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Latin America and the Caribbean

The share of the analysed population facing high levels of acute food insecurity declined across countries included in both years – from 27.3 percent in 2022 to 26.5 percent in 2023, but availability of 2023 data for Colombia (residents) and migrant and refugee populations in Peru contributed to a regional increase in numbers since 2022.

. . . .

Haiti was the most severe food crisis in the region, driven by insecurity, gang violence and sustained economic difficulties.

. . . .

Weather extremes were a more prominent driver than in 2022 due to El Niño, which resulted in erratic and reduced rainfall across the region.

. . . .

Compared with 2022, Guatemala Honduras and El Salvador saw a moderate decrease in the number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity despite localized crop losses.

. . . .

The region is experiencing a substantial displacement crisis with 12 million people forcibly displaced.

. . . .

Latin America and the Caribbean

Weather extremes associated with El Niño and persistent economic shocks, with high though overall declining food inflation rates in 2023, were the main drivers sustaining high levels of acute food insecurity.

The inclusion of two additional food crises – due to the availability of evidence meeting GRFC technical requirements for residents in Colombia for the first time as well as migrants and refugees in Peru – led to an increase in people facing high levels of acute food insecurity regionally.

19.7M

people or 17% of the analysed population faced high levels of acute food insecurity in 2023 in nine countries.

12.0M

people forcibly displaced in five countries by 2023 – consisting of 7.3 million IDPs and 4.8 million migrants and refugees.
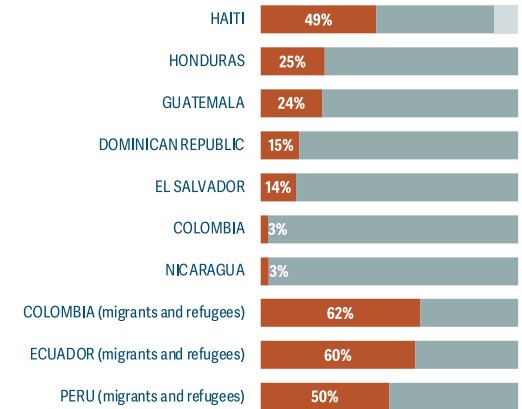
0.3M

children were acutely malnourished in Haiti, 0.1 million of them suffering the most severe form of wasting.

Colombia (residents and migrants) | Dominican Republic | Ecuador (migrants and refugees) | El Salvador | Guatemala | Haiti | Honduras | Nicaragua | Peru (migrants and refugees)

MAP 2.13 **Numbers of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity in nine countries in 2023**

HAITI 4.9M
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1.6M
GUATEMALA 4.3M
HONDURAS 2.4M
EL SALVADOR 0.9M
NICARAGUA 0.2M
COLOMBIA 1.6M
COLOMBIA (migrants and refugees) 2.9M
ECUADOR (migrants and refugees) 0.3M
PERU (migrants and refugees) 0.8M
PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA

FIG. 2.41 **Share of analysed populations facing high levels of acute food insecurity, 2023**

HAITI	49%
HONDURAS	25%
GUATEMALA	24%
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	15%
EL SALVADOR	14%
COLOMBIA	3%
NICARAGUA	3%
COLOMBIA (migrants and refugees)	62%
ECUADOR (migrants and refugees)	60%
PERU (migrants and refugees)	50%

In all countries/migrant and refugee populations, the total population was analysed, except for Haiti (91%).

■ Share of analysed population in IPC Phase 3 + above or equivalent   ■ Population analysed   ■ Population not analysed

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

■ <1.0 million ■ 1–2.99 million ■ 3–4.99 million ■ 5–9.99 million ■ 10–14.99 million ■ ≥15 million ■ Not selected for analysis ■ Data not meeting GRFC technical requirements/population not analysed ■ Data gap

! Major food crisis   ○ Refugee populations (colour coding as legend)

Sources: FEWS NET (Nicaragua); IPC TWGs (Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras); HRP (El Salvador); WFP CARI (migrant and refugee populations in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru and resident populations in Colombia).

