Crisis, Pandemic Precarity and Food Insecurity Among Migrant Households During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Quito, Ecuador

Mercedes Eguiguren, Taymi Milán and Cheryl Martens

Migration & Food Security (MiFOOD)

Paper No. 41

Series Editors: Sujata Ramachandran and Jonathan Crush

Abstract

This study examines the food insecurity experiences of Venezuelan migrants in Quito, Ecuador, within the broader context of the Venezuelan crisis, regional migration responses, and the structural precarity migrants face. Moving beyond the dominant "migration crisis" narrative, this paper adopts a crisis-living framework to analyze how protracted instability and pandemic precarity shape migrants' experiences. Based on a 2023 survey of migrants and refugees who lived in Quito throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the findings reveal that food insecurity is a persistent challenge, disproportionately affecting female-led and extended households. Key factors influencing food insecurity include job instability and deteriorating employment conditions, limited income diversification, and weak institutional support. Additionally, remittance dynamics -whether sending or not receiving remittances- contribute to economic strain, albeit to a lesser extent. While food insecurity remains prevalent among migrants in Quito, many perceive an improvement compared to their experiences during the acute crisis in Venezuela. This perception is shaped by their past experiences of scarcity, showing the importance of considering crisis-living and pandemic precarity within migrant trajectories.

Keywords

crisis, COVID-19 pandemic, food security, migrants, refugees, Venezuela, Ecuador

Suggested Citation

Eguiguren, M., Milán, T. and Martens, C. (2025). Crisis, Pandemic Precarity and Food Insecurity Among Migrant Households During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Quito, Ecuador. MiFOOD Paper No. 41, Waterloo.

Authors

Mercedes Eguiguren, Balsillie School of International Affairs and Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Canada: meguiguren@balsillieschool.ca

Taymi Milán, Institute for Advanced Studies in Inequalities, Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador: taymimilan@gmail.com

Cheryl Martens, Institute for Advanced Studies in Inequalities, Universidad San Francisco de Quito: cmartens@usfq.edu.ec

Cover Image

A wholesale food market in Quito, Ecuador, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo credit: NurPhoto SRL/Alamy

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada | Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

HUNGRY CITIES PARTNERSHIP

MiFOOD Network
GLOBAL MIGRATION & FOOD SECURITY

CIHR IRSC Canadian Institutes of Health Research | Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

This is the 41st Working Paper in the MiFOOD Working Paper series published by the Hungry Cities Partnership, an international network of cities and organizations focusing on building sustainable cities and urban food systems in the Global South. The seven-year collaborative MiFOOD Project is funded by a Partnership Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). A Canadian Institutes of Health Research grant no. W13-179968 funded the research for this paper.

© Authors

Published by the MiFOOD Network at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Introduction

Since 2018, migration from Venezuela has become the second-largest human displacement in the world, after that of Syria, and the most significant in Latin America in a century (Herrera, 2022; UNHCR, 2024). The countries comprising South America's Andean corridor (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile) accommodate the majority of Venezuelan migrants, with Ecuador ranking as the fifth-largest host nation, following Colombia, Peru, Brazil, and Chile. According to the most recent National Population and Housing Census in Ecuador, 231,686 Venezuelans lived in Ecuador in 2022, which represents roughly 55% of the country's immigrant population, followed by Colombians, who account for 23% of foreign-born individuals living in the country (World Bank, 2024). Ecuador's role as a destination for Venezuelan migrants has solidified in the last decade, driven by the deepening crisis in Venezuela, marked by political conflict, economic decline, rising insecurity, and transnational crime—factors exacerbated by the economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past decade, Venezuela has faced worsening food security, marked by severe deterioration in access, availability, and quality issues (Herrera-Cuenca et al., 2022). These challenges have led to a significant decline in the health and nutritional status of the population (Landaeta-Jiménez et al., 2018). As of 2018, Venezuelan out-migration gained rapid momentum due to the deterioration in living conditions. Food insecurity was a major driver of Venezuelan migration, with approximately 94% of Venezuelans struggling to afford basic and nutritious food. The availability of animal protein, essential minerals, and vitamins had drastically declined. As a result, an estimated 80% of Venezuelans faced food insecurity conditions (Landaeta-Jiménez et al., 2018), making food security one of the main factors impacting migration decisions. The worsening food crisis became a decisive factor for many Venezuelans, prompting more migrants travelling by foot across South American borders. Reports from the World Food Programme (WFP) in Colombia and the Working Group for Refugees and Migrants in Ecuador highlight that for many Venezuelan migrants, both in transit and settling in host countries, food insecurity was a key factor in their decision to leave the country and remained one of their most pressing concerns upon arrival in the destination country (GTRM, 2023; WFP, 2023).

Food insecurity, alongside broader social, economic, and legal precarity, has shaped the integration experiences of the Venezuelan diaspora across the region (Alfaro & Martens, 2025; Gandini et al., 2019; Vera-Espinoza et al., 2021). This situation worsened as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded. In major host countries across the region, Venezuelan migrants faced exclusion from social protection systems, xenophobic harassment, violence, and a general lack of state support (Pérez Martinez et al., 2021; Vera Espinoza et al., 2021).

In Ecuador, migrants struggled with a lack of subsistence mechanisms and institutional support to secure food during lockdowns and throughout the pandemic (Eguiguren & Martens, 2024; Martens et al., 2020; Mena Bonilla, 2024; Pérez Martinez et al., 2021). Between May 2020 and August 2021, Ecuador faced a critical period of food insecurity, with an estimated 13% of the resident population classified as severely food insecure, according to the WFP (2021). The growing threat of food insecurity in Ecuador during the pandemic was partly due to restrictions on food access imposed to curb the spread of the virus. However, the most severe impact came from the country's deep economic contraction, which disproportionately affected already impoverished groups, including informal workers, women, and youth. For migrants in Ecuador, the state retreated from upholding the rights granted to them by law, excluding non-Ecuadorians from specific key crisis relief measures, such as food basket distributions and cash transfers (Eguiguren et al., 2022; Eguiguren & Martens, 2024; Vera Espinoza et al., 2021).

Although experts predicted that the pandemic's impact on food security, both globally and in regions such as Latin America, would be extremely severe, potentially triggering a "hunger pandemic" (Beasley, 2020; Crush & Si, 2020); this issue has not yet received sufficient attention in Ecuador from academia, the government, or civil society. To date, there are few studies documenting how food security conditions deteriorated for the general population (Eguiguren & Martens, 2024; Hernández-Vásquez et al., 2022; Novoa-Sanzana et al., 2024), as well as for groups expected to be more vulnerable, such as the impoverished urban residents, those experiencing job insecurity or unemployment, seniors, children and adolescents, individuals already facing food insecurity, and migrants (Alfaro & Martens, 2025; Lee et al., 2024; Milán & Martens, 2023).

This paper seeks to address this knowledge gap by examining the social and political factors influencing the food security of Venezuelan migrants in Quito, with a particular focus on how crisis-living and pandemic precarity shape their experiences. Based on an extensive 2023 survey of 788 migrant households who resided in Quito during the COVID-19 pandemic, the study assesses food security conditions while analyzing how factors such as legal status, household composition, labour informality and impacts of COVID-19 contribute to food insecurity. Our findings reveal that migrants continue to experience significant food insecurity despite perceiving an improvement compared to the acute crisis in Venezuela. Household structure, particularly female-led and extended households, emerges as a central environment where the effects of precarity are most pronounced, as these families are more vulnerable to economic shocks and have fewer mechanisms to mitigate financial instability.

In the following sections, we first review recent literature that challenges the framing of contemporary Venezuelan migration as a "migration crisis" and examine the concepts of crisis-living and pandemic precarity as analytical lenses to understand migrant food insecurity. Then, we outline the study's methodology, explaining the survey design and data collection process. In the findings section, we analyze food insecurity among migrants in Quito, highlighting the intersections of legal status, employment precarity, household

structure, and remittance-sending. Finally, we discuss the broader implications of these findings, emphasizing the structural nature of migrant precarity and several dimensions of crisis-living drawn from the case of Venezuelans in Quito.

Venezuelan Migrants' Food Insecurity in Context: 'Migration Crisis' Policy, Crisis-Living, and Pandemic Precarity

Food insecurity has been a primary driver of Venezuelan migration since the country's economic and institutional crisis deepened in the mid-2010s. Economic recession, hyperinflation, and public service disruptions have led to widespread poverty, which reached 91% by 2017, severe shortages of food and medicine, as well as disruption in the provision of public services (Gandini et al., 2019). By 2017, life expectancy had dropped by 3.5 years, and eight out of ten Venezuelans were food insecure. Facing these conditions, many have migrated under dire circumstances, often without legal documentation, financial resources, or secure destinations (Gandini et al., 2019).

