

Seeds for Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Concept:



Food security refers to “the situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy life.”

FAO



Food Stability



Food Availability



Food Utilization



Food Access

Context:

1990-2014: LAC is the only region that reduces the prevalence of people with hunger to less than half (MDGs)



2015: Food security starts to deteriorate and evolves into a structural problem.



2019-2021: The situation is exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the developing conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Hunger and food insecurity in LAC increased more than other regions of the world.



2021: 267.7 million people (40%) with food insecurity in LAC



2021-2022: Using recent food prices variations, it is estimated that approximately 52 million people could be pushed into poverty and 66 million into extreme poverty.



The pandemic represented a setback of more than 10 years in the rates of poverty and inequality in LAC.



2015-2021: Hunger goes from affecting 36 million in 2015 (5.8%) to 56.5 million people in 2021 (8.6%) in the LAC region.



Women have been more affected by food insecurity (44% Women 117m) (31% Men 83m) (FAO, 2021)



2021-2023: Currently, the main factors associated with food insecurity in LAC are:

1. Income loss
2. Increase in food prices



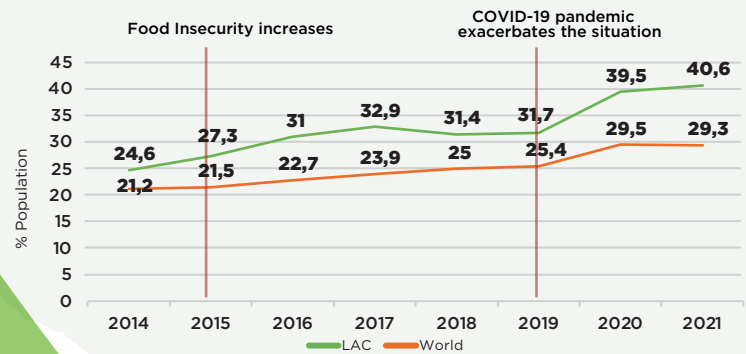
Importance of Food Security

The lack of nutritious and safe food has negative impacts on the individuals' health and full development

Consequences:

1. Reduced physical and cognitive development in childhood
2. Increase in chronic diseases in adulthood
3. Lower productivity and income in adulthood
4. Increase in Mortality Rate
5. Rise in health system costs

Food Insecurity



FAOSTAT 2021.



Food Availability



Context:

Definition:

Availability addresses the food supply at the national or local level. This can be produced through domestic agricultural production or international trade.

Challenge:

Increasing food availability avoiding negative impacts on the environment



IDB Sectoral Responses:

On average, LAC has enough food to cover the caloric requirements of their population.



South America produces **83%** of the region's food, Central America **15%** and the Caribbean **2%**. Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico produce **70%** of food in LAC.



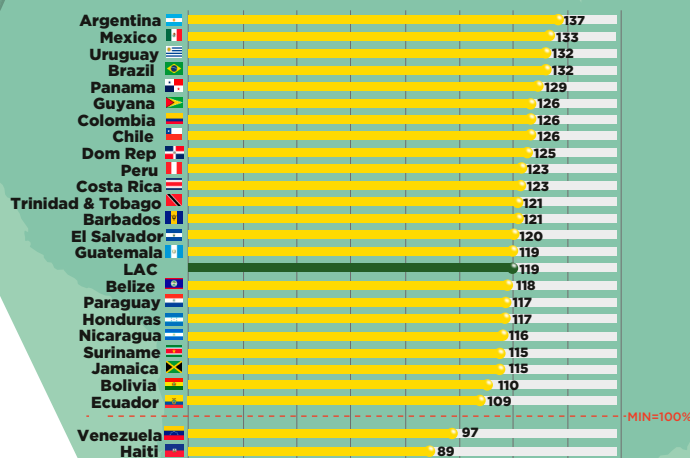
The high cost of fertilizers could affect agricultural productivity in the region.



In LAC, around **30%** of produced food is lost or wasted (approx. cost US\$97 billion per year) (FAO, 2021)



Average Dietary Energy Supply Adequacy (kcal/per capita/day). FAOSTAT 2021



Food Energy Supply: Measures Food Supply in terms of calories (Optimal: >100%)

1.



