



Identifying Food and Non-Food Needs of the Internally Displaced.

**A Joint Survey of Internally
Displaced Populations in Colombia**



ICRC

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Introduction

Forty years of conflict in Colombia and growing economic disparities have led to a severe deterioration in the basic living conditions of the population, in general, and those affected by the conflict—internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities—in particular. It is estimated that between two to three million persons have been displaced since 1985, making them the third largest internally displaced population in the world.

New displacements are, on average, 300,000 per year since 2000, increasing sharply in 2002 with over 400,000 persons displaced. The latest figures estimate between 207,000¹ and 214,000² were displaced in 2003, with spatial patterns of displacement predominantly from rural to urban areas. Areas of enforced displacement by armed actors—self-defences forces, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), and often the Army—have increased substantially, now affecting most of the country. This indicates that displacement is increasingly used as a military strategy by armed groups.

Prior to displacement rural publics face threats, assassinations, forced disappearance, direct attacks, or armed confrontation in small towns. After displacement, these risks do not vanish, but are more nuanced. Violence and intimidation continue, resulting in populations being reluctant to identify (i.e., officially register their displaced status) themselves due to circumstances that precipitated their displacement.

In fleeing from violence, rural households abandon the primary asset that undergirds their food and livelihood security: landholdings. Other physical assets such as livestock, equipment and housing are also left behind. In essence, displaced households arrive into urban and peri-urban areas with only financial assets that can be easily liquidated (i.e., cash, valuables) and their own labour.

In relocation, IDP households are, in effect, economically marginalised as their skill sets—mostly farming based—are not easily transferable in an urban economy. Given that much of the urban economy uses cash as the basis for exchange of goods and services, IDP households are particularly at risk as they do not always have disposable income on hand. This places constraints on the ability of IDP households to access basic needs such as food, housing, education, and health services.

Other socioeconomic factors compound the problem. According to a World Bank report from 2002, about 64% of the population are considered to be poor, and 23% living in extreme poverty.³ When comparing the incidence of poverty in rural and urban areas, data indicate that rural publics are worse off—areas from which IDPs emanate. Eighty percent of the rural population is considered to be poor as compared to 55% of their urban counterparts.⁴

However, given the volume of displacement since 1999, impoverishment processes in urban areas are likely to be much more pronounced. Significant increases in the urban population places a strain on the availability, accessibility and coverage of social services, utilities (i.e., water, sanitation, and sewage), and housing for all residents. Coupled with limited employment opportunities, the situation for IDP households is precarious, having implications on both monetary and non-monetary dimensions of poverty.

¹ CODHES

² RSS

³ World Bank. 2002. *Colombia Poverty Report*. Washington D.C.: World Bank Publications. Figures refer to 1999.

⁴ *Ibid.*

The Colombia Poverty Report prepared by the World Bank picks up on the monetary dimensions of poverty and the rise of displaced populations. Although the data do not permit the cause of "migration" to be established, there is a correlation between the increase in poverty rates among recent migrants between 1995 and 1999 and the growth in internal displacement. Table 1 compares poverty rates different population sub-groups in urban areas for these years.

Regardless of the reason, the study clearly establishes that "recent migrants" have become particularly vulnerable to income-poverty, joining other population groups traditionally considered vulnerable.⁵

Table 1. Urban Poverty Rates for Different Population Sub-Groups: 1995-1999

	1995	1999
<i>Urban Colombia</i>	48%	55%
Children under 2 years	63%	72%
From 2 to 6 years	63%	69%
From 7 to 13 years	62%	69%
From 14 to 17 years	55%	64%
Over 65 years old	35%	37%
<i>Migrants just moved (1)</i>	50%	64%
<i>Migrants <5% (2)</i>	46%	60%
<i>Migrants <10% (3)</i>	43%	54%
<i>Migrants <25% (4)</i>	42%	44%
Women	48%	55%
Non home owners	57%	63%
Disabled	60%	60%
Pensioners	20%	24%

Adapted from Colombia Poverty Report (2002)

- (1) Refers to people who lived less than 1% of their lives in the current city
- (2) Refers to people who lived less than 5% of their lives in the current city
- (3) Refers to people who lived less than 10% of their lives in the current city
- (4) Refers to people who lived less than 25% of their lives in the current city

Safety nets in urban areas, although more varied than in the countryside, are in most instances difficult to access, unreliable, inappropriate and unsustainable. In this context, IDP households who do not have access to a stable source of income, and for whom access to social services is erratic, will certainly face considerable challenges in meeting their basic needs.