How have the food crises in this region changed since 2022?

Overall, the estimated number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity in food-crisis countries in the region increased from 17.8 million in 2022 to 19.7 million in 2023 due to the inclusion of two additional population groups – residents in Colombia and migrants and refugees in Peru.
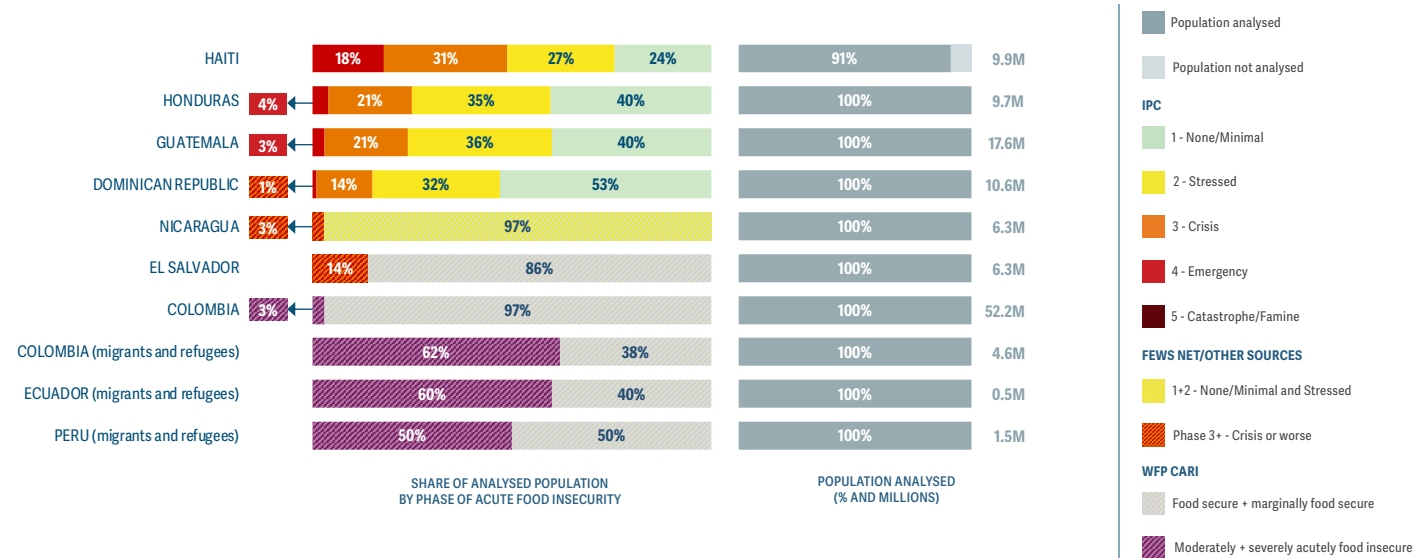
Across the countries with comparable data for 2022 and 2023, around 425 000 fewer people faced high levels of acute food insecurity. The prevalence declined from 27.3 percent to 26.5 percent. This was attributable to moderate declines in **Guatemala**, **Honduras** and **El Salvador**, reflecting subdued inflation and near-average crop production, despite localized weather-related crop losses.

Conversely, **Haiti**, the most severe food crisis in the region, experienced an increase of approximately 166 000 people facing high levels of acute food insecurity, underpinned by persisting insecurity and gang violence, coupled with high food prices, poor economic activity and reduced agricultural production due to weather extremes.

For the migrant and refugee populations in Colombia and Ecuador, the same assessment as last year was used, indicating severe acute food insecurity challenges (WFP, 2023). FEWS NET estimates for Nicaragua indicated a stable situation between the two years. Peak estimates for the Dominican Republic occurred during October 2022–February 2023 and therefore a year-on-year comparison cannot be made.

