wheat production in South America should recover from the low levels of two years ago and reach a volume of 24 million tonnes, which would be above the average of the past five years.

On the other hand, Mexico's production should reach 3.7 million tons, 4.4% above the previous year's harvest, as a result of increased plantings. However, this volume still remains slightly below the average of the past five years.

Finally, rice production should reach 19 million tons, a slight increase of 1.3% over the previous season. In South America, rice production should increase by 1.2%, reaching a volume of 16.4 million tons. More-

over, the Caribbean will increase its production by 1.8%, to more than 1.8 million tonnes.

In Cuba rice production should reach 467,000 tons, an increase of 4% compared to the previous season which can be attributed to increased plantings. In the Dominican Republic expectations are that rice production should maintain similar levels as during the previous year, while in Guyana production should increase by 3.3% to 553,000 tons. Finally, rice production in Haiti will be similar to the levels of the previous season, reaching 87,000 tons.

Agrifood trade

Agri-food trade in Latin America and the Caribbean showed a positive performance during 2013, with increases in both exports and imports of agricultural products⁷.

Exports of agricultural products grew 4.6% during 2013, reaching close to USD \$ 221 billion, while imports increased by 3.4%, to over USD \$ 90 billion. With this, the trade balance remains in surplus for LAC as a whole. Due to a greater increase in exports, the trade balance recorded a value close to USD \$ 131 billion, a 5.5% increase in performance over the previous year (see Table 4).

Trade in 2013 confirmed the trend of recent years. Since 2005, exports have greatly exceeded imports, a clear sign of the region's export potential. The value of food exports has more than doubled that of imports, even in 2009, when trade flows showed significant contractions (see Figure 15).

Compared to recent years, the growth rates of exports have shown a slowdown from the dynamic recovery that occurred after 2009. Over the past five years, exports have shown a mean growth rate of 7%, greater than the growth of imports, which augmented 5.4% in the same period, resulting in the steady increase of the trade balance, with an average growth of 8.4%.

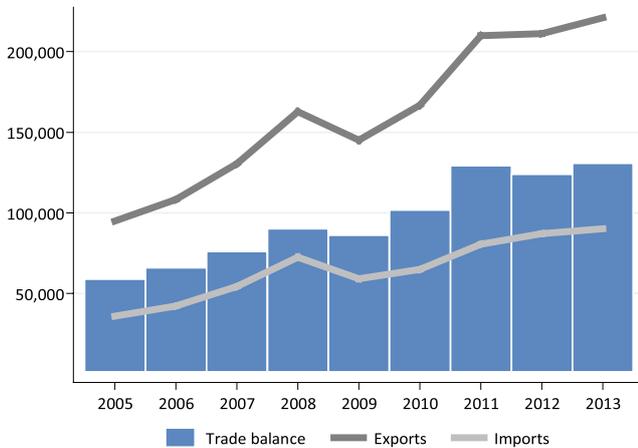
⁷/Considers all products included in chapters 1 to 24 of the Harmonized System (HS). These chapters consider both commodities and processed foods. The data for the Caribbean corresponds to that reported by trading partners (mirror data).

Table 4: Agrifood trade (millions of dollars) in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2013

Country	Exports	Imports	Trade balance
Argentina	40,912	1,912	39,001
Bolivia (E.P.)	1,934	710	1,224
Brazil	84,866	12,262	72,604
Chile	15,377	6,418	8,959
Colombia	6,579	6,054	525
Ecuador	8,550	2,066	6,485
Paraguay	6,248	924	5,324
Peru	7,025	4,458	2,567
Uruguay	6,027	1,365	4,662
Venezuela (B.R.)	47	9,756	(9,709)
SOUTH AMERICA	177,566	45,925	131,642
Costa Rica	4,178	1,972	2,206
El Salvador	1,270	1,694	(425)
Guatemala	4,711	2,433	2,278
Honduras	2,352	1,536	816
Mexico	24,082	26,053	(1,972)
Nicaragua	1,829	958	871
Panama	512	1,489	(977)
MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA	38,933	36,135	2,798
CARIBBEAN^a	4,392	8,113	(3,721)
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	220,891	90,173	130,719

Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).
Note: a/ Statistics reported by its trading partners (mirror data)

Figure 15: Evolution of agricultural trade in Latin America and the Caribbean (millions of dollars), 2005-2013



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).

While the region as a whole has a large export capacity and most of its countries showed favourable trade balances during 2013, there are great differences amongst them.

The countries of South America are the main exporters in Latin America and the Caribbean (see Figure 16). Brazil exports 38.4% of all food products in the region, a participation that has increased slightly in recent years. Argentina is the second largest exporter in the region, accounting for 18.5%, and Mexico is the third, with 10.9% of all agri-food shipments from the region during 2013.

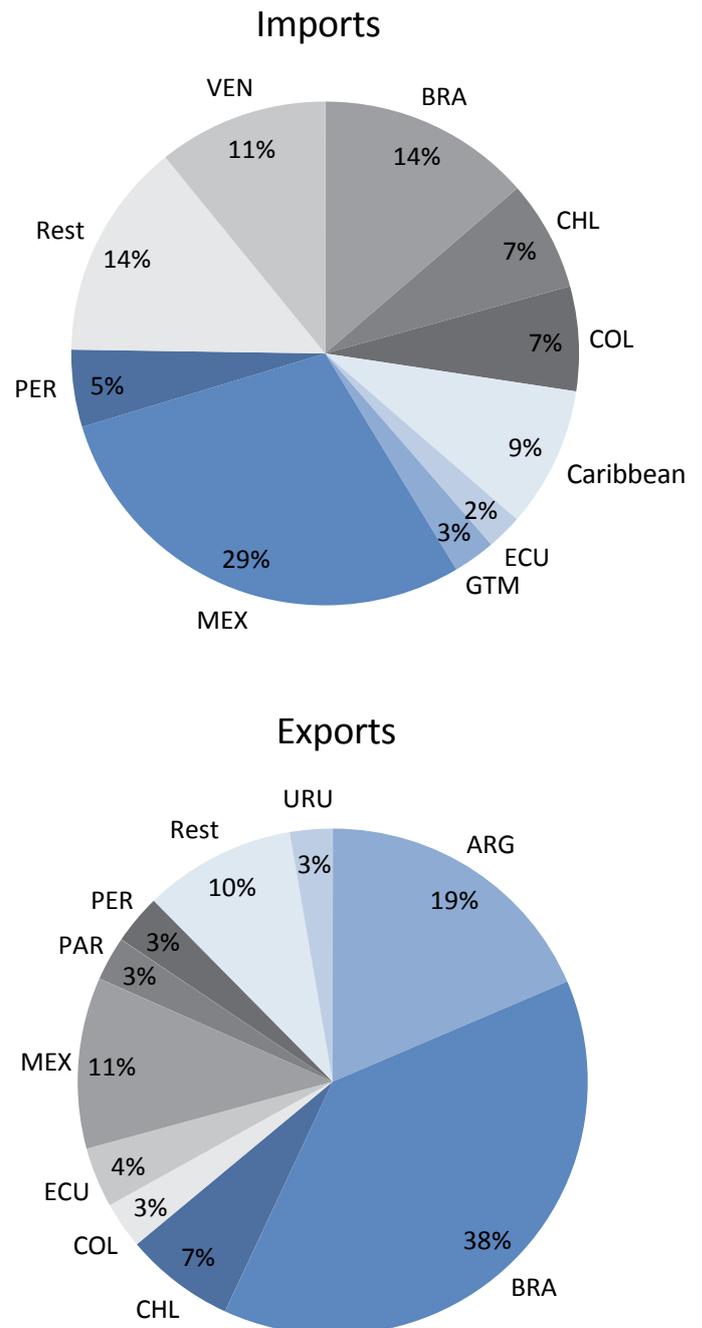
On the import side, the countries that make the largest acquisitions of agricultural products are Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela, accounting respectively for 28.9%, 13.6% and 10.8% of agri-food purchases in the region, (see Figure 16).

Table 4 shows that Argentina and Brazil have the largest trade balances in agri-food terms, valued at USD \$ 72 billion and USD \$ 39 billion, respectively. Mexico' agrifood imports outweigh its exports, despite being the third largest exporter of the region, and presents a trade deficit of almost USD \$ 2 billion.

During 2013, in addition to Mexico, only El Salvador (USD \$ 423 million), Panama (USD \$ 977 million),

Venezuela (USD \$ 9708 million) and the Caribbean as a whole (USD \$ 3728 million) had negative balances in their food trade.

Figure 16: Distribution of agricultural trade, major exporters and importers in Latin America and the Caribbean [percentages (%) of the value], 2013



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).
Note: The total may not add to 100% due to the rounding of figures.

Figure 18 show that, at the aggregate level, agricultural trade flows between countries in the region have remained relatively stable compared to the market value in 2012. Intra-regional imports were close to USD\$ 36 billion dollars in 2013, representing 39.9% of total imports, while 16.2% of regional exports were destined to countries within the same region, which shows that the region itself remains an important trading partner in agrifood terms.

Outside the region, the United States remains one of the main trading partners, being the destination for 18.2% of regional exports and supplying 36.5% of Latin America and the Caribbean's imports. The countries of the European Union have also become an important partner for the region: they are the target of 16.7% of regional exports and the origin of 6% of the region's agrifood imports. China is an increasingly important destination for regional exports partners, currently receiving 13% of all regional agrifood exports.

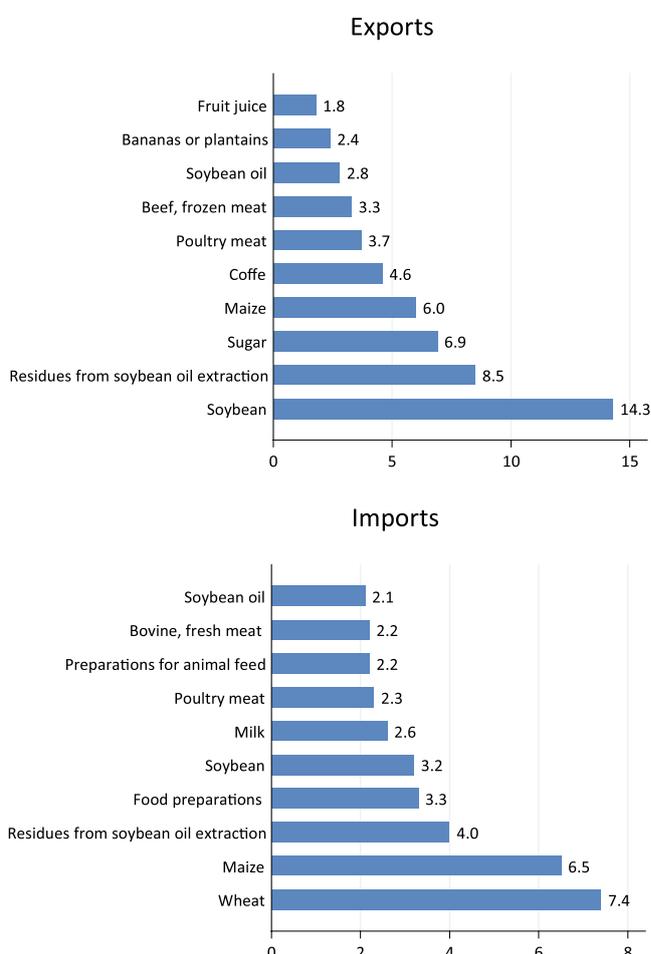
It is worth noting that, beyond the fact that intraregional trade in Latin America and the Caribbean, has been consolidated with the passing of the years, this shows that capability of the region to supply itself with food and agricultural products. Figure 19 shows that agri-food exports from the region to the region have remained relatively stable: , in recent years close to 17% of total exports from the region go to countries within the same region. While the EU and the Unites States remain relevant partners, their relative importance in terms of agrifood trade has diminished and given way to other destinations, such as China, which in the mid-2000s received close to 5% of agrifood exports from LAC, while now it receives more than 13%.

In terms of imports, the main trading partners are the United States region and the region itself. The latter has increased its stake slightly since 2005, reaching its highest value in 2009, when 45% of agricultural imports came from countries within LAC. During the same period, imports from the US have had less relative importance, down from 42% in 2005 to 36% in 2013, being gradually replaced by goods from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Analysing intraregional agrifood trade more closely, the products most traded within the region coincide

roughly with the products exported and imported by LAC which are shown in Figure 17. Figure 20 shows the main products that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean obtain from within the region, such as maize, soybeans and wheat. Most of these goods also have importance in terms of their caloric contribution to diets, so the development of intraregional trade can significantly contribute to food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean.

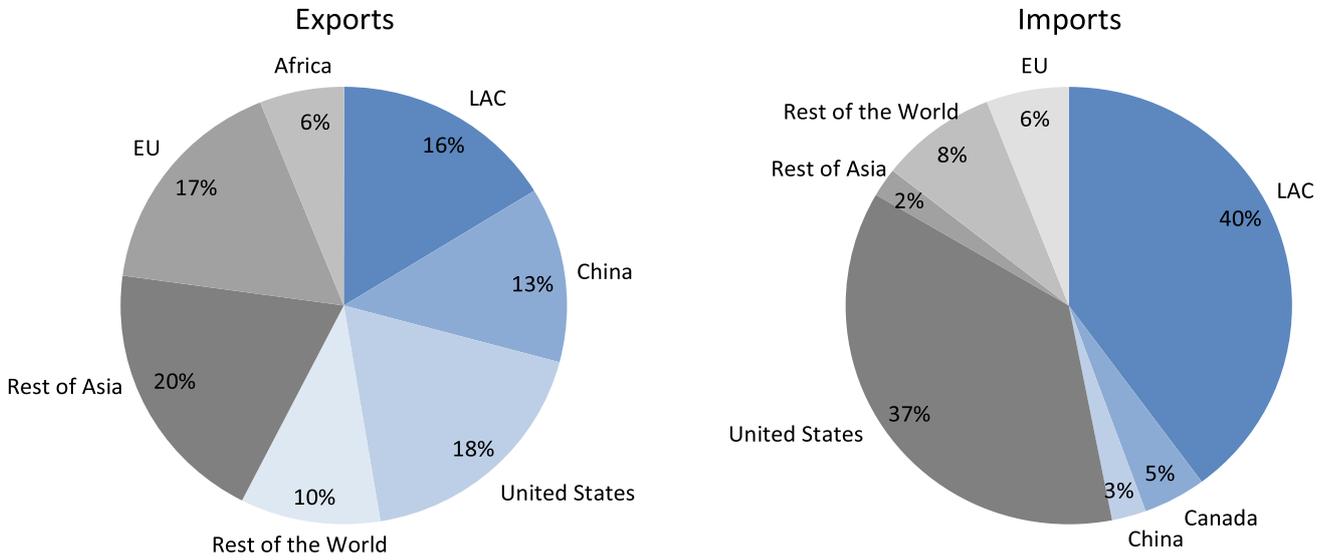
Figure 17: Major products of agricultural trade in Latin America and the Caribbean [percentages (%) of the value], 2013



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).

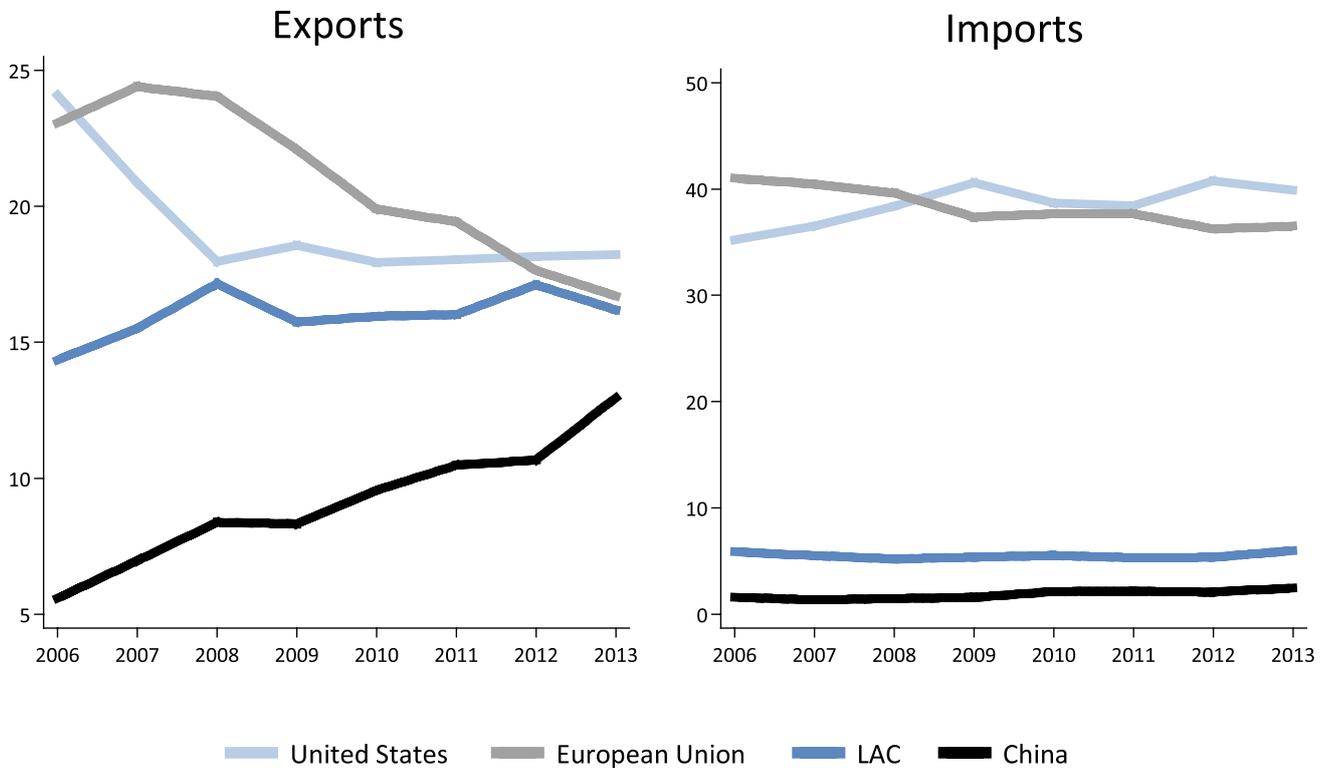
Notes: The products correspond to four digits categories of the Harmonized Tariff System: fruit juice 2009, bananas or plantains 0803, 1507 soybean oil, beef, frozen 0202, poultry 0207, coffee 0901; maize 1005, sugar 1701, residues from soybean oil extraction 2304, soy 1201, bovine animals, fresh meat 0201, preparations for animal feed 2309, milk 0402, food preparations 2106, wheat 1001.

Figure 18: Origin and destination of agricultural trade in Latin America and the Caribbean, [percentages (%) of the value], 2013



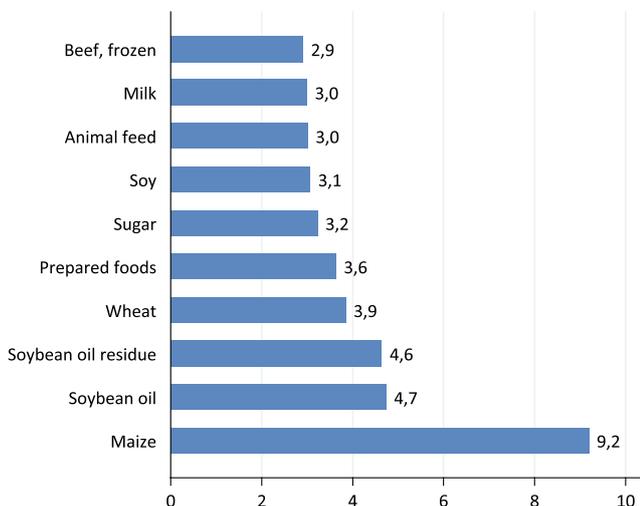
Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).
 Note: the total may not add to 100% due to the rounding of figures.

Figure 19: Share of trade flows over the total marketed by selected partners from 2006 to 2013



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).

Figure 20: Main products of intraregional agrifood trade [percentages (%) of the value] in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2013



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).

Note: The products correspond to four digits categories of the Harmonized Tariff System: beef, frozen 0202; milk 0402; animal feed 2309; soy 1201; sugar 1701; prepared food 2106; wheat 1001; residue from soybean oil extraction 2304, 1507; soybean oil, 1005; maize.

During 2013, 56% of total maize imports in LAC came from the region itself, for soybeans this proportion reached 39%, 88% for sugar, and 80% for oil. This shows the capacity that the region has to supply itself with certain basic food products, a potential which becomes evident when analyzing the trade balance of each country's commerce in terms of some of these products: countries with a trade surplus in certain products can be potential suppliers for countries who have deficits in those same foods.

Figure 21 shows that there is plenty of room to expand intraregional trade. In several products (maize, wheat, rice and dairy products), the trade surplus of extra-regional partners could be transferred to intraregional partners who have negative balances, which would make the region become the prime source of food availability for its own countries.

In spite of the above, other aspects that could influence the development of intraregional trade need to be considered, such as the bilateral relations between the countries of Latin America, or between the region and its other trade partners, free trade agreements, distances and transport costs, infrastructure, con-

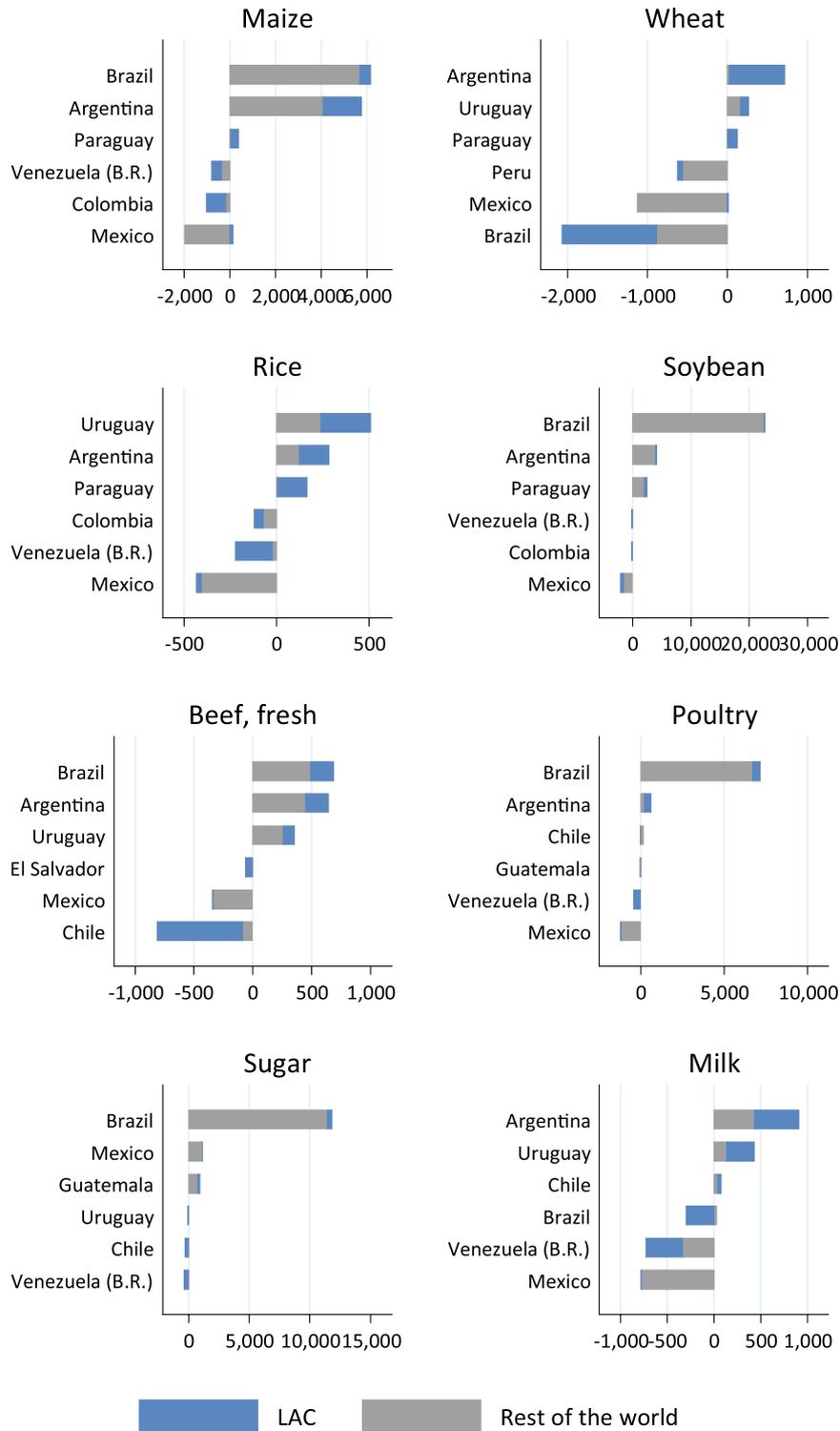
nectivity, and tariff and non-tariff restrictions, among many others⁸.

Based on the data presented, it is possible to reaffirm what was proposed at the beginning of this chapter: the region has the capacity to feed its population, and this is not only the case of exporting countries or major producers like Argentina and Brazil but is also the reality of the countries with lower production levels, where hunger still affects a large proportion of the most vulnerable population. While it must be considered that not all LAC countries can locally produce all the food they need, food can be obtained through trade both from within and without the region, which can allow all countries in the region to have sufficient food to meet their dietary needs. In fact, Latin America and the Caribbean taken as a whole could feed its entire population with locally produced food and still have more than enough to export surplus and create strategic food reserves.

While the main cause of hunger in the region is not lack of food availability, agriculture must remain a priority for policy in the region. On the contrary, food availability is the basis upon which food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean must be based. In this regard, during 2013 governments in the region have taken measures necessary to ensure and promote food production and availability for their entire population.

⁸This is evident in the case of Mexico, for example, whose main trade partner is the United States.

Figure 21: Selected commodities, trade balance (millions of dollars) of the leading importers and net exporters in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2013.



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (online).

Note: products correspond to the four categories of the Harmonized System of Tariff: maize 1005, wheat 1001, rice 1006, soy 1201, beef, fresh 0201, poultry 0207, sugar 1701, milk 0402.

Policies to improve food availability during the 2013-2014 period

The policies regarding food availability⁹ have a long tradition in ALC, and are a central theme of the regional agenda. Through various instruments, including access to inputs, financing, technical assistance and land titling, among others, the Ministries of Agriculture have taken charge of this aspect of food and nutrition security in recent decades.

The 2013-2014 period¹⁰ was no different in this sense, since measures relating to food availability were the most widespread. In this sense, the primacy of food availability measures is an important signal about the role that agriculture holds not only for food and nutrition security, but also for the economy as a whole, since countries continue to invest resources and efforts to increase its productivity and efficiency.

In first place, during 2013-2014, several initiatives were put in place that merge various components to boost the production of particular sectors. In Ecuador, for example, the Development Program for Productivity of Small Banana Producers aims to deliver a strong impetus to this sector, particularly to farmers of up to 30 hectares, with four lines of action: technical assistance; financing through loans provided by the National Development Bank; productive research; and strengthening of the beneficiaries associations and entrepreneurial, in the provinces of Guayas, Los Ríos and El Oro. In Nicaragua, meanwhile, the National Program for Transformation and Development of Coffee seeks to improve production levels of this key sector for the country's agriculture with the creation of a fund that will support five components: access to credit, technical assistance and training, research and innovation, improved marketing channels and the strengthening of institutions dedicated to coffee.

Guatemala implemented the "Chapin" Maize Against Hunger program, through which the country

aims to increase production of maize and beans in certain areas, particularly supporting small producers through technical assistance for sustainable management of production, so that in four years more than 3,000 family farmers should increase their income. In Trinidad and Tobago the Cocoa Cluster Project is an initiative of the Ministry of Food Production in conjunction with the University of the West Indies, which seeks to boost cocoa production in the country by creating productive clusters that will receive technical assistance, investments in infrastructure and agricultural research to increase crop productivity and quality.

Governments also strengthened institutions so that public systems could have greater relevance in productive terms. Brazil's created the National Agency for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension, an autonomous service with legal personality under private law which seeks to expand and promote technical assistance and extension in the country; while in Venezuela the old Venezuelan Food-Sugar Corporation (CVA Sugar, in Spanish) was replaced by the Venezuelan Corporation of Sugar Cane and Derivatives S.A, a public company designed to promote investment in the sugar sector to increase plantings and domestic production.

Measures to improve production conditions

In this area, one of the most common types of measure in the region corresponds to the construction and/or improvement of productive infrastructure. Special attention was given by governments to water: many of the infrastructure investments correspond to irrigation works, aqueducts and other structures to ensure access to water in productive lands. For example, Peru launched the "My Irrigation Fund", with an initial investment of USD \$ 358.8 million intended to finance the construction of waterworks in high An-

⁹Policy measures related to food availability are those aimed at the promotion of food production by fostering agriculture, livestock and fisheries, both directly through the creation of favourable conditions for their proper development, processing and marketing.

¹⁰In this section, as in all sections referring to policy in Chapter 2, public actions undertaken by LAC countries in 2013-2014 are analysed, with special consideration for new programs and policies as well as important reforms to initiatives that are already in place. A more in depth analyses of policies relating to food and nutrition security which considers a broader time period can be found in Chapter 3.

dean zones (areas over 1,500 meters above sea level) to have a positive impact on the reduction of poverty and extreme poverty. In Chile, meanwhile, through the signing of a cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture and the State Bank, a support mechanism was established for small farmers who were beneficiaries of the 18,450 Law for the Promotion of Irrigation and Drainage to have access to a credit so they can begin productive investment for irrigation before receiving the state bonus provided by the aforementioned law.

Another area that received special attention during this period was research and development of agricultural technology, such as the improvement of seeds and livestock to increase productivity, quality, performance and resistance to adverse weather conditions. The Dominican Republic implemented a program to improve the productivity of cocoa, which aims to double production by grafting high productivity clones in existing plantations, with a total investment of USD \$ 31.4 million. Mexico signed an agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture (SAGARPA) and the National Council for Animal Genetic Resources (CONARGEN) to invest USD \$ 3.6 million in the genetic improvement of various breeds of cattle and open up new niches for the country's meat market. With financial support from the IDB and the World Bank, Peru launched the Agricultural Innovation Program, which will invest USD \$ 180 million to consolidate national agricultural innovation systems and to strengthen the technical capabilities and state infrastructure apparatus for agricultural research, particularly of the National Institute of Agrarian Innovation (INIA).

Direct measures to promote production

One of the most important policies to promote production is access to productive inputs. Usually these measures are made effective through the

direct delivery of inputs to producers or their offer at subsidized prices. In some countries, beneficiaries are given credit cards to acquire inputs in pre-established locals or are granted financing for the same purpose. In Colombia, through a partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank, credit cards were given out to small producers which had rates 50% lower than the rest of the financial system, for the purchase of agricultural inputs to facilitate access to these productive assets and deal with high domestic input prices¹¹. A similar case was seen in Ecuador, where farmers were given a prepaid BNF-MAGAP credit-card to buy subsidized urea through an online system of the National Development Bank.

Some countries provide cash subsidies to cover part of the costs of inputs. Such initiatives are often related to the support of small-scale production. Peru launched the Good Planting pilot program, implemented jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion. The initiative delivers vouchers for USD \$ 180 dollars to beneficiaries of the JUNTOS¹² program, so that family farmers can buy seeds and fertilizer. In order to increase the productivity of small producers of yellow corn, rice, potatoes and beans, Ecuador launched the Seed Plan, which allows its beneficiaries (farmers whose have up to 10 hectares of land) access packages that include certified seed, fertilizer and crop protection inputs.

Financial initiatives to support agricultural production are widespread in the region and have great importance. In Bolivia, they created a line of credit of USD 14.4 million dollars to support small-scale producer of rice, maize, wheat, sorghum and beans in for departments of the country. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines launched the Farmers Support Programme, with the help of Petrocaribe. The program has a total funding of USD \$ 6 million to provide credits at low interest rates to national producers, as well as giving access to fertilizers and tools on credit.

¹¹/In February 2014, 2014 the Superintendence of Industry and Commerce of Colombia launched an investigation on the practices of fertilizer, pesticide and veterinary medicine distribution companies, representing 80% of the total market. Information is available at: <http://www.urnadecristal.gov.co/gestion-gobierno/sanciones-distribuidores-de-insumos-agricolas>, and was obtained on the 14th of July 2014.

¹²/Cash transfer program for families living in extreme poverty.

Other countries in the region provide financing by providing direct subsidies according to production volumes. During 2013-14, Venezuela implemented subsidies for milk production, delivering USD 0.48 per litre of raw milk sold to dairies, as well as for commodities such as rice (USD \$ 0.74 per kilo), white maize (USD \$ 0.28 per kilo), sorghum (USD \$ 0.10 per kilo), soybeans (USD \$ 0.47 per kilo) and sugar (USD \$ 0.69 per kilo). Argentina created a Trust to Foster the Cultivation of Wheat, funded by export duties retained by the State, which delivers a proportional subsidies to the declared production of wheat producers, so as to stimulate production and avoid potential hikes in the domestic price of flour and its derivatives. By 2014 the fund intends to benefit more than 10,000 farmers.

Governments also paid attention to sanitary measures, especially given the export potential of the region. The presence of coffee rust (*Hemileia vastatrix*) from Mexico to Bolivia was particularly detrimental, with varied impacts on countries: in Central America, for example, half of all crops were affected¹³. In response to the gravity and visibility of the crisis, a number of initiatives were launched to assess the situation and identify more effective responses, coordinate immediate action and plan actions for the medium and long term. In Peru resources were mobilized to recover coffee plantations and the National Action Plan to Reduce the Incidence and Severity of Yellow Coffee Rust, with a projected investment of USD \$ 3.5 million, established a monitoring program, provided inputs to fight the disease and facilitated access to seeds to renew the plantations affected farmers. Costa Rica signed the Law for the creation of the Trust to Support Coffee Producers Affected by Coffee Rust, which considers the funding of the social programs of the Joint Institute for Social Aid (IMAS) destined to help affected producers, deliver credit at favourable interest rates for the care of the coffee crop or its renovation as well as the readjustment of debts and the necessary agrochemicals to deal with the disease.

El Salvador, meanwhile, spent USD \$ 5.6 million for the revival of coffee plantations. Some of the measures implemented include the delivery of agrochemicals, fortified seeds and lines of credit. Guatemala declared a sanitary emergency and allocated resources to acquire fungicide and training. The Dominican Republic issued the 101-13 Decree that created the National Integrated Coffee Rust Management Program, with an initial budget of USD \$ 3.5 million to combat the negative effects the disease can have on this important crop¹⁴.

Post-productive measures

In recent years, public purchase have gained importance as a way to support domestic producers. Some countries have specific institutions dedicated to food purchases and the maintaining of food stocks, while others have created regulations to give preference to domestic production, particularly from small family farmers. This is the case in Colombia, where the Circular No. 7-2013 of the National Public Procurement Agency established bonuses for the evaluation process of between 10% and 20% of national agricultural producers offers. Paraguay promulgated the Decree No. 1056/13, with the aim of promoting public food procurement from family farming. Specifically, the legislation gives preferences to small and medium sized producers as the main suppliers of agricultural products to all government departments, and only in the absence of offers from family farmers are these able to buy from large producers. Thus it seeks to ensure market inclusion and fair incomes to family farmers while providing fresh and healthy food to schools, hospitals and other state institutions.

Additionally, some countries implement procurement measures focused on specific products, to avoid drops in prices and stocks and to benefit producers. This is the case of Colombia, where direct public purchases were made from potato farmers who faced the possibility of lower revenues due to a drop in prices.

¹³/Information from: <http://www.fao.org/agro-noticias/agro-noticias/detalle/es/c/195828/>, obtained on 10/7/2014.

¹⁴/It should be considered that more than 50,000 Dominican families are dedicated to coffee cultivation in the country. The information comes from <http://www.consultoria.gov.do/Actos/2013/Decreto%20101-13.pdf> and was obtained on 07/11/2014.

Purchases were made at higher than market prices, and the products were channelled to social state programs.

The food production initiatives implemented during 2013-2014 confirm that food availability remains an important issue on the agenda of the countries of the region. The fact that several countries focus their efforts on ensuring adequate levels of food production is very important from the viewpoint of food and nutrition security; there is a growing presence of the state in agriculture and a consolidation of traditional support and development methods that can support an increase in the positive trends of food production and availability detailed in this chapter.



FOOD ACCESS

During the last decades, poverty and indigence have been significantly reduced in the region, thanks to economic growth and social development policies. However, in recent years the reduction of poverty, especially of extreme poverty, has stalled, a tendency that threatens food and nutrition security.

During 2013-14 regional food inflation increased, and although inequality has been reduced, it remains high. In view of this, countries will have to redouble their efforts through social and redistributive policies to avoid negative impacts generated on the progress of hunger eradication seen so far. The promotion of decent work and the increase of minimum wage will be important in the short and long term to consolidate the status of food and nutrition security in the region.

Considering the positive situation of food availability in the region, hunger in LAC is fundamentally a problem of access to food. In the current development conditions, access to food in Latin America and the Caribbean is generally conditioned by available resources to purchase it, although there may be specific situations, such as food crisis, wherein States deliver food in kind to those affected or to subsistence farmers who depend less on money to meet their daily food requirements (FAO, 2012a).

Thus, the analysis of the access dimension of food and nutrition security for Latin America and the Caribbean comprises, in this edition of the Panorama, the following three points:

- 1. The characteristics of income generation:** seen through economic growth and the status of the labour market.
- 2. Circumstantial factors that can modify access to food:** in this case they correspond to the variation of food prices over income.
- 3. The structural constraints on access to food:** which, according to this analysis, concern poverty and inequality in income distribution.

In other words, to properly characterize access to food in the region during this period, this section will discuss the creation of income, price trends that may affect purchasing power, and poverty and inequality as structural problems, which significantly determine access to food in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean

The region has shown a positive economic performance even amidst a complex international context. Average economic growth during the 90s was 2.9%, and 3% during the following decade, reaching 3.8% the last four years, exceeding the global average in each of these periods.

While 2014 began with good economic prospects, based on the recovery of growth seen both globally and regionally, a number of contingencies -including drought in the United States, political conflict in Ukraine and turbulence in the financial markets- caused a slowdown in the growth rate of the global economy and uncertainty regarding the economic recovery both in developed and in developing countries. As a result of this, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and ECLAC reduced their global economic growth expectations. The World Bank (2014) projected an expansion of 2.8% in the global economy for 2014, 0.4 percentage points lower than projected in January 2014.

Additionally, projections indicate that the developed countries -especially the US and the EU- will lead the global economy as a result of greater fiscal stability, improvements in the labour market and a recovery in demand. Developing countries, meanwhile, will have a relatively flat growth in 2014, partly because many countries are already fully recovered after the financial crisis and are growing at close to their full potential. This is the case of Latin America.

During 2013, 3% growth was forecast for Latin America and the Caribbean and estimated growth for 2014 was projected to be 4%. The regional economy would show a moderate yet significant acceleration but (FAO, 2013b). Latest estimates from the World Bank (2014), however, speak of an expansion of 1.9% in real GDP for this year, less than half of the original projection. Similarly and information already ratified most of the LAC economies, the economic expansion observed in 2013 reached only 2.4%.

