



# Global Hunger Crisis: Guatemala, Honduras, and Ecuador

Climate change, conflict, COVID-19, and gender inequality impacts food security globally. Together with the Ukraine conflict, the food crisis across the world is worsening. UN Women's Zero Hunger Sustainable Development Goal Map shows that 49.7% of people are facing moderate or severe food insecurity in Guatemala, 45.6% in Honduras, and 32.7% in Ecuador. Increasing prices of energy, fertilizer, and agriculture inputs are also raising the prices of food and food production.

Smallholder farmers, who already struggled to produce enough food because of climate change, are now facing serious impacts because **they can no longer afford inputs for production**. Food security among the rural population who depend largely on farming as a primary source of livelihood is at risk.

To understand how smallholders' farmers are being impacted by the global food crisis in their local context, CARE engaged with three Latin American countries: Ecuador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The aim is to obtain first-hand information on the impact of these shocks nationwide and on women farmers, and the coping strategies acquired among the farmers.

## Guatemala

Guatemala, has experienced drought, severe storms, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic over the last few years. Due to the Ukraine conflict, food insecurity levels are increasing even more, reaching **4 million people who do not have enough food**. This number is expected to rise to **4.6 million by September 2022**.

Climate change and extreme weather is causing lower productivity for planting and harvesting. Rising fuel prices are keeping farmers from getting their crops to the market. In order to subsist farmers are selling assets. This is



These situations are directly causing lower local food production, higher food costs, and increasing hunger crisis in the three countries in this brief.

putting at **risk their ability to keep farming in the future**. The crisis is also impacting heavily women farmers due to gender inequality that is prevalent in the country and social norms building barriers for them.



**34%**

In Honduras, food prices have risen 34% in just one year. This is the worst spike in food prices since the FAO started recording them.

## Honduras

In Honduras, these same trends mean **food insecurity has more than doubled in less than two years, from 1.3 million in 2020 to 2.8 million** as of July, 2022, and it will keep increasing.

As food prices are increasing so is the **crude oil prices** by about **60%**, and **gasoline and fertilizer have more than doubled**. The inflation is impacting **food staples**, which has exceeded **30%**. And an **inflation of 20% by the end of 2020 is already foreseen in Honduras**.

These conditions are happening at the same time when women are dropping out of the labor force due to COVID-19. Women's reduced economic participation leaves women without an income and powerless to invest in food and/or agriculture at exactly the time their leadership is needed the most. Also, as a result of weather drastically changes, the Ukraine conflict, food insecurity, and COVID-19; **displacement, migration, and gender-based violence is increasing, disproportionately impacting women**.

## Ecuador

Ecuador has been suffering climate change consequences, which are drastically vivid by agricultural communities. For example, these being, lack of water and of irrigation water, landslides, droughts, and heavy rains. These last two, impacts the seeds development by not allowing them to germinate and/or produce.

As cope strategies against climate change, female farmers are building skills through workshops to learn about climate change and agriculture, this allowing them to **build knowledge on the issue and bring the learning to the soil**.

"If women become vulnerable to this issue (climate change) we can have a disaster because of issues of violence and of the patriarchy that could return".

-Josseling Vega, 2022.

**Due to the Ukraine conflict food prices are rocketing**. And lamentably, **field products prices are not increasing** leading to, from an economic perspective, to **untenable living conditions**. Also, due to the conflict fuel and fertilizer prices are increasing and the grains coming from Russia and Ukraine is impacting food security.

The Ukraine conflict and its consequences such as the price increases and gas and food shortage lead to manifestations and a strike in Ecuador this past June 2022. The National Confederation of Indigenous People marched towards Quito, Ecuador, to advocate for different claims, especially on food production because of the rising prices. **Due to the national strike, 32,000 people's food security was at risk**.

## Conclusion

Farmers in Guatemala, Honduras, and Ecuador are impacted by the global food crisis affected by the different scenarios around the world, like climate change, COVID-19, and the Ukraine conflict. These impact women substantially. The **escalating increase in the prices of fuel in the global market is affecting the cost of taking food from the field to the markets and therefore impacting food prices worldwide**.

**Authors:** This brief was written by Miriam Selva in July 2022.