Colombia (residents), Colombia (migrants and refugees), the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras were classified as major food crises, each surpassing 1 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity. Haiti is the only country of the region considered a protracted major food crisis.

FIG. 2.42 **Share of analysed populations by phase of acute food insecurity, 2023 peak**

Sources: FEWS NET (Nicaragua); IPC TWGs (Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras); HNO 2024 and HRP 2024 (Colombia); HRP (El Salvador); WFP CARI (migrant and refugee populations in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru).

Severity of acute food insecurity

Five of the nine food-crisis countries in the region – the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras – had data disaggregated by phase of acute food insecurity.

No populations in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) during the peak period of acute food insecurity in 2023

Prior to the peak period of acute food insecurity in 2023, Haiti had around 19 200 people facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in the Cité Soleil commune of the capital Port-au-Prince from September 2022 to February 2023. Concerns were mainly focused on vulnerable communities facing acute constraints to access essential services, reduced food and fuel supply in markets, and limited income-generating activities. An improvement in the security situation enabled better food access and availability by March–June 2023 (IPC, March 2023).

3 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) across the five countries with IPC data

All five countries with disaggregated data had populations in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Haiti had the highest numbers with 1.8 million people or 18 percent of the analysed population. Reflecting the severity of its food crisis, 15 out of 32 analysed areas were classified in IPC Phase 4. Guatemala and Honduras had over 600 000 and 350 000 people respectively in this phase, mostly due to the severe impacts of reduced rains in drought-prone areas. Compared with 2022, the number of people in IPC Phase 4 remained virtually unchanged in Haiti and Honduras and increased in Guatemala and El Salvador, reflecting the severe impacts of weather extremes on household livelihoods and food access.
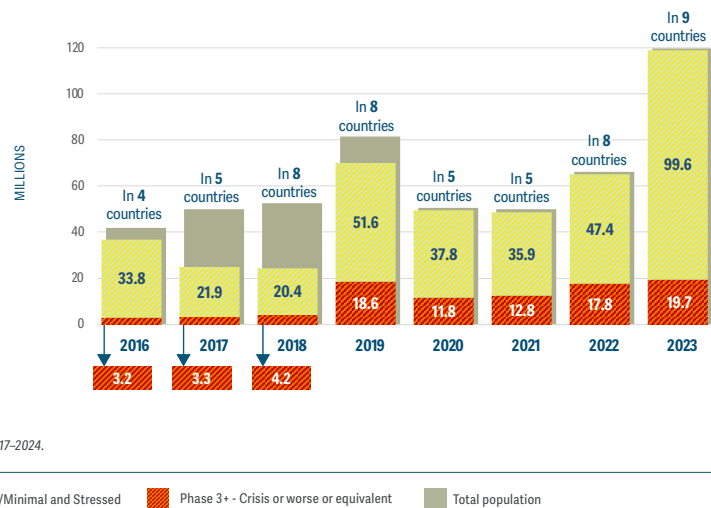
11 million people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) across the five countries with IPC data

In 2023, four out of the five countries with disaggregated data had over 1 million people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Guatemala had the highest number at 3.7 million people followed by Haiti, Honduras and the Dominican Republic. El Salvador was the only country with fewer than 1 million people in this phase.

15.7 million people in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) across four countries with IPC data

The prevalence of analysed population in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) exceeded 20 percent in four countries, reaching over 30 percent in Guatemala, Honduras and the Dominican Republic, and 27 percent for Haiti. No disaggregated data for this phase were available for El Salvador.

FIG. 2.43 **Numbers of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity, 2016–2023**

Source GRFC 2017–2024.

◼ 1+2 - None/Minimal and Stressed   ◼ Phase 3+ - Crisis or worse or equivalent   ◼ Total population

Acute food insecurity since 2016

Levels of acute food insecurity have been overall increasing since 2016.

