

Sustainability in Nutrition Careers Panel:

Planetary Health Collective – May 23, 2023

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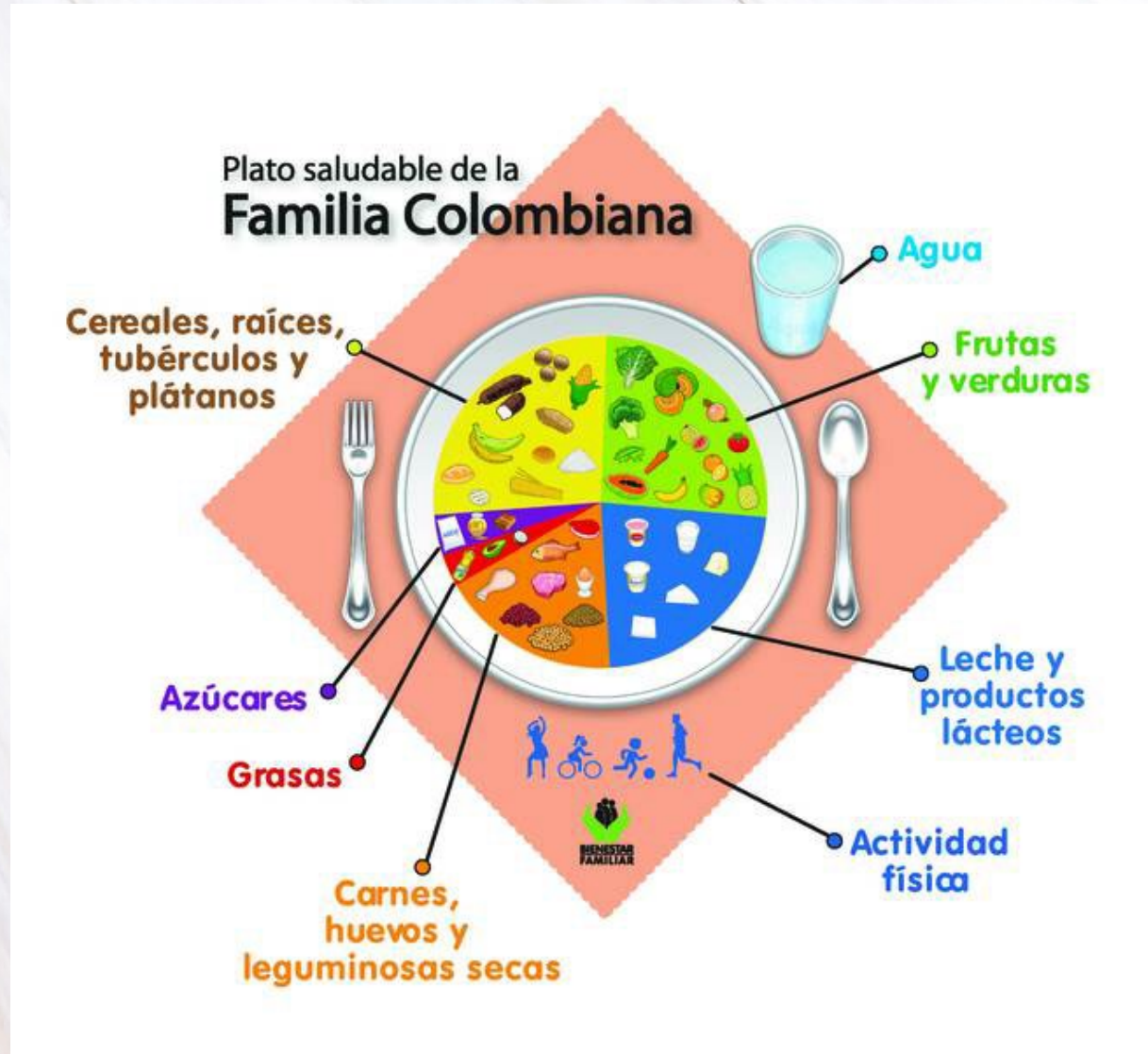
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The Colombian Family's Healthy Plate



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). *Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG): Colombia*.