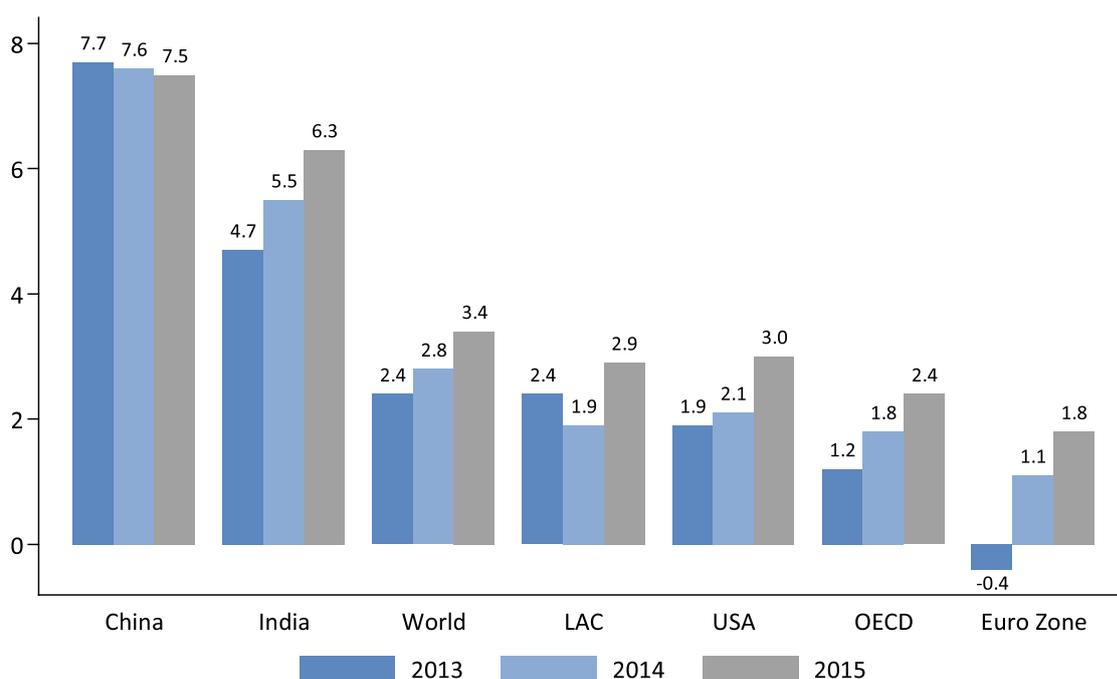
Figure 22 shows that a significant recovery in growth is projected for the major economies of the world. India, for example, should grow 5.5% in 2014, 0.8 percentage points over 2013. The same applies, albeit with less force, to the United States and the group of OECD countries, while EU will rapidly recover from the contraction of 2013. Only China will reduce its rate of economic growth, but it should remain at close to 7.5% both in 2014 and 2015. Only Latin America and the Caribbean will experience a 0.5% reduction in its economic growth during 2014, but is expected to return to a positive growth trend in 2015, alongside the rest of the world.

These growth rates, the lowest since 2009, imply lower income and diminished purchasing power for the people of the region. In this context, wherein regional household consumption is reduced, countercyclical policies implemented by governments will be fundamental to boost the economy.

Subregional trends show that economic growth in Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean will exceed that of 2013, particularly in Central America (Figure 23) where growth should reach 2.6% in 2014 after the 1.5% increase seen in 2013, partly due to good prospects for Mexico, the largest economy in the subregion, which will grow by 2.3%. The Caribbean economy (Figure 24) will grow 3.4% in 2014, 0.1 percentage points above the performance of 2013.

The case of South America is particularly significant: the subregion lowered the average growth in Latin America and the Caribbean (see Figure 25). Indeed, it is predicted that South America will grow close to 1.6% in 2014, 1.2 percentage points below the 2.8% growth seen in 2013. This was be strongly influenced

Figure 22: Economic growth (%) in major regions of the world, 2013-2015

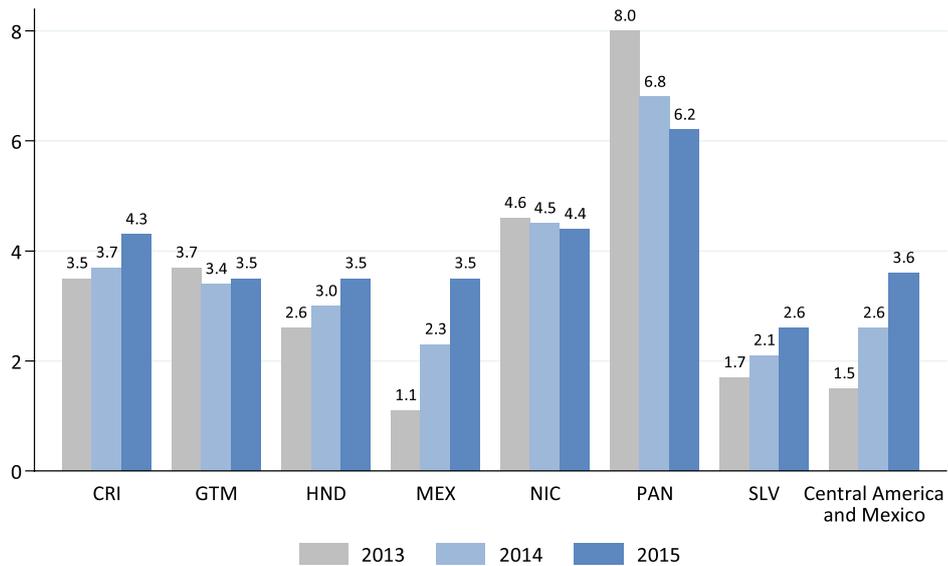


Source: World Bank, 2014a.

by countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Paraguay and Peru. Both Argentina and Venezuela, after their respective economic expansions of 3% and 1.3% in 2013, should exhibit no growth in 2014 (0%); Brazil's growth rate should fall from 2.3%

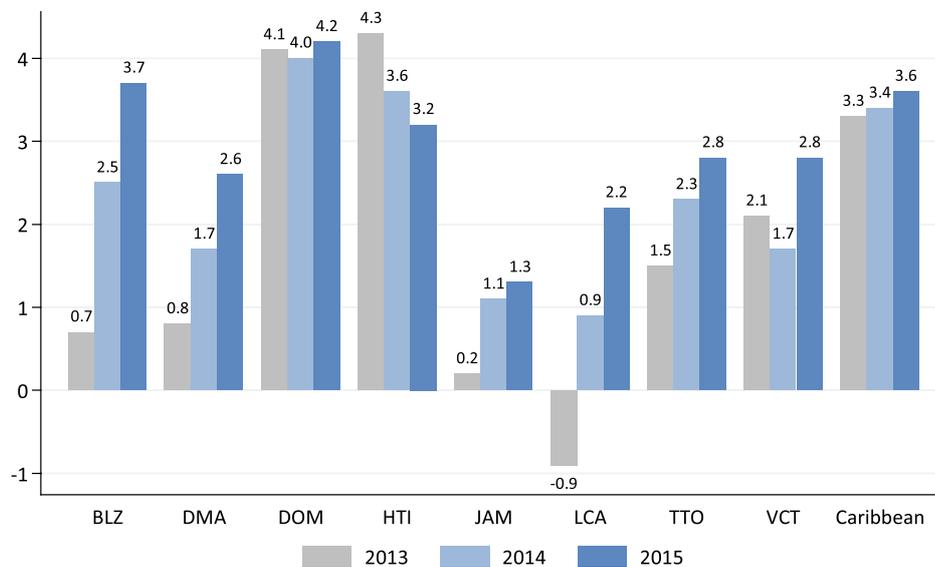
in 2013 to 1.5% in 2014, while Peru's economic expansion will drop from 5.8% in 2013 to 4% in 2014. After an outstanding rate of 3.9% in 2013, Paraguay's economic growth should fall back 4.8% in 2014, a level similar to the subregional average.

Figure 23: Economic Growth (%) in Central America and Mexico, 2013-2015

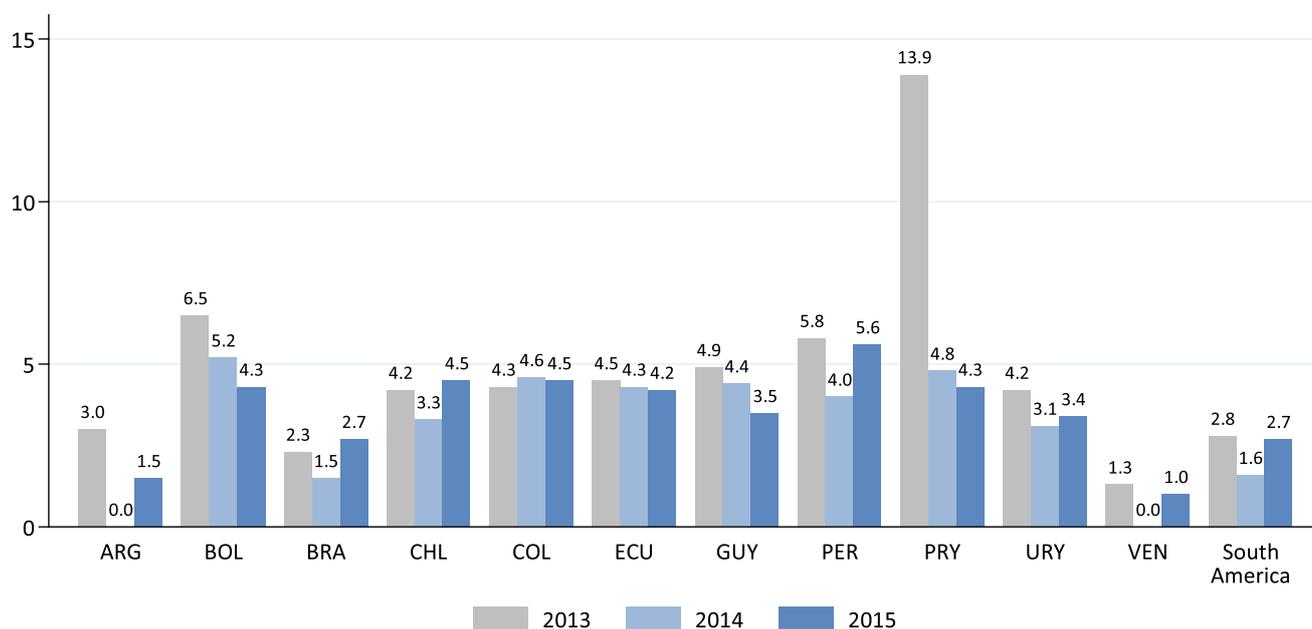


Source: World Bank, 2014a.

Figure 24: Economic growth (%) in the Caribbean, 2013-2015



Source: World Bank, 2014a.

Figure 25: Economic growth (%) in South America, 2013- 2015

Source: World Bank, 2014a.

Among the factors that explain the reduction in growth in South America are the slow recovery of the United States, a slowdown of growth and demand in China, and growing inflation in several countries of the region, coupled with lower international food commodity prices, which negatively impact the value of exports and reduce revenues.

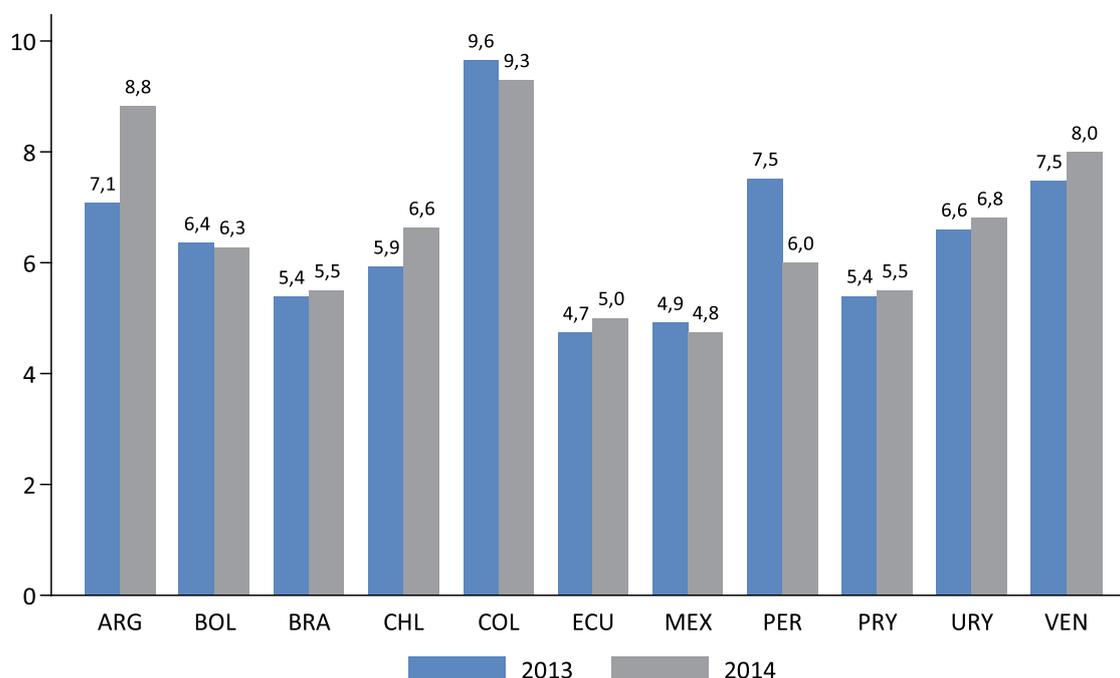
However, it should be noted that the impact of economic growth on poverty rates and undernourishment is not necessarily linear, and therefore, a reduction in economic growth does not necessarily increase poverty or hunger, just as periods of high economic growth do not lead, in and of themselves, to hunger and poverty eradication. Economic growth is necessary but by no means sufficient to reduce hunger and poverty unless it is accompanied by redistributive and social policies aimed at guaranteeing human rights, higher incomes and better access to education and health, among others (FAO, 2012a). In this sense, any impact that lower economic growth might have on food and nutrition security will be cushioned by the various actions undertaken by governments in the region.

Impacts on employment

Even if there is no linear relationship between economic growth, poverty and undernourishment, one of the direct impacts of the slowdown in economic growth will be the growth in projected unemployment rates for 2014 in LAC (FAO, 2014b).

In this sense, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela will experience different increases in their unemployment rates. In contrast, in countries like Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Peru will continue to decrease their unemployment levels in 2014 (see Figure 26). An important aspect to note is that, of all countries where there is an expected reduction in unemployment levels, only in Bolivia will this occur in a context of declining growth. In all other countries where unemployment rates are expected to fall, economic growth will increase, as should be expected.

Although increases are expected in the levels of unemployment in several countries of the region, future prospects for economic growth suggest that, in the

Figure 26: Unemployment rate in Latin America (%), 2013-2014

Source: IMF(online)

Note: 2014 figures are estimates.

long term, a trend towards stability and/or reduction in unemployment levels will become dominant. According to ECLAC and ILO (2014), this trend towards lower levels of unemployment has been consolidating in the region, generating good prospects for the employability of men and women in the coming years. Young people will be the most disadvantaged by increased unemployment, since they will face greater difficulties in getting and maintaining a job.

Table 5 shows that female unemployment in 2013 was higher than that of men; moreover, there is a gap in favour of men regarding labour participation and occupation. For example, in the Dominican Republic the unemployment rate for women is 2.1 times that of men, while in Jamaica it is 1.8 times that of men. In Honduras and Venezuela, two of the countries with greater equality in this regard, unemployment for women is 10% and 20% higher in men than in women, respectively. Mexico is the only country in the region where there are virtually no gender differences in unemployment rates.

As will be seen in the section referring to gender and food and nutrition security in rural areas included in this Panorama, there are important gaps that put women at a disadvantage compared to men in various aspects that impact both women's personal socioeconomic status and that of their families. Given that women are usually in charge of their homes and of the care of their children, the fact that they face income inequalities and higher unemployment produces negative effects on food and nutrition security, particularly in early childhood, when the consolidation of nutritional status occurs. This is especially true in rural areas and among the most vulnerable population in the region.

Thus, one can say that the employment situation is particularly important for the analysis of food and nutrition security, not only in terms of the total number of people employed but also of their employment characteristics, especially in terms of wages, since it is by means of wages that workers have access to food. Therefore, we should first analyse the level of food prices, and then how these affect the purchasing power of the population dependent on wages.

Table 5: Rate (%) of unemployment, participation and in selected countries of Latin America and the Caribbean by gender, 2013

COUNTRY	MEN			WOMEN		
	Unemployment	Participation	Employment	Unemployment	Participation	Employment
LATIN AMERICA	5,4	71,1	67,2	7,4	50,0	46,3
Argentina	6,1	72,0	67,6	8,5	47,1	43,1
Brazil	4,4	66,2	63,3	6,5	49,3	46,1
Chile	5,3	71,8	68,0	6,9	47,7	44,4
Colombia	8,9	75,3	68,7	12,5	60,4	52,8
Costa Rica	6,9	75,4	70,2	10,0	49,5	44,6
Ecuador	3,8	66,7	63,9	5,5	43,8	41,4
Jamaica	11,2	70,0	62,1	20,1	56,2	45,0
Honduras	5,7	66,1	62,3	6,3	44,7	41,9
Mexico	5,7	75,6	71,3	5,8	47,3	44,5
Panama	3,9	77,6	74,5	5,7	51,9	49,0
Paraguay	6,5	73,0	68,2	9,9	57,7	52,0
Peru	4,9	77,9	74,0	7,2	60,6	56,2
Dominican Rep.	5,0	64,5	61,3	10,4	38,2	34,2
Uruguay	5,5	72,7	68,7	8,3	55,8	51,1
Venezuela (B.R.)	7,1	78,1	72,6	8,8	50,6	46,1

Source: ECLAC and ILO, 2014.

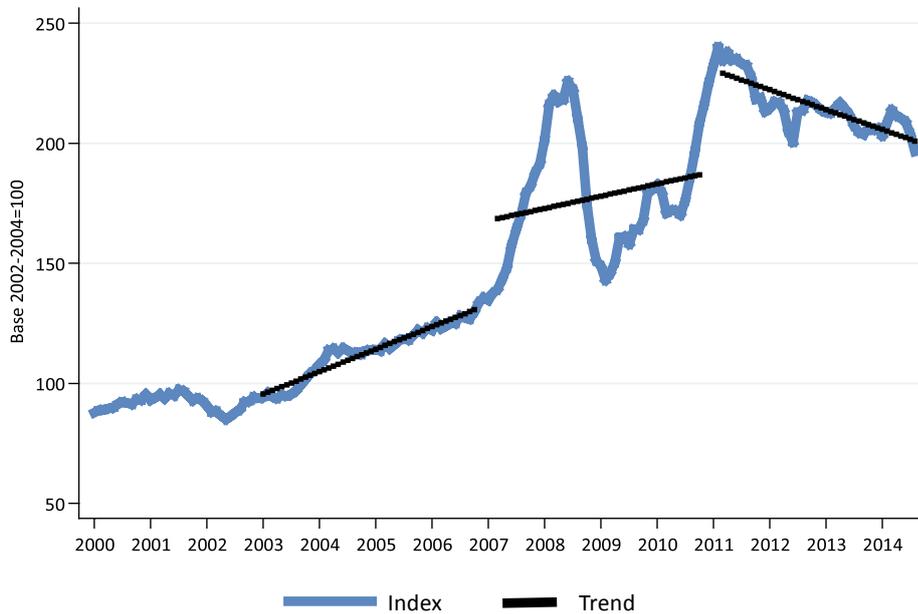
International food prices

There has been a recent downward trend in international food prices, but their level is still well above the averages before the food crisis of 2007-2008. During 2014 food prices registered negative monthly variations, while a longer-term look reveals a slight downward trend from the high levels at the start of 2011.

In August 2014, the FAO Food Price Index averaged 196.6 points, down 3.6% compared to the same month in 2013, which totals fourteen consecutive months when year-on-year variations in international food prices have been negative, with an average variation of -3.2%. During

the first eight months of 2014, the FAO Food Price Index recorded an average drop of 2.3% compared to the same period of 2013.

Figure 27 clearly shows a new level of food prices, well above those seen in the early 2000s. Indeed, by the end of the decade of 2000, food prices show a definite upward trend and have become even more volatile, rising in the final months of 2006 and reaching their peak in mid-2008, followed by a sharp decline till 2009. In late 2010 and early 2011, food prices rose back to 2008 levels, and even surpassed them, raising fears of a new food crisis such as that of 2007 and 2008. Finally, although between 2011 and the first six months of 2014 there

Figure 27: Evolution of the FAO Food Price Index (base 2002-2004 = 100), 2000-2014

Source: FAO (online).

was a slight downward trend in food prices, in nominal terms the food price index registered a 90% increase when compared to the average levels observed from 2003 to 2006, and a 21.7% increase over the average levels for the 2007-2010 period.

The evolution of the prices of the main food groups over the last year show significant reductions in the prices of cereals, sugar and oils, which have fallen, on average, 17.5%, 4.6% and 2.8% respectively over the last twelve months (Figure 28).

During the first eight months of 2014, the average price of corn fell by 29.1%, the price of rice dropped by 22.4% and wheat prices fell 4.6% compared with the same period in 2013¹⁵. The recent decline in cereal prices was caused by good prospects in global production in major exporting countries and lower concerns about the status of shipments from Ukraine.

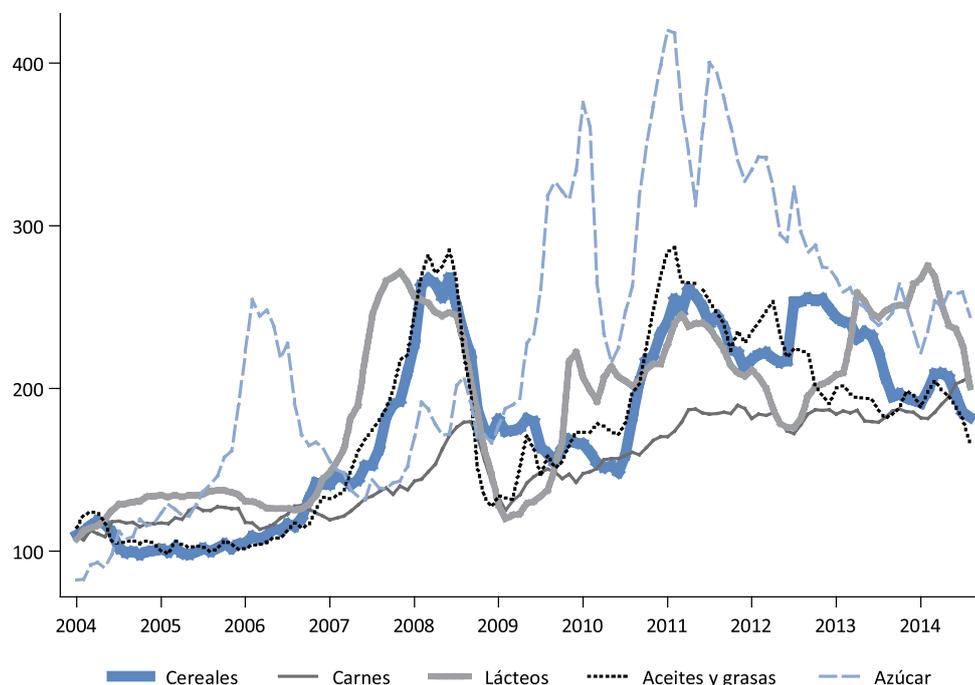
The drop in sugar prices was due a large availability for exports after the expansion of this crop during 2013. Although during 2014 the price of sugar increased slightly following market concerns about the potential impact that the El Niño phenomenon could have on this season's production, sugar price still remain at lower levels than in previous years.

As for vegetable oils, palm oil prices have decreased due to the fact that the seasonal maximum production coincided with a more moderate global demand for imports. On the other hand, in mid-2014, the price of soybean oil fell to its lowest level in four years, due to the high availability in South America and the positive forecasts for global production. Similarly, for the 2014/15 season the supply of sunflower oil and rapeseed oil should be abundant.

The prices of dairy products, by contrast, have risen since mid-2012. During the first quarter of 2014 dairy products were, on average, 4.8% higher than the levels of 2013, but during the second quarter of 2014 this trend was reversed, partly due to New Zealand's increased availability for export.

15/Calculations based on price indices produced by the IMF.

Figure 28: Evolution of the FAO Food Price Index by large groups, (base 2002-2004 = 100) 2004-2014



Source: FAO (online).

The price of meat, meanwhile, has remained relatively stable during 2013, but remains high when compared to historical levels. During 2014, average meat prices have increased 5.9% from the levels of 2013. The drop in the price of feed has favoured a decline in the prices of poultry and pork, to some extent, although in the offer of pork has fallen due to an outbreak of porcine epidemic diarrhoea in the United States. Beef and lamb prices have remained firm, reflecting a limited availability for export.

Food prices and inflation in LAC

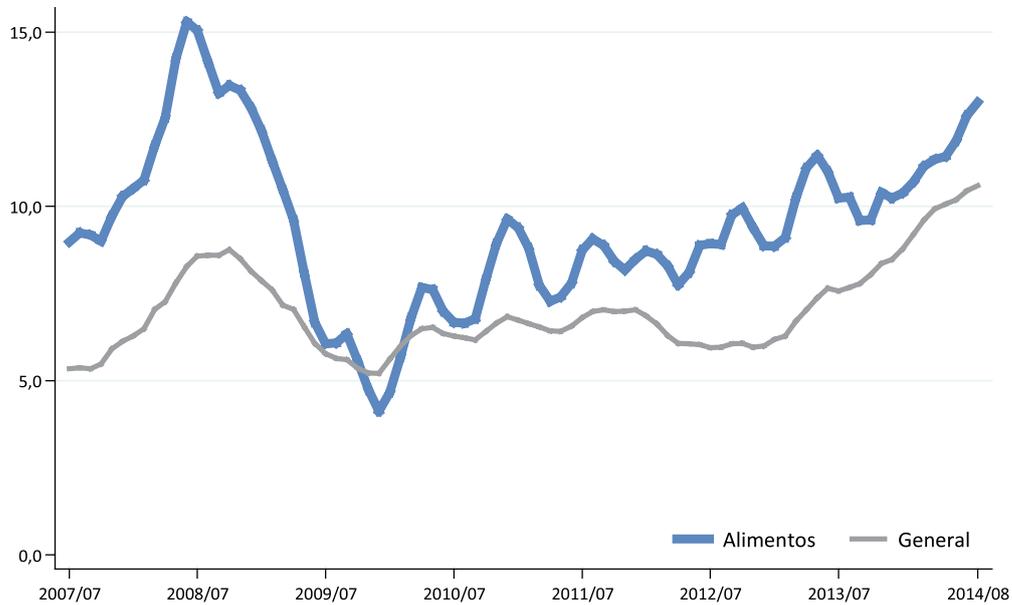
The increase of food prices has a direct impact on the welfare of families, reducing their purchasing power and thus affecting both the quantity and quality of food that households can purchase. Most people's main source of income come from wages or cash transfers, and thus are net buyers of food. Therefore, the increase in food prices directly affects the access dimension of food and nutrition security, and mostly that of the poorest households, since they spend a larger proportion of their income on

food. While families with higher socioeconomic status may reduce spending in other areas to keep their diets stable, the poorest cannot do so, and thus a rise in food prices affects their nutrition directly, with the consequent impact on their health.

Regional headline and food Inflation increased during 2014. In August 2014, year-on-year inflation reached 13%, 2.7 percentage points above the rate of inflation of the previous 12 months. Year-on-year headline inflation reached 10.6% in August 2014, 2.9 percentage points above the headline inflation of August 2013 (Figure 29).

While food inflation remains at one of the highest levels since mid-2007, it is still far from the peaks seen during the food crisis. Headline inflation, however, exceeds the maximum levels seen in mid-2008, which shows that food has had less weight on overall inflation compared to what happened during the crisis of 2007-2008. In 2014 food inflation accounts for 34.7% of headline inflation, 4.6 percentage points below the 39.3% of last year and well below the 48% that food

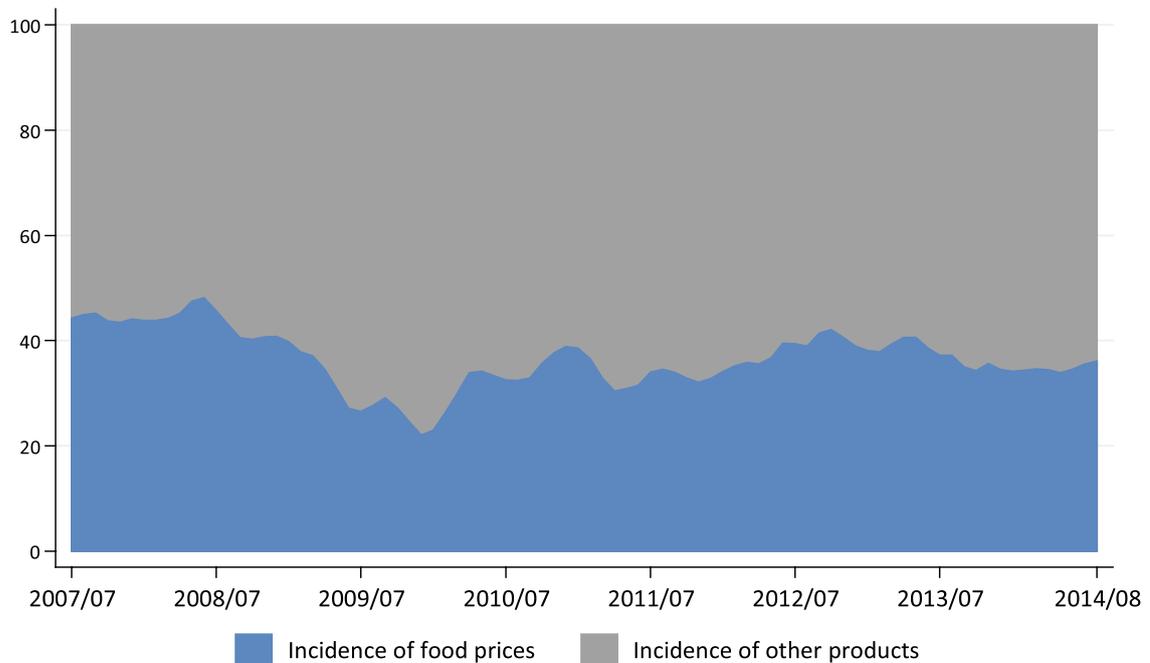
Figure 29: Evolution of the rate (%) of annual inflation in Latin America and the Caribbean^a



Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Note: a/ Average of 10 Latin American and Caribbean countries representing about 95% of regional GDP. The countries included are: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela (RB).

Figure 30: Incidence (%) of food prices and of other products on the rate of headline inflation in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods



Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Note: a/ Average of 10 Latin American and Caribbean countries representing about 95% of regional GDP. The countries included are: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela (RB).

inflation represented in terms of headline inflation during mid-2008 (see Figure 30).

Compared with the previous 12 months, several of the monitored countries in the region have had hikes in their food and headline inflation during 2014. Table 6 and Figure 31 show that, from January till August 2014, food prices increased more than from January to July 2013, contributing to increased regional inflation (Venezuela 91%, Uruguay 10.9%, Guatemala 8.6%, Honduras 7.2%, Costa Rica 6.9%, Chile 6.7%, Ecuador 6.2%, El Salvador 6%, Mexico 5.7%, Paraguay 5.1% and Colombia 3.5%). By contrast, countries such as Jamaica (10.5%), Nicaragua (9.5%), Bolivia (9.1%), Brazil (7.5%), Haiti (4.6%), Republic Dominicana (3.9%), Peru (2%) and Panama (1.4%) have seen minor variations in food prices compared to the previous 12 months.

In several countries of the region, food inflation is higher than headline inflation. This is relevant especially for the poorest sectors of society, because they spend a larger proportion of their income on food. Hence, food price increases have differentiated impacts, affecting

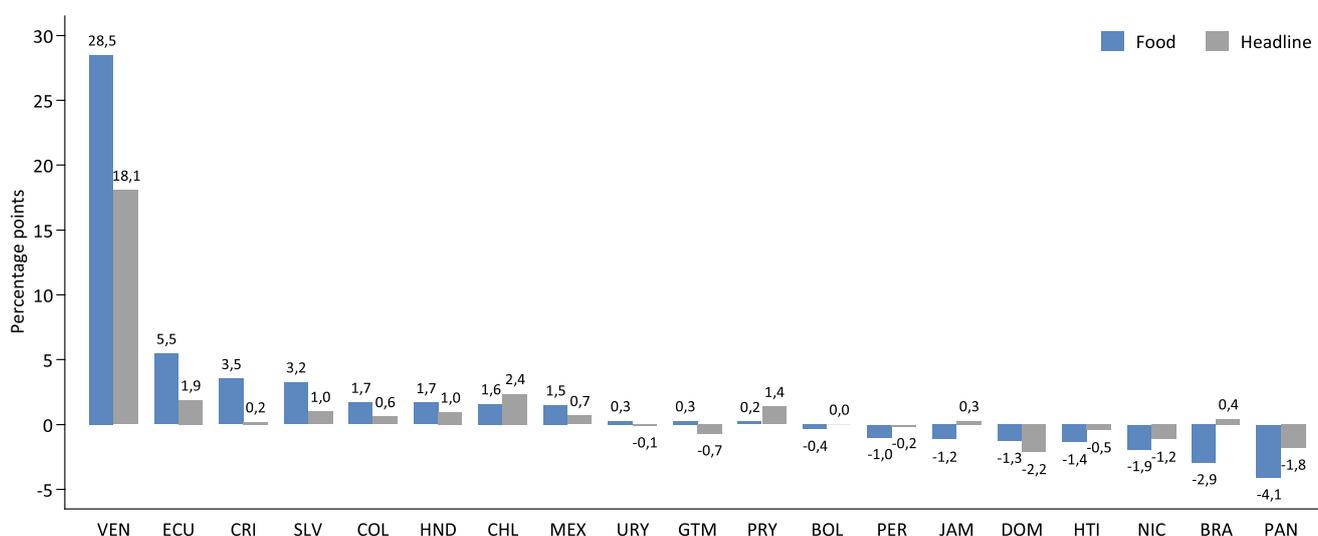
the most vulnerable in a much greater way.

Based on the latest available information, in 19 countries of the region food prices have risen faster than the price of the total basket of goods used to measure the Consumer Price Index, CPI (see Table 6).

From a food and nutrition security perspective, the rise in food prices in the region exacerbates the structural problem of insufficient access to food by sectors of society that do not have the necessary income and purchasing power to cover their food needs. Because these sectors spend a higher proportion of their income on food, the higher cost of the Basic food basket has serious impacts on their livelihoods and food security.

The cost of the Basic food basket in a given time period is equivalent to the minimum income needed to meet the food needs of a person during that time. The minimum wage should cover this cost, at least in principle. A successful update of minimum wages can prevent poor and/or vulnerable households from falling into extreme poverty because of rising food prices.

Figure 31: Differences (percentage points) in the rate of annual food and headline inflation in selected countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, between August 2013 and August 2014



Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Table 6: Rates of food and headline inflation in Latin America and the Caribbean (%), 2011- till August 2014

	Food inflation				Headline inflation			
	2011	2012	2013	Aug 2014	2011	2012	2013	Aug 2014
Antigua y Barbuda ^a	3,8	2,6	2,1	1,1	4,0	1,8	1,1	0,7
Argentina	7,6	9,9	9,3	...	9,5	10,8	10,9	...
Bahamas ^b	3,5	1,9	1,2	2,2	3,1	0,8	0,8	1,4
Barbados ^c	10,0	5,4	0,5	0,6	9,6	2,4	1,1	0,9
Belize ^d	...	1,7	2,5	0,9	...	0,8	1,6	1,6
Bolivia, E.P.	6,9	5,6	10,4	9,1	6,9	4,5	6,5	6,1
Brazil	7,2	9,9	8,5	7,5	6,5	5,8	5,9	6,5
Chile	8,6	4,7	4,9	6,7	4,4	1,5	3,0	4,5
Colombia	5,3	2,5	0,8	3,5	3,7	2,4	1,9	2,8
Costa Rica	4,1	1,2	3,3	6,9	4,7	4,6	3,7	5,5
Dominica	4,1	3,0	0,7	2,2	2,0	2,0	-1,1	-1,3
Ecuador	6,8	5,0	1,9	6,2	5,4	4,2	2,7	4,2
El Salvador	3,2	1,1	1,9	6,0	5,1	0,8	0,8	2,0
Granada ^e	5,5	1,3	1,1	0,4	3,5	1,8	-1,2	-1,3
Guatemala	...	6,0	8,8	8,6	6,2	3,4	4,4	3,7
Haiti	9,0	8,8	2,9	4,6	8,3	7,6	3,4	5,1
Honduras	3,1	3,8	4,9	7,2	5,6	5,4	4,9	6,3
Jamaica	5,5	14,3	7,9	10,5	6,0	8,0	9,7	9,8
Mexico	5,8	7,5	4,0	5,7	3,8	3,6	4,0	4,1
Nicaragua	9,2	8,1	6,0	9,5	8,0	6,6	5,7	6,7
Panama	7,5	7,2	4,6	1,4	6,3	4,6	3,7	2,1
Paraguay	3,9	0,7	6,7	5,1	4,9	4,0	3,7	4,5
Peru	8,0	4,1	2,2	2,0	4,7	2,6	2,9	2,9
Dominican Rep.	9,7	6,3	1,6	3,9	7,8	3,9	3,9	3,1
San Kitts and Nevis ^e	3,5	-0,1	4,9	3,6	2,8	0,1	0,4	-0,1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadinas ^e	5,7	1,1	1,8	2,5	4,7	1,0	0,0	-0,4
Saint Lucía ^e	5,7	10,4	-3,0	-0,6	4,8	5,0	-0,7	3,6
Suriname ^e	10,9	4,9	-1,1	-0,1	14,9	4,4	0,6	2,1
Trinidad and Tobago	10,9	12,7	10,2	11,4	5,3	7,2	5,6	5,9
Uruguay	8,7	10,8	9,0	10,9	8,6	7,5	8,5	8,7
Venezuela (B.R.)	33,6	23,7	73,9	91,0	27,6	20,1	56,2	63,4
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	8,5	8,9	10,2	13,0	7,0	6,0	8,5	10,6

Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Note: a/ Average of 10 Latin American and Caribbean countries representing about 95% of regional GDP. The countries included are: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela (B.R.).

b / Figures for July.

c / Figures for June.

d / Figures for May.

e / Figures for March.

f / Figures for February

Impact of price increases on the cost of the Basic food basket and its relation to the minimum wage

As mentioned above, the increase in food prices have varied effects on households. The price increases are negative for households who are net consumers of food (net buyers), but positive for families of producers (net sellers). The degree and extent of the effects that these prices increases will have on households is measured by the net impact on welfare with respect to production and consumption.

In terms of consumers, one of the key elements to evaluate purchasing power is the minimum wage, especially for the poorest households. The minimum wage can be set to cover the minimum needs of workers and their families, taking into consideration the varying economic and social conditions seen in each country (ILO, 2014).

Since 2008 food prices are at higher levels than those observed in the pre-crisis era, and although the upward trend did not continue and price levels fell after the crisis, they did not drop back to their habitual levels. Since 2008, the levels of poverty and indigence in the region have remained stable, and the rate of poverty reduction, both in terms of the number and percentage of people affected, has stagnated, in part due to lower economic growth.

Several factors may have influenced this slowdown in the rate of poverty reduction, and slower economic growth surely played a part. However, the lapse between the increase of food prices and the adjustment of instruments such as the minimum wage may have contributed equally to an increase in poverty, or a decrease in the rate of its reduction. To see how the rise in food prices increased the value of the Basic food basket and how governments have responded by increasing the minimum wage, we will use the most updated data available for 14 countries in the region, beginning in 2006¹⁶.