Trade: Avoid trade restrictions, such as temporary export bans, which can distort international markets and aggravate global food insecurity.

2.



Increasing agricultural productivity through investment in agricultural public goods such as infrastructure, agricultural research and innovation, capacity building programs, and technical assistance.

3.



Maintaining inputs access: Alleviate liquidity constraints for small and medium producers through mechanisms that do not distort markets (e.g. vouchers, access to credit).

4.



Reducing food losses through information to consumers, post-harvest technologies, and agricultural technical assistance.

Food Access



Context:

Definition:

Access refers to the availability of physical and financial resources for households to obtain food.



2021: In LAC, poverty reached **32.3%** (201 million people) and extreme poverty **12.9%** (82 million people)



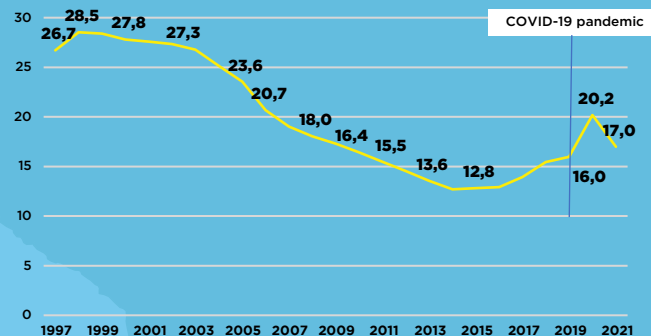
The increase in poverty and inequality implies a setback of 10 years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



The incidence of **poverty is greater in some population groups:** children and adolescents, women, indigenous and Afrodescendants.



People with an income less than USD\$3.1 per day (%LAC)



Challenge:

Increasing the access to food

IDB Sectoral Responses:

1.



Identification of vulnerable population by combining existing social records, rapid registration mechanisms, and population and poverty maps.

2.



Horizontal expansion (increase in beneficiary base) and/or vertical expansion (amount increase) of existing monetary transfers or specific programs, focused on vulnerable populations, support temporality and without conditionalities.

3.



Implementation of transfer payment mechanisms innovations, such as digital records and electronic transfers.

4.



Increase agricultural income, connecting producers with markets, creating public procurement mechanisms and local markets. Also, with interventions to reduce the income gap between urban and rural areas.

Food Utilization



Context:

LAC is facing a triple burden of malnutrition: undernourishment, overweight/obesity and micronutrient deficiency.



LAC is the region with the highest cost of a healthy diet compared to other regions (US\$3.9 vs. 3.5 worldwide; FAO,2022)



In LAC, 11% of children under 5 suffer chronic malnutrition. Children in indigenous populations have higher levels of chronic malnutrition (FAOSTAT, 2021)



24% of adults in the region suffer from obesity, and more than half of the women in LAC are affected by overweight or obesity (FAO, 2022)



Definition:

Utilization refers to the food quality to attain an adequate nutritional status and live a healthy life.

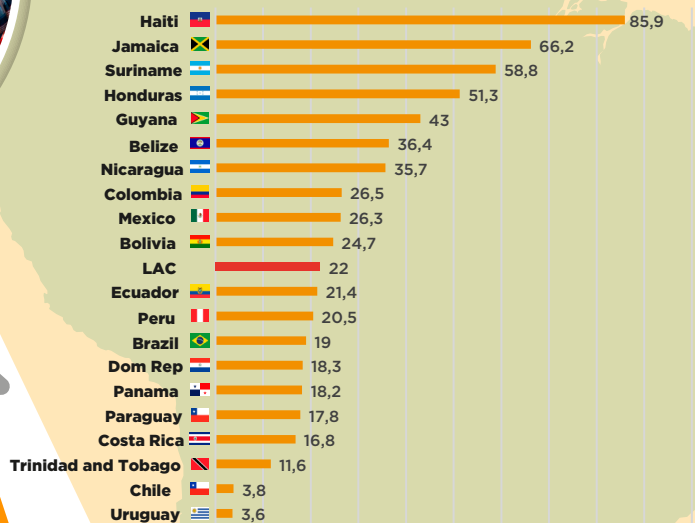


Challenge:

Improving food utilization to maintain adequate nutrition.

IDB Sectoral Responses:

% Population that cannot afford a healthy diet



Source: IDB with data from FAOSTAT 2020

1.



