

# Venezuela Food Security Assessment

Main Findings

Data Collected between July and September 2019



24

23 States + Capital District



8,375

Households



60

Assessment Days

## Background

The World Food Programme (WFP) was invited by the Government of Venezuela to conduct a Food Security Assessment (FSA) to estimate the needs and vulnerabilities of Venezuelan households. WFP had full independence to design and implement the assessment, and had access countrywide allowing the collection of household-level data without impediment.

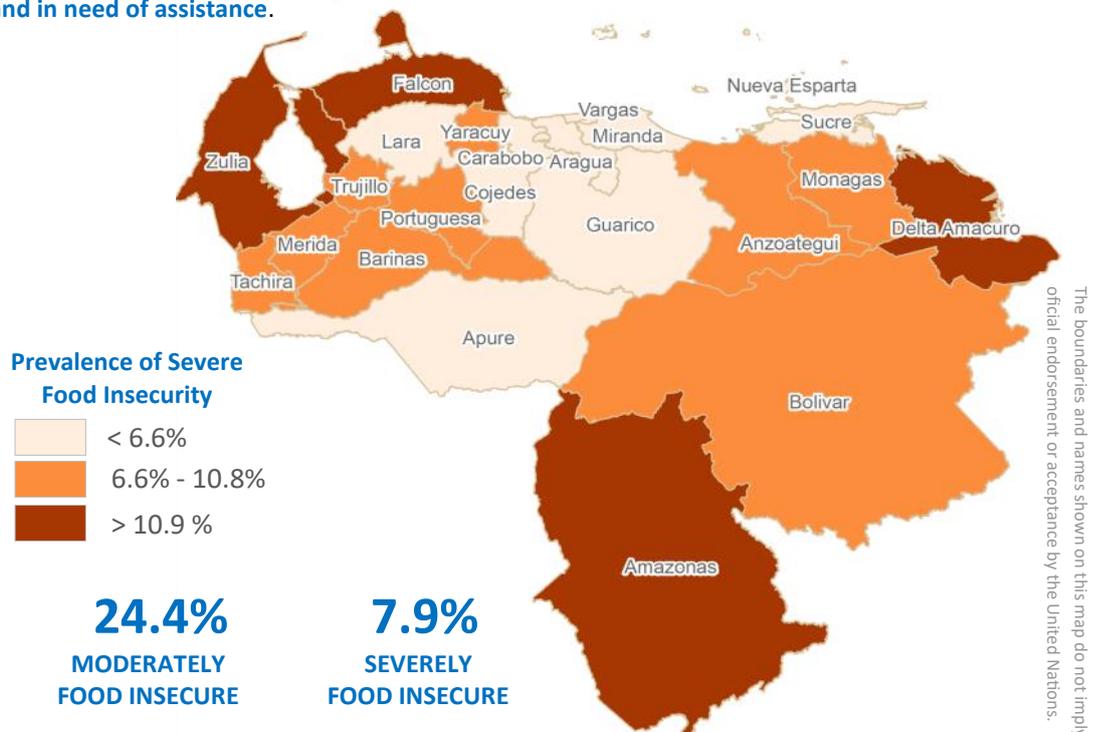
The Venezuela FSA follows the standard WFP

Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) methodology and the Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI). The assessment is based on the analysis of primary data collected at household level and at community level.

At the end of the assessment, **8,375 valid questionnaires were collected, ensuring statistical representativity at state level.**

## How Many People Are Food Insecure?

The assessment estimates that 7.9 percent of the population in Venezuela (2.3 million) is severely food insecure. An additional 24.4 percent (7 million) is found to be moderately food insecure. Based on the CARI approach, WFP estimates that **one out of three Venezuelans (32.3%) is food insecure and in need of assistance.**



## Which States Have the Highest Rates of Food Insecurity?

The analysis shows that food insecurity is a countrywide concern. Even in the states with the lowest rates of food insecurity, including Lara (18%), Cojedes (19%) and Merida (23%), approximately one out of five people are estimated to be food insecure. Eleven states present rates higher than the national prevalence of **severe food insecurity**, with the highest rates in **Delta Amacuro (21%), Amazonas (15%), Falcon (13%), Zulia (11%) and Bolivar (11%)**.