Figure 32 shows the situation of selected countries in South America¹⁷: the greatest increase in the nominal

cost of basic food baskets occurred, on average, between 2006 and 2010. The first increase in the cost of the basic food basket occurred prior to the 2007/08 crisis and the second to the strong increase in price during 2010-2011, which for many is the sign of a new crisis.

In Central America and the Caribbean, considering information available till December 2012 (FAO, 2014c, from news source), neither rural nor national minimum wages cover the cost of basic food basket in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, requiring more than one minimum wage per family to have access to adequate food (more than two in the case of Nicaragua) (see Figure 33).

The agricultural minimum wage would be sufficient to cover the cost of the reference basic food basket only in Belize, Costa Rica and Panama, in the unlikely event that a rural worker actually earns this minimum, since household surveys seem to indicate that noncompliance with minimum wages is a widespread phenomenon (FAO, 2014c, from news source).

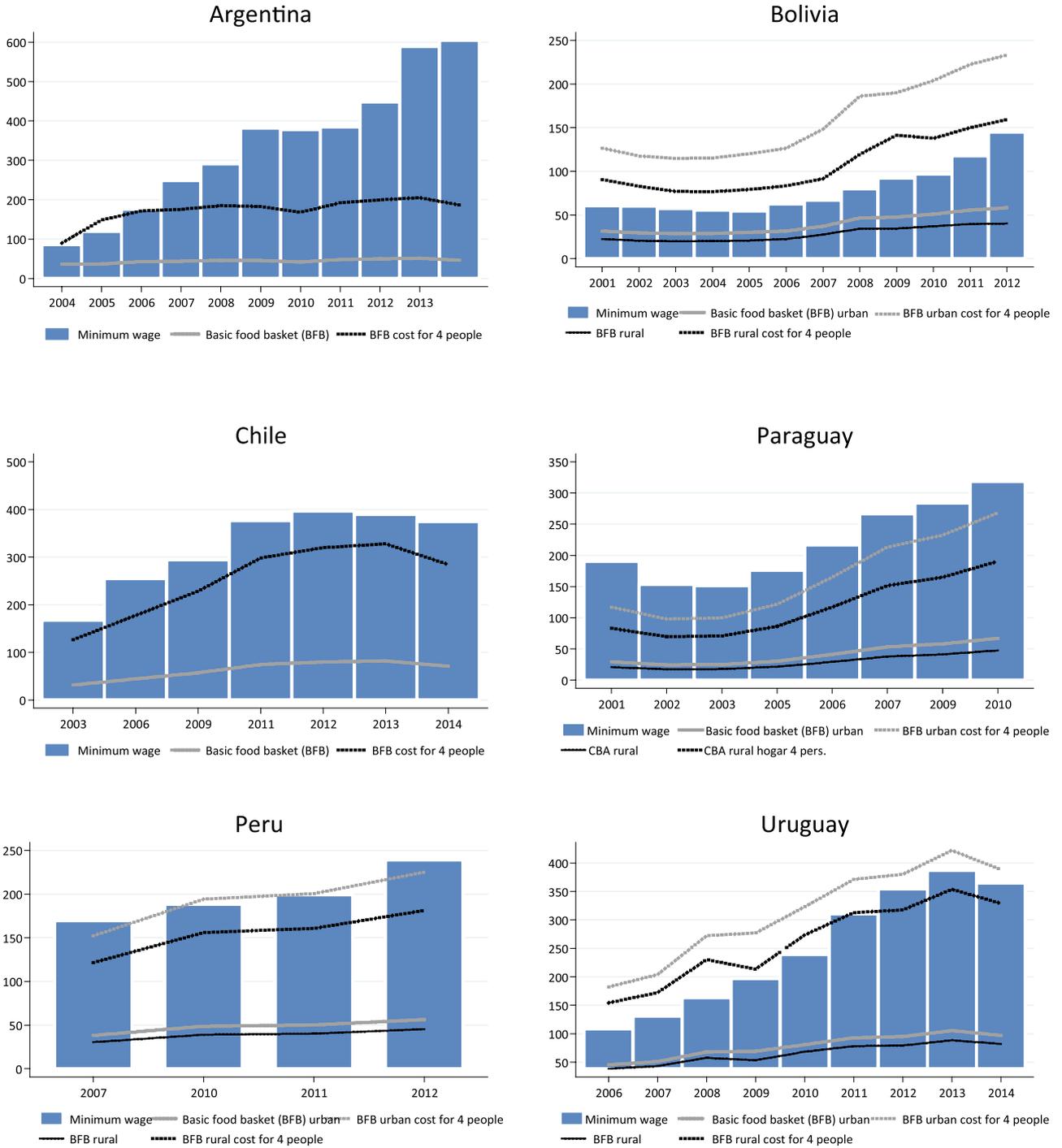
In addition to assessing whether the value of the basic food basket is covered by the minimum wage, it is important to know whether the gap between these two values remained constant or whether it has increased or shortened through time. The latter would be the most worrying, because it would imply that households have less leeway with their available income and are increasingly occupying a greater proportion of their income buying food, threatening their food access. In this regard, it is relevant to consider the average growth rate of both of these variables, to appreciate differences in the magnitude of their evolution.

When analysing the average growth in both the cost of the basic food basket and the evolution of the minimum wage (Table 7), differences between selected countries in the region become evident. In the periods analysed in Table 7 significant increases in the cost of the basic food basket were not necessarily followed by corresponding increases in the minimum wage, creating differences in their average growth.

¹⁶/Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

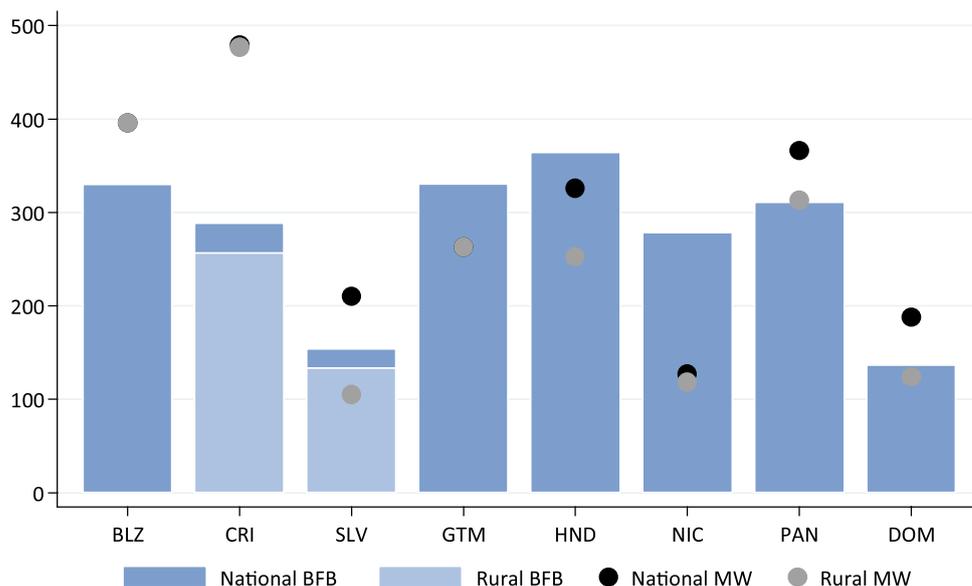
¹⁷/Country selection was made based on the information available at the time of the present analysis.

Figure 32: Cost (USD) of the basic food basket, the basic food basket¹⁸ cost for 4 people, and the minimum wage in selected countries



Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

18/Urban and/or rural, accordingly.

Figure 33: Cost (USD) of the rural and national basic food baskets and minimum wages in selected countries

Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Notes: In countries where there are several rural minimum wages, their average has been used. For the determination of national minimum wages the criteria of the ILO was used. The value of the BFB for El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama is the average of 2012, in the case of Costa Rica it is the average for the first half of 2012, and for Guatemala it is the average from January to November 2012. There are no current values for Belize and the Dominican Republic, so their averages for 2009 and 2007 are shown in Fig 33, respectively.

Argentina, Bolivia and Uruguay had average growth rates in their minimum wages above the average growth rate of the cost of the basic food basket, the greatest difference between them was in Argentina. The opposite was true for Chile, Paraguay and Peru, and the greatest gap between minimum wages and the cost of the basic food basket was seen in Paraguay.

The gap between the minimum wage and the value of the basic food basket indicates the purchasing power that households have in terms of their access to basic foods. Figure 34 shows a diverse trend among the countries studied.

Thus, in Argentina the increase in food prices in the late 2000s caused a major reduction in the purchasing power of households. However, the situation has reversed because of significant increases in the value of the minimum wage. In Chile, meanwhile, the gap has remained at more or less constant levels, in spite of a significant drop in 2009. Finally, purchasing power in Paraguay, measured as the ratio between the minimum wage and the cost of the basic food basket, decreased throughout the study period.

Table 7: Average growth (%) of the minimum wage and the basic food basket in selected countries, different periods

	Growth of the minimum wage (%)	Growth of the basic food basket (%)
Argentina (Prom. 2004/2013)	30,16	9,34
Bolivia (Prom. 2003/2012)	10,82	6,8 ^a
		6,73 ^b
Chile (Prom. 2006/2014)	10,7	11,1
Paraguay (Prom. 2003/2010)	9,5	14,7
Peru (Prom. 2010/2012)	8,47	10,3 ^a
		10,6 ^b
Uruguay (Prom. 2007/2014)	16,85	10,26 ^a
		10,34 ^b

Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Note: a/ Urban.

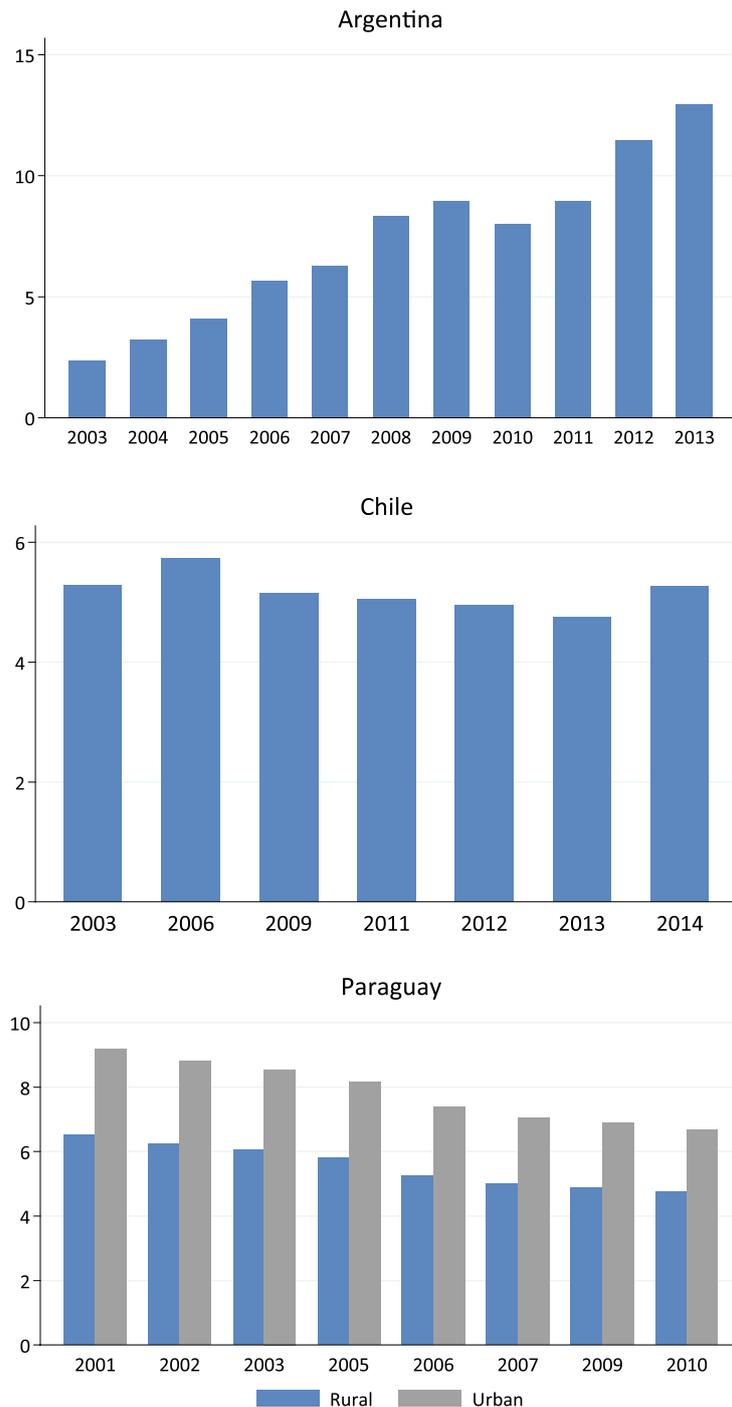
b/ Rural.

From the information above we can conclude that rising food prices meant a significant reduction in the purchasing power of the population and, more specifically, represented a major difficulty for the

most vulnerable, whose sole source of income is the minimum wage. The fact that in some countries minimum wages does not fully cover the cost of the basic food basket –as a result of the new level of food prices or due to other factors– is worrying and poses

a major challenge for the social protection systems of countries, which are becoming fundamental in terms of bridging these gaps that may jeopardize the food and nutrition security of the families that live in the region.

Figure 34: Gap (in ratios) between the minimum wage and cost of the basic food basket in selected countries, different periods



Source: FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official country information.

Poverty and inequality

As has happened with hunger, poverty and extreme poverty have experienced similar reduction trends, both throughout the region and within countries. Despite this, according to ECLAC (2013) poverty still affects 164 million people, equivalent to 27.9% of the region's population (see Figure 35).

Poverty has remained relative stable, falling slightly from 28.2% in 2012. The levels of indigence, meanwhile, have increased both in number and in terms of percentage of the total population, due to the high domestic food prices. 68 million people were indigent in Latin America in 2013, two million more than in the previous year. The rate of extreme poverty or indigence rose by 0.2 percentage points in 2013, reaching 11.5%.

It is important to note the implications of this change in the composition of poverty: While poverty as a whole remains stable, extreme poverty increased by 2 million people in the region. In that sense, the number of people in poverty remains constant, however, within this group there is a higher proportion of people in extreme poverty. This reflects, at least in part, the impact that high food prices have on poverty. It is possible that changes in the composition of poverty relate to a change in the relative prices of food compared to other prod-

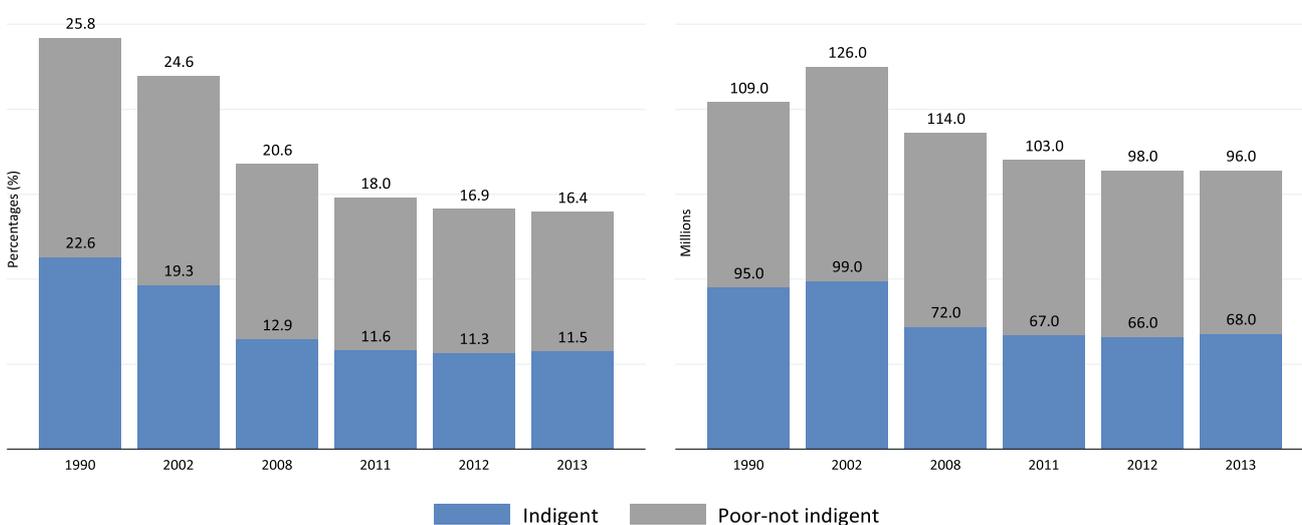
ucts of the economy, as was evidenced above. Thus, a relatively high food inflation affects the indigent the most. Moreover, when the relative prices of food versus non-food change, there is not only greater impact on the poor, but the spending gap between higher income population and those with lower incomes increases, since the latter group spend a greater proportion of their resources on buying food.

Country data, meanwhile, shows a trend towards poverty and indigence reduction in most of the countries of the region except for Mexico and the Dominican Republic, where there has been a slight rise in their poverty levels (although it is probably not significant)¹⁹.

Within countries with data available for 2012, Argentina and Uruguay show the lowest levels of poverty and indigence. In these countries, poverty affects 4.3% and 5.9% of the population, respectively, while extreme poverty affects 1.7% and 1.1% of the population, respectively.

¹⁹The household surveys that allow the calculation of poverty and indigence in the countries have a margin of error within which the differences between two point estimates are considered statistically not different from each other. This margin of error varies from country to country, but is usually close to 3%. Hence a difference as that observed in the case of Mexico and the Dominican Republic can be part of the statistical error and do not represent a real difference in the indicator of poverty and/or indigence.

Figure 35: Poverty [rates (%) and millions of person] in Latin America, selected years



Source: ECLAC, 2013.

Countries like Brazil (6.1%), Chile (3.1%), Costa Rica (7.3%) and Peru (6%) also have relatively low levels of poverty in the region. Table 8 details the information on poverty and indigence in Latin America circa 2002, 2011 and 2012.

Table 8 corroborates that from the first decade of the 2000s onwards, the countries of the region have progressively reduced their levels of poverty and indigence, coupled with a reduction in hunger. In spite of this, the change in the composition of poverty and the

Table 8: Rates (%) of poverty and indigence in selected countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, circa 2002, 2011 and 2012

Country	Circa 2002/a		Circa 2011/b		2012	
	Poverty	Indigence	Poverty	Indigence	Poverty	Indigence
Argentina	45,4	20,9	5,7	1,9	4,3	1,7
Bolivia	62,4	37,1	42,4	22,4	–	–
Brazil	37,5	12,9	20,9	6,1	18,6	5,4
Chile	18,7	4,7	11,0	3,1	–	–
Colombia	49,8	17,8	34,2	10,7	32,9	10,4
Costa Rica	20,3	8,2	18,8	7,3	17,8	7,3
Ecuador	49	19,4	35,3	13,8	32,2	12,9
El Salvador	48,9	22,1	46,6	16,7	45,3	13,5
Honduras	77,3	54,4	67,4	42,8	–	–
Mexico	39,4	12,6	36,3	13,3	37,1	14,2
Nicaragua	69,4	42,5	58,3	29,5	–	–
Panama	30	18,6	25,3	12,4	–	–
Paraguay	59,7	31,3	49,6	28,0	–	–
Peru	54,7	24,4	27,8	6,3	25,8	6,0
Dominican Rep.	47,1	20,7	42,2	20,3	41,2	20,9
Uruguay	15,5	2,5	6,5	1,1	5,9	1,1
Venezuela (B.R.)	48,6	22,2	29,5	11,7	23,9	9,7

Source: ECLAC, 2013.

Note: a / Data for Brazil, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru correspond to information for 2001. Data for Chile corresponds to 2003.
b / Data for Bolivia and Nicaragua correspond to information for 2009. Data for El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico are for 2010.

relative stagnation of the reduction of extreme poverty pose significant future challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean.

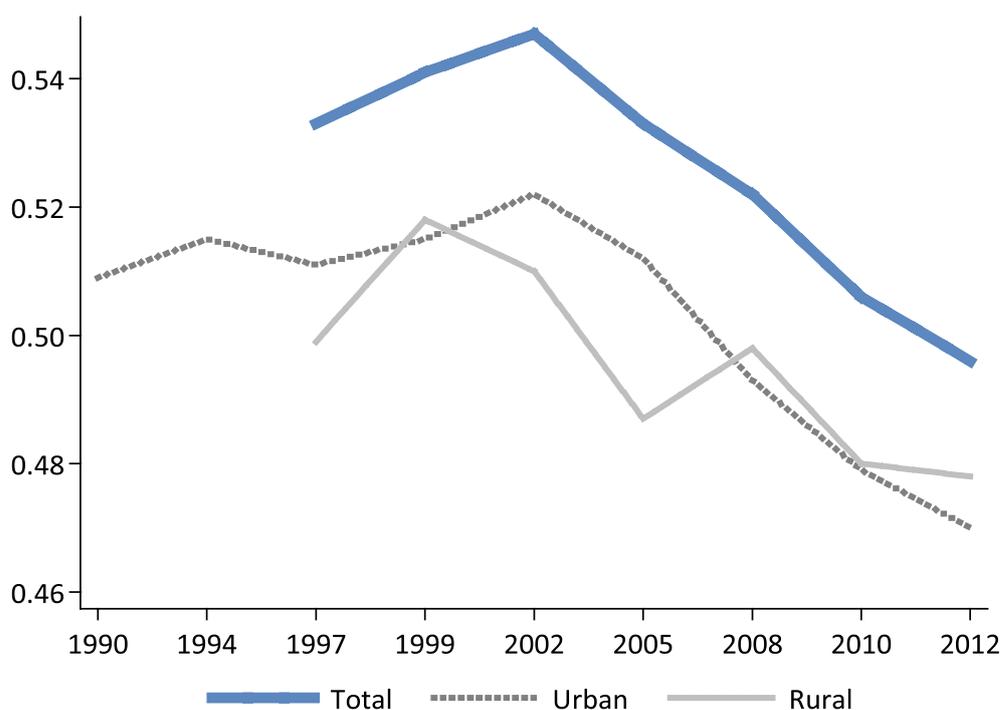
As with poverty, an analysis of inequality in the region presents a double sided scenario, characterized by an overall downward trend that, however, has important nuances. Figure 36 shows that the Gini index of Latin America has declined steadily since the early 2000s, going from 0.547 in 2002 to 0.496 in 2012. This implies that, although it is still one of the most unequal areas in the world, factors such as the improvement in the distribution of labour income and the increase of public cash transfers have reduced the levels of wealth concentration and increased the participation of the most disadvantaged in the benefits of economic growth (FAO, 2012a).

Even in the face of this positive scenario, a detailed analysis of the countries of the region shows that high levels of inequality still exist: the poorest quintile of each country participates in a fairly small propor-

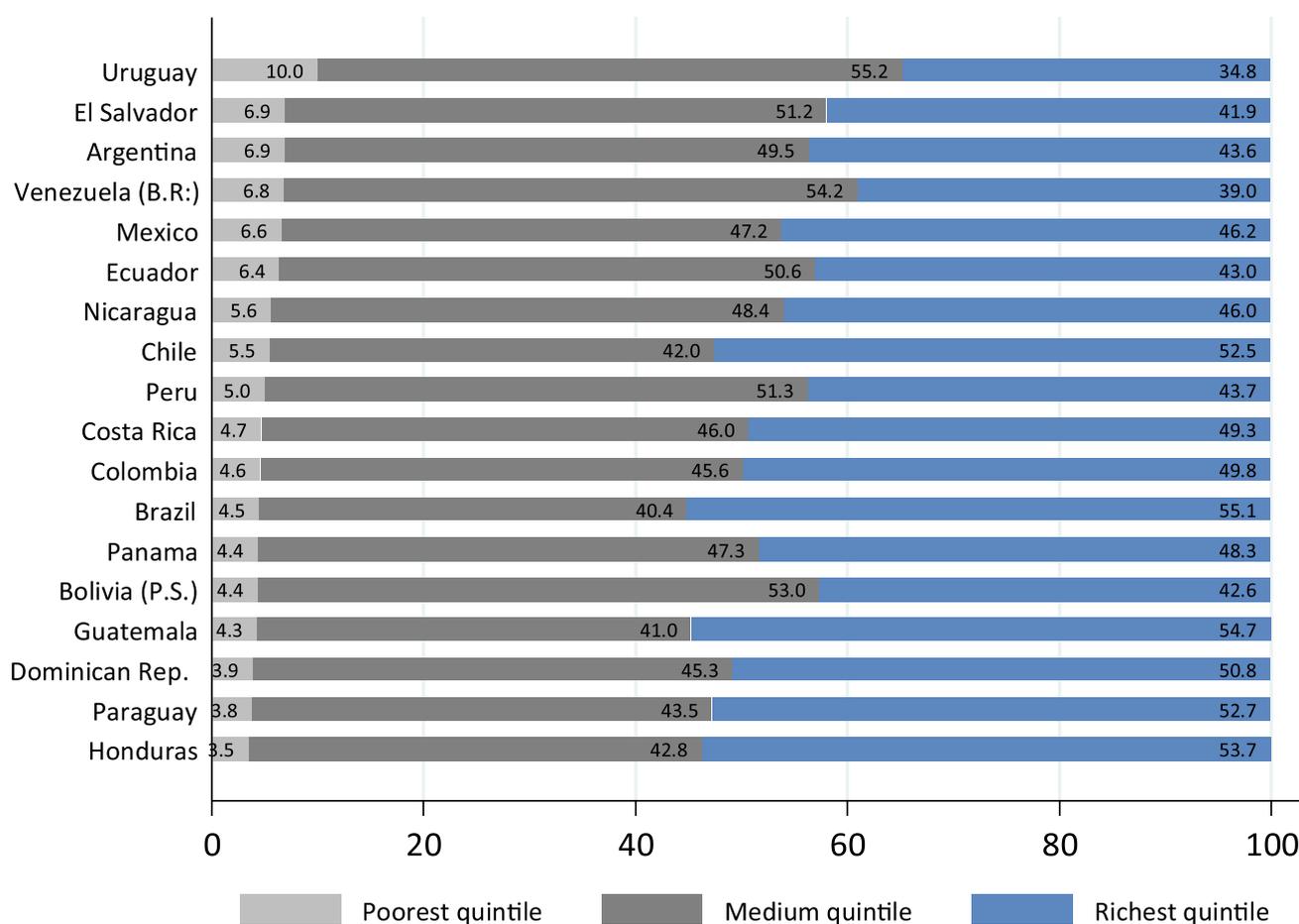
tion of total revenues. Thus, with the exception of Uruguay where the poorest quintile of the population receives 10% of the country's income, in the rest of Latin America the ratio is between 3.5% and less than 7% of total revenues. In contrast, the richest quintile of the population receives anything from one-third to more than half of the income generated by the country. Uruguay is the country with the best income distribution in the region: the richest quintile of the population receives 34.8% of the total revenues of the country (see Figure 37). By contrast, in Honduras, Guatemala, Brazil, Paraguay and Panama there are the greatest differences. In these countries, the richest quintile earns an income 20 times that of the poorest quintile.

Bolivia is one the countries that has had the best results in its efforts to reduce inequality: In 2002 the richest quintile of that country had an average income per person which was 44.2 times that of the lowest quintile. This gap is now 15.9 times (see Figure 38), a reduction of 28.3 percentage points.

Figure 36: Evolution of the Gini index in Latin America, different periods



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from ECLAC (online).

Figure 37: Share (%) of total income by quintiles in Latin America, circa 2012

Source: [FAO Regional Office based on data from ECLAC \(online\)](#).

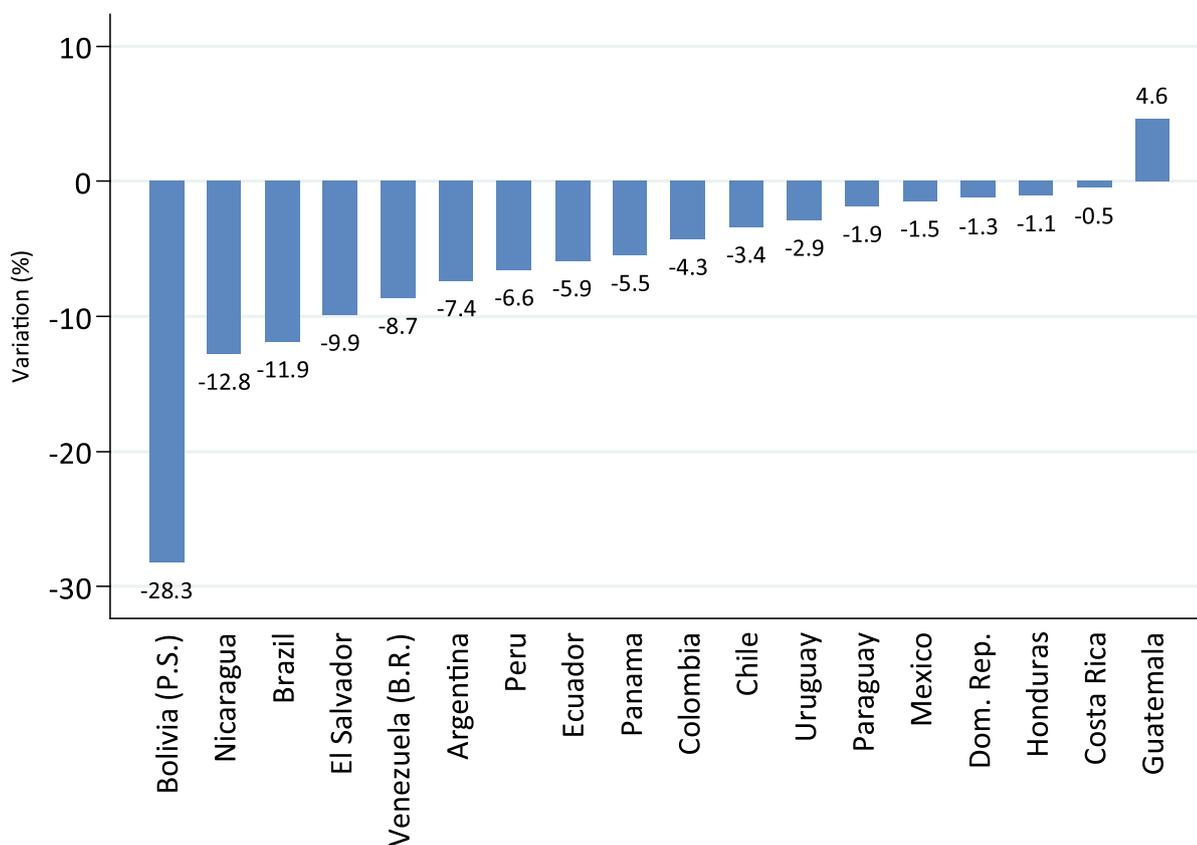
Of all the countries in Figure 37, only in Guatemala has the difference between the richest and poorest quintile has increased over time, from 19.3 times in 2002 to 23.9 times in 2006.

The importance of food prices, poverty and inequality in income distribution lies in the fact that these are the chief factors that ultimately determine the existence of hunger in the region. As was demonstrated in this chapter, there is enough food to feed the entire population of Latin America and the Caribbean, whether they are acquired through domestic production or international trade. Despite this, there are still segments of the population and remote areas that do not

participate fully in the benefits of economic growth and wealth creation and live under unfavourable food security conditions.

Even though the analysis of the past decades shows a positive trend in terms of economic growth, poverty eradication and the reduction of inequality, in recent years there has been a slowdown in their pace of progress. Taking this into consideration, as well as the apparent economic slowdown of 2014, the main challenge for the region is to redouble its efforts in the field of social and redistributive policies, so that the expected recovery in growth in 2015 can benefit the whole of society and particularly the most vulnerable.

Figure 38: Variation (percentage points) of the ratio of the average per capita income between the richest and the poorest quintile in selected countries, between periods circa 2002 and 2012^a



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from ECLAC (online).

Note: a / Bolivia (2002-2011), Chile (2003-2012), Colombia (2002-2011), El Salvador (2001-2012), Guatemala (2002-2006), Honduras (2002-2010), Nicaragua (2001-2009), Panama (2002-2011), Paraguay (2001-2011), Peru (2001-2012). For other countries the information is from 2002-2012.

The countries of Latin America will have to face two very different contexts in their national fights against poverty, hunger and inequality: On the one hand, there are those with high consumption capacity, access to decent employment, housing and a set of basic social services; while on the other, there are important sectors without adequate access to these services, decent working conditions or sufficient income to meet their basic needs. How Latin America and the Caribbean address this diverse reality will be key to consolidate its important food and nutrition security achievements in the coming years.

RECUADRO 2.

TERRITORIAL POVERTY AND COST OF LIVING: A CASE STUDY.

The most widely used criterion for measuring poverty is to define a referential monetary value for a basic food basket that meets the minimum requirements needed to develop a healthy and active life. This method is known as the “poverty line”, and is widely used in Latin America.

In Chile, poverty is estimated from: (1) a basic food basket which is identical for the whole territory, (2) the value of acquiring these foods considering average domestic prices, and (3) household income, as measured by the household survey, CASEN*. It is important to consider that there is but one poverty line, which may not correctly reflect the different costs of living that can be found throughout the territory. A study conducted in the Aysen region by Perez and Ortiz (2014), showed that in isolated areas the cost of living is higher than the national average, resulting in a significant underestimation of poverty in these territories.

Two main factors explain the difference in the cost of living throughout a territory. On the one hand, economic theory holds that a larger market creates greater the economies of scale (in this case from agglomeration) and lowers living costs (Krugman, 2008), while the larger the distance from the market, the larger the costs. Thus, smaller towns which are far away from urban centres face higher costs of living and, once you take into account other factors, higher poverty rates (Kobrich et al., 2004; Partridge et al., 2008; Pérez et al., 2013).

Regarding the case of the Aysen region in Chile, it is located in the far south of the country, and is one of the most isolated regions of the country. It has approximately 99,606 inhabitants, representing only

0.57% of the total domestic population, with a density of 0.91 inhabitants/km². Furthermore, only 10% of the regional road connectivity is paved (Perez and Ortiz, 2014).

In this case study, the cost of living in the Aysen region is superior to that used for the measurement of poverty, both for urban and rural areas, so the real rate of poverty in Aysen is higher than what is reflected in official country statistics. In fact, in the largest city of the Aysen region, prices are at least 18% higher than the national average (see Table A).

Only once the actual values of the cost of living are taken into account is it possible to appreciate their impact on poverty estimates. Extreme poverty rises from 1.55% to 2.47%, while overall poverty increases

Table A: Differences in the cost of the official basic food basket and the estimated cost of the same basket in the Aysen region of Chile (in USD*).

URBAN AREA	Official (CASEN 2011)	Aysen region
Poverty line	151,6	180,68
Extreme poverty line	75,83	90,34
RURAL AREA	Official (CASEN 2011)	Aysen region US\$
Poverty line	102,26	121,82
Extreme poverty line	58,43	69,61

Source: Pérez and Ortiz, 2014

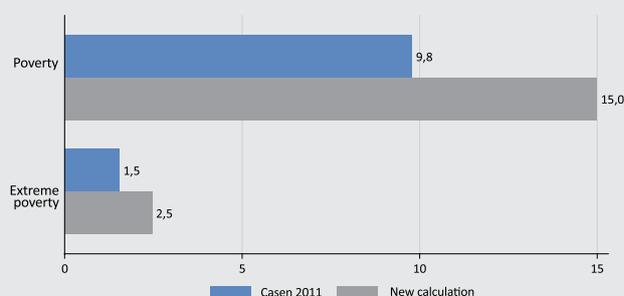
* All dollars are expressed in values of October 2012, the month when the basic food basket is calculated

*National Socioeconomic Survey (CASEN) <http://www.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/casen2011/>, Ministry of Social Development. Accessed October 2012 and January 2013.

more than 5 percentage points (see Figure A). All this implies an official underestimation of poverty of 5,192 people.

This data shows the importance of taking territorial factors into account when assessing the impacts of phenomena such as higher prices or changes in the socioeconomic conditions of the population. While national aggregate statistics account for the “macro” reality of a country, it should also be considered that people inhabit unique territories that play a central role in determining their lifestyles and living conditions.

Figure A: Incidence (%) of poverty and extreme poverty in the region of Aysen, Chile



Source: Pérez and Ortiz, 2014

Food access policies in the 2013-2014 period

Food access policies in Latin America and the Caribbean have gone from the very universal policies of the 60s and 70s to more targeted approaches centred on the concept of the “subsidiary” state. However, as this issue of the Panorama demonstrates, countries have cycled back towards universality in social policies, granting a more active role to the state while trying not to lose the progress made during recent decades in terms of characterization and targeting of beneficiaries.

Food access policies are those seeking to give people the physical and economic means to obtain the necessary food for their welfare. In this sense, access policies relate to the areas of social development, public works and economics, among others.

During 2013 and the first quarter of 2014, governments implemented a variety of measures in terms of income and food assistance, aimed at increasing the revenues of vulnerable people through public transfers and interventions in the labour market, as well as facilitating immediate access to food in kind. Initiatives concerning school feeding were also widespread in the region. The measures implemented most frequently by governments in 2013-2014 reveal that access to food is faced

both as a short-term problem that can be solved by monetary social assistance (emergency public transfers) and food aid, as well as a long-term challenge that needs continuous assistance programs (school feeding and transfer programs) and better labour conditions (measures directly affecting the labour market and that create income indirectly).

Measures to increase disposable income

One of the most common means by which governments seek to increase disposable income is through improvements in the functioning of the labour market. The implementation of temporary employment programs is one of the most common modes of intervention. These temporary employment programs have the following characteristics: (1) they employ people in vulnerable situations; (2) the beneficiaries work in jobs relating to matters of community development; and (3) these temporary jobs are coupled with job training.

Antigua and Barbuda implemented the Skills Training & Empowerment Programme (ABSTEP), whose target audience are vulnerable unemployed individuals between 17-50 years, and seeks to provide employment for a period of six months in activities or works

of community interest, such as community centres, construction or repair of local public infrastructure, collaborative education projects or public health, to name a few. Beneficiaries receive in return a salary equivalent to the legal minimum wage and work four days a week, leaving a fifth day for training.

Some countries have implemented various regulations aimed at recruiting workers from priority groups, either because of their socioeconomic status, age, ethnicity or from areas which have high unemployment rates. To this end, the state usually provides subsidies or tax benefits for private companies to hire these target beneficiaries. Uruguay enacted the “youth employment act” Law No. 19.133, which seeks to promote the recruitment of young people who are more likely to suffer unemployment, since Uruguay is the country with the highest rate of youth unemployment in contrast to the adult unemployed in all of Latin America and the Caribbean (ILO, 2013). Four modes of public support were established: (1) a subsidy of up to 25% of their salary for young people between 15 and 24 years who were employed for the first time; (2) a 15% subsidy for young people up to 29 years performing internships for graduates; (3) a 20% subsidy for employers who reduce the workday by one hour a day so young people can continue their studies, or a 40 % subsidy for those who reduce two hours; and (4) the creation of support systems and public support targeted at enterprises initiated and led by young people.

Other sources of income, as well as labour wages, determine access to food, such as pensions and public transfers. In the case of pensions, during 2013-2014, the states of the region have created programs for non-contributory pensions that provide access to stable income to seniors who are left outside the formal systems of social security; as well as establishing minimum amounts and adjustments to both contributory and non-contributory pensions, ensuring minimum levels of income for people who rely on these benefits. Other countries have implemented support systems that allow access by non-affiliated members to the formal pension system.

Panama increased the amounts of its “100 at 70” non-contributory pension plan by USD \$ 20, renaming

it “120 at 70” since it gives USD \$120 a month to Panamanians over 70 years that do not have any retirement or pension. Colombia implemented the Periodic Economic Benefits, a parallel public support system to the General Pension System which is aimed at vulnerable people who are not entitled to a pension, either because their income is lower than the minimum wage or because they have not made sufficient contributions to the social security system to allow them have access to a pension. In both cases, the state provides an incentive of 20% above the amount saved by the individual, so that upon retirement beneficiaries can have a lifelong pension.