⁵ *Ibid.*

The IDP Situation in Colombia: A Review of the Literature and Data

The Numbers Game

It is estimated that between two to three million Colombians have been displaced since 1985. The exact number is a matter of considerable debate among the state and civil society in Colombia. Lack of a standard methodology to track displaced populations over time makes it difficult to determine those who have returned to their place of origin, those who have relocated, or those continuing to be internally displaced.

Despite such problems, both the government and civil society do agree on two broad typologies of displacement: massive and individual. The former, as can be discerned from its name, involves large numbers of individuals (or IDP households) being displaced *en masse* as a result of violence. Individual displacement involves movement in a more *ad hoc* manner, but nonetheless as a result of violent conflict.

These two typologies form the basis of a variety of systems used to track IDP movements by the Government, civil society organisations and the international community. Estimating the numbers of massively displaced is easier given the overall volume of people. Individual displacement (i.e., one family at a time) is harder to track as households are afraid to officially register for fear of future violence or becoming targets of armed groups.

The government agency responsible for oversight of IDP issues, *Red de Solidaridad Social* (RSS), provides all official data on IDP numbers, point of origin, point of settlement and reasons for displacement. To date, **over 1,512,194 IDPs are** officially registered in the *Sistema Unico de Registro* (SUR) by the RSS. Of this number, 1,266,229 people, or 84% of all registered IDPs, were displaced from 2000-2003.⁶

However, civil society organisations such as the *Consultoria Para Los Derechos Humanos y El Desplazamiento Forzado* (CODHES) claim that the official figures drastically under-estimate the numbers of displaced. Using their *Sistema de Información de Desplazados* (SISDES), CODHES estimates that from since 1985, 3.2 million people have been displaced. For the period from 1995-2004, SISDES figures indicate that 2.4 million were displaced as a result of violence. When taken as a whole, and compared against RSS data, roughly 1.7 million additional people are not accounted for in the official tracking system.⁷

Similar discrepancies and disagreements exist in the 2004 estimations. During the first half of 2004, RSS/SUR registered 73,681 newly displaced individuals. CODHES estimates that from January-June 2004, up to 130,000 people have been displaced as a result of violence—over 55,000 additional cases. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), using information gathered from field offices and current beneficiary caseloads, have projected that by the end of 2004 an additional 70,000 people are likely to join the ranks of the newly displaced in the 16 cities where ICRC is present.

Another important trend, during 2000-2003, is a *relative decrease in massive displacement and corresponding increase in individual displacement*. This has, perhaps, added to numbers dilemma. The inability to accurately account for the number of individually displaced

⁶ RSS/SUR. 2004. www.red.gov.co

⁷ CODHES. 2004. *Personas desplazadas Recepción por departamento por trimestre 1999 a 2004 (Septiembre 2004)*.

supports the notion that incentives to officially register (e.g., benefits) are outweighed by security, safety and protection concerns. Differences in the registers of ICRC and RSS appear to support this observation – ICRC figures compared with RSS figures at same locations are at times higher.

In sum, although there are significant deviations in estimating the numbers of IDPs—both over time and newly displaced in any given year—the magnitude of the problem warrants attention. Efforts are currently underway to harmonise and improve the quality of tracking systems among government, civil society and international agencies. In the interim and for planning purposes, however, the numbers over the last five years—irrespective of their source—indicate that between 150,000-180,000 individuals are newly displaced in any given year.