In the five food-crisis countries consistently included in the GRFC with data between 2017 and 2023 – El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua – the estimated number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity increased steadily between 2020 and 2022, from 11.8 million to 13.1 million, before slightly decreasing to 12.7 million in 2023.

The main increases in the number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity during this period occurred in Haiti, passing from 4.1 million in 2020 to 4.9 million in 2023. In terms of prevalence, the share of people facing high levels of acute insecurity increased from 17 percent in 2018 to 25 percent in 2023 in these five countries. At the same time the analysed population increased from 46 percent in 2018 to 98 percent in 2023. The other four food-crisis countries included in this edition have not qualified as food crises in every edition of the GRFC, depending on the occurrence of shocks

and data availability. The Dominican Republic has been included twice, in the GRFC 2023 and 2024, while migrant and refugee populations in Colombia and Ecuador have been included in four editions (2019, 2020, 2023 and 2024). Migrant and refugee populations in Peru have been included twice, in the GRFC 2019 and 2024.

Drivers of the food crises, 2023–2024

Weather extremes were the primary driver in five countries, where 12.2 million people faced high acute food insecurity.

Weather extremes were a more prominent driver in 2023 than 2022 due to the El Niño event which resulted in erratic and reduced rainfall across the region. They were the main driver in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua but also affected food security in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Cereal production in 2023 was expected to be below the five-year average in Haiti, due to constrained access and availability of agricultural

inputs, including shortages of seeds and unfavourable weather conditions, leading to low plantings and yields. Favourable rainfall during the third maize crop was expected to be countered by high production costs and seed shortages from prior low harvests limiting the planted area, resulting in a reduced national cereal output.

In El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, average to above-average production of staple crops (maize and beans) is expected at the national level. However, erratic rainfall reduced crop yields, resulted in crop damage in some areas, affecting subsistence farmers.

In El Salvador and Nicaragua's Dry Corridor, insufficient rainfall and higher-than-normal temperatures, a pattern often linked to the El Niño phenomenon, contributed to below-average yields in some areas.
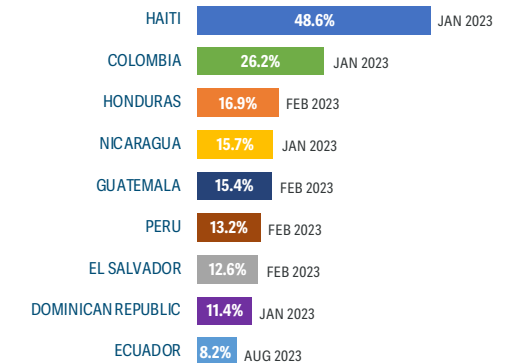
Meanwhile, Honduras experienced generally good conditions, except for some northern areas, predominantly cultivating cash crops such as sugar cane and bananas and with less staple cereal production (FAO, December 2023).

Economic shocks were the primary driver in three food crises where 2.6 million people faced high acute food insecurity

Resident populations in the Dominican Republic and migrants and refugees in Ecuador and Peru were mainly affected by challenging economic conditions, notably reduced income opportunities and increasing food prices, exacerbated by macroeconomic difficulties and uncertainty in international markets. The combination of these factors eroded households' purchasing power (IPC, December 2023; WFP, April 2023; WFP, 2023).