In terms of public transfers, countries in the region have extended social safety nets that provide benefits to supplement household incomes through Conditional Cash Transfer Programs (CCTP) and other temporary or permanent mechanisms without conditions. During 2013-2014, Chile’s No. 20,743 Law established the Permanent Family Contribution for March. This is a single transfer benefiting more than one million six hundred thousand families, and aims to supplement household income with a variable amount depending on the number of people in charge of the head of the family.

Two transfer programs were modified during the last year: in the Dominican Republic the Eating First program increased its amount by USD \$3, government initiative which delivers cash transfers intended solely for the purchase of food to mothers, under the condition of periodic medical checks for themselves and their children. Mexico amended its Food Support Program (PAL, in Spanish), to incorporate its beneficiaries in the new support scheme established in the National Crusade Against Hunger. PAL is a transfer program focused on families who are not beneficiaries of the “Opportunities” program, and in this particular case, the amendments to the PAL program promote the use of the transfers for the purchase of food in the Diconsa store and the dairy store Licónsa²⁰.

²⁰ DICONSA is a majority state-owned company, responsible for the supply of basic and complementary good for rural localities with high and very high levels of poverty. Licónsa is a state company in charge of the supply of milk

Food assistance measures

Food assistance refers to government actions that facilitate access to food in kind. Countries in the region implement these types of measures either temporarily to face emergencies through direct food aid, or permanently to ensure that the most vulnerable people in the country have a minimum supply of food for their needs.

Among the continuous initiatives, school feeding programs are one of the most widespread policies in the region. All countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (albeit with different approaches) aim to ensure breakfast, lunch and/or a snack to children at an age in which it is essential for them to have access to adequate food. During the 2013-2014 period, several countries in the region announced expansions to their programs: El Salvador expanded the coverage of its Glass of Milk Program, part of the School Food and Health Program, delivering milk purchased from local producers; Honduras expanded the coverage and improved the components of its School Feeding Program; and Paraguay expanded its Nutritional Supplement Program for children in preschool.

The strengthening of these programs only serves to demonstrate the importance they have in the creation of integrated strategies to ensure access to food.

Measures relating to domestic trade

In the area of domestic trade, understood as measures implemented by governments to facilitate food supply through improved marketing systems, a wide range of interventions are used depending on the economic orientation of each country.

Within the period of analysis, one of the countries that implemented significant changes in this area was Cuba: Through the Decree-Law 318 it allowed for direct marketing of agricultural products in the provinces of Mayabeque, Havana and Artemis, to create a more dynamic food supply system for the island. The law allowed producers to trade their surplus production, both wholesale and retail²¹, after fulfilling their commitments with the State.

²¹/Horse, beef and buffalo meat, milk and its derivatives, coffee, honey, tobacco and cocoa are excluded from this marketing system

Food price measures

Finally, in terms of food prices, the region can be divided between those countries who have permanent policies to regulate the price of some products and those who only intervene when substantial price increases occur. While States generally act unilaterally through the powers which they are entitled to by law, in some cases they have chosen to reach agreements with the private sector to set prices for certain commodities during set time periods.

Example of this is Argentina, where the government together with marketers, distributors and suppliers launched the initiative Precios Cuidados (cared-for prices), an agreement between all parties to maintain the prices of certain products in the basic food basket stable throughout 2014. These prices are reviewed quarterly in order to guarantee a profit for the different actors of the chain and grant fair prices to consumers. Uruguay also reached an agreement with industry representatives to freeze prices for more than a thousand products in the basic food basket, and halt inflation.

To summarize, policies concerning access to food has been gaining increasing importance in the region. States are increasingly becoming interested in having more and better initiatives in this area, as they become aware that the eradication of hunger and poverty is a key to national and regional development and incorporate these matters within the public agenda. Particularly important are the efforts related to income generation. The institutionalizing of various programs aimed at this reaffirm its importance within current social policies. It seems very clear that States have positively assessed the advantages of having a consolidated social protection system, instead of more cyclical welfare policies. The food price crisis of 2008 left some key lessons, which include the recognition of the need to have public intervention tools and adequate State support.



FOOD UTILIZATION

Malnutrition in all its forms (undernourishment, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity) mainly affects the most vulnerable population in the region. While there are positive trends in reducing of undernourishment, it remains a concern in many countries, while overweight and obesity have been increasing in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Malnutrition is not just a health or social problem but has impacts and is affected by changes in food systems. An increasingly healthy and sustainable food supply sets solid foundations for reducing malnutrition in all its forms.

Despite the great economic, social and health advances in Latin America and the Caribbean, there are still 37 million undernourished people and close to 6.9 million children under five who suffer chronic malnutrition (UNICEF, WHO and World Bank, 2012). Furthermore, anaemia caused by iron deficiency is the most prevalent nutritional problem in the region, affecting 44.5% of children and 22.5% of women of childbearing age (WHO, online).

Obesity figures, meanwhile, have almost doubled between 1980 and 2008 worldwide. In the region 23% of the adult population is obese and 7% of children under five (3.9 million) are obese (WHO, online).

All forms of malnutrition affect the region in different magnitudes, and have varying impacts on different population groups. The poorest people generally suffer from malnutrition and its effects, both from food deficit (stunting, undernourishment and micronutrient deficiencies) or excessive food consumption (overweight and obesity). Therefore, it is clear that the fight against poverty is inextricably linked with the reduction of both types of malnutrition.

Malnutrition and poverty: Challenges to reduce vulnerability

Poverty, especially extreme poverty, is closely related to hunger. The lower revenues of the most vulnerable population limit their ability to buy food, and since the poorest people also have less access to health services, they utilize food improperly, favouring the emergence of malnutrition (Solano et al., 2011).

Obesity is no longer a phenomenon that only affects higher income groups. Indeed, in several developing

countries obesity is more common among the most vulnerable socio-economic groups, while in several developed and middle-income countries the consumption of unhealthy foods is significantly related to low income and a low educational levels (UN, 2014).

In Mexico, for example, people who have low-income usually consume energy-dense foods, making them more prone to overweight and obesity (Donmarco Rivera et al., 2012). In Chile, the last National Health Survey (Chilean Ministry of Health, 2009) revealed that 35.5% of the population who had low education were obese, compared to 18.5% of those who were highly educated.

This double burden of malnutrition generates high economic and social costs for all countries and in all sector of the population, regardless of income (FAO, 2013c). However, poor nutrition often has greater impact on low-income sector. Malnutrition in early life may increase the likelihood of future obesity because of the “abundance or scarcity” reaction that favours the accumulation of fat (UN, 2014).

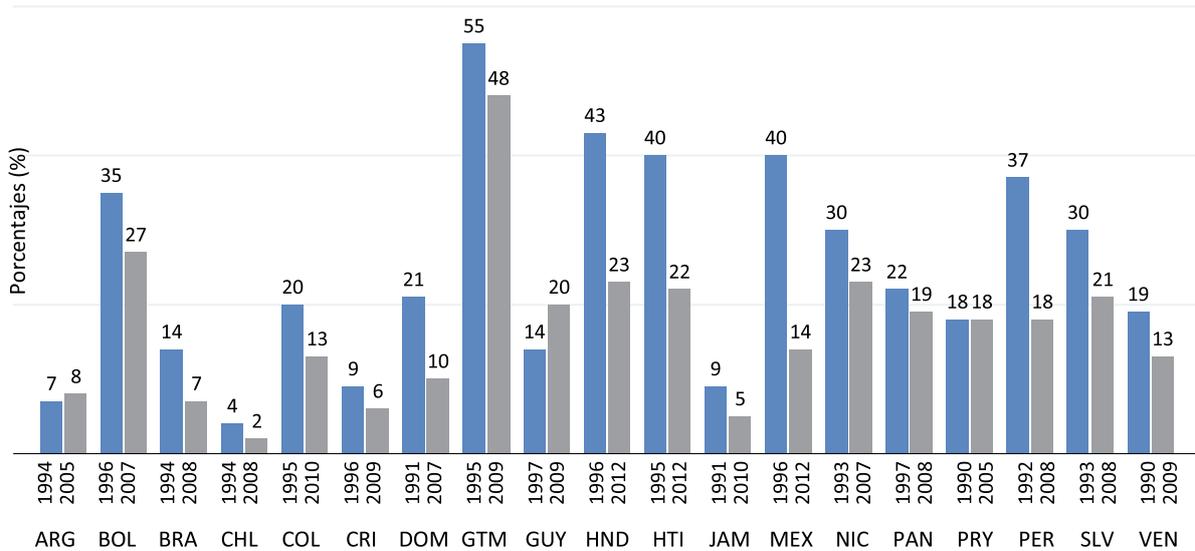
In spite of this scenario, the regional situation had improved in recent decades. Figure 39 shows a general reduction trend in stunting in Latin America and the Caribbean. Honduras stands out, with a reduction of 20 percentage points, followed by Peru and Haiti with a reduction of 19 and 18 percentage points respectively. Only Guyana and Argentina have increased their rates of stunting by 6 and 1 percentage points respectively.

Although stunting has been reduced at a considerable pace in recent years, there has been an increase of overweight and obesity in children under 5 years of age. Eleven of the nineteen countries analysed have

increased their prevalence of overweight, which has increased 0.3 percentage points in Colombia and 4.8 percentage points in Guyana (see Figure 40).

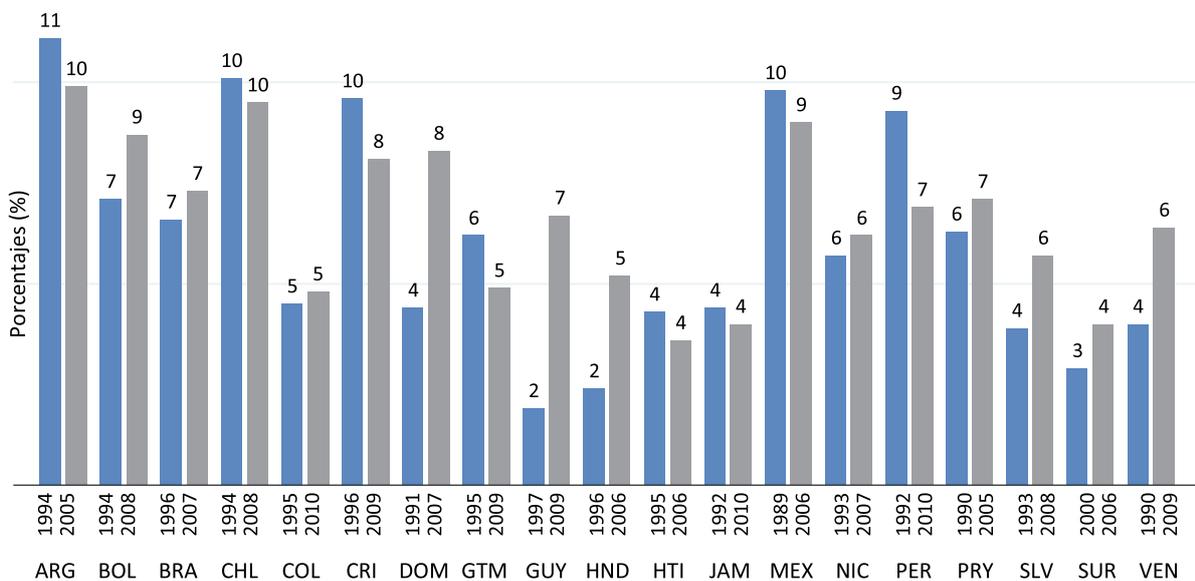
Argentina (9.9%), Chile (9.5%) and Mexico (9%) have the highest percentages of overweight in the region, even though they have managed to reduce the

Figure 39: Stunting in children under 5 years in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods



Source: WHO (online).

Figure 40: Overweight in children under 5 years in Latin America and the Caribbean, different periods



Source: WHO (online).

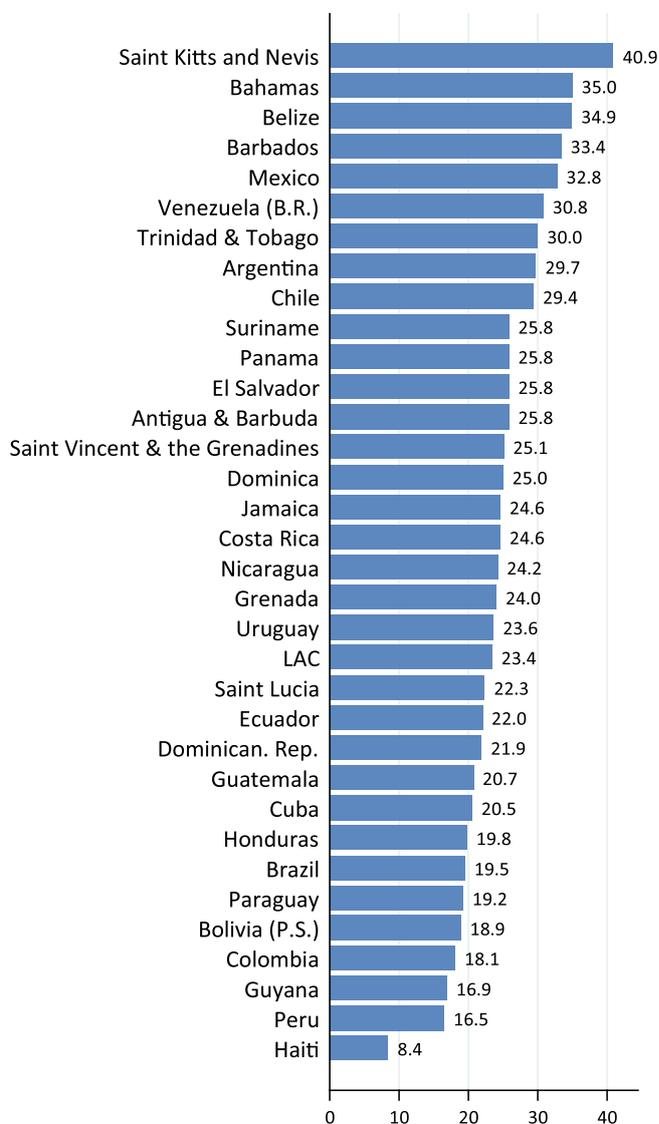
prevalence of overweight in children under five years. A recent report for seven Eastern Caribbean countries (WHO, 2014) showed that between 2000 and 2010 the rates of overweight and obesity in children aged 0-4 years doubled from 7.4% to 14.8%.

Obesity, meanwhile, is a very important problem among the adult population of the region. On average, 23% of the population over 20 years of age suffer obesity, meaning that one y four people in the region are obese. Figure 41 shows that Caribbean countries such as Saint Kitts and Nevis (40.9%), Bahamas (35%), Belize (34.9%) and Barbados (33.4%) have the highest prevalence of obesity in region. In Central America, Mexico is the country with the highest prevalence of obesity, (32.8% of adults); while in South America the countries with the highest percentage of obese adults are the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (30.8%), Argentina (29.4%) and Chile (29.1%).

Additionally, overweight and obesity vary by gender. Global estimates show that 60% of all obese people are female (WHO, 2012). In the region, Haiti is the only country that shows no differences in the prevalence of obesity by sex. At the other end of the spectrum is Dominica, which presents the greatest differences by gender (29 percentage points), followed by Jamaica and Barbados with 28 and 22 percentage points respectively (see Figure 42).

Overweight and obesity are increasingly important nutritional problems in Latin America and the Caribbean, and will have an increasingly important role in the regional agenda. UNASUR, for example, proposed a limit to unhealthy food advertising aimed at children, a reduction in the intake of sodium, sugar and fat in food to increase fruit and vegetable intake and an increase in physical activity²², during the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly of the WHO on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases in 2011. Moreover, while Latin America and the Caribbean have made great progress in reducing stunting it remains an important nutritional problem

Figure 41: Prevalence (%) of obesity in adults over 20 years of age in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2008



Source: WHO (online).

that many countries in the region continue to face through a wide range of measures.

If the close interrelationships between undernourishment, poverty and malnutrition are all taken into account, the complexity of this phenomenon becomes clear. As such, it requires both great political commitment and an approach that goes beyond traditional health care measures.

^{22/} The Information comes from <http://www.un.int/uruguay/submenu-onu/discursos/2011-09-19-NCD-UNASUR-MinistroSalud.pdf> y fue obtenida el 24/09/2014.

Changes in food systems and their influence on malnutrition

Food systems are composed of the people, institutions, environment and processes through which agricultural products are produced, processed and delivered to consumers. There are diverse systems and evolve as economies grow and urbanization increases, having powerful effects on the diet and nutritional status of the population. Since the early 70s, globalization and trade liberalization has led to worldwide concentration and vertical integration of food systems, which has had important repercussions on the current prevalence of malnutrition.

Although food production has diversified in the region, this has not led to more diverse diets for consumers. The increase in urbanization has meant that a large part of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean is now more likely to eat unhealthy foods. Rural areas are still not fully integrated into marketing channels and/or these are dedicated to the production of just a few agricultural products, which has reduced the diversity of the diet available to the rural population (Arias et al., 2013).

Changes in food production have led to changes in consumption. In practice, this has resulted in the proliferation of inappropriate diets with low nutritional quality and a lack of diversity, characterized by foods that are high in calories, fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients (FAO, 2013b). Malnutrition is directly affected by these changes, since it is characterized by nutritionally inadequate diets that prevent the intake of nutrients in the amounts needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

This scenario poses challenges both in urban and rural areas. The diet of the most vulnerable rural populations lack diversity and are based mainly on the consumption of tubers and cereals, while in the cities the “Western diet” is becoming prevalent, characterized by ultra-processed food²³ products, which contain high amounts of sugar and refined flours, oils and red meat (Monteiro et.al, 2011) .

Traditional diets based on local customs, cultural diversity and food quality have been displaced by the massive invasion of the ultra-processed foods. Currently, the marketing tendency veers towards the sale of high-calorie, sugary drinks and fast food, which is especially true in middle and low income countries. In fact, in low and middle income countries the consumption of high calorie products is 5 times higher than in developed countries and the consumption of sugary drinks is almost 3 times higher, while in developing countries consumption of these products is reaching the level of market saturation (PAHO et al., 2014).

The fight against malnutrition, overweight and obesity requires not only health and social measures but also changes in production and supply chains, needed to create more healthier, accessible and sustainable food systems. This has direct implications for countries since nutrition, like food and nutrition security, is becoming a priority and needs a cross-sectorial approach.

²³Ultra-processed food are products ready (or almost ready) to be consumed, that use ingredients such as refined substances from foods, various chemical additives, salt, sugar and fat in careful combinations that make products of high palatability and long shelf life, unlike natural perishable foods.

BOX 3.

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

The safe, healthy and adequate utilization of food requires a basic infrastructure. In order to achieve a better nutritional status which can meet people’s physiological needs aspects that do not directly relate to food must also be ensured. Thus, access to safe water, sanitation and health services must be taken into account to ensure food and nutrition security.

Latin America and the Caribbean have achieved significant progress in terms of its basic infrastructure. Access to water supply and sanitation facilities are increasing, however, rural areas still have shortcomings, especially in access to water supply, unlike urban areas, where almost the entire population is already covered. While the differences between rural and urban populations in terms of their access to

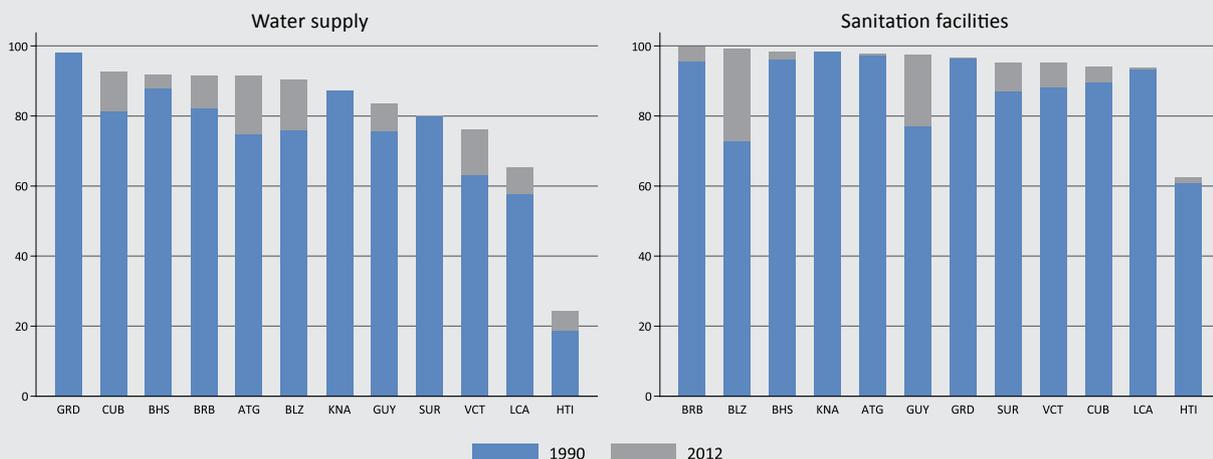
these basic services have narrowed during 2013-2014, in some countries there are still important gaps.

Figure A shows regional progress in access to these basic services. Paraguay shows significant advances: water supply in 1990 reached 37.2% of the population and 53.1% had access to sanitation facilities; by 2012 these

figures has increased to 79.7% and 93.8%, respectively. In Honduras, access to water supply increased from 48.2% to 80% from 1990 to 2012, and access to sanitation increased from 72.8 % to 89.6% during the same period. In contrast, Haiti saw little progress: water supply coverage reached 24.4% of the population in 2012, while 62.4% of the population have sanitation facilities.

Figure A: Proportion (%) of the population in the Caribbean, Central America and South America with access to water supply and improved sanitation facilities, 1990 and 2012

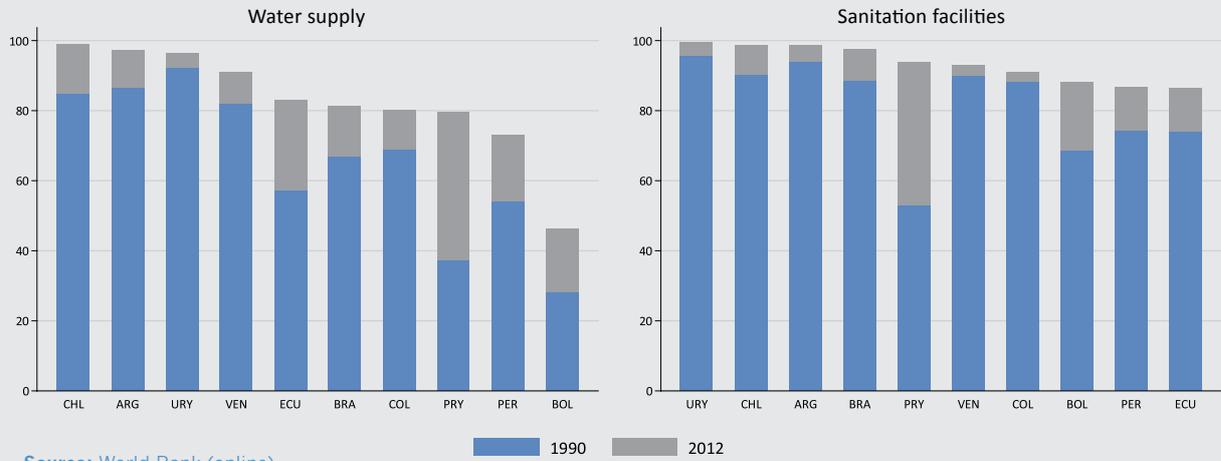
a. Caribbean



b. Central America



c. South America



Policies regarding the utilization of food in the 2013-2014 period

Policies regarding food utilization focused on the promoting of safe, innocuous and healthy food to allow people's proper development. Some of the measures implemented during 2013-2014 include those aimed at guaranteeing basic development conditions, food safety initiatives, nutritional health care measures such as medical checks for mothers and their children, the delivery of food supplements, and nutrition extension and information services to foster healthy eating habits and ensure adequate nutrition.

Over the years, these policies have gained importance in the region. Improvements in health conditions and health care have been at the base of the processes of social development in Latin America and the Caribbean during the twentieth century and the policy measures implemented during 2013-2014 are part of this long tradition.

Sanitary conditions

As in previous years, public actions related to sanitary conditions remain the most prevalent type of policies implemented in the region. Although Latin America and the Caribbean is the region with greatest global access to drinking water (94%), 36 million people still lack access to this basic service (WHO and UNICEF, 2014). 110 million people still lack access to sanitation facilities and sewerage, and in this sense the region lags behind areas such as North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia (WHO and UNICEF, 2014). Considering this scenario, the priority that these measures have within the regional public agenda is fully justified.

Focused on rural and urban areas of high vulnerability, these initiatives are usually implemented by the Ministries of Housing and/or Public Works, while there are also specific programs in some countries. This is the case of Peru, which in 2013 launched the National Rural Sanitation Programme with the aim of increasing access to safe water and sanitation to rural communities. The program responds to the major public problem represented by the lack of access to

safe water and sanitation in rural communities, and their nutritional consequences: for example, 31.9% of rural children in Peru suffer from stunting, 20% more than in urban areas. The National Rural Sanitation Programme carries out projects in 24 departments, with national funds and investments from international organizations, hoping to cover 58% of its potential beneficiaries by the year 2016. Venezuela began the implementation of its National Water Plan, which aims to increase access to potable water and sanitation services for 650,000 people by 2015. To that end, this initiative is constructing, rehabilitation and expanding aqueducts, drilling deep wells, and delivering water trucks to the beneficiary communities.

Health and nutrition

With regard to nutritional health measures, during this period the countries of the region have begun to address not only the problems caused by deficient food intake, but also due to nutritional excesses, which have led to the increase in overweight and obesity in Latin America and the Caribbean. To address this double burden of malnutrition States used traditional health programs targeting women and children under 5 years, as well as creating legal frameworks to establish conditions conducive to a nutritionally adequate development of the population.

During 2013-2014 several countries in the region began implementing new programs and public actions to face undernourishment. Since 2013, Guatemala implements the program Window of the thousand days, as part of it Zero Hunger Covenant 2012. This program focuses on children from 0 to 2 years of age, since it is a key period to reduce the risk of stunting in children, and provides support such as the delivery of micronutrients and food supplements, the promotion of breastfeeding and family hygiene, among others. This program aims to reduce the national prevalence of stunting by 10% by the year 2015.

Colombia launched a new food supplement (Bienestarina Más) as part of its strategy From Zero to Always, benefiting 6.5 million Colombians, especially young children and the most vulnerable sector of society.

Peru launched its Anaemia Zero campaign, aimed particularly to the residents of Lima. This initiative seeks to reduce the prevalence of this disease, which affects 35% of children under three years of age in Lima, by delivering micronutrients to children aged between 6 and 36 months, promoting breastfeeding till the sixth month of life, delaying the cutting of the umbilical cord and promoting the consumption of foods rich in iron.

Just as countries are facing undernourishment and stunting, that have also implemented actions to reduce the prevalence of obesity and overweight, primarily by establishing healthy eating habits. During 2013-2014, three countries in the region passed legal frameworks relating to this subject.

Argentina passed the Law No. 26,873, promoting public awareness about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for children under six months of age, and encouraging best practices for safe nutrition for infants and children up to two years of age, as well as complementary feeding for children up to 2 years of life. The law also promotes public awareness, especially for pregnant women, and supports the creation of breastfeeding centres and breast milk banks.

In Uruguay, meanwhile, the Law No. 19,140 promotes healthy eating habits for children and youth in schools. This law regulates food advertising in public and private schools, prohibiting the promotion of unhealthy foods and promoting those that are healthy. Additionally, it prohibits the presence of salt shakers on school premises to prevent its addition to prepared foods, and includes recommendations for healthy eating and healthy lifestyles for its target population. Peru enacted the Law 30,021 promoting healthy eating for children and adolescents. The law mandated the inclusion of courses on healthy eating in school curriculums and suggested the creation of a Centre for Nutrition and Study of Overweight and Obesity. The law also promotes the creation of stalls that sell healthy food inside educational institutions, endorses physical activity for its target population and regulates the advertising of “junk” food.

Besides legal frameworks, Latin America and the Caribbean have also implemented programs and public plans to fight obesity and overweight. Argentina laun-

ched a Program to Fight Sedentary Lifestyles, which aims to reduce the prevalence of physical inactivity, promoting the adoption of active lifestyles. This plan intends to reduce the risks of Chronic Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), considering that, in 2009, 54.9% of the country’s population had insufficient levels of physical activity²⁴. Mexico implemented the National Strategy for Prevention and Control of Overweight, Obesity and Diabetes, which considers these three conditions as major threats to public health. According to latest available figures, one in three Mexican children is overweight or obese²⁵. The strategy includes three main areas for action: 1) Public health interventions to promote the consumption of healthy foods and encourage physical activity; 2) Medical monitoring to identify risk factors for the development of overweight, obesity or diabetes; and 3) Creating laws and regulations to ensure these objectives. This last area includes tax increases enacted by the Mexican legislature for sugary drinks and foods high in calories.

²⁴/The information comes from http://www.msal.gov.ar/prensa/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1314:se-creo-el-programa-de-lucha-contr-el-sedentarismo-&catid=6, and was obtained on 06/30/2014.

²⁵/The information comes from <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/mexico-sin-obesidad/> and was obtained on 30/6/2014.

STABILITY OF THE AVAILABILITY, ACCESS AND UTILIZATION OF FOOD

Ensuring the stability of the availability, access and utilization of food is a complex challenge that must be addressed through a cross-sector approach. Three main factors that affect the stability dimension of food and nutrition security in the region are food price volatility, natural disasters and food losses and food waste.

Since 2011, food price volatility has been lower than during the last years of the previous decade, but have remained higher than the historical levels. Natural disasters, meanwhile, have remained at similar levels in terms of quantity and types of phenomena since 2008, although with different impacts and magnitudes.

Food losses and food waste threaten the region's food supply. Diminishing food waste and losses presents an important opportunity to reduce hunger in the region, since the food that is lost and wasted in Latin America and the Caribbean is enough to feed three hundred million people.

The dimension of stability is crosscutting since it relates to all of the dimensions of food and nutrition security, namely food access, utilization and availability.

Stably ensuring the availability, access and utilization of food is a particular challenge for Latin American and Caribbean countries, and one that manifests in many ways. For purposes of this publication, three problems of particular importance have been selected, given the nature of the region: (1) food price volatility, (2) the presence of natural disasters and their impact on food and nutrition security, and (3) food losses and food waste.

These three aspects have the distinction of affecting the stability of all or several dimensions of food and nutrition security: food price volatility, for example, affects both food production (availability) and food consumption (access) food. Natural disasters, meanwhile, also have important bearing on the potential decline of food production (availability), as well as reducing the revenues of the affected families while also increasing the price of affected crops (access) and can also have negative consequences on the access to safe water and sanitation, with the consequent negative impacts on nutrition (utilization). Food losses and food waste have negative effects on food and nutrition security since they reduce the potential food supply and thereby increase the costs of food, thus decreasing the availability of fresh and healthy foods needed to improve the population's diet.

Food price volatility

Volatility refers to the variation of prices in a given period, considering the magnitude, trend and speed of change. Price levels and price volatility are closely related, since both phenomena are determined by various factors affecting supply and demand. Moreover, high prices are often linked to higher volatility and its causes and effects vary depending on specific contexts and political, demographical, economic and climate variables.

Following the rise in mid-2008, world food prices have settled at a new and higher level with direct impacts on food and nutrition security, affecting household incomes and purchasing power, especially for the most vulnerable families. In spite of this, increased commodity prices have had a positive effect on countries that are exporters of these products, which have increased their trade balance. Countries that are net food importers have had incentives to expand their domestic production and reduce their imports.

This incentive to expand the production of agricultural goods may, however, be impaired by the existence of significant degrees of uncertainty about the future behaviour of prices, affecting the decisions that producers make. Large fluctuations in the prices of agricultural products generate uncertainty in global and domestic markets, influencing farmer's investment decisions and thus impacting production both in the

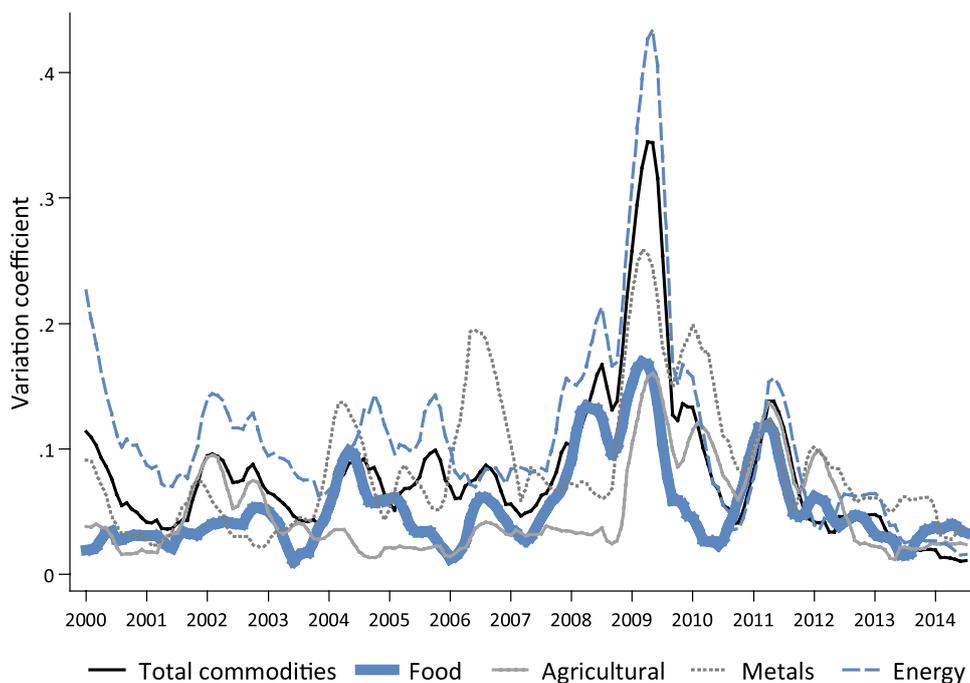
medium and long term. This can cause major difficulties for small farmers, as it increases their uncertainty about their expected revenues.

The challenges the global economy faces in this sense are considerable. The demand for food continues to grow, driven mainly by consumers in developing countries, while according to FAO (2011a) agricultural supply will need to increase by 70% by 2050, since the world's population may reach 9 billion people. The lag between planting decisions and the selling of products represents a significant risk to agricultural producers, for whom the behaviour of oil, fertilizer and other agricultural inputs in part determine agricultural production costs and hence their profitability. Variations in the prices of inputs and oil have a direct effect on the price of food and other agricultural products. Thus, lowering the levels of uncertainty is an essential task to guarantee the stability and continuity of agricultural production. In this sense, food price volatility is one of the major risk factors that agriculture must face.

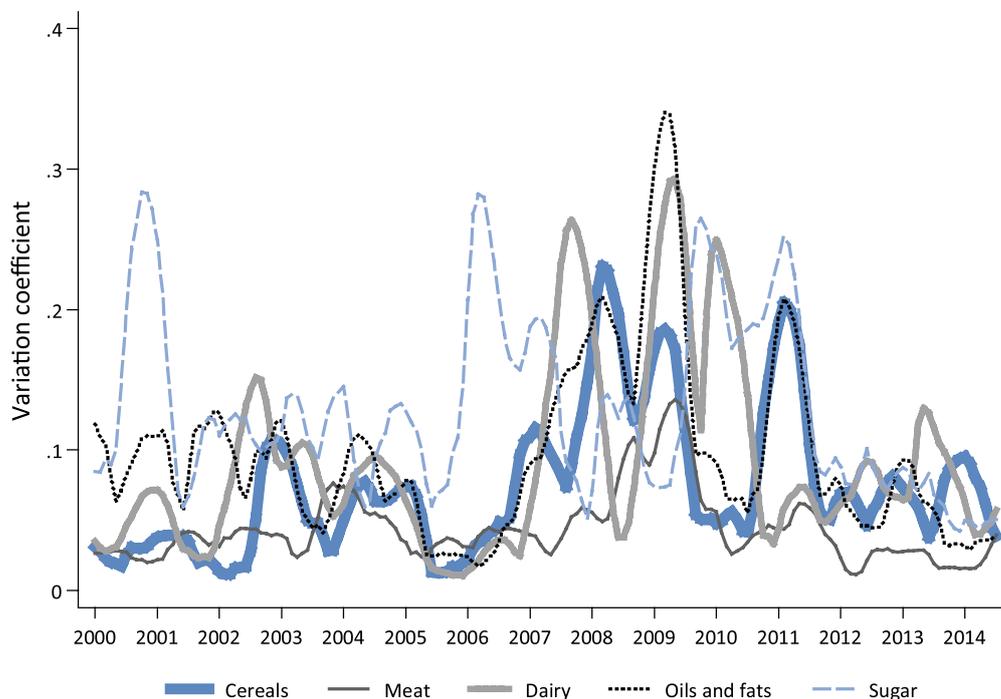
While growth in food demand puts pressure on agricultural production, there is still room to expand the availability of agricultural products, and Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular, have great untapped potential to increase production through improved agricultural productivity, adoption of new technologies and the reduction of losses throughout the production chain (FAO, 2012a). However, all of these require the necessary investments, which is why greater degrees of certainty are essential to generate an enabling environment to carry out such investments.

In 2008, during the period of increases in international food prices, an increase in the volatility of key commodities also occurred. This phenomenon affected different groups of commodities; energy products experienced the highest levels of volatility, followed by metals (Figure 43). After the second rise in prices during 2011, minor increases in volatility levels occurred when compared to the previous rise. In recent years, volatility has been lower since prices

Figure 43: Volatility (variation coefficient) of international commodity prices, 2000-2014



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC based on IMF (online).

Figure 44: Volatility (variation coefficient) in international food prices, by main groups, 2000-2014

Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC based on IMF (online).

have experienced less sharp fluctuations, although they have settled at higher levels.

The major food groups that make up the FAO Food Price Index (Figure 44), have experienced a higher degree of volatility, with significant fluctuations between 2000 and 2014. However, fluctuations have been lower in recent years, reaching levels similar to those recorded in the years before the crisis of 2008-2009. On average, the food groups that had the highest levels of volatility during 2014 were cereals and dairy products.

The factors behind the changes in supply and demand can shed light on food price movements. In this sense, the integration of the agricultural sector with other markets seems to be one of the main reasons for the increased price volatility. Indeed, a greater association of commodity markets, given the growing demand for commodities in developing economies, have made these markets an attractive financial alternative.

Additionally, rising incomes, changing consumption patterns and the discovery of new uses for agricultural products could lead to increased demand in the short term. Although these changes tend to be gradual, their introduction to market brings periods of adjustment and new scenarios.

A third factor behind price volatility are trade and marketing policies such as increases in export tariffs, which can have a negative impact on the international food supply, depending on each country's export position and the scope of the enacted measures.

Increased price volatility in international markets has become a challenge not only for farmers but also for consumers. After the most recent hikes, it has become an important point in political agendas. Uncertainty about the movements of agricultural prices continues to difficult decisions for virtually all actors involved in the economy, and threatens the stable supply of food within countries.

Natural disasters their impacts on food and nutrition security

The uncertainty generated by food price volatility in international markets is compounded by the increased impacts of climate change. A changing climate leads to changes in the frequency, intensity, range, duration and timing of extreme weather events (such as maximum and minimum temperatures and increased rainfall, droughts and tropical storms) that depending on local conditions of exposure and vulnerability, can create unprecedented problems (IPCC, 2012).