Given the scale and urgency of this exodus, it has frequently been framed as a "migration crisis." However, critical scholarship in Latin America has challenged this terminology, arguing that it de-historicizes migration patterns and portrays displacement as irrational and inherently destabilizing (De Genova et al., 2016; de Haas, 2023). Gandini et al. (2019) instead propose the term migration *in* crisis, highlighting how migration is both a consequence of crisis and a rational survival strategy. Beyond semantics, this distinction has crucial implications in terms of the political response to migration. While the term "migration crisis" was first used in European and North American contexts to justify restrictive migration policies, it has also shaped South American responses to Venezuelan migration, particularly among the Lima Group governments since 2019 (Villarreal, 2021).

Labelling the Venezuelan exodus as a crisis has served dual political purposes: first, to condemn the Maduro regime and emphasize its role in displacing its citizens; and second, to frame Venezuelan migration as a humanitarian emergency, which served as a platform for seeking international funding to address the displaced (Acosta et al., 2019). This approach ultimately resulted in the justification of temporary policies rather than developing long-term integration strategies (Gómez & Herrera, 2022; Vera-Espinoza et al., 2021). Across South America, "ad-hoc" responses multiplied, such as short-term visas and humanitarian aid. At the same time, states enacted restrictive measures, including administrative barriers to legal status, limited access to public services, and, in extreme cases, deportations (Gómez & Herrera, 2022; Vera-Espinoza et al., 2021). In Ecuador, despite its progressive legal framework for migration, the government has increasingly resorted to deterrence measures in response to the growing influx of Venezuelans and other Latin American migrants, reflecting broader regional trends of securitization of migration policy (Herrera & Cabezas Galvez, 2019).

At a different level of analysis, recent scholarship moves beyond the "migration crisis" framing to analyze how the crisis is embedded in the everyday lives of individuals, shaping their decisions long before migration occurs. Rather than being an isolated event, the crisis is an ongoing condition that structures daily survival strategies, affects personal and family well-being, and ultimately informs the decision to leave. For Venezuelans, the lived experience of the crisis was deeply marked by food insecurity, as access to food became one of the most tangible indicators of economic and social collapse. Long queues at supermarkets, severe shortages of essential food items, and the need to ration meals, often prioritizing children over adults, were everyday realities. Many migrants recall how the inability to secure food for their families was a decisive factor in their decision to leave (Alfaro & Martens, 2025; Brodzinsky, 2016). This notion of crisis as a persistent condition rather than a temporary disruption aligns with the concept of "everyday crisis-living" (Helliker et al., 2020, cited in Ramachandran et al., 2024), which highlights how individuals and families adapt to prolonged forms of instability, navigating multiple layers of precarity that shape both their past and present struggles and future decisions.

As these authors show, food (in)security is central to the experience of crisis-living. Sociological and anthropological studies in Latin America support this perspective, which show how access to food and its consumption shape the way people make sense of their difficult circumstances and vulnerabilities in different contexts of an acute decline in living conditions, scarcity, and heightened socioeconomic precarity (Cielo & Vera, 2023; Vera, 2013). For example, in their study about livelihood strategies in the Ecuadorian Amazon, Cielo & Vera (2023) argue that communities' relationship to food shapes their crisis experience.

However, the experience of crisis does not necessarily end with migration; instead, it transforms as migrants experience new vulnerabilities shaped by exclusionary policies and socioeconomic inequalities in their host societies. As is common in South-South migration contexts (Chikanda et al., 2020; Ramachandran et al. 2022), Venezuelans fleeing these conditions often find themselves trapped in new cycles of risk and uncertainty in host countries (Herrera, 2022; Gandini et al., 2019). As many scholars have noted, the precarious conditions that a vast majority of migrants face in host countries are often shared by large segments of the national population (Blouin & Zamora Gómez, 2022; Herrera 2022; Gómez & Herrera, 2022). Deep structural inequalities have long marked Latin America, and while the early 21st century saw some progress in poverty reduction and improved living conditions, most social indicators have regressed since the mid-2010s (Oxhorn & Jouve-Martín, 2017). The COVID-19 pandemic deepened these pre-existing fragilities, intensifying economic insecurity and socioeconomic vulnerabilities across the region (Ocampo, 2021).

At the same time, the limitation of legal pathways for authorized migration has played a significant role in the precarious conditions that migrants experience. The effects of irregular migration status or lack of documentation,

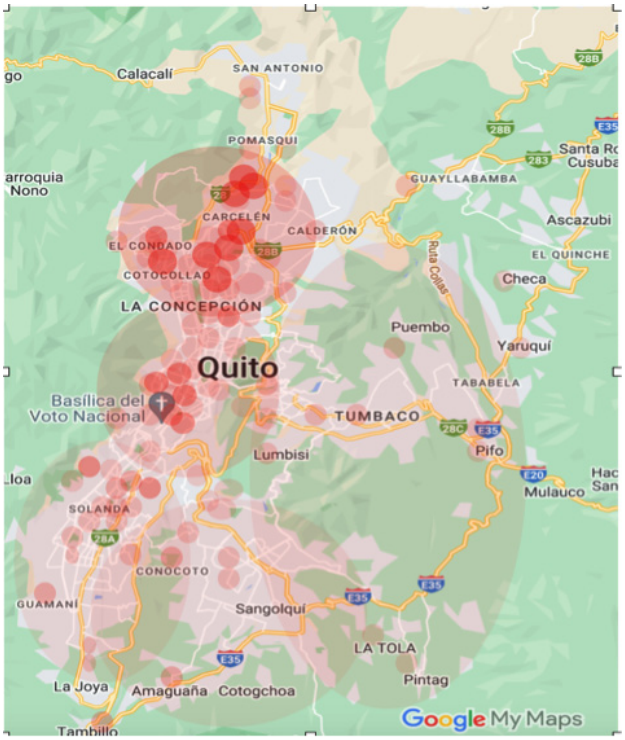
employment restrictions, and xenophobia relegate many to informal, subsistence-level jobs, while barriers in access to healthcare, education, and housing further limit their opportunities for socioeconomic security. By examining how policy measures perpetuate insecurity and exclusion for migrants, critical scholars argue that states not only provide insufficient or limited responses to migration but also actively contribute to the production of migrant irregularity, drawing on De Genova's concept of the "legal production of illegality" (De Genova, 2002). This body of literature contends that the persistent precarity migrants face in terms of labour conditions, housing, access to education and healthcare, and, more broadly, their inability to establish long-term plans, is not solely a result of structural economic conditions in host countries (Álvarez Velasco 2021; Gómez & Herrera, 2022; Hiemstra, 2023). Rather, it is aggravated by the lack of legal status—or, as some scholars describe it, by the process of being "irregularized" (Álvarez Velasco 2021).

When examining the impact of COVID-19 on Zimbabwean migrants' food security and broader living conditions in South Africa, Ramachandran et al. (2022) argue that the concept of pandemic precarity captures the persistence of vulnerability in migrant households. This concept accounts for the pre-existing inequalities that shaped migrants' experiences before the pandemic, leaving them particularly exposed to its effects. In the case of Venezuelans in South America, and specifically in Ecuador, we argue that pandemic precarity not only highlights the pre-existing conditions affecting migrants prior to COVID-19 but also requires a broader examination of structural inequalities in both sending and host countries, as well as the persisting effects of migrant irregularity. This approach helps reveal how specific population segments were particularly vulnerable to the pandemic's socioeconomic consequences.

Methodology

To examine the food security among migrant and refugee households in Quito during the COVID-19 pandemic, we conducted a survey with individuals over the age of 18 who had resided in the city during that period. We recruited a total of 788 heads of households through two non-governmental organizations (NGOs) supporting migrants. We used their contact lists to identify and contact eligible participants. The survey was administered between August and September 2023 using online questionnaires hosted on the Kobo Toolbox platform. To ensure participant safety and accessibility, most surveys were conducted in person at a local NGO, while 70 surveys were completed by telephone to accommodate individuals with mobility limitations. A team of eight enumerators, including five migrants, facilitated the data collection. All respondents received a food gift in appreciation of their time and participation in the study. Figure 1 presents the geographical distribution of migrant and refugee households.

Figure 1: Distribution of Migrant and Refugee Households in the Metropolitan District of Quito



Participants' Household Demographic Profile

Among the 788 surveyed household heads, 58% were men, and 42% were women (Figure 2). Marital status varied, with half of the respondents identifying as single, while 47% were in a conjugal relationship, married or in a common-law union. A smaller proportion were divorced or widowed. This finding mirrors the statistics on migration from the 2022 Census, where 47% of the Venezuelan population reported their marital status as single, while approximately 48% declared a common-law union or married status (World Bank, 2024).