Dynamics of Displacement

Displacement by violence results actions on the part of guerrilla, self-defence groups or the regular defence forces, including the takeover of municipalities, bombardments, threats, selective murders, abduction and kidnapping, assassination of leaders and massacres. The principle of distinction between participant and non participant to the hostilities is often not respected thereby involving the civilian population in the conflict.

The objective of armed interventions is primarily to gain control over natural resources (i.e., territorial expansion). However, the latter is coupled with drug trafficking, mining, and rent-seeking behaviour such as extortion, shadow taxation, and compensation for protection. Although the Government of Colombia has retaken control of certain areas of the country, it has yet to establish civil authority in any part of Colombia under the effective control of armed groups.

In recent years, new modalities for controlling population movements have been introduced. The latter are modern-day sieges known as restrictions. Restrictions imply the control over the movement—or isolation—of entire communities. Restrictions are enforced for the entry of selective goods, access to health services and limitations in the supply of humanitarian aid. This dynamic contributes to creating the impression—on the outside—that isolated communities are party to the actions and objectives of armed actors. As such, civilians are increasingly viewed as military targets, thereby precipitating further insecurity and instability.

In the case of restrictions, the population is allowed to bring in limited amounts of food and other basic items. Armed groups have checkpoints to control the movement of people and goods and limit the transport of fuel, canned food and medicine. Conversely, in these same areas, government security forces engage in a similar strategy, thereby exacerbating the situation.⁸

Conservative figures by CODHES estimate that 195,000 people are affected by restrictions in 20 municipalities. Moreover, armed actors fall-back on ancestral lands and territories as a rearguard or retreat zone, using inhabitants as a human shield to avoid punitive action by other armed actors.⁹ Women are particularly at risk in these zones, as sexual and other forms of domestic violence are common.

⁸ Luis Eduardo Perez. 2004. *Misión Colombia Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (CJRNA): Investigación de la fase preparatoria*

⁹ Davis, Shelton et al. 2002. "Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Colombian Populations," in Marcelo Giugale, Olivier Lafourcade and Connie Luff (eds.). 2002. *Colombia: The Economic Foundation for Peace*. Washington D.C.: World Bank Publications.

Blockaded communities often contain Indigenous or Afro-Colombian populations. The latter groups have been drawn into the current conflict as their homes are located in isolated areas within which armed groups take refuge. It is estimated that six percent of the IDPs are Indigenous and 18% is Afro-Colombian—in other words one-fourth of the displaced population, even though they represent only 11% of the total population.¹⁰

These communities are out of reach of humanitarian assistance, residing in areas where, historically, state presence is weak and social services limited. This has led to a profound state of exclusion—simultaneously along economic, political and social lines.

Official figures from RSS show that 13 out of the 32 departments in Colombia have received 75% of those displaced, namely over 1 million people. These departments are: Antioquia, Bolívar, Sucre, Magdalena, Valle, Bogotá, Cesar, Córdoba, Santander, Atlántico, Choco, Norte Santander and Nariño. The first six have actually received over 48 percent of the total IDPs. In 2004, 904 out of 1,119 municipalities, or 80% of all municipalities, are affected by displacement. In comparison, only 420 municipalities were affected in 2000.

Colombians forced to flee from conflict in rural areas attempt to integrate into overcrowded city slums, triggering accelerated urbanization. Instead of finding safety in the cities, some IDPs are exposed to crime and violence, on occasion perpetrated by the same groups who operate in rural areas, which force them to flee again. Authorities rarely recognize inter-urban and inter-municipality displacement because such individuals have not fled beyond their habitual place of residence. This limits their access to humanitarian assistance and the granting of their rights in terms of protection and service provision.

Some tensions exist between the IDPs and the host communities as the influx of IDPs exerts greater strain on an already resource strapped society. IDPs vie for low-skilled jobs, mostly in the informal sector, that other non-IDP populations also seek. The ensuing competition depresses already low wages and gives rise to exploitation of informal labour. Existing health and sanitation services in urban centres, ill-functioning at best, are burdened due to increased numbers of persons requiring coverage.