Migrant and refugee households, typically facing higher integration challenges, relied on daily wages from the informal sector. Even though in Colombia the main driver of acute food insecurity was weather extremes, migrants and refugees in the country were significantly affected by economic shocks (WFP, May 2023). The prevalence of acute
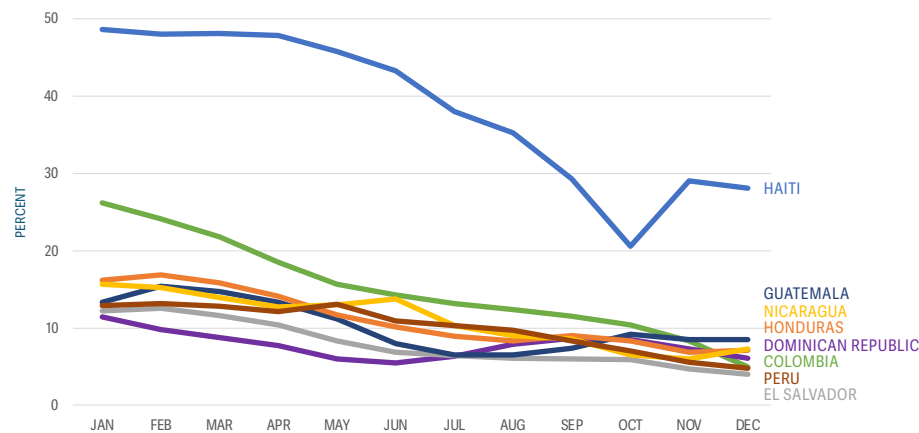
food insecurity among migrant populations was generally higher than resident populations across the region and was estimated at between 50 and 60 percent.

For some countries economic shocks were not the primary driver but still significantly affected acute food insecurity. These included El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua (OCHA, January 2023; IPC, June 2023; IPC, September 2023; IPC, May 2023; FEWS NET, November 2023).

A high reliance on imports of food, fertilizers and fuel combined with currency depreciation, mainly in Haiti, have added further upward pressure on food prices. According to the latest data, food inflation rates declined but remained high across the nine countries of the region in 2023 (WB, 2024).

As of December 2023, annual food inflation was particularly high in Haiti at 28 percent, while in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua it ranged between 4 and 9 percent (WFP Economic Explorer, 2023).

FIG. 2.44 **Highest annual food inflation rate by country, 2023**

HAITI	48.6%	JAN 2023
COLOMBIA	26.2%	JAN 2023
HONDURAS	16.9%	FEB 2023
NICARAGUA	15.7%	JAN 2023
GUATEMALA	15.4%	FEB 2023
PERU	13.2%	FEB 2023
EL SALVADOR	12.6%	FEB 2023
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	11.4%	JAN 2023
ECUADOR	8.2%	AUG 2023

Source: WFP, 2024.

FIG. 2.45 **Food inflation broadly declined across eight countries in 2023**

This graph only includes countries where food inflation peaked at over 10 percent in 2023.
Source: Trading Economics, 2024.

TABLE 2.5 **Structural vulnerabilities indicators**

	Cereal import dependency weighted by caloric relevance (%)	Share of agricultural, forestry and fishery employment (%)	HDI global ranking (1–192)	GDP ranking	INFORM Risk Index (0–10)	Crop growing period affected by drought conditions (%)
COLOMBIA	63.6	15.9	118th	43	5.3	5.9
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	65.8	8.3	80th	64	4.1	5.6
ECUADOR	34.7	32.2	95th	62	4.7	16.8
EL SALVADOR	53.5	15.2	125th	101	4	5.3
GUATEMALA	52.9	29.2	135th	69	5.1	2.8
HAITI	82.5	45.6	163rd	119	7.2	11.7
HONDURAS	60.2	24.8	137th	102	4.8	4.3
NICARAGUA	40.6	28.7	126th	132	4.1	6.7
PERU	54.2	27.9	84th	51	4.8	15.5

Sources: FAO (Cereal import dependency weighted by caloric relevance); FAO (Share of agricultural, forestry and fishery employment); UNDP (HDI Global Index); World Bank (GDP ranking); EC-JRC (INFORM Risk Index); EC-JRC (Crop growing period affected by drought conditions).

Conflict/insecurity was the primary driver in Haiti, where 4.9 million people faced high acute food insecurity.

Increasing insecurity and political instability as well as economic hardship and reduced agricultural production led to the deterioration of the acute food insecurity situation in Haiti. In 2022 and 2023, gang violence reached extremely high levels especially in urban areas, disrupting markets and the movement of people and goods, severely hindering economic activity and the provision of basic services (IPC, September 2023). This resulted in poor market supplies and shortages of essential commodities, including fuel, which contributed to sharp increases in food prices.