In line with broader migration trends, particularly for Venezuelan migrants in Latin America (World Bank, 2024), the sample displayed higher formal education levels than the general population in the host country. More than half (52%) had completed high school, while a substantial proportion had pursued higher education. Over one-third (35%) of the study sample held university degrees. 5% had completed graduate studies and held advanced degrees. However, as will be discussed later in the section on employment conditions, these relatively high levels of education and advanced qualifications did not easily lead to better labour market opportunities for this migrant cohort.

The survey also examined the length of migrants' stay in Ecuador, revealing that most had been in the country for a relatively extended period. 88% had resided in Ecuador for two to five years, while 9% had lived there for over six years, indicating a pattern of long-term settlement. In contrast, only 3% had arrived within the past year.

Housing conditions further contextualize the socioeconomic situation of surveyed households. Nearly all respondents (98%) reported having access to a food preparation space, yet the overwhelming majority (95%) lived in rented accommodations. This reliance on rental housing suggests potential vulnerabilities in terms of housing stability, as limited access to homeownership may contribute to long-term precarity. The 2022 Census indicates that the Venezuelan population in Ecuador often experience overcrowded housing conditions (World Bank 2022). Given that most households in our survey consist of 2 to 4 people, this likely reflects housing sharing among multiple households to reduce rental costs. As such, while most respondents reported having access to a food preparation space, it does not necessarily imply that these spaces are adequate or conducive to regular meal preparation.

Household Size and Structure

In our survey, households typically consisted of two to four members, with an average household size of three (Figure 3). The household size in the sample reflects broader demographic trends in Latin America, where declining fertility rates, an increase in single-person households, and a growing number of childless couples have contributed to a shift toward smaller household structures (Esteve et al., 2025; Marquez, 2024). However, single-parent households, particularly those headed by women, remain prevalent. It is also worth noting that, at the national level, Venezuelan households tend to be slightly larger than Ecuadorian households, with average sizes of 3.4 and 3.3 members, respectively (World Bank 2024).

Figure 2: Heads of Household by Gender and Age

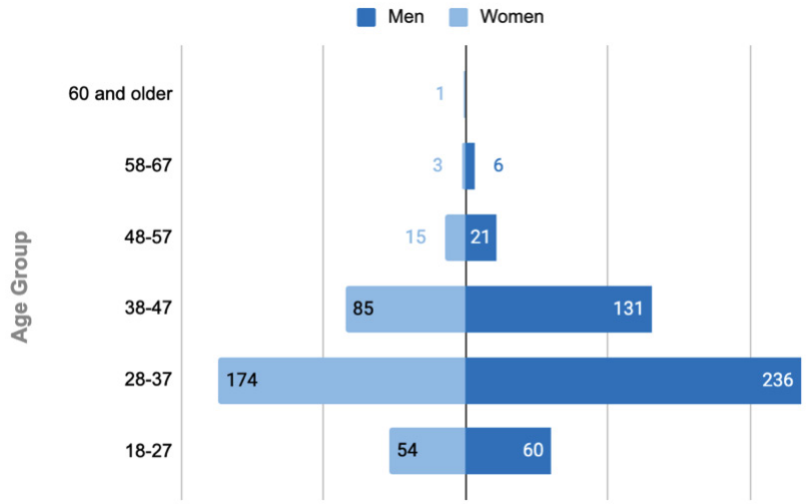
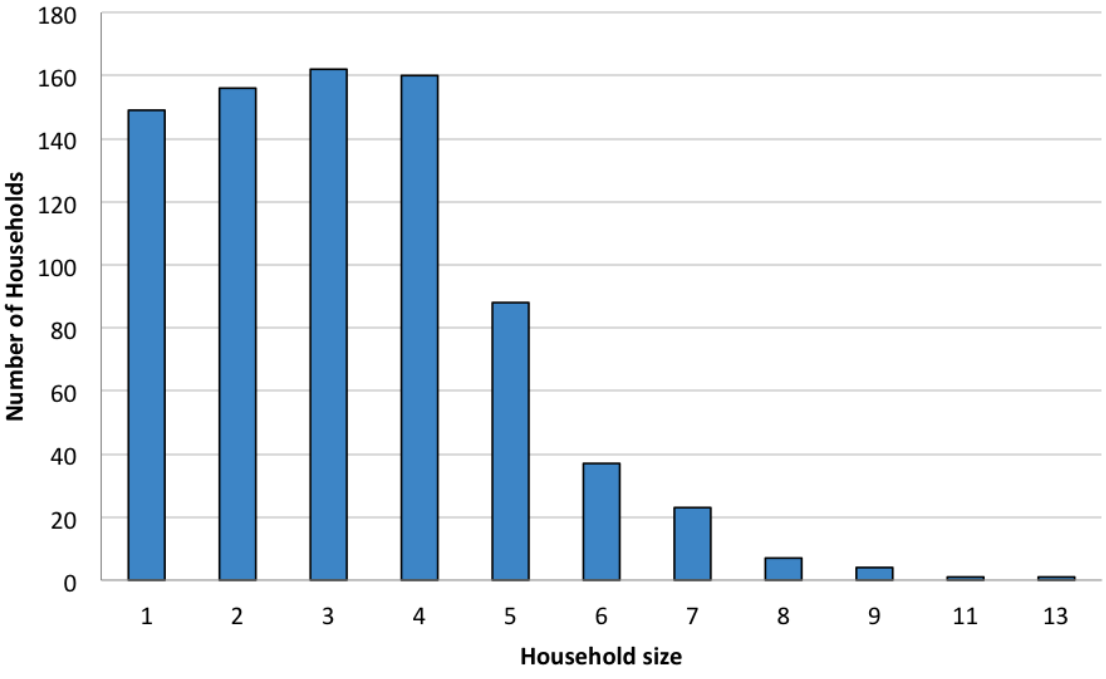


Figure 3: Household Size by Number of Members



The most common family structure was the nuclear or two-parent household, which accounted for 35% of the sample (Table 1). Single-person households comprised 18%, while extended families (including multiple generations or relatives such as aunts, uncles, and cousins) constituted 17% of the study sample. A variant of this household arrangement is the composite family, accounting for 1.5% of cases in our sample.[1] Single-parent households represented 14% of the sample, with the vast majority (98%) being single mothers responsible for children and other family members. Couples without children accounted for 14% of the sample.

Pandemic Precarity: Immigration Status and Employment Conditions

The surveyed population had higher rates of regularization compared to the broader migrant population in Ecuador, where only about 30% have obtained legal status. In our survey, more than half of respondents (61%) held a valid visa, while 39% lacked authorized immigration status. Among those with regularized status, 45% have accessed two types of visas specifically created for Venezuelans since 2019: the Temporary Residency Visa for Venezuelan Citizens (VIRTE) held by 33% of respondents, and the Exception Visa for Humanitarian Reasons (VERHU), held by 12%. Smaller segments of the sample had work visas (5%), family visas (2%), or refugee status (5%). 16% held other immigration documents, including permanent visas or the Andean Migrant Visa, known as "the Andean Letter" (Table 2). The Andean Migration Card *Tarjeta Andina de Migraciones* (TAM) is an official document that regulates the right to free movement of citizens from member countries of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) across the territory of any member state. CAN members are Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. Venezuela was a member of the CAN until 2006 but its citizens can still apply for the Andean card for transit to any of the Andean countries, complying with the established requirements (Comunidad Andina, 2025).

Among the 304 respondents with irregular status, 63% had attempted to participate in government regularization programs, while 37% had not. The primary barriers preventing migrants from obtaining legal status included the lack of necessary documentation (58%), the high costs associated with the process (26%), and limited information on how to navigate the regularization system (21%). Additionally, 6% reported other obstacles, such as outstanding immigration fines or a lack of interest in seeking legal status in Ecuador.

Several studies highlight legal status as a key factor shaping migrants' experiences in Ecuador (Pérez Martínez et al., 2021; Célleri, 2024; Malo, 2020). While the majority of surveyed held VIRTE or VERHU visas, these instruments are temporary and do not grant permanent residence. Gómez & Herrera (2022) argue that these visas reflect Ecuador's shift toward ad-hoc migration policies, increasing access barriers, widening disparities between documented and undocumented migrants, and limiting pathways to long-term integration.