Available at: <https://www.fao.org/nutrition/education/food-based-dietary-guidelines/regions/countries/colombia/ar/>

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS FOR HEALTHY EATING

Healthy eating is a right and responsibility of everyone. It is necessary that actions be taken to transform Food Systems and make them sustainable, fair and inclusive through regulations that allow the population access to nutritious, safe, varied products at a fair price and produced in an environmentally responsible manner. This starts by protecting and promoting breastfeeding and adequate complementary feeding, developing food-based dietary guidelines, as well as regulating the school environment and food environment (front of package labeling, taxes, advertising). This will only be possible with collaboration and participation from the government and non-governmental organizations, including the productive sector.



- “The global surges in obesity and nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have created a need for decisive new food policy initiatives. A major concern has been the impact of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) and ultra-processed drinks on weight gain and on the risk of several NCDs” (Popkin et al., 2021).
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- “There is a growing tendency worldwide, and especially in South America, for food companies to add micronutrients to UPFs to make health claims regarding these products, to which food-regulating authorities refer to as fake foods” (Popkin et al., 2021).
- In Colombia, two transitions are taking place simultaneously: a nutritional transition with a ‘double burden of malnutrition’ (i.e., coexistence of undernutrition alongside overweight, obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases), and an alimentary transition, where the traditional diet is being replaced with a Western-type diet (Herran & Herran-Fonseca, 2022).



New Octagonal Front of Package (FOP) Nutrient Warning Labels: Colombia



Food Insecurity: Colombia (WFP, 2023)

Between June and November 2022, an estimated 15.5 million Colombians experienced food insecurity. Of these, 2.1 million live in severe conditions of food insecurity and 13.4 million in moderate conditions.

Food insecurity is not only a rural phenomenon; although the prevalence of food insecurity is the same in urban and rural areas (30% respectively), **the highest number of people affected are concentrated in urban areas** (see table 1).

Table 1: Proportion of Food Insecurity (%) and Absolute Numbers by Main City

CITY	% FOOD INSECURITY	NUMBER OF FOOD INSECURE PEOPLE
Bogotá	19%	1,495,504
Medellín	25%	642,582
Cali	22%	491,548
Cartagena	45%	420,913
Barranquilla	25%	327,964

Food Insecurity: Colombia (WFP, 2023)

3. FOOD INSECURITY DRIVERS

Food insecurity in Colombia is explained by different structural and conjunctural factors that generate multiple effects on the population, increasing their vulnerability.

3.1. STRUCTURAL FACTORS



Monetary Poverty

Food insecurity is highly correlated with monetary poverty, which in 2021 stood at 39.3%, while extreme monetary poverty was at 12.2%⁴. This is a consequence of the of the COVID-19 pandemic, which implied a setback in the progress the country had made, in terms of poverty reduction, until 2019. At the territorial level, the highest rates of monetary poverty are found in **La Guajira (67.4%), Chocó (63.4%), Magdalena (61.1%), Córdoba (58.6%) and Cauca (58.3%)**, departments that also have high levels of food insecurity.



Unemployment

A second factor that impacts the economic situation of households and, therefore, food security, is the unemployment rate, which although reduced in 2022 compared to the previous two years, is still close to 10%⁵. Between August and October 2022, the cities with the highest unemployment rates were **Quibdó (24.4%), Ibagué (17.5%), Riohacha (16.7%), Valledupar (16%) and Montería (14.4%)**.



