



The 65 SUN Countries, 4 Indian States, +4,000 civil society organizations, +1,400 businesses, 16 UN agencies, and donor network of the **Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement** are now working together to mobilize as one movement in response to the global food and nutrition crisis.

As part of this multisectoral and multistakeholder country-led response, the SUN Movement organized on 5-6 July 2022 a series of four regional member dialogues with member country SUN Political and Technical Focal Points and their teams to:

- Highlight the current and anticipated effects of the crisis on food and nutrition actions at the country-level.
- Understand how SUN Movement members and stakeholders are ensuring that food and nutrition are being integrated into response and preparedness planning and coordination mechanisms at the country-level.
- Identify the challenges encountered by countries in addressing the food and nutrition crisis at the national and sub-national level.
- Share country short- and long-term solutions, including investing in the national food systems pathway, which have been applied to address the challenges identified.
- Outline potential gaps needing global support and action.

The regions included: Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. This brief presents the outputs of the Latin America and the Caribbean regional dialogue. Six countries participated in the regional dialogue: Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru.

Regional Situation Analysis

All SUN member countries across the **Latin America and Caribbean region** are reporting higher costs for cooking and transport fuels. They are also reporting higher fertilizer costs, with many also reporting decreased fertilizer availability.

These are resulting in lower food production, higher food costs, and are causing families to experience higher costs for basic food basket products including grains, cooking oils, etc.

Small-holder farmers are experiencing the most significant impacts, as the crisis is impacting both their income and their costs.

Mothers and children under five are identified as vulnerable across the region.

Governments are responding with clear and decisive actions including fuel, fertilizer and food subsidies; easing of food import processes; agriculture production monitoring; nutrition

monitoring for children under five years; ramping up of existing nutrition programmes including school feeding programmes, etc. Governments, however, are experiencing a financial gap burden and most subsidies are scheduled to expire after 3-12 months.

The region would like to explore joint regional planning and financial packages to be supported by the global-level crisis response (e.g. donor governments, development banks).

Detailed country-level and regional feedback on challenges and solutions

COST OF LIVING

- **Challenges being faced:** Experiencing high-cost indices and rising inflation (Ecuador), inflation increase of 6.7% and highest in 25 years and food basket price is now \$22 (El Salvador); cost of basic food basket is increasing (all countries); average wage no longer covers cost of basic food basket (Guatemala); fuel prices for cooking and transport up (all countries).
- **Solutions being implemented:** Fuel subsidies (Ecuador); cash transfer mechanisms (Ecuador); 1,000-day \$50 voucher for pregnant mothers and children under two year of age (Ecuador); human development voucher reaching one million families that increased 10% this year (Ecuador); \$8 propane subsidy for +1 million families (El Salvador); three-month suspension of stabilization fund tax for economic development (El Salvador); suspension of transport tax (El Salvador); action against price gouging taken by the government (Ecuador, El Salvador); social protection and support to consumers with propane, transport fuel, complementary food (Guatemala); cash transfers to families with school age children/youths up 6.7% to 700 thousand households, monetary subsidy for 65+ years old up 5.9% to 600 thousand people, grant to disabled up 9.4% to 81,000 people (Peru).

FOOD SYSTEMS

- **Challenges being faced:** Increased cost of operations and lack of availability of fertilizers, seeds, etc. (Ecuador, Peru, Costa Rica); fertilizer costs up 100% (Guatemala); low national production due to increased fertilizer costs (El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru); 30% dependency on Russian fertilizer (Guatemala); 37% dependence on Russian fertilizer and 20% on China (Peru); fertilizer available but cost increase of 100% (Honduras) high prices resulting in small producers not planting enough grains to supply national market (El Salvador, Guatemala); impacts will hit basic food basket, including livestock products, meat, dairy and grain; this will accelerate the agricultural crisis (El Salvador); small-scale farmer families being hit on both ends – resources to farm and food for their families (all countries).
- **Solutions being implemented:** Lines of credit at 1-5% interest over 30 years for the agricultural sector and debts up to \$5,000 are being forgiven (Ecuador); fertilizer subsidies (Ecuador); six crop monitoring system reports (Guatemala); law approved for collective purchase of agricultural inputs by the state

to support small farmers through the national center for agricultural technology (El Salvador); government declared food emergency in February to unlock resources (Honduras); fuel subsidy, transport subsidy and direct energy subsidy for 1.5m families (Honduras); exploring bio-inputs and locally produced inputs for agriculture to replace imported agrochemicals (Costa Rica); exploring crop diversification for both local consumption and export (Costa Rica); stipends for actions to assist 35,000 small-scale farmer families in food vulnerability with the support of the EU (Guatemala); stipends to assist 180,000 small-scale farmer families for soil recovery and support for agro-inputs financed with public resources (Guatemala).