Table 1. Household Structure

Household structure	Frequency (n=)
Nuclear	280
Extended	131
Composite	12
Single-parent*	113
Childless couples	110
Single person	142
Total	788

** For this data, we assume the results are applicable to single-mother households, as 91.2% of the 113 households in this category were headed by women. Only 8.8% (10 households) had a male head, a proportion too small to significantly impact the overall findings*

Table 2: Type of Migration Document Held by Head of Household

Type of migration document	Frequency (n=)
Exception for Humanitarian Reasons Visa (VERHU)	91
Exceptional Temporary Residence Visa for Venezuelan Citizens (VIRTE)	261
Work Visa	38
Family Protection Visa	20
Refugee or asylum seeker	12
Refugee	29
Permanent Resident	-
Others	33
None (migrants without authorized migration status)	304
Total	788

Remittance-Sending

Among the surveyed population, 43% reported sending remittances either within Ecuador (2%) or abroad (41%) (Figure 4). The frequency of remittance-sending varied, with 50% of household heads sending remittances several times a year, 37% monthly, 8% biweekly, and 5% weekly. The primary remittance channels included bank transfers and Western Union, while some relied on informal networks such as friends or family members. Nearly half (47%) respondents indicated that remittance-sending negatively affected their household budget. However, the majority (73.8%) believed these contributions improved the receiving household's access to food. As we will see next, the extent of this impact varied depending on family structure.

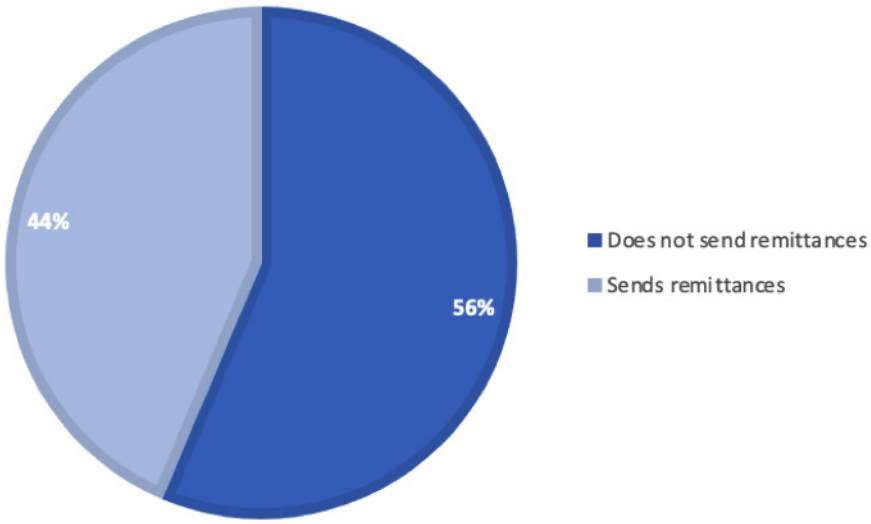
When considering remittance behaviour and perceptions across household structures, the survey reveals differences in financial strain and impact on recipients' food security (Table 3). Couples without children (54.5%) are the most likely to send remittances, while single-mother households (28.3%) report the lowest rate. Financial strain is highest among single-mother households, with nearly three-quarters stating that remittances impact their household budget. In contrast, composite families and single-person households report the least financial burden. While different family structures experience financial strain due to remittances, the vast majority recognize a positive effect on the food security of the recipient's household. Composite families and single persons overwhelmingly report this benefit, while couples without children are the most likely to state that remittances do not improve food access for recipients. Despite the economic burden, the continued commitment to remittance-sending among these households can be understood in the context of the severe crisis in Venezuela, where most respondents' families reside. Following Ramachandran et al. (2022, 2024), remittance-sending is a key transnational dimension of everyday crisis-living for migrant communities whose countries of origin are facing protracted crises. The surveyed migrant families, even when facing precarious conditions, do not stop sharing the burden of the Venezuelan crisis by supporting their family members back home, recognizing the crucial impact this has on their food security.

Employment Precarity and Impact of COVID-19 on Migrant Households

The findings indicate high economic participation among migrants, with 91% of household heads engaged in some form of employment over the past six months, aligning with previous research (Célleri, 2024; Kaplan et al., 2023; World Bank 2024). However, employment conditions remain precarious despite these high labour market participation rates. Informal work was the most common form of employment, accounting for 44% of respondents (Table 4), while 15% were self-employed or entrepreneurs. Given that self-employment in Ecuador often encompasses small businesses, street vending, small workshops, and various forms of gig work—activities typically driven by necessity rather than entrepreneurial choice—at least 59% of the sample are part of the informal sector. Formal employment was significantly less common, with only one-third of respondents (33%) holding formal jobs. Among them, 27% had temporary contracts, and just 6% had permanent contracts. Meanwhile, 4% were unemployed and actively seeking work, 3% were engaged in home-based care or domestic labour, and a tiny fraction (0.12%) was retired.

Migrants faced multiple barriers to employment, with the most significant being the lack of legal documentation, affecting 48% of respondents. Additionally, 26% reported experiencing discrimination based on nationality, while 16% reported having experienced age-related discrimination.

Figure 4: Remittance-Sending Among Households (% share)



For 95% of respondents, the pandemic significantly worsened their economic situation. While unemployment already affected 13% of respondents before the pandemic, 75% of the households experienced the economic shocks of the pandemic. Of those whose jobs were affected (593 heads of households), 31% lost their jobs, 19% saw their working hours decrease, 21% saw their wages decrease, 2% saw their working hours increase (Table 5). 40% could not continue working due to restrictions on public spaces, such as streets. An additional 2% were forced to quit their jobs.

The economic effects of the pandemic in Ecuador have not been reversed. In fact, the country has had one of the worst economic recoveries in the region, due, in part, to pre-pandemic economic weaknesses. There are still high levels of contraction in the economy (Tutiven et al., 2024), with repercussions on the value of the basic food basket, food prices, and the possibility of stable and permanent access to the employment market.

Table 3: Impact of Remittance-Sending on Migrant Households and their Recipients by Household Structure

Household structure	Sends remittances (%)	Impact on family budget (%)	Positive impact on recipient's access to food (%)	No impact on recipient's access to food (%)
Nuclear	40.7	54.4	71	17.7
Extended	45.8	50	73.3	26.7
Composite	58.3	71.4	60	40
Single-mother	28.3	71.9	73.9	21.7
Childless couples	54.5	33.3	60	40
Single person	50	28.2	100	0

Table 4: Employment Status of Heads of Household by Sex

Employment status of the head of household	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Self-employed / Entrepreneur (business owner)	78	45	123
Informal employment	192	152	344
Formal salaried employment (with permanent contract)	29	22	51
Formal salaried employment (with temporary contract)	144	69	213
Unemployed (Looking for work)	9	22	31
Retired/Pensioned	1		1
Unpaid domestic and care work	2	23	25
Total	455	333	788

Table 5: Employment and Household Income Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Impacts*	Total	Percentage**
Loss of employment	247	31
Reduction of working hours	147	19
Salary cuts	164	21
Increase in working hours	16	2
Impossibility or difficulty to work due to restrictive measures	317	40
Quit job for fear of contracting the virus	16	2
Unemployed before the pandemic	100	13

** Multiple choice*
*** Over N=788*

Household Food Insecurity During the Pandemic

Food security is a fundamental measure of well-being, as it directly influences health, nutrition, and overall quality of life, and thus, food insecurity needs to be considered a central component of pandemic precarity (Crush & Ramachandran, 2023; Ramachandran & Crush, 2023; Ramachandran et al., 2022). The findings of this study indicate that food insecurity was a widespread issue among migrants in Ecuador, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many households reported reducing both portion sizes and the frequency of meals due to financial hardship.

In our study, we measured household food insecurity using a modified version of the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) questionnaire. We focused on food shortages, the inability to afford balanced meals, and experiences of hunger, while omitting two questions from the standardized questionnaire.[2]

62% of the sampled migrant population indicated that in the last 4 weeks, they had enough food to feed their family, compared to 38% who experienced food shortages (Table 6). Due to current food costs, 56% of households had to go without certain types of food. The reported frequency of these events was as follows: 56% experienced them about once a month, 14% on a few days each week (though not every day), 11% about once a week, 3% more than once a month but less than once a week, and 2% reported experiencing them daily.

The survey results illustrate that half of participating households experienced some form of food insecurity in the near past. The highest level of concern was related to potential food shortages (68%). 43% of households had run out of food, and 58% had access to a diet based on low diversity.