Structural vulnerabilities underlie the region's food insecurity crisis

Structural factors in Latin America and the Caribbean inhibit the ability to effectively address acute food insecurity and further explain why three countries in the region – Haiti, Guatemala and Honduras – have been considered major food crises in at least five editions of the GRFC.

Haiti is the only low-income country of the region, while Honduras and Nicaragua are lower-middle income; all the other countries of the region included in this edition of the GRFC are upper-middle income, which allow them to have better capacities to absorb shocks.

The included countries in the region exhibit high cereal import dependency, with 62 percent of cereals imported in Colombia and 60 percent in Haiti, which heightens their susceptibility to food price fluctuations.

Despite a significant reliance on imports for food, a large share of employment in the domestic economy is in the agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors, with the higher rates observed in Haiti at 45 percent, Ecuador at 32 percent and Guatemala at 29 percent. The most recent data used to

calculate the Gini coefficient show that the region has high rates of economic inequality that can limit available resources reaching those with the most needs, including migrants and refugees, with Colombia and Ecuador both among the 25 countries with the highest level of inequality globally.

Poverty levels vary and composite scores measuring disaster and climate resilience suggest that countries in the region are in a precarious position. In Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, over 30 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line, with 3–6.6 percent falling under the international poverty line. Migrants intending to remain face many barriers to economic integration, including low levels of education and lack of legal status to work (WFP, May 2023).

Haiti received Very High INFORM Risk scores, which reflects its highly limited ability to respond to disasters based on hazard exposure, socioeconomic vulnerability and institutional coping capacity. Colombia and Guatemala, upper-middle income countries, also received High INFORM Risk scores.

Peru and Ecuador face the highest index risk for crop growing period affected by drought conditions in the region, indicating the high potential of crop and grazing land anomalies inducing food insecurity.

DISPLACEMENT | Despite efforts to integrate migrants and refugees into host countries across Latin America by granting stay and work permits, millions faced significant difficulties in accessing basic needs such as food, shelter, health care, education and formal employment.

The challenges faced by migrants and refugees were compounded by the global and regional cost-of-living crisis, which further eroded their purchasing power, and by high levels of vulnerability that place them at increased risk of falling victim to human trafficking, forced recruitment and gender-based violence.

The lack of stable livelihood opportunities hampers the ability of migrants and refugees to integrate effectively and contribute to their host communities. Furthermore, while a significant share of refugees and migrants have documentation, this has not guaranteed them a dignified life or adequate access to basic rights (WFP, May 2023; WFP, April 2023).

Conflict/insecurity was the main driver of internal displacement in Colombia and Haiti. Decades of

conflict and civil insecurity in Colombia led to the internal displacement of about 6.9 million people as of November 2023, of whom 1.1 million were displaced since the 2016 Peace Agreement signed between the Government of Colombia and one of the main insurgent groups. According to official figures, nearly 290 000 people were displaced in 2022 and an additional 163 000 in 2023, reflecting continued conflict and insecurity (UNHCR, 2024).

In Haiti, widespread insecurity and gang violence, predominantly in the Zone Métropolitaine de Port-au-Prince (ZMPP) and extending to other departments such as Ouest, resulted in the internal displacement of 314 000 people (IOM, December 2023).

Natural disasters, conflicts, insecurity and challenging economic conditions have driven cross-border displacement from Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua (GRFC Displacement TWG, 2024). About 4.8 million migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and other people requiring international protection are seeking refuge, across eight countries included in this edition of the GRFC (UNHCR, December 2023).

Food insecurity among displaced populations

Analyses on the acute food insecurity situation were available for populations on the move in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru and for IDPs in Colombia.