Both in Latin America and the Caribbean and the world the impacts of natural disasters are varied and seriously affect the food and nutrition security and agriculture due to losses of crops, farmland, livestock, roads, housing and productive infrastructure, besides the irrecoverable loss of lives²⁶.

Recent studies confirm that, in general, monetary losses from natural disasters are higher in developed countries, while casualty rates are higher in developing countries. Similarly, in the most disaster-prone countries such as small island states, the losses are important in both human and economic terms, exceeding 1% of GDP and approaching 10% in some extreme cases (IPCC, 2012).

A significant part of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean lives in disaster-prone areas of natural and anthropogenic origin. Poverty, excessive population growth, lack of territorial planning and fragile livelihoods have exacerbated exposure to these events and enhance their negative consequences on food and nutrition security. Other factors also affect the vulnerability of countries to natural disasters, such as their geographical size, the structure of their economy and socio-economic conditions, as well as the type and strength of disasters.

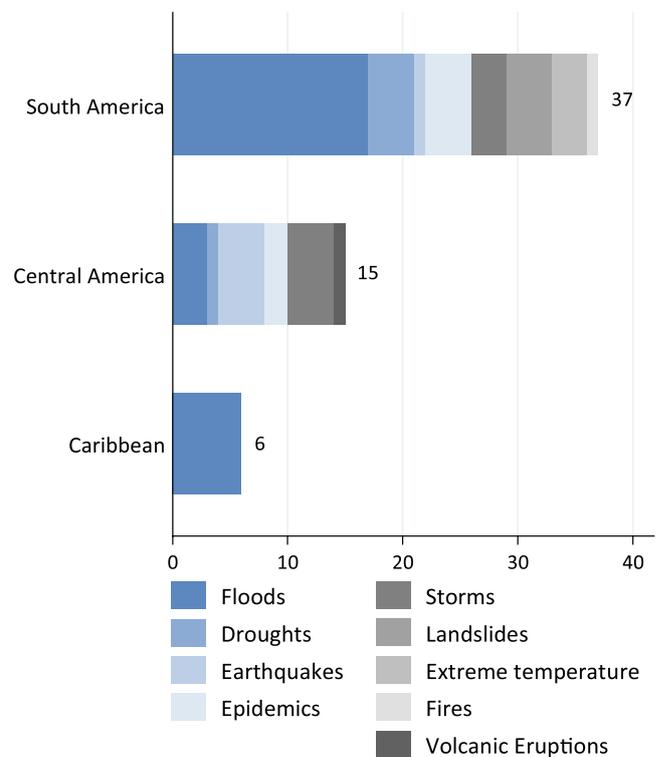
The agricultural sector is one of the most vulnerable to climate variability. Vulnerable small producers in rural areas do not have sufficient assets and capabilities to address climate hazards (IPCC, 2014th), since they have lower productivity, lack sustainability, and have

low levels of preparedness and capabilities for recovery from disasters. The impacts of climate change in rural areas will particularly affect the availability of water and agricultural inputs, their food security and incomes, having a stronger effect on female-headed households and those with limited access to land, inputs and modern agricultural technologies, infrastructure and education (IPCC, 2014b).

Climate change adds additional challenges to the agricultural sector, requiring a drastic change in the way food is produced and natural resources are used to ensure food systems that can ensure the availability and access to food for everyone while preserving natural resources for future generations.

Figure 45 shows that during 2013-2014 an important number of natural events and disasters, with different effects on food and nutrition security, affected the region. The impacts of these phenomena are considerable: from 2013 till mid-2014 nearly 900 people died, close to 3.1 million were affected and the economic

Figure 45: Frequency of natural disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean, by subregion, 2013-2014



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC based on The International Disaster Database (Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters-CRED (online)).

²⁶/It should also be considered that the consequences of disasters are one of the factors that influence the price volatility of food products.

losses totalled more than USD \$ 13.3 billion²⁷. A sub-regional analysis shows a preponderance of floods in the region, being the most common natural disasters in South America and the Caribbean. In Central America floods also occurred, but storms and epidemics²⁸ were also of particular importance.

The prevalence of natural disasters shows that although floods were the most recurrent natural events, during 2013-2014 there were less flood than the average of 2008-2012 (Figure 46). This was also the case of storms, although it at the time of publication of this Panorama the season of storms, hurricanes and cyclones was not over. The incidence of other types of disasters remained broadly similar to the e average, with the notable difference of earthquakes, which in 2013-2014 doubles the number of the previous five years.

The breakdown by country of the most important natural events shows that by the end of 2013 floods in Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Lucia, left a total of 518,000 people affected. During the first quarter of 2014 a significant number of floods occurred in Brazil, Peru, Paraguay,

Bolivia and Colombia. In Bolivia, particularly heavy seasonal rains caused flooding and landslides in several departments, affecting at least 21,000 families and taking the lives of 56 people. Close to 36,726 hectares of crops were reported as damaged due to flooding, the most affected products being maize and vegetables.

On the other hand, during 2014 droughts affected several countries like Haiti, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Brazil, among others. In Brazil, droughts are expected to cause significant effects on maize, while in Nicaragua over 2,500 heads of cattle have died from lack of water and food, caused by a drought that affects twenty municipalities in the country²⁹.

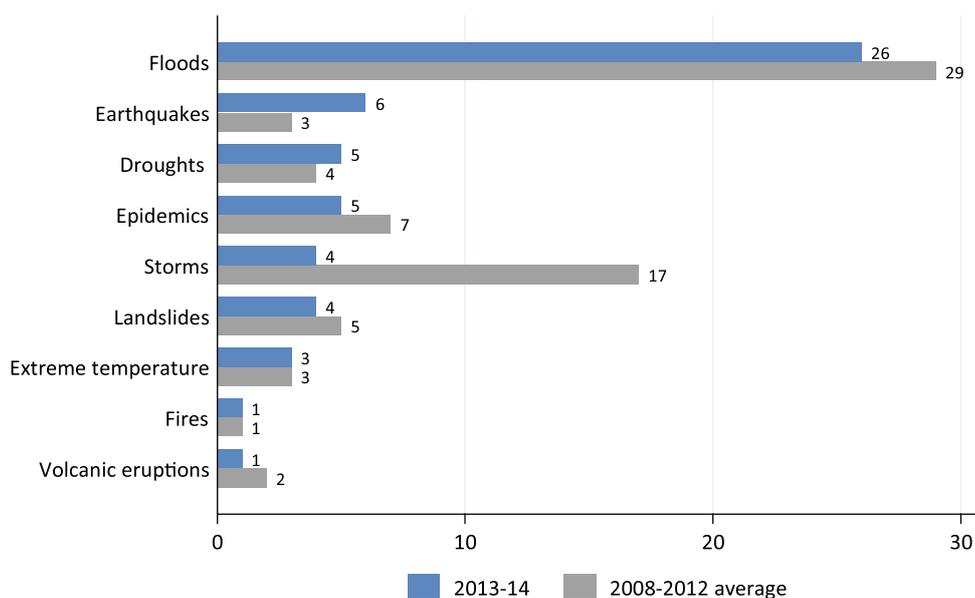
All this implies that disasters caused by natural phenomena threaten food security and nutrition security, while climate change increases and diversifies the magnitude and impact of these phenomena. This is particularly relevant for the stability dimension of food and nutrition security. Due to this, concrete actions to reduce the current fragility of food production systems and their vulnerability to disasters are already an important part of the regional and global political agendas.

²⁷Figures until September 2014 (CRED, online).

²⁸Refers to human epidemics and / or plant pests.

²⁹<http://www.fao.org/agronoticias/>

Figure 46: Frequency of natural disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean, by type, 2013-2014 and average for 2008-2012



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC based on The International Disaster Database (Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters–CRED (online).

BOX 4.

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN DRY CORRIDOR

Central America is one of the regions with the greatest exposure to extreme weather events. Given its location and geography, it suffers both hurricanes with strong winds and rain and also extreme drought. The vulnerability of the region is increased due to its socioeconomic characteristics: poverty affects a significant proportion of the population (Table 8), and income distribution in countries is far from equitable, with the richest sectors accounting for the most part of national incomes (see Figure 37). A significant part of the population of Central America live in rural areas, which are often more exposed and vulnerable to extreme climate events. Among the countries of the Central American agreement for Free Movement³⁰ (CA-4, in Spanish) the rural population ranges from 34% in El Salvador to 49% in Guatemala. Between 54% and 67% of rural inhabitants are dedicated to the production of basic grains and are generally small producers who dedicate the most part of their food production to home consumption (FAO-RUTA, 2010).

One of the particularly vulnerable areas in the region is called the “dry corridor”, a strip of land that begins in Chiapas (Mexico) and covers the lowlands of the Pacific coast and much of the Midwestern foothills (0-800 m) of Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guanacaste in Costa Rica, while in Honduras it includes territories close to the Caribbean coast (FAO, 2012). This dry corridor has a marked and prolonged dry season (summer), where droughts occur cyclically and recurrently, causing major productive, environmental and social damage, generating critical food and nutrition security conditions.

Droughts affects degraded areas with greater force. These areas are then hit by excessive rains that cause floods which affect the agricultural and livestock sectors particularly. Rainfall has been more erratic and extreme, giving rise to prolonged droughts in periods of “El Niño” and heavy rainfall due to hurricanes and storms in periods of “La Niña”, generating landslides, soil erosion and significant volumes of sediments that affect the watersheds of the region. Coupled with deforestation, this has increased the vulnerability of the dry corridor to these phenomena, resulting in a lower water-retention capacity and fertility in soils, which in turn affect crop yields.

Countries have made significant efforts to improve risk management and increase the resilience of the production systems of those whose livelihoods depend on activities developed in the areas affected by disasters. Many of these actions form part of regional and national legal and institutional frameworks.

At the regional level, the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC, in Spanish) is an intergovernmental organization belonging to the Central American Integration System (SICA, in Spanish) created in 1987 with the mandate to promote activities to reduce human and economic losses caused by natural disasters. The following table lists the institutions and legal frameworks for the action relating to the prevention, mitigation and management of the effects of the different types of disasters, in countries where the effect of drought in the dry corridor is most severe.

³⁰ Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.

Table A: Institutions and legal frameworks in countries of Central American agreement for Free Movement

Country / region	Institution	Laws/regulations
Guatemala	National Coordinator for the Reduction of Natural or Man-made Disaster (CONRED, in Spanish)	Law 109-96, created the CONRED
El Salvador	Secretariat for Vulnerability Affairs and General Directorate of Civil Protection	Decree No. 777 created the National System of Civil Protection, Disaster Prevention and Mitigation
Honduras	Standing Commission for Contingencies (COPECO)	Law of the national system of risk management, established the National Risk Management System (SINAGER) under the coordination of COPECO.
Nicaragua	National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response (SINAPRED)	Law N° 337, created SINAPRED

Source: FAO Regional Office from official country information.

Food waste and food losses

“Food losses and food waste” are understood as the decrease in the mass of food for human consumption at any point of the supply chain. In particular, “food losses” are those occurring in stages of production, post-harvest and processing; while “food waste” correspond to losses arising from the decision to discard food that still has nutritional value and is associated with the behaviour of sellers, points of sale and consumers.

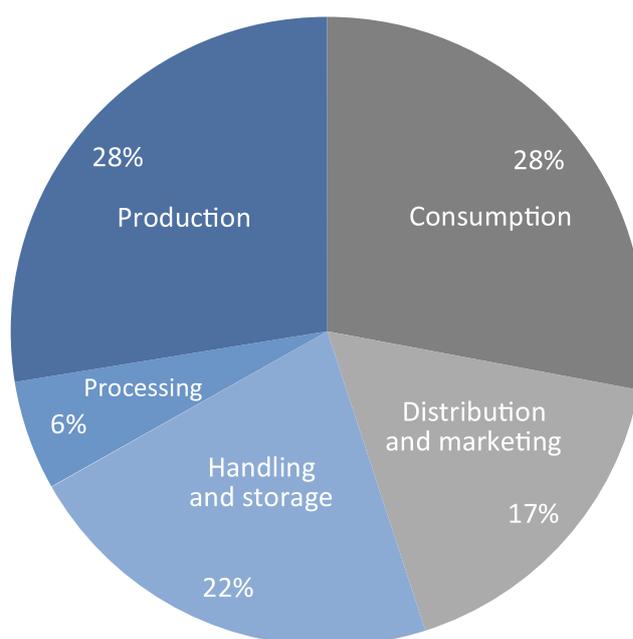
Both in the world and particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, food availability is guaranteed. However, it is important to note that a significant proportion of the food produced worldwide is lost at different stages of the food chain. According to the World Bank (2014a), globally, between a quarter and a third of all foods produced for human consumption are lost or wasted. Additionally, more than half of the food being lost or wasted correspond to cereals³¹, and more than a third of them are lost in the stages of consumption.

FAO (2014c) estimates that 6% of food losses worldwide occur in Latin America, and that this subregion losses or wastes close to 15% of its available food,

³¹/Measured as their contribution to caloric intake.

which would be enough to feed 300 million people. 28% of the food losses in Latin America occur during the production stage, while an equal amount is wasted at the consumer level (Figure 47).

Figure 47: Food losses and waste (% of lost and wasted calories) in Latin America, by segment of the food chain, 2014



Source: FAO Regional Office based on World Bank, 2014b.

Note: Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding of figures.

According to the latest FAO estimates (2014c) during the 2012-2014 triennium, Latin America and the Caribbean wasted between 3% and 4.2% of its total available calories just at the retail level³². The magnitude of this waste is not to be underestimated; under the assumption that countries could allocate those wasted foods to people who suffer hunger, they could meet the nutritional requirements of almost 10 million people in the countries of the region where the prevalence of hunger is still above 5%.

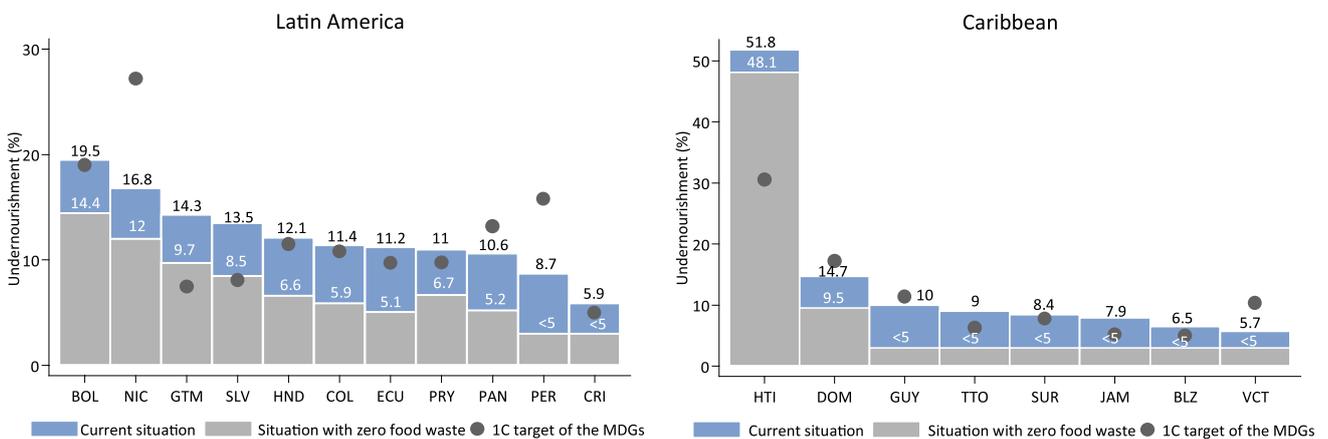
Moreover, if food waste did not exist in Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, they would have sufficient food to successfully halve their proportion of undernourishment from the levels of 1990-1992,

adding to the 14 countries that already given reached the MDGs hunger target, while Belize, Costa Rica, Guyana, Jamaica, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago would have undernourishment levels below 5% (Figure 48).

Price volatility, natural disasters and food losses and waste have a common characteristic: they create uncertainties that affect the stability of food and nutrition security and require preventive or corrective actions. Countries in the region cannot ignore the existence of these problems or expect solutions that do not arise from decided State actions. Climate change is a reality that requires adaptation and mitigation; price volatility requires clear rules and transparency in markets that only public policy can deliver; and food losses and food waste will only decrease if the public sector implements regulations in coordination with the private sector.

³²/Retail losses occur during the sale of food to consumers.

Figure 48: Current state of undernourishment (%) in Latin America and the Caribbean and hypothetical situation if they had no food waste, and their relationship to the Millennium Development Goal, 2014



Source: FAO Regional Office for LAC with information from FAO, IFAD and WFP 2014.

Public policies for stability in availability, access and utilization of food

Public policies regarding the stability dimension of food and nutrition security correspond to government actions that are intended to ensure long-term availability, access and utilization of food. Various kinds of measures were implemented during the 2013-2014 period, because their goals are to allow the consolidation over time of the other dimensions of food and nutrition security.

The present analysis will focus on four main types of public action: emergency measures to deal with natural and/or humanitarian disasters intended to overcome their effects in the shortest possible time frame; measures concerning the management and conservation of natural resources for productive and community use; climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives intended to prepare countries' natural, agro-productive and social systems to face this growing phenomenon; and various measures to reduce food losses and food waste throughout the food chain.

Measures related to natural resources and phenomena

The most common initiatives implemented during 2013-2014 are emergency measures. In Chile, for example, the Drought Plan Bonus gave support to people in rural areas affected by drought through a single transfer of USD \$ 72 was, an increase of USD \$ 13 per household member. Peru launched the Machinery for Development Programme, which involves the acquisition of mechanical diggers through an investment of USD \$53.8 million, in order to perform work to prevent the overflow of rivers that often damage communities surrounding river basins. Mexico presented the National Program for Prevention of Hydraulic Contingencies, a public initiative that aims to take actions to minimize risks related to flooding. The program will conduct various hydrological studies, coordinate land management actions that protect existing human settlements in risk prone areas, and strengthen the climatological and hydrometric system, with emphasis their early warning systems.

In the area of management and conservation of natural resources, in Bolivia the Law 337 on Food Production and Recovery of Forests seeks to regularize the situation of agricultural land which had been established by unauthorized clearings between 1996 and 2011, as well as promoting food production and reforestation. The beneficiaries will benefit from a significant reduction in the fines resulting from their irregular forest clearings, only in the case that the illegal lands are now used for food production and that 10% of them be reforested.

As for adaptation and mitigation of climate change, countries generally remain legal frameworks or instruments of long-term policy to deal with this threat has become increasingly important in the public agenda: studies in some countries in the region demonstrate, for example, the serious consequences that climate change could have on crops such as beans or corn in Guatemala and Nicaragua (Eitzinger et al., 2012). In Bolivia, on the other hand, it is projected that by possible increases in average temperatures by 2020, 58 municipalities would be seriously threatened their food and nutrition security (Plurinational State of Bolivia, 2012).

During 2013-2014 Chile presented its Plan for the Adaptation of Agriculture and Forestry to Climate Change, which identifies potential impacts and risks of climate change. To address these threats, the plan proposes the implementation of 21 measures structured in five main lines: (1) improving the competitiveness of agriculture; (2) promoting research and innovation; (3) promoting economic, social and environmental sustainability; (4) promoting transparency and market access; and (5) the modernization of the Ministry of Agriculture and the services.

Meanwhile, Granada implemented the Programme on Adaptation Strategies, an initiative financed by the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ) and UNDP that seeks to increase the adaptation capacity of vulnerable communities and ecosystems to climate change risks. The programme will incorporate adaptation strategies in national planning processes, improve the management and efficient use of water and coastal resources; create communal plans for the development of adaptation strategies, and grant access to financing to create and implement measures to address change climate. Guatemala, meanwhile, adopted a Framework Law to

Regulate the Reduction of Vulnerability, the Compulsory Adaptation to the Effects of Climate Change and the Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases (Decree 7-2013). This law creates the National Council on Climate Change to monitor these actions and also creates the National Information System on Climate Change, as well as establishing action plans for government interventions in various in order to reduce, adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Measures to reduce food losses and food waste

Initiatives to address food losses and food waste include dimensions of food and nutrition security due to the characteristics of this phenomenon, although actions related to the food availability and access are more common.

One of the means by which States can intervene in this matter is investing and/or facilitating access to silos, storage facilities and other structures that enable secure and safe storage of crops. During 2013-2014, Ecuador made numerous investments, building storage facilities for milk, cocoa, maize and fish products, targeted especially towards small farmers, who otherwise have no access to such infrastructures.

Another area of intervention is the creation and improvement of processing facilities for agricultural products, particularly those owned by small rural producers or close to rural areas. Venezuela, for example, has built processing centres for livestock, fisheries and seed products in various areas of the country, which has enabled hundreds of farmers to have greater access to these services.

A third way to reduce food losses is to improve connectivity between production areas and sale and/or storage centres, which in practice means more and better rural roads. Ecuador recently signed a USD \$ 60 million agreement with the IDB to implement the Project in Support of Decentralized Autonomous Governments in Provincial Roads (PROVIAL), in order to improve the connectivity of rural roads with the national road network in 23 of the 24 national provinces.

Governments have also created public infrastructure to facilitate the sale of agricultural products, through public supply markets. An example of this is the construction of the “Merca Santo Domingo” in the Dominican Republic, a state-funded project to improve food marketing, while in Cuba, the first wholesale cooperative market for agricultural products in the country was inaugurated.

CHAPTER 3.

**GENERAL OUTLOOK AND INNOVATIONS IN
PUBLIC FOOD SECURITY POLICIES:
A SUCCESS STORY**





The outstanding regional achievements in the fight against hunger are the product of the broad and crosscutting political commitment of countries to guarantee food and nutrition security. This was the basis for implementing institutions and legal frameworks, enhanced governance mechanisms and policies, programs and investments in key areas for food and nutrition security.

The region has undertaken a new approach whose main feature is a broader vision of food and nutrition security. This implies the adoption of cross-sector policies in a “twin track” approach, combining short and long-term measures which have led to significant progress in four key areas: the adoption of comprehensive policies and strategies to ensure food and nutrition security; strengthening family farming; the fight against poverty, with emphasis on rural areas; and the establishment of better channels for intra-regional and domestic trade.

During the past two decades food and nutrition security has been incorporated at the core of the public agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean. Food security has become the framework within which a set of diverse policies have been implemented that have fostered the region’s development. This has occurred within a context in which hunger eradication has become a crosscutting commitment assumed by the whole of society, while the role of the State in these matters has been reappraised.

To consolidate the advances made in recent years, the countries of the region must strengthen regional integration and South-South cooperation; improve the monitoring and evaluation of public policies in order to encourage their continued progress; and continue the integration of food and nutrition security within broader efforts to eradicate poverty and economic development that provide these advances with sustainability over time.

As was discussed in the first chapter of the Panorama, one year from the date agreed upon by the international community for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Latin America and the Caribbean show great progress: between 1990 and 2014 the prevalence of undernourishment in the region fell by 60%. This means that the region has already met the 1C target of the MDGs, which was to halve the prevalence of people suffering hunger by 2015.

In addition, considering that 31.5 million people overcame hunger during the same time period, the region is very close to reaching the World Food Summit (WFS) goal, which seeks to halve the absolute number of people affected by hunger from the levels of 1990-92. The region has managed to reduce the total number of undernourished people by 45%.

These achievements are not only significant for countries, but constitute a stimulus for the upcoming region challenges in terms of the post-2015 development agenda and the imminent establishment of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September

2015. Latin America and the Caribbean can contribute their experience, which is based on the recognition of basic human rights, the creation of inter-sector and multidisciplinary lines of action, and the strengthening of public systems that increase the level of political commitment with the eradication of hunger and malnutrition worldwide.

How has the region achieved such success in hunger reduction in the past fifteen years? *What are the distinctive elements that made the difference, both in Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole and in particular countries? What common features can serve as a basis for a future development agenda for the region and the world?*

A new approach to eradicate hunger

This chapter provides an initial diagnosis of the various aspects and areas that shape public action at both the regional and national levels to provide valid elements for both the academic debate and the dialogues between countries of the region.

The following chapter will analyse four main strategic policy areas where Latin America and the Caribbean have focused their efforts, which cut across all dimensions of food and nutrition security.

1) Policies and strategies for food and nutrition security.

2) Strengthening of family farming.

3) Fighting poverty and extreme poverty, particularly in rural areas.

4) Intra-regional and domestic trade for food and nutrition security.

This does imply disregarding other factors that are key to food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean, such as economic growth, regional integration in world markets, political stability and the consolidation of democratic regimes, among others.

For decades, food and nutrition security was seen as an exclusively technical challenge, especially in terms of agriculture. That food and nutrition security depended merely on the existence of enough food to meet the needs of the population seemed to be taken for granted.

Over the years this approach has mutated, which can today be seen in the four-dimensional approach to food and nutrition security that is used today. Nevertheless, this paradigm shift was not initially reflected in the way that States addressed the problem of hunger, which remained stuck with a technical and sector-based approach to food security, where food availability was the exclusive competence of agriculture, the -at the time nascent- field of social development was in charge of the access dimension of food security, the health sector was in charge of food utilization, etc.

However, as mentioned in the first chapter of this publication, Latin America and the Caribbean were one of the first regions to put hunger at the top of their political agendas. This regional political commitment to eradicate hunger laid the foundation for the implementation of institutional frameworks, governance mechanisms and comprehensive public policies for food and nutrition security.

When hunger became a definite part of the public agenda, the approach changed from the technical to the political, which did not imply the disappearance of technical criteria but rather their strategic adaptation to integral political objectives at the highest national level. Specifically, this new approach to food and nutrition security, the so called “political approach” is characterized by four aspects: More institutional dimensions for the design of public policies; Cross-sector, comprehensiveness and broader governance; and a “twin-track approach” of short- and long-term policies.

Greater institutional dimensions in the design of public policies. Once food and nutrition security was firmly installed within the public agenda, the discussion process, implementation and evaluation of policies relating to this area of concern exceed the traditional scope of its technical content (policies). This greatly enriched the process of policy formation with discussions related to the institutional framework that governs the relationship between the state and society, wherein lie the chances of developing sustainable answers in the form of public instruments (polity). This new approach also took into account the nature of political activity to position food and nutrition security on the decision making agenda, which permitted the formation of a public consensus that would enable the sustainable implementation of intervention strategies (Beduschi et al., 2014) .

In practice, this should lead to the creation of institutional spaces that lend weight and sustainability to public policies, as well as laws that underpin these policies and allow them to be carried out continuously, independent from the changes brought on by the change in governments.

Integral, inter-sector extended governance. Establishing hunger as a problem that includes the technical aspect but also exceeds its scope means that to assign the responsibility of facing this problem to a single sector makes no sense in terms of establishing a comprehensive set of public policies; thus a shift in focus is evident both in the content and implementation of hunger eradication policies. The creation of multi-sector strategies to address malnutrition as a complex problem -which concerns several sectors of the State, society and the market- became the first concrete expression of a new

form of tackling hunger reduction that avoided compartmentalization. This new approach is characterized by inter-institutional coordination, multidisciplinary analysis, respect for the characteristics of the different segments of the population and their life cycle, and multi-sector policy implementation.

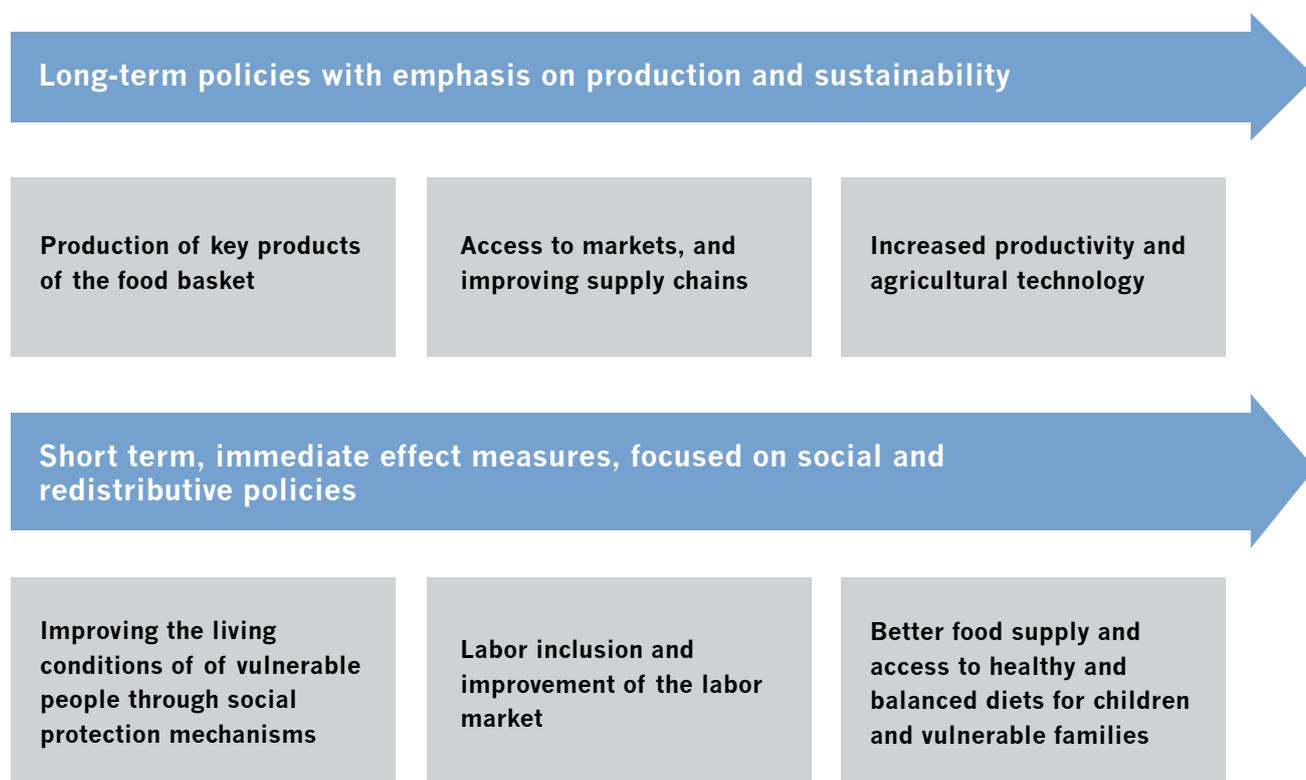
The involvement of the executive power and of all actors that shape public policy -namely, the legislature, civil society and the private sector- is one of the concrete manifestations and distinguishing features that characterize the political environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. Thus, the responsibility for ensuring food and nutrition security falls on the society as whole, rather than having it depend on isolated individual actors without horizontal or vertical integration.

Short and long term policies, the “twin track” approach. A third distinctive feature is the integrated implementation of a wide range of policies –that differ in terms of their scope and/or content– in order to

eradicate hunger. This model, dubbed as “twin track approach” by Stamoulis and Zezza (2003), involves the implementation of short-term measures by way of social protection systems to address the immediate needs of those suffering hunger and malnutrition, while at the same time implementing long-term policies that promote economic growth, ensure the availability of food and strengthen the capacities of the most vulnerable populations, to provide long-term sustainability to food and nutrition security. (Figure 49).

The implementation of policies under the twin-track approach in the four strategic areas mentioned in the beginning of this chapter (policies and strategies for food and nutrition security; strengthening of family farming; fighting poverty and extreme poverty, particularly in rural areas; intra-regional and domestic trade for food and nutrition security), is the way that governments have public instruments to implement the “political approach” to hunger eradication.

Figure 49: The “twin track approach” to food and nutrition security



Source: FAO: FAO Regional Office for LAC.

Comprehensive policies and strategies for food and nutrition security

The concept of food and nutrition security has gradually evolved over the past 40 years. It is now defined as: “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 2010: 4).

Moreover, in the field of human rights, the conception of the human right to adequate food (HRAF) has slowly been gathering strength. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states in Article 25 that, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food (...)”. Likewise, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), in force since 1976, mentions that one of the duties of the State is to take appropriate action, with maximum available resources, to progressively realize the right to food without discrimination and, moreover, should facilitate the realization of the human right to adequate food in other countries. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states that “the right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement” (CESCR General Comment 12, 1999).

The international community has assisted States’ efforts to meet their obligations with the right to food, such as approval in November 2004 of the “Voluntary Guidelines for the Progressive Realization of the Right to Food” during the 127th session of the FAO Council. These reflect a broad international consensus on the ample range of policies and measures needed to tackle the multiple dimensions of food and nutrition insecurity, providing specific recommendations that can be incrementally adopted depending on the specific conditions and capabilities of each country.

A retrospective look at the Voluntary Guidelines ten years after their adoption shows that they remain current and necessary and that countries should work towards strengthening their effectiveness through international policy dialogue. Considering the development of the

region during the last decade, the Voluntary Guidelines are not only current and applicable in terms of their comprehensive view of food and nutrition security and of the increasing efforts that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have made to create comprehensive frameworks for public policy, but also show that there is no single solution to ensure the human right to adequate food in the long term. Rather, the definition, implementation and evaluation of the path towards complete food security must involve a variety of actors at the national level through inclusive governance mechanisms.

The aforementioned concepts are at the base of the region’s efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Countries have integrated food and nutrition security, the human right to adequate food and a human rights approach³³ as a public policy objectives which are undoubtedly some of the main factors behind the progress that Latin America and the Caribbean have made towards the eradication of undernourishment.

Food and nutrition security and the right to food have consolidated both legally and institutionally

Since the decade of 2000, both food and nutrition security and the human right to adequate food have consolidated through a growing number of legal bodies and institutions dedicated to them. Today at least 15 countries in the region explicitly recognize the human right to food in their constitutions (De Schutter, 2012), while 7 countries have enacted framework law for food and nutrition security. States have implemented two main types of legal actions: (1) the recognition of the right to food in their constitutions, and (2) the enactment of framework laws dedicated to food and nutrition security.

Constitutional recognition of the human right to adequate food: Countries have recognized the human right to adequate food in their constitutions³⁴ in three different ways, as detailed below.

³³/Participation, accountability, equity and non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and rule of law.

³⁴/The information regarding the recognition of the HRAF and the organic FNS laws was gathered from the Platform for Food and Nutrition Security <http://www.rlc.fao.org/psan/inicio>

Explicit and direct recognition of the right to food. This recognition has different characteristics depending on its scope. It can be directly applicable to all people, as is the case of Mexico (2011), where Article 4 of the Constitution states that “(...) everyone has the right to nutritious, sufficient and quality food. The State shall guarantee this (...)”. It can also apply only to a specific population category, as in the case of Colombia (1991): Article 44 of the Colombian Constitution states that “children’s fundamental rights are: life, physical integrity, health and social security, a balanced diet, name and nationality, to have a family and not be separated from it, care and love, education and culture, recreation and the free expression of their opinion”.

Additionally, the HRAF can also be part of specific clauses which are part of the explicit recognition of other rights, such as in Panama: The 1972 Constitution directly and explicitly recognizes the HRAF in Article 118: “It is an essential State duty to ensure that people live in a healthy environment free from pollution, where the air, water and food satisfy the requirements for the proper development of human life”.

Implicit recognition in the context of broader rights. In El Salvador (1983), Article 2 of the Constitution states that “everyone has the right to life, to physical and moral integrity, liberty, security, work, property and possession, and to be protected in the preservation and defence thereof”.

Recognition as a goal or principle of constitutional order. The represent the values that guide society and government action, particularly in socioeconomic terms, but they are not considered as principles that seek to provide individual rights. For example, Chile’s 1980 Constitution grants an implicit recognition of the right to food, establishing in Article 5 that “the exercise of sovereignty is limited by respect for the essential rights emanating from human nature” and that “It is the duty of the Government to respect and promote the rights guaranteed by this Constitution and by the international treaties ratified by Chile that are in force”, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In addition to the above examples, other countries also have explicit or implicit recognitions to the HRAF and food and nutrition security. The Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti and Nicaragua explicitly recognize the right to food or the protection against hunger of all their inhabitants. Mentions on food security, the nutritional status of the population, the rights of minors and state supply of food for vulnerable populations exist in the constitutions of Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Suriname and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Enactment of food and nutrition framework laws. In Latin America and the Caribbean seven countries³⁵ have enacted food and nutrition security laws. All these laws intend to organize and rationalise public administration, in order to legally and institutionally strengthen food and nutrition security. In general, these laws contain: provisions concerning the establishment of guiding principles; definitions, objectives and scope; obligations and powers of dependent and independent public bodies; and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for accountability and information, among others. Table 9 summarizes the main characteristics of these seven legal bodies.

At the institutional level, for many years State responsibility in matters related to food and nutrition security was focused in the ministries of Agriculture, responding to the old paradigm that regarded food security primarily as a problem of food availability. However, the responsibility has gradually been transferred to the Presidency or to ministries of Social Development, either because of technical criteria (fully justified taking into account the levels of poverty, informality and inequality that exist in the region) or political criteria (given the greater relative weight that social ministries have gained within the framework of comprehensive strategies to reduce hunger and poverty).

This trend began in Brazil in early 2000, with the creation of the *Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e*

³⁵The Framework Law on the Right to Food, Food Security and Sovereignty, adopted in 2012 by the PARLATINO also relates to this subject.

Combate à Fome, (Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger, MDS) as the Executive Secretariat of the *Conselho Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional* (National Council of Food and Nutrition Security, CONSEA), and *the coordinator of the Câmara Interministerial de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional* (Interministerial Council of Food and Nutrition Security, CAISAN), the main organs of the Brazilian National Food Security and Nutrition System, established in 2006.

This trend has been continued in countries like Argentina, where the Ministries of Health and Social Development are responsible for enforcing the provisions of the Law on National Food Security and Nutrition 2003, and Mexico, where the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL) holds the Presidency of the

Interministerial Commission for the Implementation of the Crusade Against Hunger since 2013.

This change in the bodies that govern and execute food and nutrition strategies and plans is also related to the recognition of HRAF and the implementation of organic laws on food security. However, this relationship does not necessarily occur in all cases. Such is the in Ecuador, where the governing body of the Food and nutrition Sovereignty System is the Plurinational and Intercultural Conference on Food Sovereignty (COPIISA, in Spanish), a formal body with the participation of civil society which is part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture (MAGAP, in Spanish). In Costa Rica, the Ministry of Health is in charge of the food and nutrition security policy.

Table 9: Framework laws on food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean

Country	Year	Objective	Country	Year	Objective
Argentina	2003	National Nutrition and Food Program Act: The program was created to ensure the State's duty in terms of the right to food, and aims to develop national food programs.	Honduras	2011	Food and Nutrition Law: mentions and explicitly defines the right to food. Seeks to establish a legal framework to structure and coordinate food security actions that contribute to improve the populations living conditions, prioritizing vulnerable groups.
Brazil	2006	Organic Food security Law: creates the national Food Security System to ensure the right to food. Its aim is to create an integrated system for food security and nutrition including several governing bodies and institutions.	Nicaragua	2009	Food and Nutrition Security and Sovereignty Act: mentions the right to food as the object of the law and explicitly defines it. It aims to guarantee the right to food and create the food and security system.
Ecuador	2009	Organic Law on Food Sovereignty: establishes a regime of food sovereignty comprised by a set of related rules to establish agri-food policies.	Venezuela (B.R.)	2008	Decree with Rank, Value and Force of Organic Law on Food Security and Sovereignty: sets production for food security and sovereignty mentioning the right to food as part of the guarantees that allow agri-food sovereignty.
Guatemala	2005	Law of the National Food Security System: its aim is to create the food security system (SINASAN) composed of members of government and civil society with the support of international cooperation.			

Source: FAO Regional Office from official country information.

This only serves to demonstrate that Latin America and the Caribbean remains a diverse region and that, despite the growing tendency to institutionalize the fight against hunger and malnutrition in the ministries of Social Development, there are a number of different approaches which vary from country to country.