Regarding food intake, 46% of respondents said they had to consume less food than usual in the past four weeks. 39% of respondents reported reducing the frequency of meals during the day because they did not have enough food. 28% of participants reported going without food on one or more occasions in the past four weeks due to a lack of resources to buy food, and 29% went to bed hungry at some point because they did not have enough food. The mean score based on the modified HFIAS metric was ~5.19, showing moderate to high levels of food insecurity. Approximately 53% of households had very low scores (0 and 3), indicating that they never or rarely experienced food insecurity. Just over 10% of the surveyed population had scores between 3.1 and 6.0, indicating that they had mild or sporadic experiences of food insecurity. Approximately 19% had scores between 9.01 and 15, suggesting a moderate level of food insecurity. Finally, 4% of households experienced severe food insecurity, with scores between 15.01 and 21.

In addition to the food access indicators already discussed, we applied the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), a widely used tool for assessing the variety of foods consumed within a household as a proxy for food access. It involves assessing the variety and diversity of foods consumed during a specific period by determining the foods included in the household diet. Based on this measure, a list of predefined food groups was used for households to identify whether they had consumed them in the last 24 hours. The greater the diversity in the range of food groups consumed, the higher the Household Dietary Diversity Score (0-12) (Swindale & Bilinsky, 2006).

The day before the survey, 98% of the respondents had consumed food. The surveyed households show average levels of dietary diversity, with significant variability in the consumption of food groups (Table 7). Particularly noteworthy is the high consumption of carbohydrates (93%) compared to other foods with higher protein content, such as beans (29%), fish and seafood (16%). The HDDS performance averages 5.6 and is higher for childless couples, single-person households and nuclear families.

Table 6: Households' Experience of Food Access in the Last Four Weeks

Last four weeks	Positive responses (A little/ Sometimes/Often)	Negative responses (Never)	Food insecure households (%)
Was your household concerned about running out of food?	533	255	67.6
Has your household ever run out of food?	335	453	42.5
Did your household rely on a diet with little variety?	459	329	58.3
Did you or another adult in your household eat less than you should have?	365	423	46.3
Did you eat fewer meals in a day due to a lack of food?	308	480	39.1
Did your household run out of food due to a lack of resources?	225	563	28.6
Did you go to bed hungry because there was not enough food?	227	561	28.8

Table 7: Household Consumption Ratio of the Different Food Groups	
Types of food consumed the previous day	**Respondents reporting consumption (%)**
Rice, *arepas* (flat bread), noodles, bread or any other food made from rice, wheat, corn or maize	93
Potatoes, carrots, onions, sweet potatoes, *ocas**, *mellocos***, or any other food made from roots or tubers	30
Other vegetables	59
Fruits	45
Meats including veal, pork, beef, veal, chicken, duck, lamb etc.	64
Eggs	54
Fish and seafood	16
Beans, lentils, broad beans, *chochos****	29
Milk, yogurt, cheese or other dairy product	49
Any food made with vegetable oils	26
Any food containing animal fat or butter	22
Sugar or honey	47
Condiments, tea or coffee	52
Canned or frozen foods (including sardines, tuna, soups, etc.)	24
Snacks in bags such as chips, chocolates, cookies, candy, lollipops	20
Nuts and foods made from peanuts, walnuts, almonds, sesame, pecans	5

** The oca (Oxalis tuberosa Molina) is an Andean tuber, native to the south of Peru, grown between 3200 and 3900 meters above sea level. It contains carbohydrates and vitamin C (Roca et al. 2007).*

*** The melloco (ullucus tuberosus) is an Andean tuber, native to Ecuador, grown at high altitudes, and contains water, carbohydrates, fiber, proteins, and essential minerals like potassium and iron (Pacheco et al. 2020).*

**** The chocho (Lupinus mutabilis Sweet) is an Andean legume characterized by its high-quality protein content (Chalampuente-Flores et al., 2021). Oca, melloco, and chocho are traditional components of the Ecuadorian diet, especially in the highland region where Quito is located. Although their cultivation and consumption have declined over time, they remain popular market items; particularly chocho, which is the main ingredient in several street food dishes.*

Perception of Food Price Increase During the Pandemic

Overall, participants in the study survey considered that the price of food increased during the pandemic compared to the period before COVID-19 (Table 8). 48% reported spending up to twice as much as before the pandemic, 27% reported spending more than twice as much, while 18% reported spending the same, and 7% reported spending less than before 2020. However, it is important to note that this reported decrease in spending may also be related to the decrease in available income due to reduced work opportunities during the pandemic. These perceptions align with available macroeconomic data, which show an inflationary trend in Ecuador's consumer price index between 2018 and 2023, with an overall increase of 6.12% (Pilco Córdova, 2024). Although formal estimates indicated that average household income remained sufficient to cover the rising cost of the Basic Family Basket during those years (Pilco Córdova, 2024), in practice, few households earned two incomes at the level of the Unified Basic Wage. In 2020, an estimated 3 out of 10 households could afford the Basic Family Basket (Gobierno de Ecuador, 2020), highlighting that the increase in the cost of essential goods and services places significant pressure on household economies in Ecuador.

Table 8: Perceptions of the Cost of Food After the COVID-19 Pandemic		
Comparing household food expenditure before January 2020 with current expenditure	**Responses**	**Percentage**
Spending more than before (up to double)	377	47.84
It spends much more than before (more than double)	212	26.90
Expenditure remains roughly the same as before	143	18.15
Spending less than before	53	6.73
Other	3	0.38
Total	788	100

Household Composition and Patterns of Food Insecurity

Household composition plays a crucial role in shaping the experience and severity of food insecurity, as reflected in both food access metrics and dietary diversity. Disaggregating the data by family type reveals how factors such as household size, caregiving responsibilities, and income distribution contribute to disparities that disproportionately affect extended and female-led households.

Food insecurity and dietary diversity patterns vary considerably across household structures. As shown in Table 9, extended and single-mother households exhibit the highest levels of food insecurity, with average scores of 8.0 and 7.0, respectively, on the household food insecurity metric. These results align with broader patterns of economic vulnerability identified elsewhere in the analysis. Nuclear households follow with a moderate score of 5.6, while composite households appear relatively less affected (3.2). Childless couples and single-person households reported the lowest food insecurity levels, with average scores of 2.8 and 2.0, respectively.

In contrast, dietary diversity, measured using a 12-group HDDS scale, presents a somewhat inverse pattern. Childless couples and single-person households report the highest diversity in food consumption (6.5 and 6.2, respectively), followed closely by nuclear households (6.2). Meanwhile, extended and single-mother households show the lowest scores (5.0 and 5.3), suggesting that these groups face greater barriers to food access and struggle to maintain varied diets.

According to these measurements, our data reveals that extended and single-mother families are the most vulnerable within the sample. Several structural and economic factors captured in the survey may explain this situation, particularly household composition, income stability, and access to external support (Table 10).

Extended families have an average of 4.78 members, making them one of the largest household types. While composite families also have a significant number of members, the key difference lies in the age distribution. In extended families, 1.71% of the members are children, whereas in composite families, only 0.7% are minors.[3] More children in the household implies greater food needs and a lower capacity for income generation compared to households where adults are the majority. In composite families, multiple members are more likely to contribute financially, whereas in extended families, the economic burden falls on fewer adults responsible for the household's support. Additionally, extended families may perceive higher food needs due to the greater presence of children, as there may be a heightened sense of urgency to ensure proper nutrition. As a result, food insecurity might be felt more intensely in these households.

A crucial factor that exacerbates food insecurity in the surveyed population is the experience of economic shocks, which have persisted into the post-pandemic period and continue to shape the crisis conditions facing migrant households. Figure 5 illustrates the three most frequently reported reasons that limited household access to sufficient food over the previous six months, disaggregated by household structure. Employment loss or wage reduction and declining household income were the most cited factors, with up to 65% of extended and nuclear households reporting these barriers. Single-mother households also showed high exposure to income-related disruptions, though to a slightly lesser extent. Rising food prices affected all groups, with nearly 60% of nuclear and single-mother households reporting this as a key constraint. Notably, theft of money or food was a significant factor only among single-person house-

Table 9: Relationship Between Household Structure and Food Security Metrics

Type of family	Average household food insecurity metrics	Average HDDS
Nuclear	5.6	6.2
Extended	8.0	5.0
Composite	3.2	5.8
Single-parent (Female-led)	7.0	5.3
Childless couples	2.8	6.5
Single person	2.0	6.2

Table 10: Household Composition and Head of Household Characteristics by Family Type

Household composition	Avg. number of children	Avg. number of adults	Male head of household (%)	Female head of household (%)
Nuclear	1.7	2.0	73.2	26.8
Extended	1.7	3.1	48.1	51.9
Composite	1	3.7	83.3	16.7
Single-mother	1.6	1.1	8.8	91.2
Childless couples	0	1.6	75.5	23.7

holds, appearing among their top three reported barriers. In contrast, fewer than 5% of remittance-sending households viewed this obligation as limiting food access. Overall, only 1.4% of all households reported no barriers to food access, suggesting the widespread nature of food insecurity in this population.