NUTRITION

- **Challenges being faced:** Risk of increased malnutrition (all countries); increased costs of nutritious foods (El Salvador, Guatemala); increased risk of overweight and obesity due to increase in price of nutritious foods and people turning to unhealthy cheaper foods creating greater vulnerability (El Salvador, Honduras).
- **Solutions being implemented:** The “Ecuador Grows Without Child Malnutrition” initiative has been strengthened – brings together five institutions: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Social Registry, Civil Registry and Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion to focus on first 1,000 days of child’s life and mother’s wellbeing (Ecuador); hosting an international cooperation roundtable to align efforts and harness resources (Ecuador); early warning system for nutrition security and nutrition surveillance including 24 Situation Rooms to monitor and prevent acute malnutrition in children under five years, including: focus on first 1,000 days, complementary food, school feeding, cash transfer for food, social canteens; and 7 Situation Rooms monitoring under five year child mortality – first case detected (Guatemala); strengthen school feeding (Costa Rica).

NUTRITIOUS FOOD AVAILABILITY AND COST

- **Challenges being faced:** Decreased availability of food due to lower agricultural outputs caused by lack of fertilizers (El Salvador), increase in the price of basic food basket products, which impacts quality of diets shifting to non-nutritious substitutes (all countries); basic food basket cost up 8.1% (Guatemala), including high increases for grains and beans such as white

maize (38.0%); yellow maize (26.7%); rice (15.6%); white beans (28.6%) and black beans (18.7%) (Guatemala); estimated 4.6 million people are food insecure (Guatemala); predicted 35% increase in food costs for products using urea fertilizer (Peru); decreased production of maize, rice, tomato, carrot, onion and potato will cause decreased availability by end 2022 and into 2023 (Peru).

- **Solutions being implemented:** One-year suspension of tariffs on 20 basic food basket items (e.g. oil, butter, rice, white maize, yellow maize and some animal feed, potatoes, bananas, cabbage) (El Salvador); fast-tracking food imports (El Salvador); early warning system set up for food and nutrition security (Guatemala); recommendation to declare national food crisis as a “humanitarian” situation (Honduras); advocate for diversified energy matrix, encourage domestic production and shorten the distribution and marketing chain so as to reduce final costs (Honduras); increase school feeding 3.5% to 4.2 million students (Peru); deliver 655,000 food baskets to 375,000 people (Peru); canteens will serve 700,000 vulnerable people (Peru); increase budget

by 66% to 196 million for expanded food subsidy programme (Peru); school feeding programmes (Costa Rica); raise awareness for local food products and production, and support families with information on reducing food loss (Costa Rica).

NATIONAL RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- **Challenges being faced:** Governments have financial gaps for crisis response (Ecuador, El Salvador); current costs of food/nutrition crisis come on top of cost of COVID-19 crisis and tropical storms Eta and Iota (Guatemala).
- **Solutions being implemented:** Global action at the regional level is being considered, namely through coalitions formed to advance the national food systems transformation pathway and Nutrition for Growth commitments (El Salvador); need more advocacy for support to countries that have greater vulnerabilities, including financial and technical assistance (El Salvador); develop a regional finance package to seek joint funding (El Salvador); national emergency plan for crises has been developed (Guatemala).

Potential support to SUN Countries



© UNICEF/Pintado - Ecuador

- South-south learning: sharing regional experiences (SUN countries) on innovations in addressing the effects of international food crises (Guatemala).
- Generating awareness raising materials on healthy eating, local and seasonal food consumption (Guatemala).
- Mobilizing additional resources and leveraging funding opportunities (Guatemala).
- Advocacy and governance for the implementation of the updated National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (Guatemala).
- Strengthen multisectoral and intergovernmental coordination mechanisms to address food insecurity, especially in periods of crisis associated with various adverse shocks (Peru).
- Promote the Food and Nutritional Security Policy, including the national food systems pathway, as an instrument to identify, delimit and dimension the public problem of food and nutritional insecurity, led by MIDAGRI (Peru).
- Promote the continuity of nutrition interventions for the reduction of anaemia and for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities – and avoid reversing the progress achieved (Peru).
- Position food and nutrition in emergency programmes not just crisis response (Costa Rica).
- Elevate nutrition to the highest political level, to increase potential external and internal donor and development partner support for effective nutrition actions and interventions (Costa Rica).