In spite of the regional diversity, at the supranational level the trend is much more evident. CELAC, has adopted a Latin American and Caribbean Programme for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty within the context of its Social Action Plan established at the First Summit of Ministers of Social Development in July 2013. Poverty and hunger are the structural axes of the Action Plan 2012-2014 established by the Council on Social Development of UNASUR. In MERCOSUR, meanwhile, hunger eradication is the first line of action of the Strategic Plan for Social Action established in 2012 by the Ministers of Social Development of its member countries.

Inclusive governance to eradicate hunger

In a broad sense, governance relates to the decision making process and how these decisions are implemented. Therefore, it is a process of social coordination in which the different branches of government, civil society, private sector and international cooperation determine guidelines for generating public value. Governance refers to the rules and formal and informal

processes through which public and private actors coordinate their positions and interests for making and implementing decisions (FAO, 2014e).

To guarantee effectiveness from a human rights perspective, FAO (2014e) identifies a series of principles and common features of all governance mechanisms:

Transparency, accountability and equity. To build governance systems for food and nutrition security it is extremely important to have a set of diverse and inclusive information channels, from members of civil society organizations to the highest levels of government. These channels are fundamental to the creation of a system of accountability that allows appropriate feedback on actions taken. From the point of view of equity, it public policies must be built to accommodate a diversity of actors from civil society, especially the most vulnerable, so that they all have opportunities to improve or maintain their standard of living in matters as important as food and nutrition security.

In the region, these principles are usually exercised within the same space of inclusive governance. In the case of Brazil, the instance for the participation of civil society (CONSEA) is not only responsible for defining the parameters of the national food security policy, but also oversees the implementation and convergence of the actions of the Policy for Food and Nutrition Security and the Plan for Food and Nutrition Security, together with other members of the National System of Food and Nutrition Security (SISAN). On

Key aspects of institutional development for food and nutrition security and the right to food in Latin America and the Caribbean

- The laws of at least fifteen countries in the region explicitly recognize the right to food, food and nutrition security, the nutritional status of the population, the rights of minors and/or guarantees for the food supply of vulnerable populations in their legal frameworks. This demonstrates the broad presence and scope that the fight against hunger and malnutrition has in the region.
- Seven countries in the region have framework laws for food and nutrition security, which strengthen institutional commitment.
- At a regional level, social ministries and/or agencies are in charge of food and nutrition security. Nationally, however, in several countries of the region these systems are in the hand of the Presidency or the ministries of Agriculture and/or Health.

the other hand, the Interministerial Chamber of Food and Nutrition Security (CAISAN) is entrusted with monitoring the analysis regarding food security and finding the best way to avoid the recommendations of CONSEA getting lost within the branching structures that make up state agencies. The CAISAN must also submit periodic reports to strengthen accountability.

Participation. The inclusion of civil society and the private sector in the public debate and construction of policies gives greater legitimacy and sense of reality to decision making. Involving them in the phases of implementation and evaluation allows for more sustainable and effective public policies.

In Ecuador, COPIA is composed exclusively of representatives of civil society, selected and appointed by the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control. It includes members of academia, consumer organizations, agricultural producers, farmers, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture producers, farmers' organizations and representatives of indigenous groups, mixed race, and Afro-descendants. COPIA was formally created as a Sectorial Citizen Council of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

Another emblematic example is Nicaragua, where civil society participates through the Technical Sector Councils for Food Sovereignty, Security and Nutrition (COTESSAN, in Spanish), technical and coordination bodies composed of representatives of the National Commission for Food Sovereignty, Security and Nutrition (CONASSAN, in Spanish). CONASSAN is the highest decision-making body, in charge of national intergovernmental and cross-sector coordination. COTESSAN are composed of representatives from the government, NGOs, the private sector, indigenous peoples and universities, and work closely with the Executive Secretariat of Food Sovereignty, Security and Nutrition (SESSAN) to coordinate and support the implementation of food and nutrition initiatives.

Inter-institutional coordination. The complexity of food and nutrition has required the creation of inter-institutional coordination mechanisms for policy articulation, both at national and regional level. These mechanisms have different hierarchies, composition, authority and varied degrees of formality. Each has, according to its

nature, different challenges in the areas of political, technical and operational coordination.

There is a growing trend towards the establishment of bodies for political, technical and operational coordination among various sectors and at different levels. These usually form part of the ministries of Health, Agriculture, Social Development and the Presidency.

Coordination instances located within the Presidencies of the Republic include: the Technical Unit for Food and Nutrition Security (UTSAN) of Honduras; the Ministry of Food and nutrition Security of the Presidency of the Republic (SESAN) of Guatemala; the CONASSAN of Nicaragua; the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security of Antigua and Barbuda; the Council on Food Security of the Dominican Republic; the National Secretariat for the Food and Nutrition Security Plan (SENAPAN) in Panama; and the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Food and Nutrition Security in Jamaica.

The coordination mechanisms that are part of the ministries of Agriculture include: the Interministerial Council on Food Security (CISA) of Haiti, the Cross-sector Commission on Food Security and Nutrition in Peru; COPIA in Ecuador. Those that form part of the ministries of health include: the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security (CONASAN) of El Salvador; the National Council of Food and Nutrition (CONAN) in Bolivia; the Secretariat of the National Food Policy (SEPAN) in Costa Rica; and the

Cross-sector Commission on Food Security and Nutrition (CISAN) in Colombia.

Finally, in view of the characteristics of the problems of food security in the region, some countries have instituted these coordination mechanisms within the ministries of Social Development. This is the case of Argentina, where the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan is jointly coordinated by the ministries of Health and Social Development; the CAISAN in Brazil; and the National System of the National Crusade Against Hunger in Mexico.

The explicit creation of action plans is key for inter-institutional coordination and to reinforce the concrete

implementation of national food and nutrition security policies and strategies. They are also needed to further accountability, programme sector actions and processes with annual targets, and establish of inter-sector goals.

Legality. This principle of successful governance is defined as the existence of legal frameworks for institutions that implement inclusive public policies for food and nutrition security under a human rights approach. In the region, the construction of governance mechanisms is linked to the enactment of laws on food and nutrition security, whereby all countries maintain ad hoc legal frameworks for the implementation of these mechanisms.

Monitoring and evaluation. The management of food and nutrition policies and strategies has a technical dimension: it requires maximizing their impacts by hierarchizing resources, to ensure that policies are implemented efficiently and effectively. There is also an ethical dimension that relates to the human rights approach and the promotion of transparency. Finally, it also has a political dimension, since consensual decision-making grants greater legitimacy to effective cross-sector strategies, which reflect a political systems response capacity in light of the population's needs.

In general, countries in the region have specialized agencies for this process of monitoring and evaluation that is then validated in the respective areas of governance. In Honduras, for example, each year the UTSAN

must give a detailed report on the state of food and nutrition security to the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security. The Monitoring Committee on Food and Nutrition Security is also responsible for carrying out monitoring and evaluation of the National Food and Nutrition Security.

In Nicaragua, monitoring and evaluation are conducted by the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit of SESSAN, which is in charge of the National System of Evaluation and Monitoring for the food sovereignty and security, based on the different sector systems of evaluation and monitoring. The Departmental Commissions for Food Sovereignty and Food and Nutrition Security (CODESAN), are the highest departmental decision making instances, and are also in charge of cross-sector coordination and monitoring, and the evaluation of food sovereignty and food and nutrition security plans.

The evaluation and monitoring of the Zero Hunger Covenant of Guatemala is in the hands of SESAN, and is considered one of the keystones of the pact. SESAN plans and implements specific actions, such as monitoring the institutional performance of each of the components of the Zero Hunger Covenant, creating adjustment mechanisms for its interventions and implementing corrections at different institutional levels, as well as evaluating the levels of compliance with progress indicators. The Zero Hunger Covenant includes the participation of civil society in all stages, from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation through the Departmental Municipal and Community Committees on Food and Nutrition Security (CODESAN, COMUSAN and COCOSAN).

Key aspects of governance for food and nutrition security and the right to food in Latin America and the Caribbean

- The establishment of governance mechanisms for food and nutrition security is directly related with the presence of ad hoc institutional frameworks, whether they be framework laws and other types of regulations
- These spaces for governance have been strengthened since the 2000s, and today are an integral and fundamental part of the systems responsible for food security and nutrition in each country.
- Interagency coordination and the participation of civil society and the private sector within the mechanisms of governance in the region have been greatly developed

Policies, plans and long-term strategies for food and nutrition security

Given the breadth of food and nutrition security, many public instruments could be referred to as “relevant to food and nutrition security policies”. This section simply lists and analyses policies, strategies and plans explicitly related to food and nutrition security, understood as programmatic expressions of governments. This clearly shows the orientation that the various countries of the region have in this area.

In first place, it should be noted that currently sixteen countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have Policies, plans and long-term strategies for food and nutrition security and six more are in the process of drafting similar policies³⁶. This means that two-thirds of the countries of the region have explicit policy instruments to deal with hunger and malnutrition, or are in the process of developing them.

Most of these policies recognize the four dimensions of food and nutrition security and include actions concerning them, with varied emphasis depending on the characteristics of each country. Table 10 summarizes the current policies in place and the dimensions of food and nutrition security that considered in their design.

As is apparent from Table 10, all food and nutrition policies specify actions in the dimensions of food access and utilization, the second most prevalent dimension is food availability and finally stability. Although it should be noted that the general trend is that these policies address all dimensions of food and nutrition security, the preponderance of the dimensions of access and utilization versus availability and stability can be explained by the strong relationship that exists within the regional political agenda between the concepts of nutrition and food security, hunger and extreme poverty. Indeed, the regional debate focuses its attention on these two dimensions because they are deemed as key areas for the consol-

idation of food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean. Attention to food availability is often the responsibility of policies for the agricultural sector, running the risk of being left out of the more general food and nutrition strategies and plans. Stability in many countries is often linked to emergency response, disaster resilience and plans to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

In general, the contents of these policies have similarities and commonalities in the way they address the four dimensions of food and nutrition security. For example, regarding food availability, countries’ main objective is to ensure the food supply for the whole population, although with certain particular emphasis: Costa Rica, Brazil and Guatemala aim to sustainably increase food production through a proper use of natural resources; the Caribbean, meanwhile, prioritizes and increased production to substitute food imports. Also noteworthy is that several food and nutrition security policies have specific considerations to further family farming, such as Nicaragua and Colombia.

On the other hand, the access dimension is addressed through the explicit aim of increasing the income of the most vulnerable. To achieve this, many of the food and nutrition security policies seek to integrate and strengthen social protection systems, as is the case in Argentina and Saint. Lucia. Initiatives concerning the labour market are important in Panama, while other countries pay particular attention to certain populations such as Brazil’s special emphasis for indigenous peoples and descendent of Afro-Brazilian slaves (quilombolas, in Portuguese), and while Mexico’s emphasis on peasants and rural agricultural workers.

Three major areas of intervention are prevalent for the dimension of food utilization: prevention of critical factors and health promotion (Honduras and Guatemala); establishment of sanitary conditions for the proper utilization of food (El Salvador and Colombia); and consumption of quality and safe food (Nicaragua and Costa Rica).

Finally, stability is addressed far less than the other dimensions, but a clear tendency to intervene by implementing actions for climate change adaptation

³⁶/It should be noted that Ecuador and Venezuela have laws that could be equated in content to long-term policies for FNS.

Table 10: Policies, plans and national strategies for food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean

Country	Period of implementation	Name	Dimensions of food and nutrition security			
			Availability	Access	Utilization	Stability
Antigua and Barbuda	Since 2012	Antigua and Barbuda Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
Argentina	Since 2003	National Food Security Plan		*	*	
Belize	Since 2010	The National Food and Nutrition Security Policy of Belize	*	*	*	
Brazil	Since 2010	National Policy for Food and Nutrition Security	*	*	*	
Brazil	2012–2015	National Plan for Food Security and Nutrition	*	*	*	
Colombia	Since 2008	National Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
Colombia	2012-2019	National Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
Costa Rica	2011-2021	National Food Security Policy	*	*	*	*
Costa Rica	2011-2015	National Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
El Salvador	2011-2015	National Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
El Salvador	2013-2016	National Strategic Plan for Food Security and Nutrition	*	*	*	*
Guatemala	Since 2005	National Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
Guatemala	2012-2016	National Strategic Plan for Food Security and Nutrition	*	*	*	*
Guatemala	2012-2015	Plan of the Zero Hunger Covenant		*	*	
Guyana	Since 2011	Food and Nutrition Security Strategy for Guyana	*	*	*	*
Haiti	2010-2025	National Food and Nutrition Security Plan	*	*	*	*
Honduras	Since 2006	Long Term Policy on Food and Nutrition Security		*	*	*
Jamaica	Since 2012	Food and Nutrition Security Policy	*	*	*	*
Jamaica	Since 2013	National Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan	*	*	*	*
Mexico	Since 2013	Strategy of the National Crusade Against Hunger	*	*	*	*
Nicaragua	Since 2009	Food Sovereignty and Food and nutrition Security Policy from the Public Agriculture and Rural Sector	*	*	*	
Panama	2009-2015	National Plan for Food Security and Nutrition	*	*	*	*
Peru	2013-2021	National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security	*	*	*	*
Saint Lucia	Since 2013	Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan	*	*	*	*

Source: FAO Regional Office from official country information.

and mitigation can be seen when analysing the policies included in Table 10, as in the case of Antigua and Barbuda, for example. To a lesser extent, other countries foresee actions to reduce food losses and food waste, as is the case of Mexico.

In addition, several countries intend to strengthen institutions related to food and nutrition security, a

key aspect to ensure food stability. This is the case of Peru, which envisages the implementation of an institutional and programmatic framework for food and nutrition security at all levels of government. The food and nutrition strategy of El Salvador explicitly raises the need to strengthen institutions relating to food and nutrition security as a fundamental aspect for its sustainability.

Key aspects of policies, plans and strategies for food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- The implementation of policies, plans and strategies for food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean is widespread and consolidated in most countries of the region reality
- These policies are particularly focused on overcoming poverty, inequality (food access) and improving the nutritional status of the population (utilization). This responds to a regional diagnosis that sees hunger eradication and the fight against extreme poverty as challenges that share common characteristics, and whose approach is complementary.



Strengthening family farming

The concept of family farming (FF), its main characteristics and the importance this sector has in Latin America and the Caribbean have been studied in depth in recent years³⁷. Family farming is defined as a “way of classifying production from agriculture, forestry, pastoral, fisheries, and aquaculture managed and operated by a family, and which mainly depends on family labour, including both women and men³⁸.”

81.3% of farms in the region belong to family farming. In Central America, family farming produces more than 70% of food AF, and more than 50% of agricultural jobs, in a group of 10 countries studied³⁹ (Leporati et al., 2014). These figures show the enormous importance of family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean.

However, as important as it is, family farming faces great challenges that make the sector a priority for public policies. Most family farmers have limited productive resources and are socio-economically vulnerable, which means that even though the majority of farms belong to this sector they only account for 23% of agricultural land and their contribution to agricultural GDP does not generally exceed 50% in the countries of the region (Leporati et al., 2014).

The central role of family farming in terms of food security, employment and food production, as well as the challenges they face are a top priority of the regional public agenda. Their importance is not limited to the productive sector. Taking into consideration the fundamental role that family farmers play in food availability, they have become a target of public policies that address food and nutrition security and are a factor of change in all aspects of food security.

Specific institutions for family farming

For a long time family farmer did not count with specialized institutions, since the sector had not even been conceptually defined as a subject for differentiated policies within the agricultural sector. Only in the early 2000s the widespread use of this concept and the efforts to define family farming became commonplace (Salcedo et al., 2014). Their common features began to be defined and from 2004, with the creation of the Special Meeting on Family Farming of MERCOSUR (REAF, in Spanish), this productive sector became a definite target for public policies regarding food and nutrition security.

The establishment of a reference terminology for this specific group of farmers prompted the creation of institutional spaces directed at family farmers, as well as the adaptation of policy instruments aimed at this sector.

The State structures and institutions dedicated to family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean can be seen at three levels:

Ministerial level. This the highest level of state organization, and in this particular case it implies that family farming becomes a public sector of special interest and as such is regarded as distinct from the agricultural and social sector. Only Brazil and Nicaragua have given this status to family farming⁴⁰. In 1999, Brazil created the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA, in Portuguese), whose functions include land reform and agrarian reorganization, rural development and attention to family farming. In 2012, Nicaragua created the Ministry of Household, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA, in Spanish), which promotes family farming, micro, small and medium agribusinesses and industries, supporting associative forms of production such as

³⁷The importance of family farming has become so important in the public agenda that 2014 was declared by the UN as the “International Year of Family Farming”.

³⁸Information from <http://www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/home/what-is-family-farming/es/> obtained on 14/08/2014.

³⁹Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

⁴⁰This does not necessarily mean that countries which have a specific ministry in charge of family farming demonstrate greater concern than those which have implemented other institutional solutions.

cooperatives. In both countries family farming has acquired a status which is different from agriculture, by also shares its institutional space with other closely related areas, such as rural development in Brazil, or the promotion of small industries and cooperatives in Nicaragua.

Vice-Ministerial level. This level is the “second tier” of State organization. In countries that maintain vice-ministries for the care of family farming, these are part of the ministries of Agriculture. Several countries have vice-ministries for this sector, something especially common in Central America (FAO, IICA and ECLAC, 2013). In Honduras, the Vice-Ministry for Rural Development deals with matter related to family farming, a substructure of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG, in Spanish), while in Guatemala the Vice-Ministry for Food and Nutrition Security is in charge of family farming. Outside Central America, Argentina created the Secretariat for Family Farming⁴¹, part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

Two trends can be seen in the institutionalization of family farming at the vice-ministerial level: the first –minor trend– is the creation of vice-ministries which, in name and functions, refer specifically to family farming, while the second trend –the majority of cases– is to include family farming as part of subsector policies related to rural development and food security.

Level of public services, institutions and/or executing program levels. This level corresponds to state structures usually responsible for implementing programs and public instruments and meeting the requirements of state beneficiaries. Most of the institutional spaces for family farming in South America are located in this level, as is the case of the Colombian Institute for Rural Development (INCODER, in Spanish), or the Institute of Agricultural Development (INDAP, in Spanish) in Chile. Because of their number and diversity it is harder to identify their common factors, even if the rough outlines of a trend which is similar to what happens at the vice-ministerial

level can be distinguished, i.e. a minority of services is specifically dedicated to family farming while most are related to other issues such as rural development or land tenure.

Besides these three forms of institutional structure, there is a fourth option, where family farming does not have its own space within the state but is the responsibility of more general institutions, particularly of the agriculture sector. This is the case in most of the Caribbean countries and in Mexico (FAO, IICA and ECLAC, 2013).

In parallel to the establishment of institutional spaces, some countries have established legal frameworks that govern family farming. The creation of specific laws for this sector is less common than the creation of institutions, and in most cases the rules relating to this sector are part of more general laws that include family farming within their articles. An example is Law No. 2,419, which established the National Institute of Rural Development and Land (INDERT, in Spanish) in Paraguay and defined family farming in its 6th Article which also defines the potential beneficiaries of the Institute. However, there are two cases where specific laws have been established to regulate family farming: Brazil enacted the Law No. 11,326 in 2006, setting guidelines for the formulation of a National Policy for Family Agriculture and Rural Family Enterprises. The Plurinational State of Bolivia passed Law No. 144 of Productive Community Agricultural Revolution in 2011, and in 2013 it passed the Law No. 338 on Indigenous and Peasant Economic Organizations (OECAS, Organizaciones Económicas Campesinas, Indígena Originarias, in Spanish) and of Community Economic Organizations (OECOM, in Spanish) for the Integration of Sustainable Family Farming and Food Sovereignty. Both laws clearly establish the concept of family farming, but also detail public actions to support this sector.

⁴¹/It used to be an under secretariat.

Key aspects of institutional development for family agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Only two countries in the region have ministries of family farming; however, virtually all countries in Central and South America have specialized institutions to support this sector. Caribbean countries in general have no specialized institutions for family farming and the care for this sector is left to the ministries of Agriculture.
- At an institutional level, the promotion of family farming is tied with other policy areas, most notably rural development, food and nutrition security and access to land.
- Only two countries have exclusive legal frameworks for family farming, while in general the regulatory framework for this sector derives from those legal bodies that govern the institutions dedicated to its support.

Participation of family farmers for the development of the sector

Farmers have long been important social actor in the process of constructing policies for the agricultural sector, and have become major players in important political processes such as land reform. The central role they played in the development of the region meant that during the era of authoritarianism in Latin America and the Caribbean the formation of peasant organizations was both repressed and discouraged (Sternadt and Ramirez, 2014).

Today the regional outlook for these organizations is diverse, and the levels and types of farmers' organization and their relative weight in political discussions depend on the unique characteristics of each country (Sternadt and Ramirez, 2014). However, the situation of Latin America and the Caribbean requires that traditional family farming organizations change from being pressure groups to becoming actors fully involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies concerning this sector.

In recent years, increased pressure for greater participation in the creation of public policies has led to workshops, round tables, advisory committees and public-private partnerships which have begun to create opportunities for expanded agriculture governance (Sotomayor et al., 2011), something particularly relevant for family farming.

There are two dominant trends in the region in this sense, although they are not the only ones⁴². One is the existence of coordination mechanisms among actors that deal with issues specific to family farming. The other is the expansion of governance mechanisms beyond specific issues, becoming a coordinator of policies for the sector. The first trend encompasses most of the initiatives that exist in the region, one example being the establishment by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAGAP) of Ecuador of "advisory council", which aim to generate agreements on policy among all actors of the food chain of certain agricultural products. For example, during 2013 the Advisory Council of Maize fixed the monthly price per quintal of yellow corn, while the Rice Advisory Council was restructured in 2014 to support the development of this chain. Similarly, in 2011 a Council concerning the management and conservation of common dolphinfish⁴³ was created, demonstrating the diversity of objectives that these mechanisms pursue.

In contrast, the number of countries which maintain broader governance mechanisms for family farming is much lower. One of them is the Plurinational State of Bolivia, which has two statutory bodies that structured

⁴²/Although excluded from the current analysis because of methodological issue, the existence of governance mechanisms for the implementation of rural development programs and strategies should also be pointed out, and will be more closely analysed in the section of the Panorama concerning rural poverty.

⁴³/Coryphaena hippurus

governance mechanisms for family farming⁴⁴:

Law No. 144 and Law No. 338. Both laws recognize the right of communities to participate in the design of public policies and to exert social control over public management in the agricultural sector. To that end the Productive Economic Councils were created to serve as governance bodies that aim to coordinate all stakeholders involved in the design, subsequent monitoring and evaluation of public policies. These councils, whose mayor organ is the Plurinational Productive Economic Council (COPEP, in Spanish) have a departmental, provincial and municipal counterparts, so as to completely cover the national territory.

In addition to national governance mechanisms, supranational integration and coordination mechanisms are of vital importance in the region, and have often been the basis for the subsequent implementation of governance spaces at a national level. In the field of family farming there are three particularly important governance mechanisms in Latin America and the Caribbean: the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming of

MERCOSUR (REAF, in Spanish), the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC, in Spanish) and the Alliance for Food Sovereignty of the Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO, 2014f). The first is a space for dialogue between organizations of family farmers and governments of the Member States and associated countries of MERCOSUR, born of the political and socioeconomic importance of family farming in that trade block. REAF seeks to strengthen public policies for family farming in MERCOSUR and promote the trade of products from family farms in order to reduce market asymmetries.

The CAC is an organ of the Central American Integration System (SICA) consisting of the ministers of Agriculture of the countries of Central America, and cares for family farming under the guidance of the Central American Rural Territorial Development Strategy 2010-2030 (ECAD-ERT), ascribed by all member states. The Alliance for Food Sovereignty of the Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean is a platform for dialogue and political coordination between family farmers movements and organizations and other sectors committed to food sovereignty. This group participates in subregional, regional and global discussion spaces, such as the Committee on World Food Security (FAO, 2014f).

44/And for food sovereignty.

Key aspects of family farming governance in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- The processes of participation and integration of the various stakeholders related to family farming are being restructured and strengthened.
- The vast majority of countries in the region include family farming in narrow governance spaces for specific sectors. However, some countries have begun to create opportunities for inclusive governance for all aspects that make up family farming.
- Regional governance for family farming has consolidated over the last decade and has its highest expression in organs such as REAF and CAC.

Specialized policies for the promotion of family farming

of integrated rural development (IRD) in Latin America and the Caribbean were gradually dismantled, resulting in more focused and sector specific support initiatives. This led to the creation of new programs, mainly related to agricultural extension, technical assistance and credits (Maletta, 2011).

But gradually -and in line with the previously mentioned processes- family farming began to form part of the public agenda, which resulted in the progressive expansion and specialization of policies to support the sector, especially in recent years. At present, the vast majority of countries in the region have policies explicitly designed for family farming, which we have classified into three groups: (1) policies, plans and comprehensive strategies; (2) targeted agricultural public programs; and (3) cross-sector policies and programs for the development of family farming. While not all countries have these three types of policies, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have supported this sector with varied combinations of them.

Policies, plans and comprehensive strategies. Within this category are programmatic policies which provide lines of public action and then put them in place in the medium and long term. Policies for family farming are general part of broader policies relating to two areas in particular: agriculture and food and nutrition security. In the first case -the most common- family farming is identified as a distinct sector of agriculture, and specific policy guidelines are established for it. An example of this is Bolivia, where the Agricultural Development Sector Plan 2014-2018-Towards 2025 characterizes sustainable family farming and establishes lines of action and specific targets for this sector in each of its sections. In Haiti, meanwhile, the Triennial Programme for Agricultural Revival 2013-2016 counts with a specific line of action to support family farming through investments, policy instruments and results for the triennium.

On the other hand, food and nutrition policies are also reference policies for family farming. In most cases family farming forms part of both food and nutrition security and agricultural policies; However, there are

some examples in which the only reference to family farming is made in food and nutrition security policies, something especially common in English speaking countries of the Caribbean. Such is the case of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy of Antigua and Barbuda, which has among its objectives increased food availability, emphasizing support for family farmers.

In spite of the fact that in most case family farming is often part of broader policies, there is growing trend to create unique policies for family farming, particularly in Central America. Indeed, three countries of that sub-region (Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala) have policies, plans or differentiated strategies for family farming, with some common goals: (1) increase production of family farming by access to credit, inputs and fertilizers; (2) increase productivity through technical assistance services and agricultural extension, and (3) promote market integration for family farmers. In all three countries, although the cross-cutting nature of family farming is recognized, the execution of its core program is focused on the ministries of Agriculture. They are also well aware that improving the productive and social conditions of family farmers strengthens food and nutrition security. How these broad lines of action are put in place can be seen by analysing public programs focused on family farming.

Agricultural public programs focused on family farming. These programs directly implement public instruments for the care of family farming; in other words, they are the expression of each country's strategic guidelines for family farming. The existence of programmatic documents that explicitly refer to family farming is not a necessary precondition for the implementation of programs that seek to support this sector. In fact, virtually all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have specialized agricultural programs which implement policies for family farming, whether they have official documents for the sector or not.

Family farming development programs have four main areas of support: (1) technical assistance, agricultural extension and technology transfer; (2) market and supply chain integration; (3) finance, insurance and credit, and; (4) access to inputs, goods and productive infrastructure (FAO, 2012a). As can be seen, these components are in line with the comprehensive strat-

egies analysed above, which justifies the conclusion that public support for family farming, regardless of the type of instrument used, has rather homogeneous characteristics that reveal the importance of the sector in the region.

Some of the main features of each of these four areas can be seen below⁴⁵.

Technical assistance, agricultural extension and technology transfer. This includes training, education, capacity building and technology transfer aimed at both individual family farmers and their organization. The goal of these interventions is to improve the productive capacities of family farmers and enhance their associations to strengthen the sector.

Usually, this type of support is implemented by technical advisory teams hired to work directly with beneficiaries. That is the case of the Local Development Programme (PRODESAL, in Spanish) in Chile, where personal is recruited through co-financing to deliver permanent technical assistance to family farmers' groups. In Paraguay, the Program for Promotion of Food Production from Family Agriculture also provides permanent access to technical assistance, in this case through personnel recruited directly by the program.

Market and supply chain integration. Due to its characteristics, family farming has great difficulty entering markets (FAO, 2011b). Thus, another component to support the sector is the implementation of policies to facilitate the marketing of products from family farming in domestic and international markets, thus becoming integrated into the various production chains.

The programs implemented in the region generally offer technical assistance and financing focused specifically on market and supply chain integration, as is the case of the Inclusive Rural Development Programme (PRODERI) in Argentina. Additionally, the creation of partnerships between family farmers and other local economic actors - such as the Rural Alliances Project in Bolivia- is also promoted, allowing them to coordinate amongst themselves and facilitate their access to markets.

Financing, insurance and credit. The limited access that the financial services sector, both in the terms of loans and crop insurance hinders the consolidation of family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean (Soto Baquero et al., 2007). In the eyes of the financial sector, family farmers are high risk. Bearing in mind that in previous decades public systems supporting family farms were dismantled, countries have been forced to create specific programs to provide this kind of support and they have also begun, in some cases, to rebuild the public agricultural banking system in recent year.

Usually the hallmark of credit programs aimed at family farming in the region is the creation of different lines of financing, with lower interest rates and payment plans as compared to the traditional banking market, in order to expand access to credit for the most vulnerable producers who were not creditworthy. Among these initiatives, surely the one with most tradition and impact is the National Program to Strengthen Family Agriculture (PRONAF, in Portuguese) Brazil. This program, which has more than 12 lines of credit, gives loans to family farmers to finance their production costs and make productive investments. Since 2003 the program diversified and expanded and became a cornerstone of country's support policy for family farming (Hermi Zaar, 2010). In fact, its funds destined for financing have grown more than 10 times, from USD \$939 million in 2002-03 to USD \$ 9,800 million in 2014-15⁴⁶.

With regard to agricultural insurance, countries of the region call out to the public and private sector, and the State intervenes by providing subsidies or incentives that allow family farmers to access private insurance. For example, in Peru the Guarantee Fund for the Countryside and Agricultural Insurance (FOGASA, in Spanish) subsidizes private Catastrophic Crop Insurance for small farmers in vulnerable situations, while in Ecuador the Agricultural Insurance Unit (UNISA, in Spanish) implements the Agro-insurance Project, which subsidizes 60% of the value of the agricultural insurance premium for small and medium producers.

Access to inputs, goods and productive infrastructure. A final component of the support programs for family

⁴⁵The programs used as examples in each category mostly have more than one component of the aforementioned categories.

⁴⁶Information from <http://www.fetra.org.br/sistema/ck/files/Plano%20Safra%202014-2015.pdf> obtained on 20/08/2014.

farming is the delivery of production inputs, machinery and tools, and productive and irrigation infrastructure to sustain production in the medium term.

Usually this type of support is given through direct delivery of inputs, fertilizers and materials for the construction of basic productive infrastructure, as in the case of Zero Hunger Program in Nicaragua. This initiative gives out a Food Production Package, consisting of animals, seeds, animal feed, tools and supplies for subsistence farmers, to encourage food production intended both for home consumption and a subsequent sale of surplus production. Support for irrigation infrastructure is often based on the provision of funding to build such work, as in the case of the My Irrigation Fund in Peru, which funds studied and the actual construction of irrigation works in vulnerable agricultural highland⁴⁷ communities.

Cross-sector policies and programs for the development of family farming. A final category of support policies corresponds to initiatives that are not exclusive to the field of agriculture, but are integrated with other sectors, creating synergies that allow improving all areas involved⁴⁸. This type of interventions has begun to consolidate in the region in recent years, as the political context has demanded more comprehensive and cross cutting policy innovations and intervention components in the fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

One of the most common and successful examples of this type of intervention are public procurement initiatives for family farming. These initiatives involve the acquisition by the State of production from family farming under favourable conditions (guarantees for price and/or purchasing volumes). Public procurement programs are particularly important for family farming as one of its greatest challenges is access to markets. In many cases, when market failures and the limitations of family farming prevent production to be sold under favourable conditions, the State may become the only actor capable of facilitating the purchase of these products, thereby increasing revenue for small producers and

promoting their consolidation.

In recent years the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have used public procurement not only to support family farming, but also to benefit other State sectors. The creating food stockpiles from family farming not only creates reserves that can be used in case of a supply and/or food price crisis, but can also provide healthy food to key initiatives for food and nutrition security, as are school feeding programs, soup kitchens and food aid programs, among others. Thus, public purchases from family farmers adopt a “twin-track” approach: in the short term they guarantee income to producers and food for social programs, while in the long term they strengthen family farming, encourage increased food availability, and ensure continuous safe and nutritious food for vulnerable populations.

One of the most studied cases in this field is Brazil. This country has two main tools: the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA, in Portuguese) and Law No. 11,947 of 2009, which states that at least 30% of purchases made by the National Fund for Educational Development (FNDE, in Portuguese) for the school feeding programs must come from family farming (ECLAC, 2014a). The PAA, created in 2003, buys food for family farmers and then donate them to vulnerable people through social institutions or programs. The volume of purchases and of farmers involved in the PAA has grown over time, and by 2012 more than 185,000 family farmers participated (ECLAC, 2014a). In the case of school feeding the aforementioned law has allowed family farmers access to preferential prices and sale conditions. Here the relationship between institutions and local producers is key, since the law explicitly promotes school feeding in accordance with cultural costumes and traditions in each area (FAO, 2011c).

Other countries in the region have also implemented actions in this field. Ecuador, for example, created in late 2008 the Food Supply Program (PPP), whose mission is “guarantee food and complementary services to the social food and nutrition programs of the State, facilitating the incorporation of small producers as suppliers of these programs”(ECLAC, 2014a: 47). In 2013 the program became the Institute of Food Supply, which maintains its core functions of but also seeks

⁴⁷/Located higher than 1,500 meters above sea level.

⁴⁸/Due to the characteristics of family farming in many of the countries in the region, the clearest example of this type of coordination and integration are the programs related to rural poverty. These programs are referred to elsewhere in this document.

to encourage family farmers' food production through its food procurement program⁴⁹. Paraguay, meanwhile, recently promulgated Decree No. 1056/13 to regulate preferential public food purchases from family farming.

⁴⁹/Information from <http://www.derechoecuador.com/productos/producto/catalogo/registros-oficiales/2013/octubre/code/RegistroOficialNo106-Martes22deOctubrede2013Suplem/registro-oficial-no-106---martes-22-de-octubre-de-2013-suplemento> obtained on 21/8/2014.

Key aspects of public policies for family agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Family farming has established itself on the agenda of the countries of the region, which is demonstrated by its growing presence in programmatic policy documents.
- Family farming is mostly integrated into policies, plans and agricultural strategies, and to a lesser extent in policies for food and nutrition security. However, some countries have specific policies just for this sector.
- Public family farming programs are primarily linked to the ministries of Agriculture, and consist mainly of support for technical assistance, market integration, supplies and financing.
- In parallel, countries have begun to address family farming from a cross-sector approach. In that sense we can highlight public procurement initiatives to strengthen food and nutrition programs, rural development initiatives and the fight against poverty.



Combating poverty and extreme poverty with emphasis on rural areas

The access dimension of food and nutrition security has been identified as the “Achilles heel” of the region in terms of the fight against hunger and malnutrition (FAO, 2010). Leaving aside contingent economic situations that might affect food access, there are structural features that limit economic access to food in the region which create poverty and inequality (FAO, 2012a). In that sense, the reduction of poverty and inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean is inextricably linked to food and nutrition security.

During the last decade, poverty and extreme poverty have been steadily declining in the region: from 2002-2013 the prevalence of poverty has been reduced by more than 15 percentage points, and the prevalence of extreme poverty fell by 8 percentage points over the same period. In rural areas, meanwhile, although the decline in the levels of poverty and extreme poverty is also encouraging⁵⁰, by 2012 the proportion of people living in extreme poverty in rural areas was four times higher than in urban areas, which indicates that countries should redouble their efforts to improve living conditions in rural areas as a necessary condition to continue their hunger eradication progress.

Social and agricultural institutions become present in rural areas

Traditionally, the institutions that address poverty in the countries of the region are the Ministries of Social Development and their specialized agencies. However, in rural areas there is a mix between interventions of the ministries of Agriculture and Social Development which has led to a marked sector-based approach to the rural fight against poverty: farming families are benefited by agricultural development programs, while those not engaged in agricultural production are part of welfare programs (Faiguenbaum, 2013).

This also happens at the level of public services. However, most institutions working in this area are dedicated to rural development, implying that there is a greater presence of cross-sector interventions to combat poverty in rural areas. A case in point is provided by the Cooperation Fund for Social Development (FONCODES, in Spanish) in Peru. This institution focuses on families living in extreme poverty in rural areas, and implements actions related to agricultural subsistence and surplus production, and also with capacity building and the construction of basic services such as infrastructure for drinkable water, electricity and roads.

With regard to regulatory frameworks, these fall into two broad categories: (1) development and social security and (2) labour market regulation.

Development and social security. There are two types of regulatory frameworks in this category: the social development laws of are, for the most part, legal bodies that create the appropriate framework for the implementation of policies and procedures that allow the state to act through public instruments for the sake of human development. These laws benefit the general population, although many put special emphasis on the most vulnerable social groups. For example, in Mexico the goal of the General Law of Social Development is to ensure the exercise of the rights to health, education, food, housing, employment and social security for all people, but in its articles states that people in vulnerable situations are entitled to benefits that solve their situation, whether in urban or rural areas⁵¹. Another example is the 2014 Development and Social Protection Act of El Salvador, which in addition to “establishing a legal framework for human development, social protection and inclusion, which promotes, protects and ensures the fulfilment of people’s rights” makes explicit differences among the population, giving priority to people “in poverty, vulnerability, exclusion and discrimination, prioritizing girls and boys, women, youth, the elderly, the disabled and abandoned, indigenous peoples and all those who do not fully enjoy their rights”.

⁵¹ Information from <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/264.pdf> obtained on 21/8/2014.

Social security laws address traditional contributory social protection instruments related to formal employment. Generally these legal bodies have a universal orientation and are focused to provide health benefits, pensions and family allowances, among others (Faiguenbaum, 2013). However, since they require monetary contributions from workers, they have been historically limited to salaried sectors and middle class wage earners in urban areas (Cecchini and Martínez, 2011). Their coverage in rural areas is lower, considering the higher levels of informality, poverty and income instability in these areas (Faiguenbaum, 2013).

However, there are some countries that include specialized instruments for the rural world within their social security schemes. Ecuador includes the special regime of Rural Social Security as part of its Social Security Law. In force since 1968, this system gives health care and social for rural inhabitants and small-scale fishermen, strengthening the protection of farmers recognizing their right to old age and disability pensions, as well as health and maternity benefits under the same conditions of the members of the general insurance scheme.

Labour market regulation. All countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have either a Labour Code or Labour Laws to regulating this market, which seek to protect the rights of workers through a general regulatory framework for employment. Because of their universal character, these frameworks also regulate labour relations in rural areas. However, in the region there are two cases of legal frameworks that specifically regulate rural employment and seek to safeguard the rights of rural workers. The first case is Uruguay, which in 2008 enacted the Working Day and Rests in the Rural Sector Law 18,441, that limits the length of the workday,

establishes intermediate breaks between work sessions and weekend breaks for rural workers, particularly in the dairy and shearing industries. It also regulates the payment of overtime.

The other case is Argentina, which in 2011 passed the Agricultural Work Regime, Law 26,727, creating a social security system that reduces the retirement age to 57 years for rural down from 65 years (down from 60 years for women) or for 25 years of contributions. It also provides a 15 day paternity leave. The law also recognizes minimum wages for rural labourers as determined by the National Council of Agricultural Work, which may not be less than the vital mobile minimum wage and established payment periods. It also sets the workday as no more than eight hours (42 hours per week) recognizes the payment of overtime, the right to weekly rest and better hygiene and safety conditions as basic requirements for rural activities.