## Food Security Classification

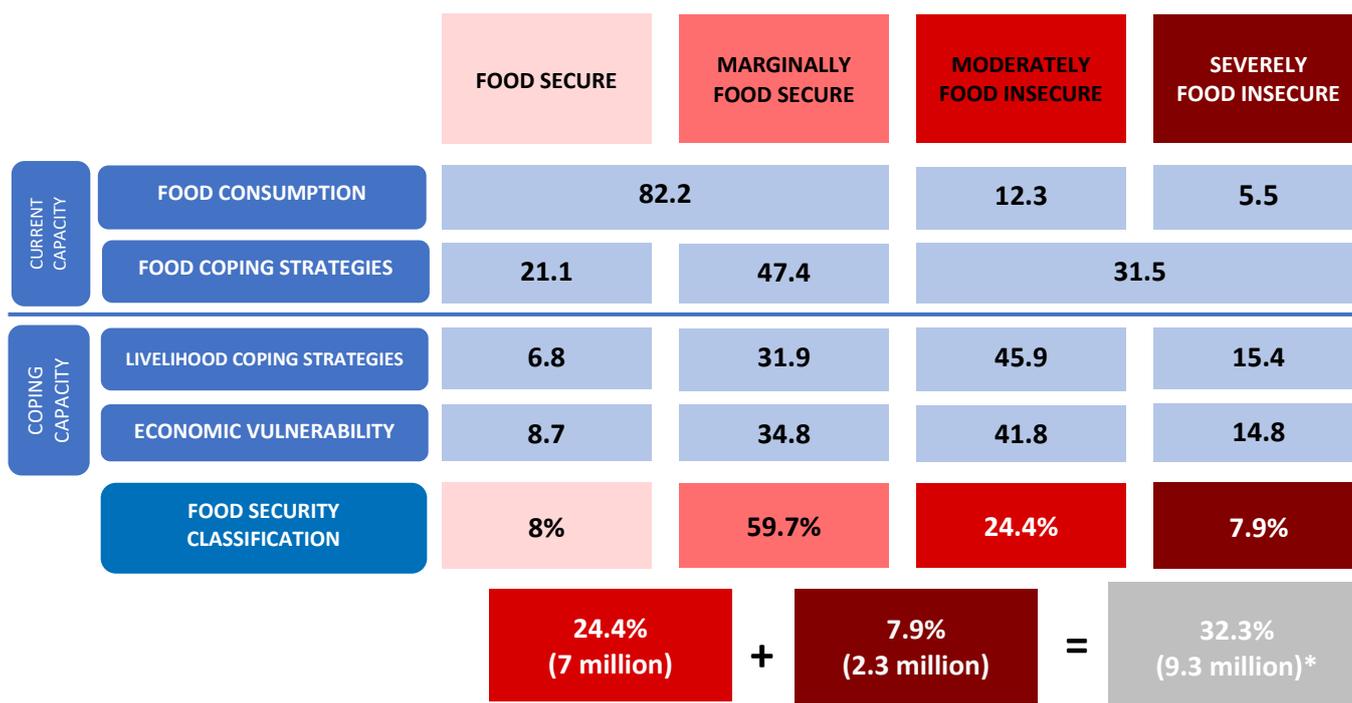
The prevalence of food insecurity in Venezuela was obtained by analysing food consumption patterns, food and livelihood coping strategies and economic vulnerability. Indicators have different behaviours; the table below shows the food consumption indicator (FCS) performs better (17.8% of food insecurity) than the livelihood coping strategies indicator (61.3% of food insecurity). This means that, at the time of the survey, many families were still able to cover their food needs but at the great cost of sacrificing their assets and endangering their livelihoods.

The analysis of the FCS indicates that nearly **one household**

**out of five (17.8%) has an unacceptable level of food consumption**, of which 12.3 percent have borderline food consumption and 5.5 percent poor food consumption.

**The lack of dietary diversity is of major concern.**

Venezuelan families consume cereals, roots or tubers on a daily basis, and complement the daily intake of cereals with pulses (beans, lentils) three days a week and dairy products four days a week. The overall consumption of meat, fish, eggs, vegetables and fruits is below three days a week for each of these food groups. The lack of dietary diversity indicates inadequate nutritional intake.



\*Food Security Classification as of October 2019

FOOD SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION
<b>Food Secure</b>	Able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical coping strategies
<b>Marginally Food Secure</b>	Has minimally adequate food consumption without engaging in irreversible coping strategies; unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures
<b>Moderately Food Insecure</b>	Has significant food consumption gaps, or marginally able to meet minimum food needs only with irreversible coping strategies
<b>Severely Food Insecure</b>	Has extreme food consumption gaps, or has extreme loss of livelihood assets that will lead to food consumption gaps, or worse

## Coping Strategies

Seventy-four percent of families have engaged in food-related coping strategies, **reducing the variety and the quality** of the food they eat; 60 percent of the households reported **reducing the portion size of their meals**.

**Three out of four families engaged in at least one livelihood-related coping strategy** and, on average, families adopted at least four strategies in the 30 days preceding the survey. In order to survive, 33 percent of households

**accept working for food as payment** and 20 percent have **sold family assets to cover basic needs**. Six out of 10 families **have spent their savings to buy food**.

As families deplete the coping mechanisms they have been using to sustain basic food consumption, there are great concerns that nutritional needs will not be met in the short term. This will affect the most vulnerable, including children, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly.

## Perceived Food Availability

**Seven out of 10 Venezuelans report that food is always available.** However, access to food is difficult as the prices are too high when compared to household income.

## Income Sources

Hyperinflation is affecting the ability of families to secure food and other basic needs. Fifty-nine percent of households **have insufficient income to buy food** and 65 percent are **unable to buy other essential items** such as hygiene products, clothes and shoes.

When asked about how the current situation in Venezuela has impacted the sources of income of the household, half of the respondents declared a partial loss (51%), such as reduced salaries or the loss of one of two jobs. More than a third of respondents (37%) have experienced a total loss of

their income, such as losing their only job or losing their business.

Results show **18 percent of households rely on government assistance and social protection systems.** The constant outflow of migrants, whilst allowing families to rely on remittances, translates into a concerning human capital and social capacity loss, including reduced numbers of teachers, doctors, scientists and other skilled workers.

## Basic Services

The survey collected data on access to basic services (water, sanitation, housing, electricity, cooking facilities) to understand living conditions. The results show families are strongly concerned on the deterioration of basic services.

At the time of the survey, four out of 10 households had daily interruptions in the electrical service and 72 percent

had an irregular gas supply. Four out of 10 households have recurrent interruptions in the water service; as a result, families use alternative strategies to gain access to potable water such as buying bottled water or using water trucking services. **Twenty-five percent of the households do not have sustainable access to potable water.**