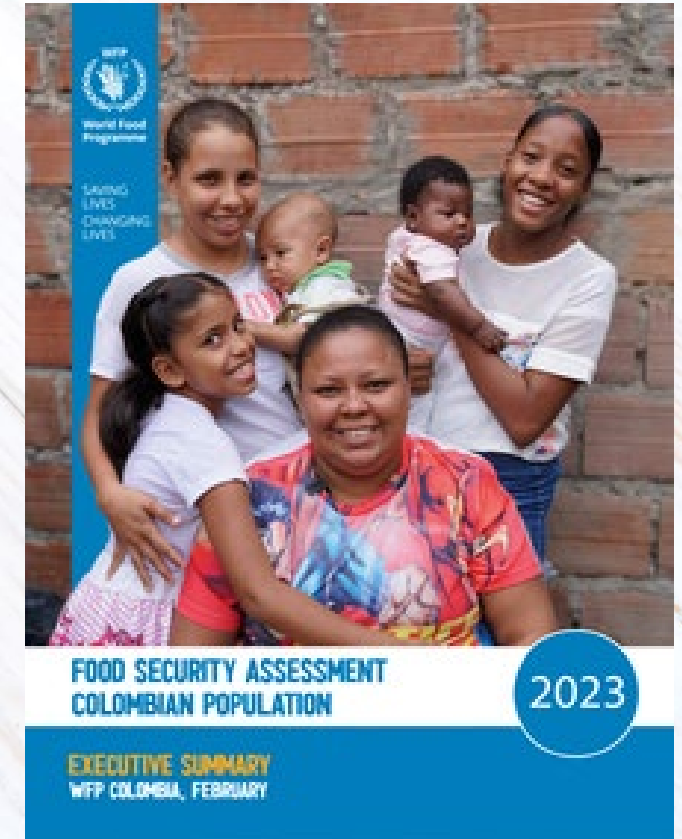
Informality

The unemployment rate is linked to the ratio of labour informality, which for the same period reached levels close to 58%. However, there are cities with much higher rates, such as, **Valledupar, Sincelejo, and Cúcuta (all at 67%), Santa Marta (65%), and Montería (63%)**, all of which are capital cities of the departments with high levels of food insecurity.



Violence, conflict, and displacement

Between 2021 and 2022, there was a 56% increase in the total number of victims of confinement and a 12% rise in the number of victims of mass displacement⁶ adding more people to Colombia's 5.2 million internally displaced people – the fourth largest in the world. In several parts of the country, non-state armed groups (NSAGs) are expanding their territorial control, subjecting local communities to conditions that make it difficult for them to ensure their food security.



<https://www.wfp.org/publications/2023-food-security-assessment-colombian-population-executive-summary>

3.2. CONJUNCTURAL FACTORS



Effects of the crisis in Ukraine

A report by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), released in December 2022 jointly with WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), revealed that between 2019 and 2021, Latin America experienced the largest increase in the prevalence of food insecurity compared to other regions of the world rising from 31.7% to 40.6%.

Accordingly to the report, the situation remains critical due to several factors triggered by the war in Ukraine, including high levels of inflation, rising fertilizer, and food costs, against a backdrop of the region's dependence on food imports. More than 30% of Colombia's fertilizers are imported from Russia and the country has faced shortages of agricultural inputs as a result of this conflict⁷. Data from FAO show that in Colombia during 2022, 71% of agricultural growers experienced difficulties in their production, with access to fertilizers being one of the main reasons⁸ impacting mainly small and medium-sized producers. Additionally, the price of cereals increased significantly as Colombia imports 54%⁹ of this food group.



Inflation

During 2022 the country experienced high inflation, which at the end of the year stood at 13.1% overall, and 27.8%¹⁰ for food and non alcoholic beverages. The food items that showed the greatest variation during 2022 were rice (+54%), milk (+37%), and beef (+20%), basic products of the household food basket. The price increase among these food items have impacted households purchasing power, especially among the most vulnerable.