Table 11 shows that the lack of additional income sources remains a critical issue for migrant households. A substantial 83.3% of composite households report no other sources of income, making them among the most financially dependent on a single revenue stream. Nuclear families face similar constraints, with 71.4% lacking additional resources. Despite their economic precarity, single-mother households demonstrate greater income diversification, with 57.5% lacking other sources of income. This result suggests that, in addition to experiencing labour and financial instability, extended and composite households may have fewer coping mechanisms, compounding their vulnerability to food insecurity.

Remittances are most frequently received by single-mother households (9.7%), followed by single-person (7.7%) and childless couples (5.5%). Extended (3.1%) and nuclear (1.8%) families report much lower access and composite households report receiving no remittances.

Access to government transfers is nearly nonexistent across household structures, with no group reaching even 1% coverage. Only 0.9% of single-mother households and 0.7% of nuclear households reported receiving state support, while most structures reported no access. These figures underscore the limited role of public assistance in alleviating food insecurity for migrant households in the post-pandemic context.

In contrast, NGO assistance appears to play a more significant role, particularly for single-mother households (22.1%), childless couples (22.7%), and single-person households (19.7%). Another key resource is borrowing from third parties, which is more frequently used than formal financial credit in most household types. This result suggests a reliance on informal networks over institutional channels for managing financial stress.

These patterns reinforce that, although single-mother households face substantial challenges, they appear better connected to formal assistance networks than extended or composite households.

Figure 5: Top Reasons for Limited Food Affordability by Household Structure

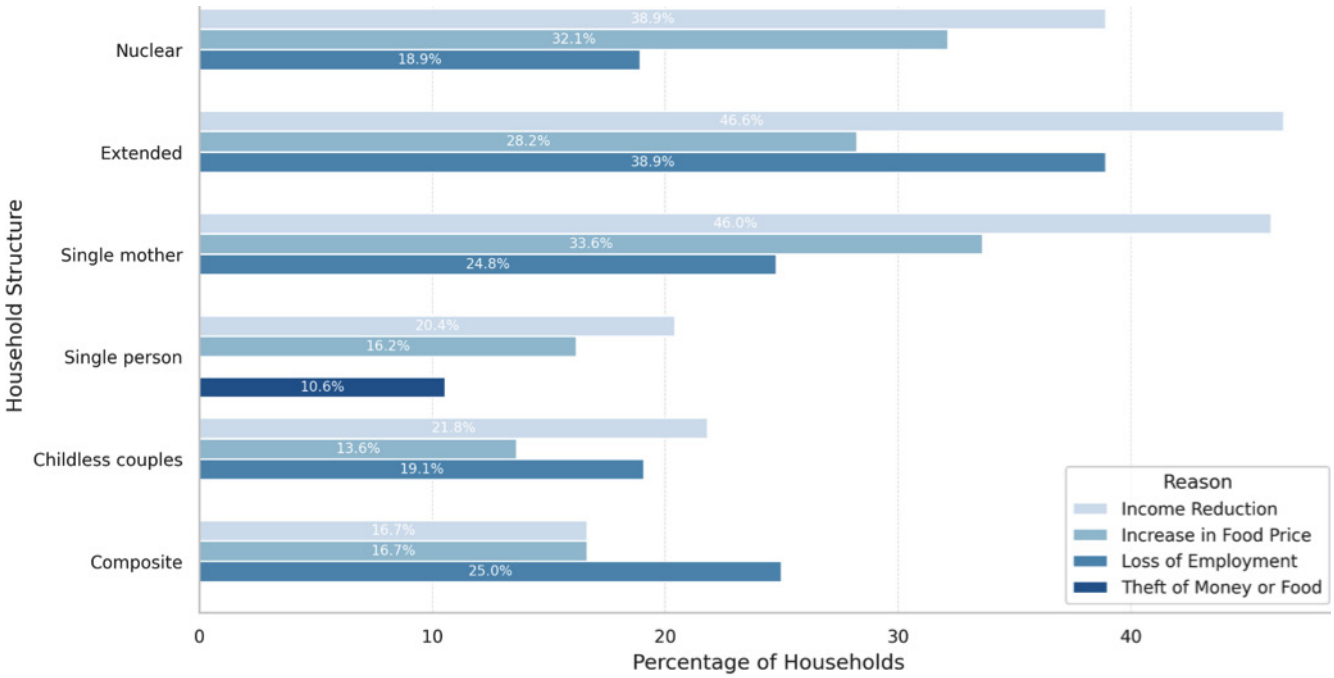


Table 11: Access to Additional Resources and Supports in the Previous Month by Household Structure							
Household structure	**No additional income sources (%)**	**Receives international remittances (%)**	**Access to credit from financial institutions (%)**	**Loan from third parties (%)**	**Street begging (%)**	**Receives government assistance (%)**	**Receives NGO assistance (%)**
Nuclear	71.4	1.4	3.2	16.4	0.7	0.7	14.6
Extended	79.4	3.1	2.3	11.5	0.8	0.0	9.9
Composite	83.3	0.0	0.0	8.3	8.3	0.0	0.0
Single-mother	57.5	9.7	2.7	13.3	0.0	0.9	22.1
Childless couple	53.6	5.5	5.5	26.4	0.0	0.0	22.7
Single-person	67.6	7.7	3.5	11.3	1.4	0.0	19.7

Migrant Perceptions of the Impact of Migration on their Food Security

In considering migrants' perceptions of how migration has affected their food security, their prior crisis experience in Venezuela emerges as a crucial reference point. Most respondents perceive that living in Quito has had a significant impact on their household nutrition compared to their situation before migrating. 39% of participants perceived this change as very positive and another 50% considered it positive (Figure 6). Based on our findings, it is clear that experiences of food insecurity significantly shape migrants' sense of well-being, making food access a central dimension of how they evaluate the outcomes of their migration.

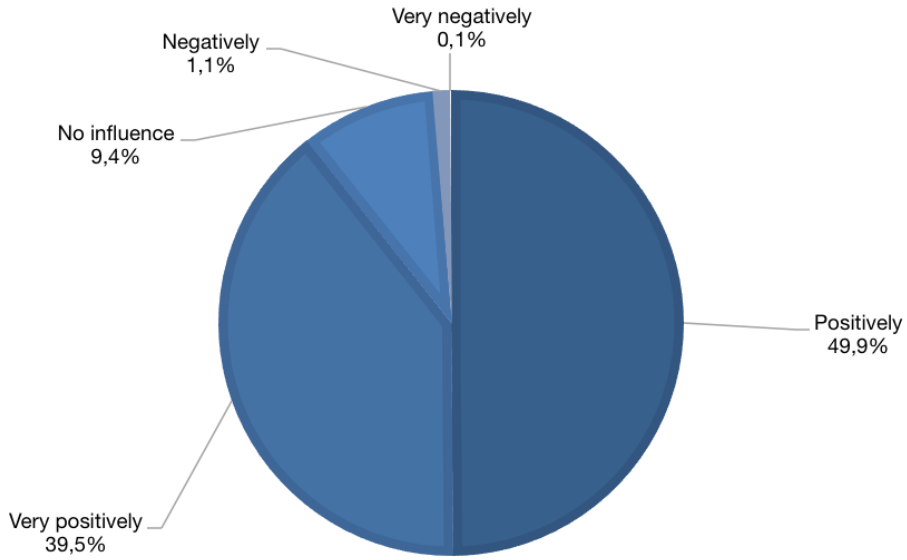
As our previous qualitative research found, some migrants perceived the rapid and severe deterioration of living conditions in Venezuela as a shock comparable to, or even more critical than, the pandemic (Alfaro & Martens, 2025). In this context, migration to Ecuador represented an improvement in food access and the only viable path for migrants to seek better overall well-being. A closer examination of how they perceive this improvement in relation to food security reveals nuances in their understanding of the relationship between their new realities as migrants and their food security.

The most cited reasons for improvement highlight factors related to the food environment in Quito rather than individual economic stability: food accessibility (57%), proximity and availability (50%), and greater diversity of foods, including fruits, vegetables, animal products, and cereals (44%). However, affordability remains a challenge, as evidenced by 23% of respondents noting that they could buy more food for the same amount of money –suggesting that while food is more available, accessible, and diverse, economic constraints still shape their food security.