Finally, new displacement is not only a result of violence, but farming households displaced by fumigation of coca fields. The latter households are considered as “economically” displaced rather than displaced by violence. As such, they are entitled to limited amounts of official assistance through the “Plan Colombia”, but are not counted in the aggregate IDP figures.

Government Support Structures: Policy and Operational Practice

In 1997, the Government of Colombia enacted Law 387 (henceforth Law 387/97) and created the Sistema Nacional de Atención a la Población Desplacada por la Violencia (SNAIPD). Comprised of 14 government ministries and agencies covering various areas such as agriculture, social security, health and education, SNAIPD was responsible for providing an integrated response to the IDP problem.

In 1999, after an evaluation of the progress made, the government designated the RSS as the agency responsible for all planning, coordination and service delivery to IDPs. The RSS would, in essence, be charged with ensuring that SNAIPD live up to its initial mandate. The

¹⁰ RSS/SUR. 2004. www.red.gov.co

authority given to RSS was consolidated through Law 487, enacted in 1999, placing the agency in the Office of the Presidency.

Soon thereafter, an Action Plan (CONPES) was prepared to operationalise the government policy *vis-à-vis* IDPs. In brief, the policy and action plan comprised four elements: (a) prevention measures; (b) humanitarian assistance; (c) return, relocation, and economic stabilisation; and (d) protection. It is upon these four pillars that the Government and its partners in civil society and the international community base their efforts.

On paper, the Government's recognition of the IDP problem and their proposed response is a step in the right direction. There is, however, a wide gap between policy priorities and operational practice. According to SNAIPD data covering the period 1999-2002, of the total budget earmarked for IDPs, 37% went to humanitarian assistance and 52% to relocation, representing, respectively, 43 and 19 percent of *identified needs*.¹¹

While international and national agencies complement government resources, all official assistance is targeted only towards the registered population. Therefore, it is estimated that all State aid earmarked for IDPs reaches only 17% of said IDPs.¹² One of the reasons for low levels of assistance, beyond issues related to registration, is that IDPs are not always aware of their rights, entitlements and obligations. Unidades de Atención y Orientación (UAOs), organisations that attempt bridge the gap between IDPs and support institutions, are assisting IDPs navigate the state bureaucracy. Nevertheless, their effectiveness suffers from a general lack of support from municipal and departmental authorities.

There is also concern among key stakeholders about the utility and adequacy of government-provided humanitarian assistance that is currently limited, by law, to three up to six months. The lack of attention (i.e., coverage and extent) paid to economic stabilisation measures means that, after three or eventually six months of initial assistance, the displaced population has no real option, as they possess few if any productive assets, of either returning to their place of origin or relocating.¹³

Even though the Government's objective is to facilitate the return of 30,000 displaced households (approximately 150,000 persons) by 2006, it is not in a position to ensure safety and assistance. Most returnees have no guarantee of security and protection as they to return on the basis of fragile agreements with illegal armed forces¹⁴.

To date, only 12,000 displaced families (around 58,000 persons) have been assisted by RSS in returning to their place of origin. But in many cases, the conditions are not conducive to sustainable re-integration. Though the Government's policy envisages the provision of housing subsidies, income-generating activities, vocational training and land titles, these are rarely made available to returnees. According to ICRC, only 11 percent of IDPs individually displaced wish to return, while over 46 percent want to stay where have settled and almost 19 percent would like to be resettled in other areas.

Another gap between policy and practice is the amount of human, technical and financial resources devoted to SNAIPD, and ultimately RSS. Given that SNAIPD is composed of sectoral ministries, existing ministerial responsibilities compete with new obligations towards IDPs—especially in terms of financial resources. Coordination, along sectoral lines, remains

¹¹ RSS. 2004. www.red.gov.co

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Arboleda, Jairo and Elena Correa. 2002. "Forced Internal Displacement," in Giugale et al., (eds.). 2002. *Colombia: The Economic Foundation for Peace*. Washington D.C.: World Bank Publications.