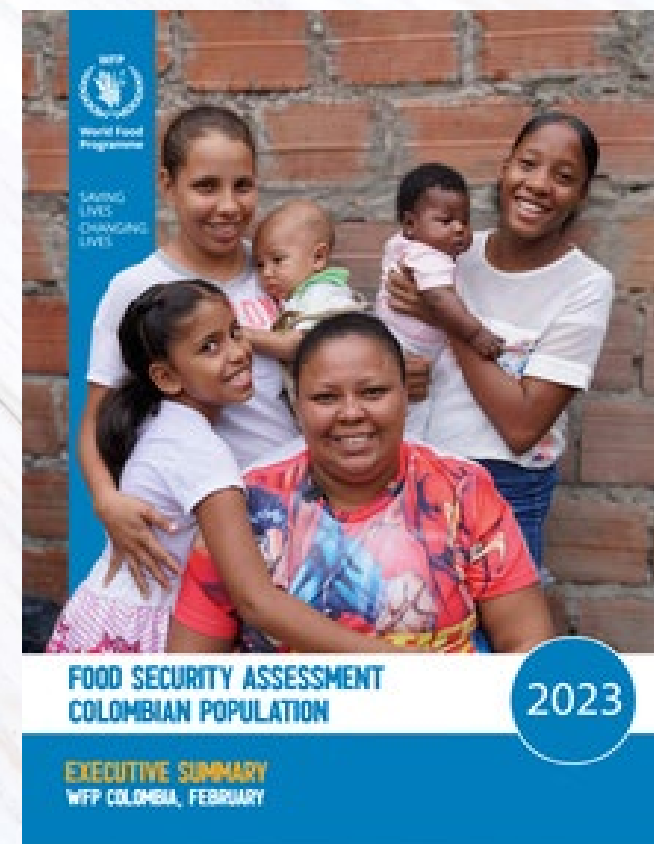
Natural and Climate Disasters

Factors related to the La Niña phenomenon and the passage of Hurricane Julia in the Caribbean region have also been affecting food and nutrition security, impacting populations in a large part of the country. During October 2022 alone, 131,000 people were affected by floods, eight times more than in the same month reported in 2021 (15,334), mainly in the departments of La Guajira, Bolívar, Atlántico, Magdalena, Córdoba, and Cesar in the Caribbean region; Chocó in the Pacific; and the Orinoco region in general¹¹.



COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and the containment measures adopted during 2020 and 2021 heavily affected the country's economy, especially the informal sector and left long-lasting impacts for vulnerable households that have yet to recover. A study by the University of Andes found that despite emergency interventions with monetary transfers by the government, the percentage of households living below the poverty line increased between 2019 and 2020. As a result, families were compelled to adapt to reduced food portions and lower quality food consumed¹². According to the Social Pulse survey from the National Statistics Department (DANE), the percentage of households eating less than three times a day increased from 11% before the onset of the pandemic to 32% in July 2020 - a figure that remains at 26% (November 2022)¹³.



<https://www.wfp.org/publications/2023-food-security-assessment-colombian-population-executive-summary>

Bogotá es Mi Huerta

#BogotaEsMiHuerta

- **Martha Liliana Perdomo, Directora del Jardín Botánico de Bogotá**

<https://jbb.gov.co/portfolio/martha-perdomo-directora-del-jardin-botanico-de-bogota/>



- The purpose of the program is to restore Bogotá's food-growing traditions, improve food security, build climate resilience, and strengthen local communities in the process.
- “This project was really born during the pandemic, when we realized that urban gardens in Bogotá had great potential. Not only as food production projects to prevent hunger and malnutrition, but also as spaces where families and residents can have power within their own communities and have some kind of sovereignty that is not completely dependent on the outside world.”

— **Martha Liliana Perdomo, Directora del Jardín Botánico de Bogotá**

RESULTADOS DEL PROCESO DE FORMULACIÓN PARTICIPATIVA DEL PROGRAMA DISTRITAL DE AGRICULTURA URBANA Y PERIURBANA AGROECOLÓGICA

“BOGOTÁ ES MI HUERTA 2023-2031”



<https://bogotamihuerta.jbb.gov.co/la-huerta-del-parque-de-atracciones-mas-visitado-de-colombia/>

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