Among personal economic factors, the most frequently cited was an improvement in the household head's income (39%), reflecting the increased likelihood of securing some form of income after migration. In contrast, overall household income improvement was cited by only 10%, reinforcing that while some individuals may achieve better earnings, this does not necessarily translate into broader financial stability for the entire household. Less frequently mentioned reasons – such as having more time to prepare and eat food (10%) and receiving food donations (3%) – point to limited access to additional sources of support beyond employment.

These patterns suggest that while migrants overwhelmingly recognize an improvement in food security following

Figure 6: Perceived Impact of Migration on Household Food Security



migration, this is driven more by their assessment of better conditions in the host context than by a fundamental improvement in their financial situation. In other words, their recognition of improved food security does not necessarily indicate a resolution of their economic vulnerability but rather an appreciation of greater food access and diversity in Quito compared to the crisis they faced in Venezuela.

Conclusion

This study highlights that food insecurity among Venezuelan migrants in Quito is deeply intertwined with broader conditions of precarity, shaped by legal status, labour conditions, and economic instability. Food insecurity became one of the most tangible manifestations of the Venezuelan crisis, and the largest mass displacement in Latin America's modern history, a response to it. However, as our study of Venezuelans in Quito shows, migrants have not escaped precarity, as they found new structural constraints that limit their access to stable employment, social services, and legal protections, exacerbating their vulnerability to food insecurity.

Legal status emerges as a critical factor influencing food security, as migrants with irregular status face exclusion from labour protections and public support systems, leaving them reliant on unstable and informal employment. In other words, legal precarity reinforces economic vulnerability, undermining their ability to secure adequate access to food. These findings align with critical perspectives on migration governance in response to the Venezuelan exodus, arguing that migration policies regulate movement and actively contribute to the production of irregularity and precarity.

Labour conditions further shape migrants' food security and reveal broader patterns of pandemic precarity. Despite high economic participation, most surveyed migrants have found no other option than informal work, where job instability, low wages, and lack of social protections restrict their capacity to maintain food security. As observed in other South-South migration contexts, our study demonstrates that economic disruptions during the pandemic pushed vulnerable and at-risk migrant workers in Quito further into labour precarity, negatively impacting their access to food and other essential resources.

Furthermore, our findings suggest that the combined effects of legal and labour precarity, as well as limited income sources, disproportionately impact extended and female-led households. This result aligns with existing evidence demonstrating that female-led households are particularly vulnerable during periods of crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic, due to compounded economic and caregiving responsibilities. These findings highlight the gendered nature of crisis-living, as households where women are overburdened with care work or where there are apparent care imbalances, with more dependents requiring support, experience heightened precarity. It is also reflected in their crisis-living strategies and particular challenges.

This dynamic is especially pronounced in Venezuelan migrant households, where the dependency structure takes on certain forms. These households tend to include a higher proportion of dependent children compared to Ecuadorian households, which more commonly include minors and older adults. While both household types must navigate caregiving demands, the presence of older adults in Ecuadorian families often contributes to household functioning, relieving working-age adults of specific caregiving responsibilities. In contrast, Venezuelan households are less likely to benefit from such intergenerational support, underscoring how the complex interplay between family structure, care responsibilities, income security, and migration status shapes overall living conditions. These dynamics can either exacerbate or alleviate household precarity, particularly in the context of protracted crisis and migration.

Our analysis builds on the understanding of the experience of food insecurity among Venezuelan migrants in Quito within the broader notion of everyday crisis-living, which conceptualizes crisis not as a singular rupture but as a persistent condition that shapes decision-making, survival strategies, and social integration. Migrants in this study overwhelmingly perceived an improvement in their food security compared to their experiences in Venezuela, yet this does not necessarily mean that their situation is secure. Instead, their perceptions are shaped by past experiences of extreme scarcity, highlighting how their lived crisis experience informs their assessment of current conditions. This finding suggests that food security is not solely a material condition but also a deeply subjective and comparative experience, where migrants assess their present circumstances against the acute deprivation they endured before migration.

Moreover, remittance sending emerged as an additional factor shaping food insecurity, demonstrating the transnational dimension of crisis-living. Despite their personal and household precarious conditions in Quito, many migrants continue to financially support relatives in Venezuela, often at the expense of their household budgets. The act of sending remittances, while crucial for sustaining families left behind, can constrain food access for migrants in Ecuador, illustrating the interconnected nature of economic vulnerability across borders.

Endnotes

1. Following the official household typology of the Ecuadorian Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC), we distinguish between extended and composite households. An extended household includes the head of household, spouse, children and additional relatives, while a composite household also incorporates non-relatives (INEC, n.d.).
2. Questions from the standard HFIAS questionnaire were omitted for two reasons. First, internal validation of a previous survey by the research team found these questions to be repetitive and confusing in the local context. Second, given existing reports of the traumatic nature of food insecurity in Venezuela (particularly for parents who reported feelings of guilt and distress over their children's well-being – see Landaeta-Jiménez et al.

2018), we chose to reduce the number of questions to minimize respondent discomfort.

3. Considering the household dependency ratio, that is, the proportion of minors (0 to 14 years old) and dependent older adults (65 years or older) relative to the working-age population (15 to 64 years old), Venezuelan households in Ecuador exhibit a high rate of dependency, primarily due to the presence of children (World Bank, 2024).

References

Acosta, D., Blouin, C., & Freier, L.F. (2019). La emigración venezolana: respuestas latinoamericanas. *Documentos de Trabajo*, 3.

Álvarez Velasco, S. (2021). Mobility, control, and the pandemic across the Americas: First findings of a transnational collective project. *Journal of Latin American Geography, 20*(1), 11–48. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48650354

Alfaro, Y. & Martens, C. (2025). Migration and food (in)security during the COVID-19 pandemic in Quito, Ecuador: A Photovoice study with Venezuelan migrants and refugees. MiFood Research Brief No. 11, Waterloo. https://mifood.org/research-brief/migration-and-food-insecurity-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-quito-ecuador-a-photovoice-study-with-venezuelan-migrants-and-refugees/

Beasley, D. M. (2020). The looming hunger pandemic. *Foreign Affairs*. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2020-06-16/looming-hunger-pandemic

Blouin, C., & Zamora Gómez, C. (2022). Institutional and social xenophobia towards Venezuelan migrants in the context of a racialized country: the case of Peru. In Herrera, G., & Gomez, C. (Eds.), *Migration in South America: IMISCOE regional reader* (pp. 169-189). Cham: Springer.

Brodzinsky, S. (2016). 'We are like a bomb': Food riots show that Venezuela crisis has gone beyond politics. *The Guardian*, May 20. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/20/venezuela-breaking-point-food-shortages-protests-maduro

Célleri, D. (2024). Access to labour and "differential inclusion" for young Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador. *Social Inclusion, 12*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.17645/si.7762

Chalampuente-Flores, D., Bastidas, C. T., & Sørensen, M. (2021). The Andean lupine - 'el chocho'or 'tarwi' (Lupinus Mutabilis Sweet). *Biodiversity Online Journal*, *1*, 4.

Chikanda, A., Crush, J., & Tawodzera, G. (2020). Urban food security and south-south migration to cities of the global south. In Crush, J., Frayne, B., & Haysom, G. (Eds.), *Handbook on urban food security in the global south* (pp. 261-281). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Cielo, C., & Vera, C. (2023). Dear food: Yuca's relational role in sustaining precarious populations in Ecuador. *International Sociology, 38*(6), 646-663. https://doi.org/10.1177/02685809231202768

Comunidad Andina (2025). Migración y movilidad humana. Comunidad Andina. https://www.comunidadandina.org/

Crush, J., & Si, Z. (2020). COVID-19 containment and food security in the Global South. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development, 9*(4), 149-151.

Crush, J., & Ramachandran, S. (2023). Mapping the linkages between food security, inequality, migration and development in the Global South. In Crawley, H. & Teye, J. (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of South-South Migration and Inequality* (pp. 567-584). Cham: Springer.

De Genova, N. P. (2002). Migrant "illegality" and deportability in everyday life. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 31*(1), 419-447.

De Genova, N., Tazzioli, M., & Álvarez-Velasco, S. (2016). Europe/crisis: New keywords of "the crisis" in and of "Europe". *Near Futures Online, 1*, 1-16.

De Haas, H. (2023). *How migration really works: A factful guide to the most divisive issue in politics*. London: Random House.

Eguiguren, M. & Martens, C. (2024). *Impacts of COVID-19 Policy Measures on Migration and Food Security in Ecuador.* MiFOOD Policy Audit No. 2, Waterloo.

Eguiguren, M. M., Martens, C., & Martínez, D. (2022). Migración en contexto de pandemia: las respuestas políticas en el Ecuador. *Cuadernos del Cendes, 39*(111), 29-59.