Social protection with a focus in nutrition: supplements distribution, implementation of behavioral change strategies aimed at improving feeding practices integrated with cash transfer programs.

2.



Identification and care of severe malnutrition: detection of areas with greater malnutrition, and food insecurity hotspots.

3.



Strengthening the Health Sector: ensuring permanent availability of prenatal and infant supplements, and integrating nutrition counseling into health care services.

4.



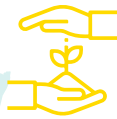
Nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions (e.g., diversification in food consumption, home gardens, biofortified crops with higher micronutrient content, etc.)

5.



Increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and improve food safety services.

Food Stability



Context:

Definition:

Stability: refers to the ability to maintain constant access and availability to nutritious and quality food.

Agricultural productivity growth could have been 21% higher without the climate change effects (since 1961)*



Climate change, natural disasters and price shocks are **the main factors affecting food stability in LAC.**



In 2020, food supply variability in LAC was higher than the global average (29 kcal/cap/day vs. 4 kcal/cap/day)



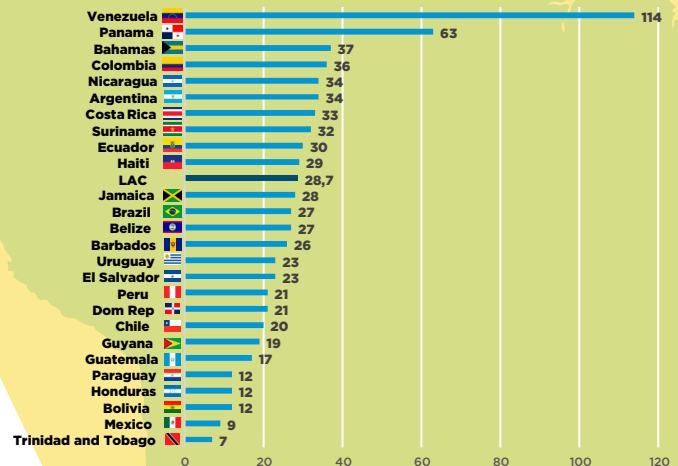
Challenge:

Increasing stability in food availability and access.

IDB Sectoral Responses:

Food Supply Variability

(kcal/cap/day) average 2019-2021. IDB with FAOSTAT data (2021)



Food Supply Variability: Measures food stability in terms of calories

1.



Increasing the resilience of food systems to climate change: Promoting diversification of food sources and inputs, encouraging climate-smart technologies adoption, and strengthening agricultural health systems.

2.



Information: Establishing an information and monitoring system for food and supply prices and planted areas in real time.

3.



Short circuits of production and consumption that encourage local production and consumption.

4.



Facilitation of international trade through the improvement of infrastructure and customs control services, simplification of procedures for food and inputs exchange (i.e. digitization, automation).

*Ortiz-Bobea, A., Ault, T. R., Carrillo, C. M., Chambers, R. G., & Lobell, D. B. (2021). Anthropogenic climate change has slowed global agricultural productivity growth. Nature Climate Change, 11(4), 306-312.

What is the IDB doing for Food Security in LAC?

We improve Food Security and eliminate hunger in LAC through a multisectoral approach with evidence-based interventions.



Availability
We guarantee food availability by facilitating trade and increasing agricultural productivity without putting pressure on natural resources.



Access
We increase the access to food for the most vulnerable population in LAC, through transfer programs, employment creation, and connecting producers with markets.



Utilization
We reduce the triple burden of malnutrition and improve food safety, financing programs to increase access to drinking water and sanitation.



Stability
We reduce the vulnerability of food systems to climate change and natural disasters.



Empowering women to reduce the gender gap



Project Approval



Between 2019 and 2021, 25 projects that contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 2 of "Zero Hunger" were approved for an amount of **US\$3.5 billion**



Technical Assistance and Knowledge

We generate high added value through the provision of technical assistance and the development of knowledge products.



Portfolio Management and Expedited Processes

- We modify portfolio operations (redirecting / reformulating) and implement 'fast track' processes for the processing of standardized operations during the pandemic in order to mitigate its immediate effects (monetary transfers) totaling **US\$3.4 billion in 16 countries.**

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