Key aspects of institutional development to combat rural poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean

- The institutions responsible for addressing the problem of rural poverty in LAC are the Ministries of Social Development and Agriculture, addressing productive development and social protection, respectively.
- In general, vulnerable people in rural areas are covered by the same social and labor legislation than those living in urban areas. However, some countries have begun to establish specific provisions and special arrangements for residents and workers in rural areas.

Greater participation for inclusive governance in rural areas

In the section of this Panorama relating to family farming a brief reference to the importance of rural social movements in the development of Latin America and the Caribbean was made. Several agencies and multilateral coordination spaces, such as the World Bank, FAO, IFAD and the European Union, among others, have, in recent decades, argued for the creation of new institutions in rural areas so as to achieve good governance (Ortega, 2012). This has given rise to a new perspective that gives new value to the formation of “bottom up” institutions at the local level, as a way of addressing the macroeconomic changes and their effects on communities (Appendini and Nuijten, 2002).

This tendency to create more participatory, transparent and coordinated institutions in rural areas results in a new understanding of public governance and how it is applied at a territorial level, an understanding that particularly encourages the participation of all stakeholders in the development of their respective rural areas (Jorquera, 2011). This can also be seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, where new forms of participation and deliberation have been created in the framework of local agencies and/or programs that act directly in rural areas.

To review the progress in governance in this area, particularly of the increased participation of vulnerable people, we will study national and local governance spaces dedicated to rural development, due to the potential impact they can have such in reducing poverty and achieving other development goals in the region (Jorquera, 2011).

First, at a national level there are several space for participation and coordination of actors involved in the development of rural areas. Usually, these institutions are established as consultative and advisory bodies on rural development, within the framework of broader laws that seek to support the consolidation of these territories. This is the case of Mexico, where the Sustainable Development Act enacted in 2001 provides for the creation of the Mexican Council for Sustainable Rural Development as a consultative body of the Federal Government, including all stakeholders in rural areas.

Its objectives are the promotion of social participation in the creation and implementation of public initiatives focused on rural areas.

In Brazil, meanwhile, the creation in 2003 of the National Council For Sustainable Rural Development (CONDRAF, in Portuguese) was a result of the work done, since 1997, in regional and local rural development councils within the framework of PRONAF⁵². The CONDRAF is composed of representatives from the public sector and civil society and is designed to provide guidelines for the implementation and formulation of public policies for sustainable rural development, land reform and family farming.

On the other hand, some countries lack specific instruments to promote governance in their rural development policies, but maintain an independent body within governance mechanisms for urban and rural areas. This is the case of Guatemala, which in 2002 published the Law of the Councils of Urban and Rural Development. The law provides for the establishment of the National Development Council, which is the main participation space for indigenous and non-indigenous communities in the democratic planning for development. At a national level, the law established the National Council of Urban and Rural Development, composed of members of government, the private sector and civil society, whose functions include the formulation and monitoring of development policies.

The creating of national councils is part of the framework of policy instruments or laws that promote such coordination spaces, and although they differ they also share common characteristics with regard to their composition and functions. Both in the cases mentioned above and in the region in general, national councils have their regional and local counterparts to boot integration and coordination at a territorial level and thus strengthen local communities. This is part of States' effort to carry out decentralization processes that will give a greater responsibilities in the creation of public policies to regional al local councils and participation

⁵²/Information from <http://www.ipea.gov.br/participacao/conselhos/conselho-nacional-de-combate-a-discriminacao-lgbt/138-conselho-nacional-de-desenvolvimento-rural-sustentavel/274-conselho-nacional-de-desenvolvimento-rural-sustentavel>, obtained on 26/8/2014.

spaces (Ortega, 2012), many of which have served as the basis for better, more inclusive and participatory programs.

As well as governance mechanisms for rural development, there are also rural development programs with explicit goals of social integration and participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. One of the most prominent examples of this is the Citizenship Territories Program in Brazil. This program was created in 2008 with the aim of overcoming poverty and inequality in rural areas, including gender, race and ethnic inequalities. To achieve these objectives, it aims to coordinate the implementation of public instruments to integrally support rural areas (areas not governed only by municipal and administrative divisions) in three major ways: support for productive activities, citizenship and rights, and infrastructure. It does this through agencies at a national, state and territorial level to coordinate and integrate all stakeholders in the fight against poverty and the promotion of human and productive development in rural areas. Only in the public sector this involves the participation of 19 agencies of the Federal State (Ortega, 2012). In territorial terms, these councils deliberation on policies, facilitate the coordination of all stakeholders involved in program implementation and provide social control and monitoring of these initiatives (Pereira Leite et al., 2013).

El Salvador created the Territories of Progress Presidential Program (PPTP, in Spanish) in 2011, which aims to strengthen the quality of public territorial interventions, on the basis of social management and participation of communities. The territories where the program operates are prioritized according to their levels of poverty and exclusion⁵³, and the program

provides mechanisms of territorial planning, public participation and vertical State integration.

Policies to address and overcome rural poverty

Policies and programs responsible for combating rural poverty are basically linked to the ministries of Social Development and Agriculture. Since many programs of the productive programs are discussed in the section concerning family farming, this section will discuss only those related to social development.

In general, countries integrate their instruments to combat rural poverty within broader policy frameworks dedicated to social development and poverty eradication. For example, Guyana's 2011-2015 Poverty Reduction Strategy identifies rural poverty and includes actions relating to infrastructure, agriculture and education in order to eradicate it as a part of already established national efforts.

However, some countries in the region have medium and long-term programmatic documents focused specifically on rural poverty. The National Strategy for Good Rural Living in Ecuador is a cross-sector strategy with two main objectives: to extend capabilities and opportunities in rural society through processes of social, economic, cultural and institutional transformation, boosting the

⁵³In El Salvador, in 2012, rural poverty was 11.6% higher than urban poverty, while rural indigence was 9.2% higher than urban indigence (ECLAC, online).

Key aspects of governance to combat rural poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Several countries in the region have inclusive governance spaces linked to territories, including rural areas, which provide greater participation of inhabitants of rural areas in local and national levels.
- Additionally, many programs are implementing the territorial approach to strengthening governance as an essential step in overcoming poverty in the poorest areas, whether they are oriented exclusively to rural areas or not.

strengths and characteristics of rural areas; and the inclusion of small and family farmers in the productive matrix transformation process⁵⁴. This strategy maintains a territorial approach, which uses different models to assist in closing the urban-rural gaps in the provision of education, health, housing and social inclusion, while increasing revenue opportunities and production. With this objective, the strategy created the Interagency Committee for Good Rural Living, formed by the Coordinating Ministry of Social Development, the Vice-Ministry of Rural Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAGAP, in Spanish), the National Secretariat of Planning (SENPLADES, in Spanish) and the Coordinating Ministry of Production, Employment and Competitiveness (MCPEC, in Spanish).

Regarding the implementation of programs and other measures, several studies (Faiguenbaum, 2013; Rossel, 2012) have pointed out the low coverage that “traditional” social security systems have in rural areas, and the increased importance that non-contributory social protection mechanisms have in light of this. Other studies have also noted the importance of employment, and in particular the mechanisms for protection and improvement of the labour market in rural areas, which are characterized by a growing number of salaried workers (FAO, 2012b).

The main characteristics of three key types of public interventions to address rural poverty will now be analysed: (1) conditional cash transfer programs (CCT); (2) non-contributory pensions, and; (3) labour market policies.

Conditional cash transfers. During the last fifteen years non-contributory social protection has grown in the region, primarily through CCT programs (Cecchini and Madariaga, 2011). In many of the countries in the region such programs were initially focused on the most vulnerable rural population, seeking to benefit a part of the population that had historically remained outside the coverage of social protection systems. Considering the coverage of 5 CCT programs in the countries in

the region⁵⁵, rural coverage of these programs can be from 1.4 to 7 times higher than in urban areas (Rossel, 2012).

The last edition of the **Panorama of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean** (FAO, 2013b) showed that CCT programs positively impacted food and nutrition security of their beneficiaries, with results in terms of quantity of food consumed, dietary diversification and even in terms of agricultural production.

Several studies have shown that CCT programs have also alleviated poverty at a regional level. A recent paper by Cruces and Gasparini (2013) analysing 9 countries found that without the presence of public transfers, extreme poverty measured with a threshold income of USD 2.50 per day per person would increase between 0.4 and 5.3 percentage points over the figures of circa 2010 in these countries.

CCT programs have also been alleviated poverty at a regional level, as several studies⁵⁶ have shown. A recent study by Cruces and Gasparini (2013) for 9 countries found that without the presence of public transfers, extreme poverty measured as a threshold income of USD 2.50 per day per person would increase between 0.4 to 5.3 percentage points over the figures reported circa 2010 in these countries.

In terms of the effect of CCT programs on rural poverty, although there are no regional studies, there are positive estimates on the effect of these programs at a national level. The Solidarity in Rural Communities program in El Salvador, increased up to 20% the per capita income of the beneficiary families (Avalos, 2012). In Mexico, meanwhile, the Opportunities program increased the wages of its young beneficiaries between 12% and 14% during at least six years when compared to the rural inhabitants who were not participating in the program (SEDESOL, 2010). In Paraguay, studies on to the pilot CCT program Tekoporã showed that it had contributed to the diversification of income sources in rural areas (Soares et al., 2008).

54/Information from <http://www.desarrollosocial.gob.ec/proyecto-de-coordinacion-intersectorial-para-el-buen-vivir-rural/> obtained on the 27/8/2014.

55/Bolivia, Mexico, Panama, Ecuador and Costa Rica.

56/Important studies are Fiszbein and Schady (2009) *Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty*, and Cecchini and Madariaga (2011): *Conditional Cash Transfer Programs: Review of Recent Experience in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

Welfare pensions. Non-contributory pensions, which have increasingly been implemented in several countries in the region, mainly for the care of the elderly and disabled, are another way to fight poverty. These are social pensions financed by the State aimed at those who have been unable to access traditional social security systems, either through lack of resources, informal labour or other reasons.

There are close to 20 such programs in Latin America and the Caribbean⁵⁷, mostly national in scope. This type of program is particularly common in English-speaking Caribbean countries, whose common feature is a monthly pension delivered by the State to older adults over 65 years of age and for people with disabilities. The Non Contributory Old Age Pension in Barbados, or the Assistance Invalidity Pension in St. Kitts and Nevis are examples of this.

In Latin America these programs show the same characteristics, while in South America there is long history of non-contributory pensions focused on rural workers, such as the Rural Welfare program in Brazil. Its beneficiaries are older adults living in rural or urban areas of up to 50,000 inhabitants who have worked in family farming and artisanal fisheries, as well as the disabled who live in rural areas. By the year 2012, the program benefited 5.8 million people⁵⁸, and its effects have been analysed, among others, by Delgado and Cardoso (2000), who measured the income of the benefitted families in the 90s and found that they were between 3.6% and 13.1% greater than those who did not have access to the program in the north-eastern and southern areas of the country.

Labour market policies. Within this category are included all actions taken by States to achieve or maintain decent quality jobs. The reason that this market is in the public interest is due to the fact that it has special characteristics which make it different from other markets. In the absence of regulation or government action, it may have negative social, economic

or political effects (FAO, 2012b). The effects of these policies have been extremely important, since anywhere between 1.8 to 3.6 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean have entered the labour market through these initiatives (Martinez, 2002).

Labour market policies can be classified as “passive” or “active”, depending on their characteristics. Among the passive are unemployment insurance and temporary and/or emergency employment programs, while the active measures include direct job creation, public employment services and training for the labour market (FAO, 2012b). However, it should be noted that often the components of passive and active policies are included within a single program.

Passive policies generally consider the participation of vulnerable people in the construction of public works for the benefit of the communities in which they live. This has the dual effect of direct income for beneficiaries, but also provides better services that facilitate social development to their communities. The Ñamba`apo program in Paraguay promotes decent work for people living in poverty and extreme poverty through development projects and temporary jobs that last a maximum of nine months. The program also conducts training courses for its beneficiaries, so they may become a part of the labour market, which are an example of active labour policies within its design. In addition, it delivers a Promotion of Employment Insurance, a total of \$ 115 per month for a six month period.

Active policies, such as subsidies for hiring or the creation of public employment, do not usually benefit vulnerable rural people (FAO, 2012b). Some of the actions that do have particular impact, however, are training programs, technical assistance and subsidies or grants for the creation of business and other sources of self-employment and income. In fact, many of these programs are focused on rural areas, such as the Market Access and Rural Enterprise Development Programme in Granada, which seeks to increase the income of unemployed or self-employed youth in 50 selected rural communities. For this, it grants access to technical assistance and training to enable them to generate economic activities in agriculture and non-agriculture.

57/The information comes from <http://www.rlc.fao.org/psan/inicio> and <http://dds.cepal.org/bdps/> and was obtained on 08/22/2014.

58/The information comes from <http://dds.cepal.org/bdps/> and was obtained on 24/08/2014.

Key aspects of policies to combat rural poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Non-contributory social protection policies have become very important to address poverty in rural areas.
- The coverage of CCT programs is high in the region, and although non-contributory pensions do not have specific versions for the rural world except in the case of Brazil, this trend is slowly beginning to change.
- Policies relating to employment may be important to address rural poverty, especially considering the increase in salaried workers in these areas.



Domestic and intra-regional food trade for food and nutrition security

Latin America and the Caribbean is an important actor in global agrifood production and trade, capable of providing food for the whole region and exporting surplus production to other regions of the world. The region's resources and climate give it ample productive capabilities and competitive advantages.

However, even given this positive regional scenario, each country has peculiarities both as a whole and in certain parts of its territory, which means that the volume of regional food production does not always imply continuous food availability nor in response to the population's demand for agricultural products. In this sense, both domestic and international trade channels have become particularly important in recent years.

The aforementioned factors favor intraregional trade, understood as trade relations between countries in the region, building on existing complementarities and linking the food offer to markets that demand such production. In other words, intraregional facilitate that the aggregate production volume of the region, coupled with its productive diversity, ensure countries food supply. Indeed, the food trade between Latin America and the Caribbean has increased, so that in the period 2010-2012 agri-food trade flows in the region accounted for 42% of imports and 17% of total annual exports (FAO and LAIA, 2014), a clear example of the importance of intraregional trade and the potential of the region as a supplier of food and other agricultural products.

Intra-regional trade is an important factor for food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean. Whereas the region has both net food exporting and net food importing countries, the consolidation of the commercial channels between them contributes to a more stable and fluid food supply, which can help them cope with turmoil in global markets. Similarly, lower transportation costs, greater cultural similarities in terms of food and diets and proximity in case of emergency situations which could affect local production are key advantages of intraregional trade (FAO and LAIA, 2012).

While intraregional trade can ensure food availability between countries, the characteristics of domestic

trade are key to ensuring an adequate food supply within them. Many countries have regions that are great producers while others face productive deficits; Some of these latter regions simply do not have the necessary natural and productive resources for agricultural activities, while others have socioeconomic problems that hinder their production and subsequent access to food. Similarly, the conditions of sale of food within countries can be disadvantageous for the most vulnerable populations. In all these cases, the facilitating role of the State in relation to domestic food trade becomes very important. The State also plays a key role through the implementation of public instruments that optimize the functioning of the food marketing chain, thus improve the state of food and nutrition security in each country.

Institutions for a more just and inclusive trade

Institutions related both to international and domestic trade in Latin America and the Caribbean, like most other public institutions in the region, have evolved since the 1980s and 1990s onwards, from being very contrary to State interventions to reevaluating the role of public actions as a means to correct market failures. This is evident in the creation and/or strengthening of institutions and regulations that give governments the ability to act in commercial chains when deemed necessary.

However, the existence of institutions relating to foreign trade is much more extended and consolidated in the region than those who deal with domestic trade, although it is clear that all countries have, to a greater or lesser extent, institutions with prerogatives in this area⁵⁹.

Institutions and regulations for foreign trade. Within the institutions and regulatory frameworks in the field of international trade, tariffs are certainly a central,

⁵⁹For example, many countries do not have direct means to act in the domestic market yet they implement indirect actions such as information, policy development and oversight of trade processes (FAO, 2011a). These measures have been widely discussed in the literature and therefore will not be part of this document.

transverse and common intervention mechanism. In recent decades, the tariff structure has tended downward, on par with the broader processes of global trade liberalization. In spite of this, food products maintain a level of tariff protection well above that of other industrial products, and LAC maintains an average level of general tariff (MFN) of 15.3% (FAO and LAIA, 2014). Still, the average fails to reflect differences between products, which often have a strong subregional trend. For example, while the MFN of rice in the Caribbean is 19%, in Central America it reaches 32.5%, an example of the diversity of the region (FAO and LAIA, 2014).

Furthermore, in addition to setting tariff barriers, trade regulations also include para-tariff and non-tariff requirements. Among the first measures are quotas and sanitary regulations, while the latter include measures such as additional taxes on imports, usually related to bureaucratic and administrative aspects (FAO and LAIA, 2014).

All countries maintain sanitary regulations for foreign trade. Their importance has increased in recent years, not only from the point of view of the protection of plant and animal heritage, but also as an instrument of policy to protect local producers from imports and to grant them access to international markets (FAO and LAIA, 2014). As for quotas, several countries in the region have permanent mechanisms that allow them to protect local production and domestic supply. For example, in Costa Rica the Act No. 8763 regulates the implementation of quota-free import tariff in the case of a shortage of beans or white corn; by contrast, in Colombia in recent years import quotas for wheat were established to protect domestic production, based on the Decree 2112 of June 5th, 2009.

With regard to non-tariff regulations, all countries in the region have rules and regulations: Additional taxes for certain products, special permits, and fees for the use of customs services, among others. Their variety responds to the diversity of the region; in any case, they should not necessarily be considered as greater barriers to trade. They can be signs of greater transparency since the legislation governing them is open and public (FAO and LAIA, 2014).

Institutions and legislation for domestic trade.

Several countries in the region have institutions whose role is to ensure domestic food supply and to facilitate access to food in areas that suffer food deficit. They are generally companies that are closely related to the productive sector, responsible for public procurement, the creation of food reserves and marketing in case of food shortages or due to high prices of certain agricultural products. A case in point is Ecuador, which in 2007 created the Public Company National Storage Unit (UNA EP, in Spanish), which is responsible for weighing, purchasing, storing and marketing agricultural products. That same year, Bolivia created the Support for Food Production Enterprise (EMAP, in Spanish), in order to support domestic producers through government procurement, and to ensure affordable prices for consumers in products derived from wheat, corn, rice and soybeans.

One of the longest standing examples in this field is Brazil's National Supply Corporation (CONAB, in Portuguese). Created in 1990, this institution has a key role in the food supply of the country, by providing market information, implementing the Minimum Price Guarantee Policy (PGPM, in Portuguese) the Food Acquisition Program (PAA, in Portuguese) and securing food supplies to people and areas in need require using agricultural products in social programs and humanitarian donations (Intini, 2014).

Key aspects of institutional development for agrifood trade in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- During the last decades the countries of the region have established a solid institutional framework for international trade as well as legislation that allows them to intervene when necessary
- Institutions for domestic trade are less developed since the reappraisal of the role of the State in national markets is quite recent.

Agrifood market chain governance

Governance for international trade has been part of the regional agenda during the last decades. In the last twenty years, many spaces for coordination and dialogue have been created and consolidated as a natural consequence of this long standing regional interest in the creation of more integrated commercial systems. The birth of a series of commercial integration organisms is a concrete example of the region's interest in creating governance systems dedicated to the agrifood market chain.

There are several subregional commercial agreements that have great importance for intraregional trade. One of these is the Common Central American Market (MCCA, in Spanish), created in 1960 as part of the Central American Coordination System (SICA, in Spanish). El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica form part of this agreement, which includes a free trade agreement for 96% of all traded goods (Demeke et al., 2014). In the Caribbean, meanwhile, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), composed of ten countries⁶⁰, has a high degree of trade liberalization between its members (FAO and LAIA, 2014). Meanwhile, in South America, the Andean Community of Nations (CAN, in Spanish) composed of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, maintains a common external tariff and trade preferences among

its members; while the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR, in Spanish), includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela as full members and maintains free trade agreements and a common tariff policy (Demeke et.al, 2014).

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) is the most widespread trade integration organism, including 13 countries in the region. LAIA facilitates the establishment of preferential economic agreements among its member countries to further trade integration. It relies on three mechanisms: a regional preferential tariff, which applies to products originating in member countries with regard to existing tariffs for third countries; regional agreements; and partial agreements involving two or more member countries⁶¹. Finally, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America–People Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP, in Spanish) – is made up by nine countries of the region and seeks to develop a system of sovereign and fair trade among its members⁶².

The presence of these organisms has led to greater integration and coordination among their member countries. For example, in the case of MERCOSUR, it has meant better conditions of transparency and legal stability, which resulted in a strengthening of trust in institutions by the private sector and civil society (Arellano, 2013).

⁶⁰/Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Granada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

⁶¹/Information from http://www.aladi.org/nsfaladi/arquitec.nsf/VSITIOWEB/quienes_somos obtained on 31/8/2014.

⁶²/Information from <http://alba-tcp.org/content/principios-fundamentales-del-tratado-de-comercio-de-los-pueblos-tcp> obtained on 31/8/2014.

Key aspects of governance for agrifood trade in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Intraregional trade governance in Latin America and the Caribbean is the result of a long process of integration among the countries of the region.
- Intraregional trade governance is now consolidated and its mechanisms for coordination and participation are adequate to face new institutional challenges.

Trade policies that ensure food and nutrition security

Policies and programs to facilitate trade are particularly varied in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, especially for domestic trade.

Regarding international trade, countries in the region have common trade defence instruments, mainly safeguards, countervailing and anti-dumping measures. These are tools that countries can use temporarily to avoid imbalances in local markets, protecting domestic production and dealing with unfair practices by third parties, such as dumping in selling prices or the extended application of subsidies, which can impact the volume and price of products entering the country (FAO and LAIA, 2014).

As for mechanisms to encourage intraregional trade, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean act by implementing bilateral or multilateral trade agreements, to improve trade in certain products or with certain countries. Thus, there are countries in the region that have bilateral agreements for the marketing of agricultural products, such as the agreement concerning the import of rice from Guyana by Venezuela.

From the point of view of domestic trade, the instruments are more diverse and often respond to the socio-political reality of each country. Public procurement policies stand out: They use public instruments to intervene on behalf of actors who may be affected by the functioning of the market, implementing short-term measures and long-term decisions to exact structural changes. In the field of food and nutrition security, there are several programs that seek to increase food access for vulnerable populations, as well as other initiatives to protect small producers who face trade disadvantageous. These initiatives can be characterized into three groups (FAO, 2011b):

Construction of infrastructure to promote trade and supply. These measures consist of the construction of public works through which the State guarantees the necessary conditions for trade. In this sense, it is assumed that when the appropriate conditions exist, producers can sell their products and consumers access them on advantageous terms. Countries like the Dominican Republic and Paraguay, for example, maintain

construction projects for public markets to meet the above objectives, while in some Caribbean countries such as Barbados and Granada have built fishing facilities to facilitate trade in marine products.

Initiatives to promote the sale of agrifood products without intermediaries: In this type of initiatives the State facilitates trade: it actively encourages the direct sale of agricultural products between farmers and consumers. These measures try to diminish the costs of food by reducing the number of actors within the distribution chain, increasing small producers revenues. The *Pa' que te alcance* (slang meaning "so you have enough") Plan in Guatemala implemented of 44 consumer fairs, in order to provide food at prices on average 20% to 30% lower than market price⁶³. In the Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Agriculture implemented "Agricultural Plazas" to facilitate the sale of agricultural surpluses by producers so that consumers can buy food at lower prices.

State interventions in domestic trade to promote food supply. Several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have created programs where the State becomes one more actor of the supply chain⁶⁴. In some cases they focus on areas with structural deficiencies in terms of their supply, such as the Rural Supply Programme in Mexico, which created food stores in rural areas of high and very high marginalization in order to ensure a supply what cannot be covered by traditional trade mechanisms. Other countries have programs aimed only at previously identified vulnerable populations; the Food Pantry Program in Belize, which sells a basic food basket at half the market price once a week to its beneficiaries.

In addition to these more focused programs, there are those where state supply chains have national and universal coverage. The one that stands out the most is the Food Mission of Venezuela, which runs through the MERCAL stores (food markets) and the Venezuelan Food Production and Distribution Company Inc. (PDVAL, in Spanish). Since 2003 it has been implemented for the purpose of providing the population access to essential goods at below market prices; in 2013, between 45% to

⁶³Information from <http://www.guatemala.gob.gt/index.php/2011-08-04-18-06-26/item/5804-plan-pa%C2%B4quete-alcance-busca-otorgar-q3-mil-millones-en-microcr%C3%A9ditos> obtained on 29/8/2014.

⁶⁴Some of these initiatives have already been mentioned in the analysis of institutions referred to domestic trade.

47% of the Venezuelan population had purchased at least one product in the MERCAL network (National Institute of Statistics of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 2014).

Summary and conclusions: lessons learned and future challenges for the region

While it fails to capture a complete and thorough picture of the regional situation, the overview of the different areas of relevance for food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean presented in this chapter shows certain common characteristics that have consolidated in the past fifteen years and which have allowed a constant decrease of hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

The four areas of policy that characterize the “political approach” to the fight against hunger (policies and strategies for food and nutrition security; strengthening of family farming; fighting poverty and extreme poverty, particularly in rural areas; intra-regional and domestic trade for food and nutrition security) reflect the different initiatives undertaken by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, but also shows their common characteristics, leading to a series of conclusions and lessons learned in light of the regional success in the eradication of hunger. Additionally, this section presents a series of challenges that the region must face with redoubled efforts if it wants to consolidate the advances made during the past fifteen years.

Differentiating characteristics of the regional hunger reduction process

One of the highlights of this year’s **Panorama of Food and Nutrition Security** is the region’s achievement of the 1C hunger goal of the MDGs. This section of the Panorama analyses some of the distinctive characteristics that lead to this regional milestone in the fight against hunger. While not set in stone, they can serve as a basis for a regional debate on food security, which is rapidly becoming a central development topic.

Food and nutrition security as a coordinator of sector policies. The integration of food and nutrition security in the political debate set major challenges for the States of the region. How to deal with a multidimensional problem with public instruments that were characterized by their

sector-based approach and a lack of institutional coordination? How to build a new paradigm in which food and nutrition security is given the same importance as other already consolidated social objectives such as poverty, food, health, and economic development?

The progressive consolidation of food and nutrition security in the public agenda has changed the States’ approach during the last two decades. To eradicate hunger and malnutrition, public interventions needed to be harmonized across all sectors with a voice in the matter. Sector-based interventions of great public investment were no longer sufficient and often had serious problems of coordination and targeting. The creation of laws, policies, plans, and strategies for food and nutrition security have been the product of a new regional trend that demands a more flexible and integrated State, and, above all, a cross-sector approach.

When the four policy areas that make up this chapter are analysed together, it can be seen that their interplay is even more important than each one of them by itself. In the long term, these policy areas are interrelated in ways that bolster the four dimensions of food and nutrition security. The establishment of comprehensive policies for food and nutrition security reinforces its four dimensions. Strengthening family farming consolidates food availability, increases food access by ensuring higher levels of income to producers, and improves food utilization by providing markets with more fresh and nutritious food. The eradication of poverty in rural areas is closely linked to the strengthening of access to food, while intra-regional and domestic trade has great potential to ensure availability and access to food, in addition to promoting the stability of food security in the medium term.

Since hunger and malnutrition are broad and multidimensional problems, the region has implemented a range of different policies, which are not confined to a particular dimension of food security and that work in parallel. In doing so, this set of comprehensive, cross-sector policies of different scope, time period and focus is uniquely tailored to face the challenge of hunger eradication: This is one of the most important lessons that the **Panorama 2014** highlights.

Political commitment as a starting point for inclusive social processes. The inclusion of food and nutrition se-

curity in the public agenda also opened the arena for the public discussion of this subject. However, in the region this inclusion did not only become a topic of general interest and social demands: it resulted in the consolidation of two parallel processes whose complementation allowed the enrichment and definitive consolidation of the fight against hunger. One process was the inclusion of social organizations, civil society and the private world as part of the solution of the problems of food insecurity, rather than being passive beneficiaries who demanded responses from the State. The other process was the political system's gradual understanding of the benefits of incorporating a variety of social players who had been considered "passive", and the establishment of new forms of participation and coordination that redefined the old political system.

In other words, the commitment of the public sector and civil society came together around food and nutrition security, so that the development of mechanisms for inclusive governance gave greater legitimacy to the fight against hunger, improved policy design and strengthened feedback channels. This also allowed an increase of the effectiveness and efficiency of these policies, while the target population went from being passive recipients of social policies to subjects of law enabled to strengthen governance mechanisms from a holistic perspective.

Revaluation of the role of the State in development processes. As part of a regional and global historical process that began in the 90s, the State has recovered its role as an important player in country development, not only as guarantor and regulator but as an active player in the development process.

This is especially important for the fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Although the benefits that economic growth had brought to the region are undeniable, there is still an important core of vulnerable people that require support from the State to fully participate in national development processes (FAO, 2012a). In this respect, Latin America and the Caribbean has structural constraints, such as unequal distribution of income and degrees of productive development that vary not only from country to country but within national territories, for which the State is the only actor capable of performing the necessary transformations to overcome these limitations.

The establishment, strengthening and even rebuilding of public development institutions in the region has become necessary. This is also a powerful political signal for a world that has faced situations such as the rise and volatility of food prices in 2008, a situation that requires a stronger and more comprehensive state structure to enable countries to address these types of crisis (FAO, 2011b).

Challenges for a new development agenda

The consolidation of food and nutrition security in the region, has very positive aspects, from which we can draw important lessons, but there are still important challenges and goals to sustain these advance in the long run. There are some issues in particular which will require special attention in the coming years:

Greater regional integration. Although there are numerous coordination mechanisms in the region, these require a higher degree of consolidation and higher powers. Trade integration, which still faces pending challenges, must be accompanied by a broader political process, in which the countries of the region take advantage of their cultural similarities and mutually enrich each other.

In this sense, integration organizations in the process of consolidation such as UNASUR and CELAC have a special role to play in promoting dialogues to share experiences and facilitate assistance and cooperation among countries for the implementation of food and nutrition policies. Integration will grant greater stability to food and nutrition security, and prepare countries in the region to better cope with potential shocks and emergencies that may jeopardize the progress made so far.

Although the region has shown that it can move decisively towards the eradication of hunger, there are still many different realities within its countries. South-South cooperation between countries of Latin America and the Caribbean can make a difference in this regard, and cooperation should be extended and moved from bilateral agreements towards supranational integration organizations.

Improvements in information, monitoring and evaluation systems. Many countries in the region still have weak institutions in charge of producing and disseminating information

relating to food and nutrition security, and precarious mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating sector and cross-program food and nutrition security interventions and actions.

While there is a political environment conducive to the eradication of hunger and poverty, the implementation of public instruments requires the appropriate technical background needed to increase the chance of success of programs and interventions related to food and nutrition security. In practice this implies that while the main drive of the development processes in the region is political, there are still deficiencies from the point of view of the technical structures of the State that embody the commitment to food and nutrition security in concrete actions, which are necessary to achieving levels of political, technical and operational coordination across the different sectors and levels of government.

The consolidation of information, monitoring and evaluation systems involves strengthening the capacities of the public administration, but also the creation of human capital to support their actions in the medium and long term, becoming resilient to political and economic cycles. More and better analysts and specialists at all levels mean better results and greater possibilities of interventions with positive effects on vulnerable populations.

Consolidation of comprehensive national policy frameworks. Finally, even if we have highlighted the positive aspects of the implementation of public policies for food and nutrition security they still face challenges that, to a greater or lesser degree, will determine the public agenda in the coming years.

Although the countries in the region have demonstrated a high degree of political commitment towards the establishment of comprehensive strategies for food and nutrition security, there is still a lack of programs to cover all dimensions of food and nutrition security. As noted throughout this **Panorama**, countries in the region have yet to strengthen mechanisms to address emerging problems of food and nutrition security in its dimension of stability (economic shocks, new level of food prices, climate change), and availability (reduce the gaps between family farming and agribusiness based on criteria for ecological sustainability). This can be done through the existing offer of sector-based programs or from decisions born of cross-agency and inter-sector coordination.

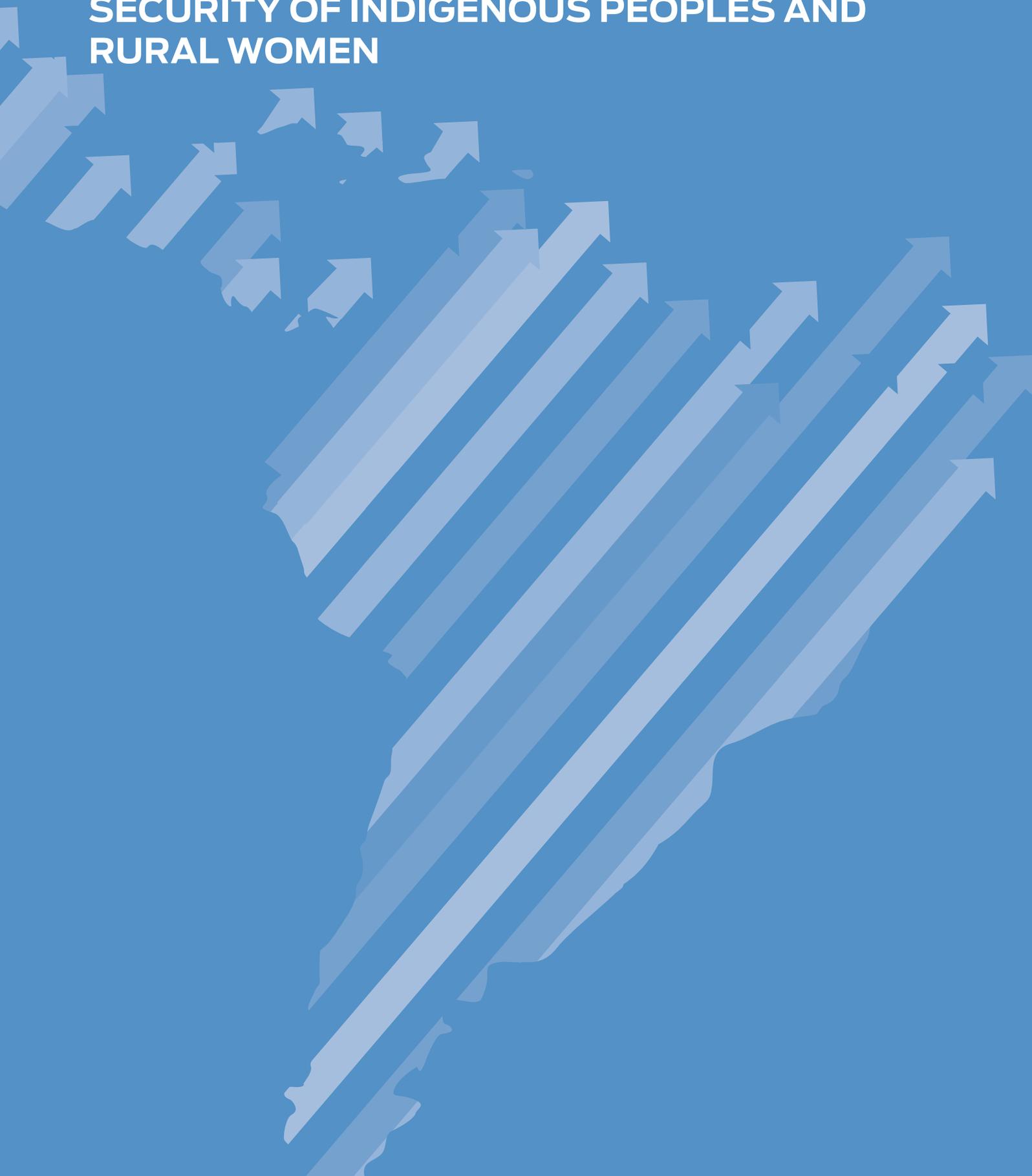
While there are countries that have been able to consolidate large-scale programs to support family farming and social protection programs at a national level, based on the individual capacities and needs, there are still others whose programs are relatively new and only provide partial coverage to the most critical cases in the early stages of their implementation. The expansion of coverage and support, as an explicit recognition of the rights of the population, is still pending. This transition from pilot experiences to nationwide consolidated policies faces the dual challenge of, on the one hand, successfully overcoming the difficulties imposed by political and economic cycles in each country; while creating new social, political and fiscal pacts to grant them sustainability.

Existing programs must adapt their components and management to the needs of different population groups and territories. From a human rights perspective, it is necessary to intensify efforts to create differentiated programs to close existing welfare gaps. This includes recognizing the informal sectors which have been historically excluded as subjects for policy, but also designing, implementing and evaluating measures and programs which consider gender inequalities, the life cycle, indigenous and African-American peoples and the new socio-economic dynamics in rural areas.

Finally, it is imperative to note that although in recent years the State occupies an increasingly central role in the success of hunger, malnutrition and poverty reduction, food and nutrition security is an achievement of the whole of society, and this is precisely why the contributions made to this process by civil society and the private world must be strengthened. This brings to the fore the sustainability of public investment in food and nutrition security. The political factor has been key to the achievements in regional hunger eradication. The implementation of redistributive policies requires significant fiscal efforts, which must be accompanied by a sustainable process of economic growth; also, the State's participation in trade should facilitate market access and correct market flaws, but should not be an obstacle for the integration of private players in the supply chain. In this sense, the governance mechanisms of the region can be key to avoiding these risks and guaranteeing that the implementation of public policies is sustainable over time and regularly adapted to meet potential new scenarios that the region will face.

CHAPTER 4.

**STATE OF THE FOOD AND NUTRITION
SECURITY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND
RURAL WOMEN**





Undernutrition affects members of indigenous peoples at a rate between 1 to 5 times more than the general population, which represents major challenges for the region, the most important being the creation of information and public policies for this sector of the population, considering their traditions, knowledge and values.

In rural areas, women face significant gaps relative to men in terms of their income, size of their farms and access to inputs and productive programs, despite their fundamental role in food and nutrition security. This undermines the eradication of hunger in rural areas since it is women who are, for the most part, in charge of feeding their families.

The situation of indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean

Despite the diversity of official statistics, it is estimated that the indigenous population of Latin America reaches close to 40 million individuals belonging to over 800 peoples. This represents approximately 10% of the total population of the region and 40% of the rural population of Latin America (ECLAC, 2014b).

While Latin America is the region that has made most progress in raising awareness and recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, this process fails to account for the diversity and complexity of the reality that indigenous peoples face (FAO, 2014g). Except for El Salvador and Panama, most continental countries in the region have ratified the 169 Convention of the ILO⁶⁵, which has meant that, after the adoption of the Declaration by the United Nations, the struggles of indigenous peoples have experienced unprecedented progress in the defence of their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, as well as in terms of the land, territories, resources and knowledge that make up their invaluable collective heritage.

Despite these advances, there are still challenges ahead. Within the rural world, for example, the problems experienced by people who identify themselves as indigenous or native are often very different from other rural stakeholders such as farmers (although many farmers may have indigenous ethnic and cultural origins). Their problems are the product of different historical processes, which have led to very different

⁶⁵/The Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries of the International Labour Organization (ILO), was adopted in 1989 and entered into force in 1991..

identities, agendas and claims, responding to factors such as their relationship with State institutions, the national and global economy, and the policies of which they have been subjects.