In Colombia, home to a high number of migrants and refugees, acute food insecurity among this population was alarmingly high. During the peak of 2022 (June–August), 2.88 million people, or 62 percent of the analysed migrant and refugee population, faced high levels of acute food insecurity. The situation was particularly dire for pendular and in-transit migrants and refugees, with 73 percent experiencing high acute food insecurity levels, compared with about 52 percent of those intending to settle (WFP, May 2023). This is above the prevalence of 55 percent assessed among these populations during the last analysis in 2019 (GRFC 2020, April 2020).
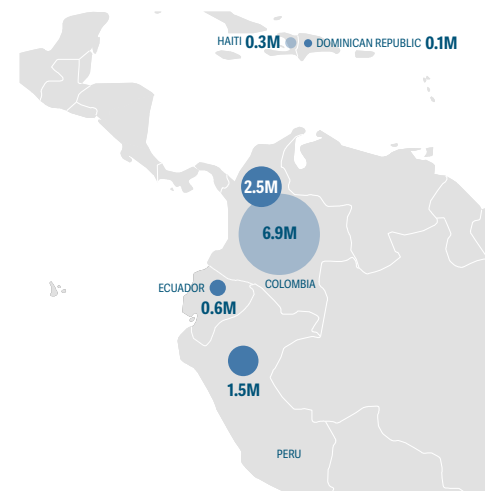
In Ecuador, during the peak period of July–August 2022, 0.3 million people or 60 percent of the analysed migrant and refugee population faced high levels of acute food insecurity. Challenges such as marginalized legal status and complex regularization processes hinder migrants and refugees' ability to obtain formal employment and access basic services, pushing many into the informal sector. Weather extremes, including El Niño-induced heavy rainfall, have compounded these challenges, affecting key paddy-producing areas. These include Guayas and Los Ríos provinces, which host large refugee and migrant populations (ACAPS, September 2023). The impacts on paddy production translated into an upsurge in rice prices in the third quarter of 2023 (FAO, December 2023).

Acute malnutrition among displaced populations

Acute malnutrition data were only available for migrant and refugee populations in Colombia, notably for children aged under 5 years old and pregnant women. Over 70 percent of children with acute malnutrition live in food-insecure households, underscoring the interrelations with food insecurity and their increased risk of illness because of their precarious situation (WFP, May 2023).

Migrants and refugees face considerable nutritional challenges linked to various forms of malnutrition, including acute malnutrition,

MAP 2.14 **Numbers of IDPs, refugees and asylum-seekers by country, 2023**

HAITI 0.3M · DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 0.1M
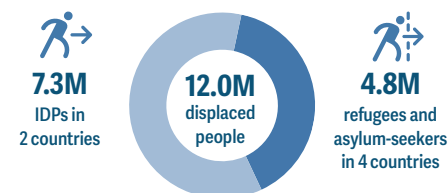2.5M
6.9M COLOMBIA
ECUADOR 0.6M
1.5M
PERU

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
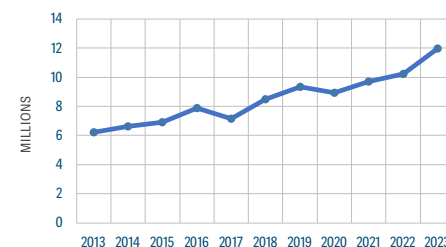
■ IDPs ■ Refugees and asylum-seekers

Source: UNHCR, IOM, December 2023.

anaemia and stunting, with girls under the age of 5 from in-transit migrant and refugee households being the most vulnerable. As of 2022, 5.2 percent of children under 5 years old in the in-transit migrant and refugee group and 2.8 percent of children under 5 in the migrants and refugees with intention to stay group were estimated to be acutely malnourished. These levels are considered Medium and Low respectively (WFP, May 2023). High levels of anaemia, which limits physical and cognitive development and is caused by poor diet quality, were of particular concern for migrant and refugee children, with between 44 and 55 percent of migrant and refugee children under 5 affected across subgroups, while levels were slightly lower at 37 percent for pregnant women (WFP, May 2023). About 43 percent of children under 6 months were exclusively breastfed and only 24 percent of children aged 6–23 months were estimated to consume a Minimum Acceptable Diet (WFP, May 2023).