Esteve, A., Castro Torres, A.F., & Becca, F. (2025). Family change in Latin America: schooling and labour market implications for children and women, *Oxford Open Economics, 4*(1), i292–i306. https://doi.org/10.1093/ooec/odae026

Gandini, L., Prieto, V., & Lozano Ascencio, F. (2019). El éxodo venezolano: migración en contextos de crisis y respuestas de los países latinoamericanos. In Gandini, L., Lozano Ascencio, F., & Prieto, V. (Eds.), *Crisis y migración de población venezolana: Entre la desprotección y la seguridad jurídica en Latinoamérica* (pp. 9-32). Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).

Gobierno de Ecuador (2020). Evaluación socioeconómica: PDNA Covid-19 Ecuador. At: https://www.undp.org/es/latin-america/publicaciones/evaluacion-socioeconomica-pdna-covid-19-ecuador-enero-marzo-2020

Gómez, C., & Herrera, G. (2022). State and "mixed migrations": Migration policies towards Haitians, Colombians and Venezuelans in Ecuador. In Herrera, G., & Gomez, C. (Eds.), *Migration in South America: IMISCOE regional reader* (pp. 77-95). Cham: Springer.

GTRM (2023). Refugee and migrant needs analysis. https://rmrp.r4v.info/rmna2023/

Hernández-Vásquez, A., Visconti-Lopez, F. J., Chacón-Torrico, H., & Azañedo, D. (2022). COVID-19 and Food Insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, 18*(3), 372-379. https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2022.2086023

Herrera, G. (2022). Venezuelans in Latin America: Looking beyond the binary of migrants vs. asylum-seekers. In Triandafyllidou, A. (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Immigration and Refugee Studies* (pp. 388-395). London and New York: Routledge.

Herrera, G. & Cabezas Gálvez, G. (2019). Ecuador: de la recepción a la disuasión. Políticas frente a la población venezolana y experiencia migratoria 2015–2018. In L. Gandini, F. Lozano Ascencio y V. Prieto (Eds.) *Crisis y migración de población venezolana. Entre la desprotección y la seguridad jurídica en Latinoamérica* (pp. 125-156). Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and El Colegio de la Frontera Norte.

Herrera-Cuenca, M., Landaeta-Jimenez, M., Hernandez, P., et al. (2022). Exploring food security/insecurity determinants within Venezuela's complex humanitarian emergency. *Dialogues in Health, 1*, 100084.

Hiemstra, N. (2023). The value of illegality: Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador and the (re)entrenchment of neoliberal capitalism. *International Migration Review, 58*(2), 800-828. https://doi.org/10.1177/01979183231182679

INEC (n.d.). Ficha metodológica de indicador. Censo Ecuador. https://www.censoecuador.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/3.Ficha_Met_Porcentaje_de_hogares_por_tipo.pdf

Kaplan, D. S., Rivera Rivera, A., & van der Werf, C. (2023). *A fair chance for migrants in the labor market.* https://doi.org/10.18235/0005198

Landaeta-Jiménez, M., Herrera-Cuenca, M., Ramírez, G., & Vásquez, M. (2018). Las precarias condiciones de alimentación de los venezolanos. En A. Freites (Ed.), *Espejo de la crisis humanitaria venezolana. Encuesta Nacional de Condiciones de Vida 2017* (pp. 151-173), Caracas, Venezuela: Universidad Católica Andrés Bello.

Lee, G. O., Cevallos, W., Andrade, P., Van Engen, A., Uruchima, J., Redd, C., & Coloma, J. (2024). Pandemic-associated food insecurity in northern, coastal Ecuador. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, 19*(6), 1261-1276.

Márquez, H. (2024). Goodbye to large families in Latin America. https://www.ipsnews.net/2024/10/goodbye-large-families-latin-america/

Martens, C., Milán, T., Flores Torres, J., Tria, J., Gámez, I., Marinelli, M., & Santos, D. (2021). *The Current State of the Situation of Migrants and Refugees in Temporary Housing and Shelters in Ecuador March–April 2021*. Quito: Care International. https://www.care.org.ec/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CARE-The-current-state-Mig-Ref-shelters-in-ECU-2021-ENG.pdf

Malo, M.G. (2020). Access to formal employment and mobility: Colombian and Venezuelan forced migrants in Ecuador. RLI Working Paper No. 42. School of Advanced Study, University of London, London. https://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/9328/1/malo-access-formal-employment-mobility-v2.pdf

Milán, T., & Martens, C. (2023). Venezuelan migration, COVID-19 and food (in)security in urban areas of Ecuador. *Land, 12*(2), 517. https://doi.org/10.3390/land12020517

Mena Bonilla, T. (2024). "Sentir su camino": (Im)mobilities in the return of Venezuelan migrant women during the pandemic in Ecuador. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space, 0*(0):1-16. DOI:10.1177/23996544241226852

Novoa-Sanzana, S., Moya-Osorio, J., Morejón Terán, Y., Ríos-Castillo, I., Becerra Granados, L. M., Prada Gómez, G., & Durán-Agüero, S. (2024). Food insecurity and sociodemographic factors in Latin America during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública, 48,* e21.

Ocampo, J. A. (2021). The COVID-19 crisis in Latin America in historical perspective. *CEPAL Review, 2020*(132), 47-64.

Pacheco , M. T., Hernández-Hernández, O., Moreno, F. J., & Villamiel, M. (2020). Andean tubers grown in Ecuador: New sources of functional ingredients. *Food Bioscience, 35*, 100601.

Pérez Martinez, L., Álvarez-Velasco, S., Bayón Jiménez, M., & Hurtado, F. et al. (2021). *Viviendo al límite: Ser inmigrante en Ecuador en tiempos de COVID-19*. Quito: Colectivo de Geografía Crítica de Ecuador, Red Clamor y GIZ.

Pilco Córdova, A. E. (2024). Índice de precios al consumidor y la canasta básica familiar en el Ecuador postpandemia. *Perspectivas Sociales y Administrativas, 2*(2), 13-24.

Ramachandran, S., & Crush, J. (2023). Food security, equitable development and South-South migration: towards a research agenda. *International Migration, 61*(6), 341-344.

Ramachandran, S., Crush, J., Tawodzera, G., & Onyango, E.O. (2024). Pandemic precarity, crisis-living and food insecurity: female Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa. In McAuliffe, M. & Bauloz, C. (Eds.), *Research Handbook on Migration, Gender, and COVID-19* (pp. 180-195). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Ramachandran, S., Crush, J., Tawodzera, G., & Onyango, E.O. (2022). Pandemic Food Precarity, Crisis-Living and Translocality: Zimbabwean Migrant Households in South Africa during COVID-19. SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 85, Waterloo.

Roca, W.M., Ynouye, C., Manrique, I., Arbizu, C., & Gomez, R. (2007). Indigenous Andean root and tuber crops: New foods for the new millennium. *Chronica Horticulturae, 47*(4).

Swindale, A., & Bilinsky, P. (2006). *Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) for Measurement of Household Food Access: Indicator Guide* (v.2). Washington, D.C.: FHI 360/FANTA.

Tutiven Desintonio, C., & Quintero Montaño, W. J. (2024). Recent performance of the Ecuadorian economy in a context of high uncertainty: an analysis of economic growth, poverty, and unemployment. *International Economics/Economia Internazionale, 77*(1).

UNHCR (2024). Venezuela crisis explained. https://www.unrefugees.org/news/venezuela-crisis-explained/

Vera Espinoza, M., Prieto Rosas, V., Zapata, G. et al. (2021). Towards a typology of social protection for migrants and refugees in Latin America during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Comparative Migration Studies, 9*, 52. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-021-00265-x

Vera, M.P. (2013). *Más vale pájaro en mano: crisis bancaria, ahorro y clases medias*. Quito: FLACSO Sede Ecuador.

Villarreal, M. C. (2021). Multilateralismo, crise e migração venezuelana: o Grupo de Lima e o Processo de Quito em perspectiva comparada. *Revista Brasileira de História & Ciências Sociais,13*(26), 104-140. https://repositorio.furg.br/handle/123456789/10787

World Bank (2024). *Cruzando Fronteras – Una Mirada a la Población Venezolana y Colombiana en Ecuador: según el Censo 2022*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099010225071528730

World Food Programme (WFP) (2021). Food Security Report Remote Assessment in Ecuador. https://ecuador.un-.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/INFORME%20DE%20SEGURIDAD%20ALIMENTARIA_Agosto_2021.pdf

World Food Programme (WFP) (2023). Emergency food security and nutrition assessment for migrant populations and host communities Colombia. https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000147247/download/?_ga=2.36939680.1069922287.1721985649-1617895213.172198564