Therefore, it is essential to recognize that the reality of the indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean is heterogeneous and diverse, ranging from villages in isolation and refugees in remote regions to situations like Bolivia, the most indigenous country in America⁶⁶. There are also transnational⁶⁷ indigenous peoples, due to the foreign imposition of interstate limits that fractionated their original territories, or because of contemporary migration processes⁶⁸.

Despite this diverse scenario, the exclusion conditions affecting the indigenous population of the region to a greater or lesser extent seem to have ethnicity as an explanatory factor for the persistence of the gaps that separate the indigenous population from the non-indigenous in virtually all progress and welfare indicators.

The emergence of indigenous peoples as social and political actors in recent years has helped to redefine the collective imagination and perceptions that both States and societies had of them, gradually dignifying their history, their culture, their worldviews and their contributions to the construction of plural identities,

⁶⁶/The results of the last Census (2012) of Bolivia are not yet official. However, data from the previous census (2001) show that most of the Bolivian population is indigenous (62%) and urban (66%) with the majority of the indigenous population being urban and most urban residents being indigenous (UNDP, Albó and Molina, 2004).

⁶⁷/As in the case of the Guaraní people, divided between Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay; or the Aymara, distributed in current territories of Bolivia, Chile and Peru, among others.

⁶⁸/Expressed, for example, through such sui generis entities as the "Oaxacan Indigenous Binational Front Mixteco-Zapotec" made up from communities in Oaxaca and emigrants in New York.

now recognized by most constitutional systems of the region.

One area in which this new recognition of indigenous peoples becomes clear is the demographic information that accounts for multiculturalism as an attribute of Latin American societies, something that strongly changes the fallacious notion that the region is homogeneously mixed-race, which was commonplace until recently.

Despite progress in recent years in terms of the breakdown of the ethnic variable and the incorporation of the self-identification criterion in various measuring instruments, the information available to analyse the different dimensions and characteristics of the indigenous population remains insufficient, dispersed and disparate both in census information, sector statistics and administrative records in the various countries of the region.

However, in many cases the available information has already been fuelling the creation of differentiated and targeted policies, whose results demonstrate the relevance of this effort, in contrast to the undifferentiated policies, in which the indigenous population was subsumed in the categories of “poor”, “vulnerable”, “rural population” and other such concepts.

Indigenous peoples, health and food and nutrition security

Even when the available information has several limitations, it is possible to conclude from the data in the region that the food insecurity conditions of the indigenous population are higher than those of the non-indigenous population. This is a paradox, since the territories they inhabit generally harbour the highest diversity and genetic wealth, resources that not only explain the survival of their original communities but that have become the basis of modern food systems worldwide.

This paradox can only be understood through a multi-causal analysis of the various dimensions that determine it. It is not enough to analyse the rates of malnutrition in the indigenous population, nor their

gaps with the non-indigenous population, since these data only showcase the effects but not the structural causes of their problems.

For example, information available ten years ago led to figures such as those presented by the World Bank (2005): 57% of the Guarani children under 5 years of age in Argentina suffered undernourishment and 43% suffered stunting; the overall rate of stunting in Guatemala was 44%, but for indigenous children this rate affected 58%, almost twice the rate of non-indigenous children; the data for Ecuador showed that stunting was also more than twice as high in indigenous communities compared with non-indigenous people.

Table 11 shows the situation of undernourishment of the indigenous population compared with the non-indigenous, indicating a mixed regional picture. However, it is important to note that the parameters for the indigenous population are between one and a half and almost five times higher than those of non-indigenous population.

This table allows us to appreciate that while the overall rates of undernourishment of the indigenous population remain significantly higher than those of the non-indigenous population, and the rates of stunting and underweight have dropped significantly in the countries considered, there are important differences that deserve to be highlighted. Figure 50 shows the situation in Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru. While in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru the rate of decline of undernourishment in the indigenous population is greater than that of non-indigenous population, in Bolivia the opposite is true. This can also be seen in absolute numbers in Table 12.

Malnutrition is surely one of the mayor problems that affect indigenous peoples in the region. Caused by environmental degradation, pollution of their traditional ecosystems, loss of their lands and territories and the decline of their traditional sources of food or of their means of access to them (UN, 2010), one could say that malnutrition is both a cause and an effect of many of the structural difficulties that they face.

Furthermore, a recent study (ECLAC, PAHO and UN-FPA, 2013) showed that infant mortality disproportio-

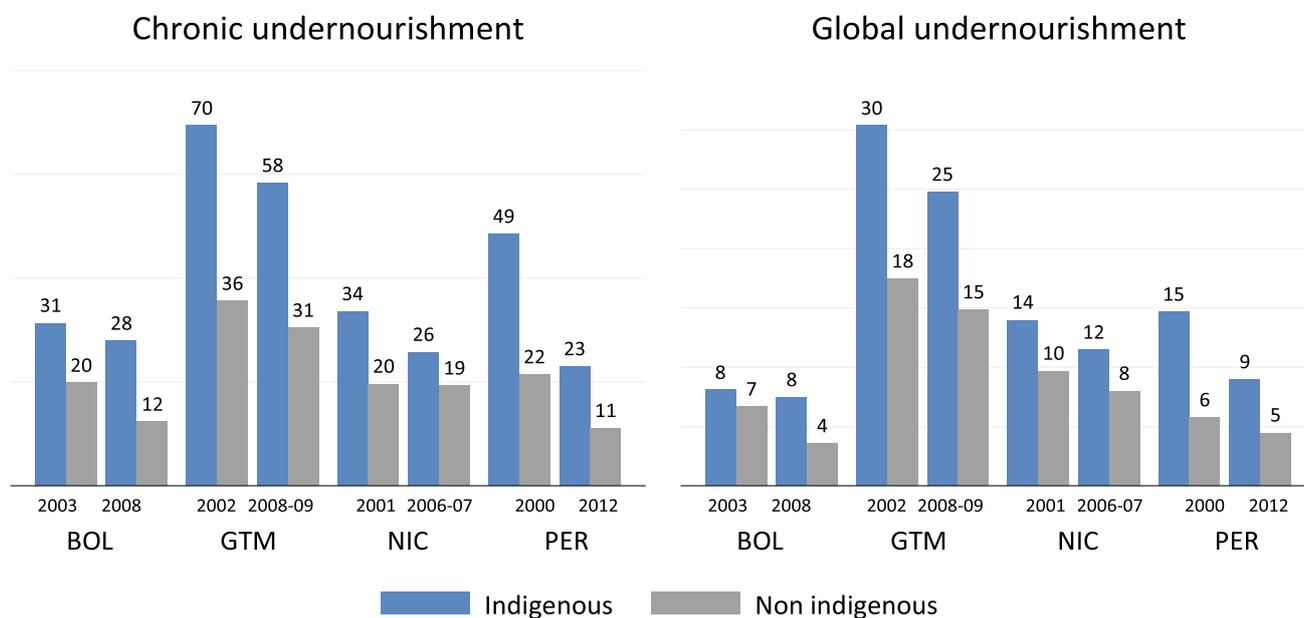
Table 11: Prevalence (%) of stunting and underweight in children under five years, by ethnic status in selected countries, different periods

Country (Survey year)	Ethnicity	UNDERNUTRITION ⁶⁹	
		STUNTING	UNDERWEIGHT
Bolivia, P. S. (2008)	INDIGENOUS	28,0	7,5
	NON- INDIGENOUS	12,4	3,6
	TOTAL	22,5	6,1
	Relative gap	2,3	2,1
COLOMBIA (2010)	INDIGENOUS	22,3	8,6
	NON- INDIGENOUS	8,5	4,6
	TOTAL	9,2	4,8
	Relative gap	2,6	1,9
ECUADOR (2004)	INDIGENOUS	47,6	16,5
	NON- INDIGENOUS	21,5	9,3
	TOTAL	24,1	10,1
	Relative gap	2,2	1,8
GUATEMALA (2008-09)	INDIGENOUS	58,4	25,0
	NON- INDIGENOUS	30,5	14,6
	TOTAL	43,3	19,4
	Relative gap	1,9	1,7
HONDURAS (2011-12)	INDIGENOUS	23,7	11,8
	NON- INDIGENOUS	16,2	9,2
	TOTAL	17,1	9,5
	Relative gap	1,5	1,3
NICARAGUA (2006-07)	INDIGENOUS	25,8	11,5
	NON- INDIGENOUS	19,4	8,0
	TOTAL	19,9	8,3
	Relative gap	1,3	1,4
PERU (2012)	INDIGENOUS	23,1	9,0
	NON- INDIGENOUS	11,2	4,5
	TOTAL	13,7	5,5
	Relative gap	2,1	2,0

Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from CELADE-ECLAC (2014).

⁶⁹Percentage of children under 5 years. Undernourished children as a percentage of the total, considering the following categories: stunting (height for age) or underweight (weight for age). This categorization is made from anthropometric measurements made at the time of the survey (weight and height in their places of residence). From this survey, the children are classified according to the number of standard deviations (SD) of the mean of the International Standard used by NCHS/CDC/WHO. Undernourished children are those who are 2 or more standard deviations below the mean of the reference population.

Figure 50: Changes in stunting and underweight [percentages (%)] for indigenous and non-indigenous populations in selected countries, different periods



Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from CELADE-ECLAC (2014).

Table 12: Reduction (%) of stunting and underweight in selected countries, different periods

	STUNTING				UNDERWEIGHT			
	Rate of reduction (%) during the period ^a		Annual reduction rate (%) ^b		Rate of reduction (%) during the period ^a		Annual reduction rate ^b	
	Indigenous	Non-indigenous	Indigenous	Non-indigenous	Indigenous	Non-indigenous	Indigenous	Non-indigenous
Bolivia, P.S.	-10,8	-37,7	-2,2	-7,5	-7,9	-46,8	-1,6	-9,4
Guatemala	-16,0	-14,6	-2,5	-2,2	-18,4	-14,9	-2,8	-2,3
Nicaragua	-23,4	-1,5	-4,3	-0,3	-17,6	-17,5	-3,2	-3,2
Peru	-52,5	-47,9	-4,4	-4,0	-38,6	-22,2	-3,2	-1,8

Source: FAO Regional Office based on data from CELADE-ECLAC (2014).

Notes: a/ for Bolivia the period comprises from 2003 to 2008, for Guatemala it corresponds to the years 2002 and 2007-2008, for Nicaragua the years between 2001 and 2006-07, and Peru includes the years 2000 and 2012.

b/ b / Corresponds to the average annual rate of reduction during the years comprised in each of the periods.

nately affects indigenous peoples in relation to the rest of the population in all countries where disaggregated data exist. In addition a diverse pattern of infant mortality among indigenous peoples in the same country was seen, as well as within members of a particular indigenous people scattered amongst various countries, as is the case of Quechuas and Aymaras in Chile and the Plurinational State of Bolivia. Furthermore, it has been shown that there is an obvious delay in compliance with international agreements and commitments

made by countries, such as the Action Plan of the International Conference on Population and Development of Cairo (1994), which stipulated that in 2014 the levels of infant mortality among indigenous peoples should be equal to those of the general population.

As for the mortality statistics in infants and children under five in Latin America, infant mortality among indigenous children is 60% higher than among non-indigenous children: 48 out of a thousand compared with

30 out of a thousand births (ECLAC, 2014b). However, these averages may not be representative of the specific situations that certain indigenous peoples face: for the Campa-Ashaninka and the Machiguenga people in the Peruvian Amazon, infant mortality rates reach 99 and 100 children per one thousand births, respectively. The gap is even greater with respect to the probability of dying before 5 years of age, exceeding 70% for indigenous children (ECLAC, 2006). For smaller indigenous populations, high mortality rates can be demographically disastrous: small epidemics can destroy an entire generation, with effects on the population viability of the community as a whole (Montenegro and Stephens, 2006). For example, between 58.3% and 84% of the Yanomami living in Venezuela get hepatitis B at some point in their lives, this being the third leading cause of death among them after malaria and undernutrition (ECLAC, 2014b).

Poverty among indigenous peoples

The gaps in terms of their health and nutritional status between the indigenous population and the rest of the population have many causes, and also extended to other socioeconomic indicators such as poverty, which worsen due to ethnicity. In Panama, for example, the poverty rate of the indigenous population is 5.9 times higher than the non-indigenous population, whereas in Mexico and Guatemala it is 3.3 and 2.8 times higher, respectively (ECLAC, 2014b). In Chile, meanwhile, there are important gaps related to poverty, education, family size, distance from population centres and rural inhabitants between the indigenous and non-indigenous population (UNDP and RIMISP, 2012).

In another case, a recent study in Paraguay (FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture of Paraguay and the Paraguayan Institute for Indigenous Peoples, 2014) concluded that indigenous poverty is explained by a combination of factors, among them access to land, education, health and other basic services. In Paraguay, the rate of extreme poverty of indigenous children is 2.4 times higher than non-indigenous children, an issue which is particularly relevant since the poverty indicator is directly related to the basic food basket. From the point of view of education,

there are also very marked differences between the average years of study of the indigenous population -barely 3 years- and the non-indigenous population: 8 years. Finally, data on access to health services are also telling: While 37 % of indigenous children have access to medical consultations, 61% of non-indigenous children.

Indigenous peoples are part of the solution

While historical and contextual circumstances affecting the indigenous population pose significant challenges to the States of the region, the fact remains that they are great repositories of knowledge, resources and skills that are essential to any approach aimed at dealing with poverty, hunger, malnutrition and sustainable rural development.

This is important both in terms of the underlying assumptions and the concrete expressions that States must apply to their policies to reach their full development. With regard to their foundations, the current development schemes require new answers and paradigms of greater austerity, sustainability and efficiency to reach a fullness in social life. The lifestyles and traditions that indigenous peoples have preserved, based on their world visions and value systems, are fundamental, in spite of their asymmetries with respect to the prevailing hegemonic model. The acceptance of a plural vision of development holds great potential, given that the global community is currently redefining the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. This is an opportunity that should not be missed.

As for the concrete expressions of these ideals, respect for diversity must be undertaken through the adoption of a new governance model, in which indigenous peoples can enter into formal political participation areas where they can present their concerns and initiatives, defend their interests and negotiate with other actors. The State and other actors should promote a respectful and horizontal intercultural dialogue, trying to apply a human-rights approach which until now has not been part of most institutions in the region.

Food and nutrition security of women in the rural areas of Latin America and the Caribbean, with an emphasis on family farming

As producers, women and men in rural areas play different roles in ensuring the food and nutrition security of their families and communities. While men are mainly engaged in tending to crops in the field, women are usually responsible for growing and preparing most of the food consumed at home, in addition to raising small livestock that provide protein.

In their role as managers of household resources, women also spend a large part of their income on food and the needs of their children. This is particularly important, since some studies indicate that the chances of survival of a child increases by 20% when it is the mother who controls the household budget⁷⁰. Thus, women play a key role in food and nutrition security and in child health.

Moreover, woman's access to education is also a determining factor in the levels of child nutrition and health. Studies show that children of mothers who have received five years of primary education are 40% more likely to live past their fifth year⁷¹. Similarly, in many cultures, women and girls eat after the male members of the family, which shows that an adequate supply of food does not translate directly into an adequate level of nutrition, at least not for all members of a household home. Women, girls, sick or disabled people are the primary victims of this food discrimination, which results in health problems and malnutrition.

Furthermore, the physiological needs of pregnant and lactating women make them more susceptible to malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Moreover, maternal health is crucial to the survival of children: A malnourished mother will probably give birth to a child with low birth weight, something that significantly increases the risk of infant death.

All this is reflected in the fact that undernutrition affects more women than men and that girls are more likely than boys to die from undernutrition⁷². A similar situation is observed in the case of overweight and obesity, which tends to be more prevalent in women⁷³.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the rural population reaches 121 million people, representing approximately 20% of the total population. 48% of them are women, which means that 58 million women live in rural areas (ECLAC, online).

Rural women are responsible for more than half of food production worldwide and play an important role in preserving biodiversity. They also conserve seeds and seed banks that are fundamental to global food production, they help recover of agro-ecological practices and contribute to food and nutrition security through the production of healthy food and their participation in local food markets. However, their knowledge of seeds (collection, classification, identification of properties, storage, dietary and culinary qualities, and combination to prevent diseases) still goes almost unnoticed⁷⁴.

Likewise, despite progress in recent decades, rural women live in social and political inequality, strongly expressed in their economic situation, characterized by a lower access to land, credit and technical assistance, among others. Thus, reducing gender inequality is essential for hunger eradication.

Woman are “invisible” and have lower income

40% of rural women over 15 years of age in Latin America do not have their own source of income (Figure 51). This affects 21% of rural women in Uruguay and 73% in Nicaragua. Unpaid female worker in agriculture make up the largest and least known segment of women engaged in agricultural activities.

⁷⁰/Information from <http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-programme/gender-food/es/> obtained on 24/09/2014..

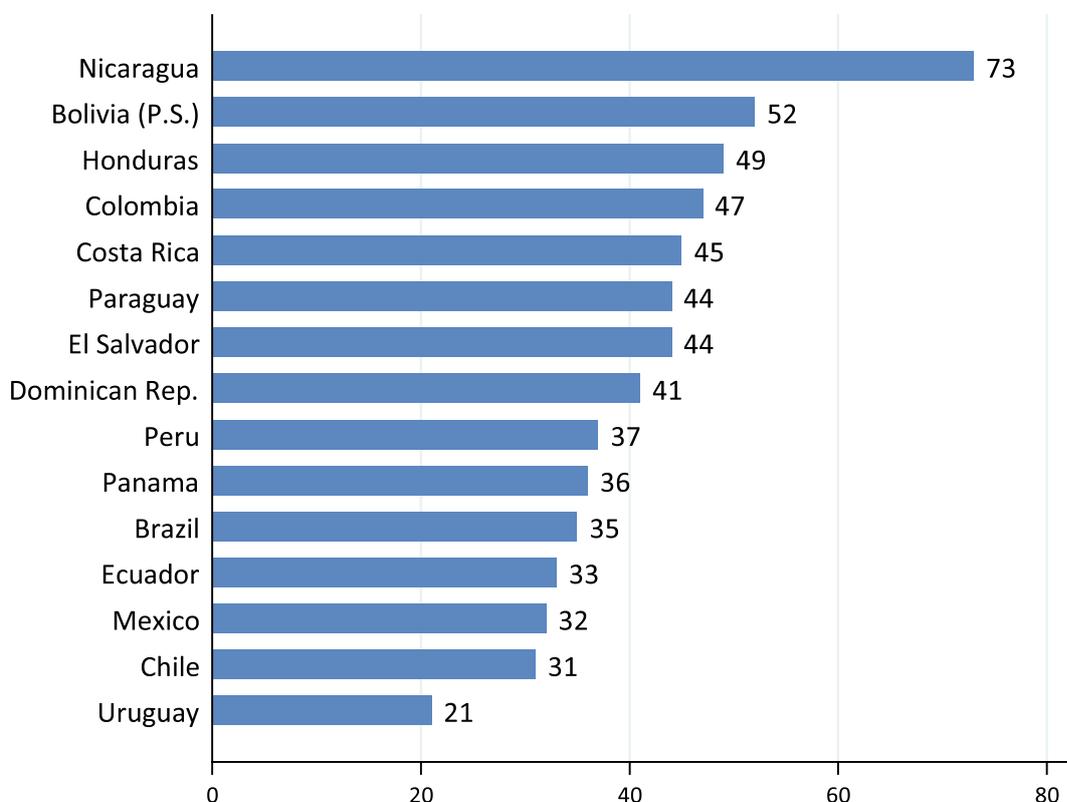
⁷¹/Ibid.

⁷²/Ibid.

⁷³/Referred to in the section concerning food utilization.

⁷⁴/Information comes from <http://www.fao.org/americas/perspectivas/genero/es/> obtained on 24/09/2014.

Figure 51: Percentage (%) of rural women over 15 years of age without their own source of income in Latin America and the Caribbean, circa 2010



Source: FAO Regional Office from tabulations from national agricultural census.

While some female agricultural workers receive direct income, creating better conditions for their autonomy and the recognition of their economic contributions to the household, a large part of them are unpaid workers in family farms. Since the income from these farms is received solely by men, women's contribution to family income is obscured and "invisible" reducing their ability to manage these resources.

The contribution of women to the rural economy is, thus minimized. Despite this, some statistical measurements have highlighted the contribution that women make to the rural economy due to their high share in agricultural production for home consumption (Table 13).

Additionally, many women suffer discrimination even in paid jobs carried out for employers. An example of this can be seen in the study of indigenous immigrant women from Panama and Nicaragua, working

Table 13: Rate (%) of participation in food production activities for home consumption by sex in selected countries, circa 2010

Country	Gender	Rate
Ecuador	Men	46
	Women	60,9
Guatemala	Men	31,1
	Women	47,6
Mexico	Men	47,0
	Women	48,4

Source: FAO Regional Office based on Time Use Surveys of Ecuador (2010), Guatemala (2010) and Mexico (2010).

as temporary salaried workers in the coffee harvest in Costa Rica, which found high levels of informality and exclusion of labour rights and social protection, since these are deregulated markets (FAO, ECLAC and ILO, 2012).

In relation to employment, over 50% of rural women in the region work in rural non-farm jobs, a type of work that has increased greatly in recent decades: during the 2000-2008 period, this type of employment increased 29% for women, compared to 27.7% for men (FAO, 2013d). These jobs give women income that is fundamental to their economic independence.

Table 14 shows great differences between men and women in wages and incomes by subsector, the type of participation in the subsector (self-employed and small business versus other types), the type of

contract (formal or informal) and the locality (lower wages for a same job when the worker's residence is rural or rural). There are also differences between wages and income of women and men for equal work and with similar qualifications, largely explained by gender discrimination. The result of all these factors is that average income for women is 40% lower than for men in the twelve countries analysed (FAO, 2013e).

Rural women usually do not directly receive any income from the work they perform, and when they do it is significantly less than what men receive for the same work and with the similar qualifications. This causes the probability of being poor to be greater for women than for men (FAO, 2014h, in press).

In this sense, the economic autonomy of women is closely related to the poverty that affects many rural house-

Table 14: Income and average workday (%) of women and men over 15 years working in rural non-farm jobs, in selected countries, circa 2010

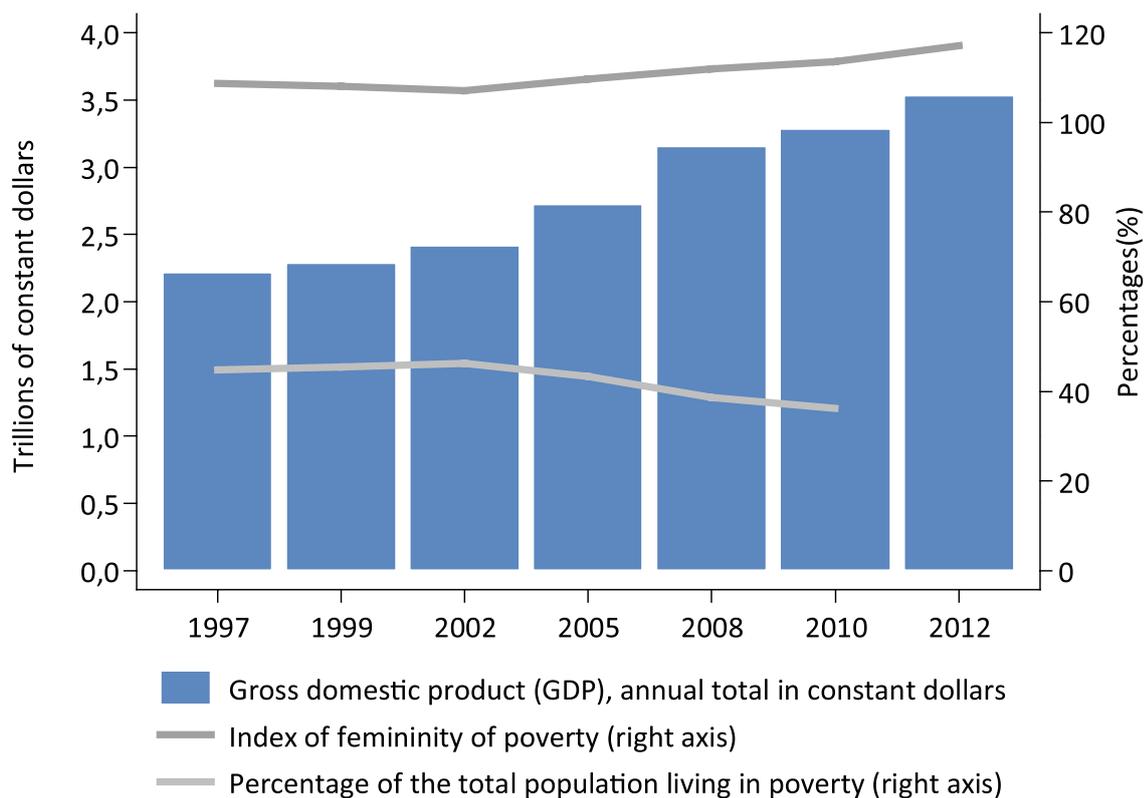
	Women's average labour income over men's average labour income	Women's average weekly working hours over men's average weekly working hours	Difference between women's proportion of working hours and their labour income
Brazil	62,3	79,4	17,2
Chile	69,8	90,3	20,5
Colombia	54,2	76,0	21,8
Costa Rica	68,9	71,4	2,4
Ecuador	62,3	86,9	24,6
El Salvador	71,7	89,7	18,1
Mexico	58,1	77,8	19,6
Panamá	58,9	75,7	16,8
Paraguay	47,9	91,2	43,4
Peru	43,2	81,1	37,9
Dominican Rp.	66,2	84,4	18,2
Uruguay	58,0	72,7	14,7
Simple average of 12 countries	60,1	81,4	21,3

Source: FAO Regional Office from tabulations of household surveys of the respective countries, 2010, except for Brazil and Chile (2009).

holds, which is higher than in urban areas. ECLAC data (2012) shows that between 2000 and 2010 rural poverty and indigence has fallen considerably, especially in Brazil, Chile, Peru and Uruguay. However, Figure 52 shows

that the proportion of women among the poor and indigent population has increased, a phenomenon that became worse during the crisis of 2008, proving that women are the most affected during periods of crisis.

Figure 52: Evolution of poverty (% and trillions of constant dollars), femininity of poverty and GDP in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1997-2012



Source: ECLAC (online).



Women and land administration

In Latin America and the Caribbean, between 8% and 30% of agricultural holdings are run by women (Figure 53). While it is low, this proportion is growing and becoming increasingly important for the economic empowerment of women, food security and the general welfare of society (Namdar-Irani et.al, 2014). In turn, the proportion of women farmers has increased by more than 5 points in the last decade (see Table 15). This increased participation of women in agriculture has led to a feminization of the countryside in some countries (FAO, 2013f). In other countries, meanwhile, the gaps in access and administration of land are slowly closing as a result of cultural changes.

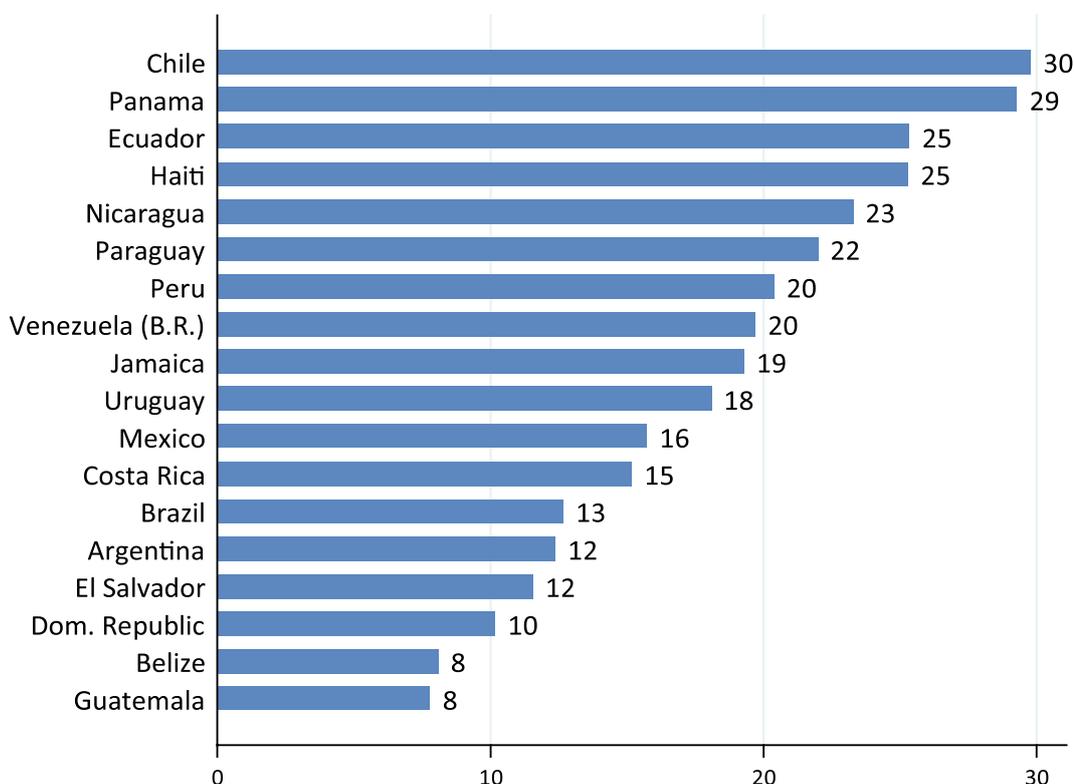
Although countries show some degree of diversity in terms of the weight that women have as heads of agricultural holding, there is a constant: they tend to own smaller production units, and the average size of their

Table 15: Evolution of the proportion (%) of agricultural holdings headed by women in selected countries, different periods

Countries	Proportion of agricultural holdings headed by women			
	Most recent observation i		Prior observation ii	
	Year of observation	Percentage (%)	Year of observation	Percentage (%)
Chile	2007	30.0	1997	21.0
Guatemala	2003	8.0	1991	7.0
Nicaragua	2011	23.0	2001	18.0
Paraguay	2008	22.0	1991	9.0
Peru	2011	24.0	(a)	20.0
Dominican Rep.	s.i	10.0	1960	11.0

Source: FAO, from National Agricultural Census: Brazil, 2006; Chile, 2007; Ecuador, 2000; Haiti, 2009; Nicaragua, 2001 (there was no data available from the 2011 census); Peru, 1994.

Figure 53: Proportion (%) of agricultural holdings headed by women in selected countries



Source: FAO Regional Office based on special tabulations from National Agricultural Census and National Crop Census.

holdings is always significantly lower than those controlled by men (Table 16). They also have less access to credit, technical assistance and training, and have lower participation in decision-making since in some scenarios they are not considered as producers (FAO, 2013d).

Additionally, women also have worse quality lands: there is a lower concentration of farms headed by women in territories of higher agricultural potential (FAO, 2013f). Thus, women heads of agricultural holding have a considerably greater representation in the less capitalized stratum of family farming than in the rest of agriculture.

Table 16: Average size of farms according headed by men/women and relationship of the average size of holding according to gender in selected countries

Country	Average surface (Ha)		Average surface in relation to men/female ownership
	Farms headed by women	Farms headed by men	
Chile	25,5	60,7	42,0
Costa Rica	37,6	47,1	80,0
Ecuador	3,0	7,6	40,0
Haiti	0,8	1,0	76,0
Nicaragua	20,0	34,0	57,0
Peru	6,1	9,0	67,0

Source: FAO, from National Agricultural Census: Brazil, 2006; Chile, 2007; Ecuador, 2000; Haiti, 2009; Nicaragua, 2001 (there was no data available from the 2011 census); Peru, 1994.

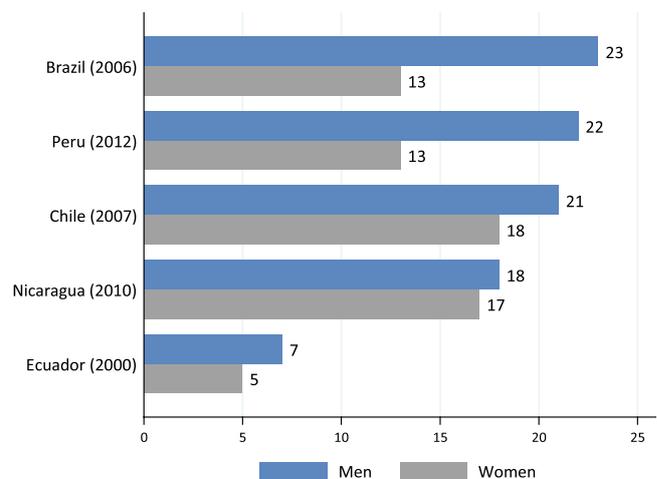
Women and access to production support

As with respect to land, woman also face a gap in terms of their access to other productive assets such as technical assistance, training and access to credit (FAO, 2013f).

There is a clear tendency for female-headed farms to receive less technical assistance (Figure 54). In Peru and Brazil the gap between male-headed and female-headed farms is 10 and 11 percentage points, respectively, in favour of men. For other countries, such as Nicaragua, Ecuador and Chile the gaps between women and men in this sense are very small, less than 3 percentage points. While 17% of female heads of farms in Nicaraguan, 5% in Ecuador and 18% in Chile receive technical assistance and/or training, this rate for men reaches 18%, 7% and 21%, in each respective country.

Despite this, the gaps have been narrowing. In Chile, for example, while in 1990 women accounted for only 8% of all users of the technical assistance programs of the Ministry of Agriculture, this proportion grew steadily, reaching 41% in 2012 (Namdar-Irani, 2014). In Nicaragua, the 2001 Agricultural Census indicated a 3 point gap in access to technical assistance (with

Figure 54: Percentage (%) of female and male farmers with access to technical assistance in selected countries



Source: FAO Regional Office compiled from: Brazil, Nobre M, 2012; Chile, Ministry of Agriculture, Qualitas AC, 2009; Ecuador, ECLAC, 2006a; Nicaragua, IV National Agricultural Census 2011; Peru, INEI, National Survey of Strategic Programs 2012 INEI, 2012, "Improving the statistics for gender equality, Peruvian Experience" (presentation slides).

or without training), since 9% of farms headed by women received these services versus 12% in the case of holdings headed by men. Ten years later, in the recent census of 2011, the gap is less than 1 point (14.1% coverage in the case of women and 14.7% for men) (Namdar-Irani, 2014).

In term of access to training, a similar trend is observed: While in 2001 the coverage rate was 8.8% and 12.8% for women and men, respectively, in 2011 the gap was shortened to 0.9 percentage points (14.2% coverage for women and 15.1% for men) (Namdar-Irani, 2014).

In relation to credit, women's overall access to financing is even more restricted than technical support, with coverage rates that reach, at most 15% of them (see Figure 55). In Brazil, it 12% of female-headed farms had access to credit, while for men this figure reached 19%. The same situation can be seen, albeit with nuances, in the other countries.

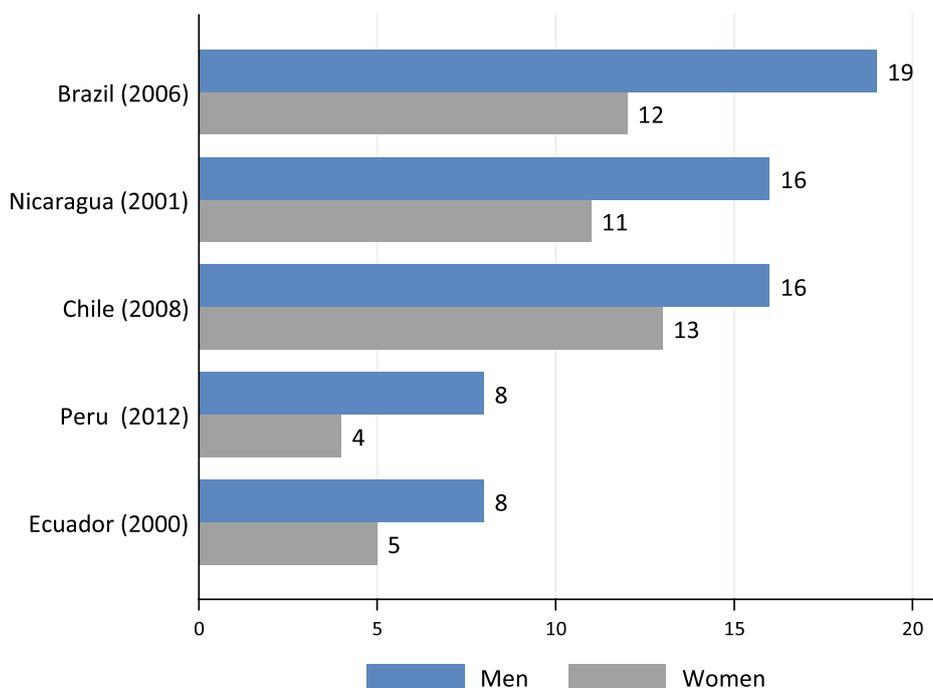
In Chile, for example, there has been reduction in the gender gap in the access to credits and in the amounts

received by woman. While women in 1995 accounted for only 15% of all credit subjects and received 10% of the total amounts, these numbers grew in 2008 to 25% and 19%, respectively. In 2012, women represented 28% of all short-term loans and 33% of all long-term loans, and they received 20% of the total amounts given in short-term loans and 27% of the total amounts given out as long-term loans, showing that, despite progress, a gap still persists (Namdar-Irani, 2014).

In Nicaragua, meanwhile, a gender gap is evident both in term of women's credit applications and approvals: 19% of women heads of farms applying for loans and 60% of applicants get one, while these proportions are 25% and 64% form male heads of farms. 11% of women who are heads of farms have credit, a while 16% of farms headed by men have access to credit.

Recent figures from Peru reveal low credit coverage: only 7% of farms have access to financing (INEI, 2012). Within this total, farms headed by women are even more disadvantaged, as only 4% of them have access to credit, compared with 8% for men.

Figure 55: Percentage (%) male and female farmers and producers with access to credit in selected countries



Source: FAO Regional Office compiled from: Brazil, Nobre M, 2012; Chile, Ministry of Agriculture, Qualitas AC, 2009; Ecuador, ECLAC, 2006a; Nicaragua, IV National Agricultural Census 2011; Peru, INEI, National Survey of Strategic Programs 2012 in INEI, 2012, "Improving the statistics for gender equality, Peruvian Experience" (presentation slides).

Equality for women means progress for all

Rural women in the region face many challenges. They tend to have fewer financial and productive resources than men. Also, women have a smaller sized farms and show a greater relative concentration in less dynamic areas, from an agricultural point of view. This represents a major challenge for food and nutrition security, since it is mostly women who are in charge of feeding their families through subsistence agriculture.

Family farming can help increase Latin America and the Caribbean's food supply, reduce poverty, undernourishment and malnutrition for the most vulnerable people in rural areas, among which women stand out⁷⁵. This should be taken into account by agricultural development and rural development programs, since farms headed by women are more vulnerable and require differentiated treatment. Indeed, equality of opportunity requires equal capacities to take advantage of them and to have similar results in terms of benefits.

It is fundamental to provide support to rural women involved in family farming by developing strategies, policies and programs for food and nutrition security with a strong gender component, as this can increase their chances of economic development and eliminate the constraints they face in terms of their access and control of resources and services.

Unpaid female family farmers are little-known and lack direct support in spite of the fact that they represent a similar number to that of self-employed female workers and the fact that their productive contributions are equally important. The first challenge for governments in this area is to know this particular group of producers better and, based on greater study and knowledge, design support programs that simultaneously respond to their needs as female producers and subjects of policies.

⁷⁵/Chapter 3 discusses in greater detail the initiatives in this area.

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