FIG. 2.46 **Numbers of IDPs, refugees and asylum-seekers in the region, 2023**

7.3M IDPs in 2 countries

12.0M displaced people

4.8M refugees and asylum-seekers in 4 countries

Source: UNHCR, IOM, December 2023.

FIG. 2.47 **Numbers of forcibly displaced people in the region 2013–2023**

MILLIONS

Sources: 2013-2022, UNHCR, IDMC, UNRWA; 2023, UNHCR nowcasted estimates December 2023, IOM.

ACUTE MALNUTRITION | In Latin America and the Caribbean, levels of acute malnutrition are lower compared with other regions analysed in the GRFC, reflecting a lower severity of the food crises and better coping capacities of governments to support the nutritional situation of vulnerable children and women.
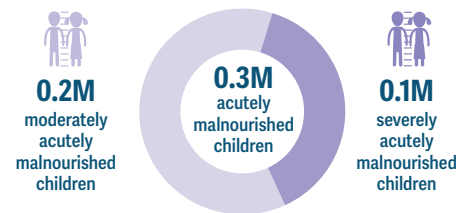
FIG. 2.48 **Number of children under 5 years old with acute malnutrition in Haiti in 2023**

0.2M
moderately acutely malnourished children

0.3M
acutely malnourished children

0.1M
severely acutely malnourished children

No malnutrition data were available for the other countries in the region.
Source: HNO 2023, March 2023.

0.5M pregnant and breastfeeding women with acute malnutrition in Haiti in 2023

Source: HNO 2023, March 2023.

Comprehensive data on acute malnutrition were available for Haiti while data for migrants and refugees were only available in Colombia.

Historically low levels of acute malnutrition confirmed by screenings and data on admissions elsewhere in the region are the main reason associated with the absence of prevalence and burden data at the national level for resident populations.

Concerns remain regarding the lack of assessments on the nutrition situation for migrant and refugee populations. In Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, more than half of the analysed migrant and refugee populations faced high levels of acute food insecurity, experienced challenges caring for young children and had limited access to health services, which are all contributing factors to child wasting and maternal malnutrition.

In Haiti, the most severe food crisis in the region with nearly half of the population facing high levels of acute food insecurity in 2023, about 260 000 children suffered from acute malnutrition, around 100 000 of them severely so. More than half a million pregnant and breastfeeding women were acutely malnourished (HNO 2023, March 2023). The prevalence of child acute malnutrition was 5.1 percent at the national level. However, in metropolitan areas it reached High and Very High levels, estimated at 19.2 percent in

Croix-des-Bouquets and 11.7 percent in Delmas (SMART, 2023).

There were increased cases of acutely malnourished children among migrants and refugees in Colombia due to elevated levels of acute food insecurity, challenges in caring for young children, and limited access to health services.

Global Network Against Food Crises
INTEGRATED ACTIONS FOR LASTING SOLUTIONS

Founded by the European Union, FAO and WFP in 2016, the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) is an alliance of humanitarian and development actors committed to addressing the root causes of food crises and finding lasting solutions to them, through shared analysis and knowledge, strengthened coordination in evidence-based responses and collective efforts across the humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) nexus.

🌐 **www.fightfoodcrises.net**   𝕏 **@fightfoodcrises**

FSIN Food Security Information Network
Joint analysis for better decisions

The Food Security Information Network (FSIN) is a technical global platform for the exchange of expertise, knowledge and best practices on food security and nutrition analysis. Its purpose is to promote timely, independent and consensus-based information about food crises, while also highlighting and addressing critical data gaps. As a key partner of the GNAFC, FSIN coordinates the publication of the *Global Report on Food Crises*.

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