¹⁴ For further analysis, refer to Perez (2004), pages 28 to 31.

a challenge insofar as common policy priorities do not translate into complementary policy implementation.

Limited financial resources and technical capacity also result in service delivery functions being poorly resourced, designed and implemented. This is especially true at the municipal level as local governments are unable to manage the large influxes of IDPs or provide them the necessary social and economic services. The trade-offs between meeting IDP needs and those of non-displaced populations are especially acute at the municipal level as budgets cannot cover the increase in overall demand.

A recent ruling by the Constitutional Court (T-25) pointed out that the Government had not lived up to its responsibilities and legal obligations towards IDPs. It declared that the state of forced displacement and lack of protection to be unconstitutional. The Court ruling reorients the Government policy *from an assistance driven approach to a comprehensive and constitutional rights based approach*. By early 2005, all entities of the SNAIPD have to present realistic policies, based on clearly identified needs, funding and commitments. However, given its previous experience, it is reasonable to assume that the bureaucratic and operational re-orientation of SNAIPD will take time.

In this context, existing mechanisms for supporting IDPs—notably humanitarian assistance—are potentially much more than short-term infusions of resources. They represent an important safety net for the displaced population. However, these mechanisms can only lead to sustainable solutions provided the government takes over its responsibility, clear and adapted policies are put in place and implemented. All these mechanisms still require further refinement so that they can pave the way for more structural improvements over time.

Socio-Economic Situation of Displaced Households

According to a WFP-supported survey in 2003, the average size of an IDP household is six persons, with a dependency rate of almost 31%.¹⁵ Fifty percent of the displaced population is less than 15 years old.¹⁶ Of the total number of children who attended school once, 60% dropped out between the age of 6 and 7. Within the 10-14 age cohorts, 79% of children are attending school, with the highest drop out rate between the ages of 12 and 15 years, reaching over 14%.¹⁷ The main reason given for dropping out as collected by the above mentioned study was for economic reasons, followed by the importance of working and helping out members of the household.

When comparing the socioeconomic conditions of IDP households with those of the poorest income quintile of in urban areas—specifically in the area of Unmet Basic Needs (UBN)—the picture is bleak. UBN refers to an index composed of 5 indicators: (a) housing; (b) access to services; (c) living conditions—more than 3 persons sleeping in one room; (d) school enrolment; and (e) economic dependency. Using data on UBN for the non-displaced and comparing these to displaced populations, 70% of IDP households are deficient in two or more UBN—notably in the area housing and living conditions. On the other hand only 10% of the poorest income quintile in urban areas had deficiencies in two or more UBN.¹⁸

¹⁵ Econometria. 2003. *Vulnerabilidad a la inseguridad alimentaria de la población desplazada por la violencia en Colombia*.

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸ DANE. 1997. *Encuesta de Vida*.

With respect to food security issues, a 2003 survey of 1503 displaced households indicated that, on average, households purchase 80% of their food.¹⁹ The latter implies that access to stable and sufficient sources of income is critical. This being said, displaced households earn, on average, only 61% of the minimum wage in Colombia (COP 356,000.-)—of which 79% emanate from labour earnings.

In terms of health and nutrition issues, PAHO/WHO conducted a health and nutrition survey of displaced and non-displaced households in six main urban areas in Colombia.²⁰ The study found 16% chronic and 4% acute malnutrition rates among children under five. The prevalence of acute malnutrition was 1.5% more than would be expected in a normal population but it did not differ drastically from the poorest non-displaced households.

However, certain health indicators among children of displaced households warrant attention. Among under-fives, the PAHO/WHO study indicates that children from displaced households are far more likely to suffer from diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, and skin infections. Thirty-three percent and 77% were reported to suffer from diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections, respectively. The high prevalence of anaemia of over 50 percent is considered to be severe and has direct implications on the growth and development of children, including their learning capacity.

The previous paragraphs have offered a cursory overview of the key factors contributing to the displacement crisis in Colombia. A more comprehensive review of the literature and secondary data (Perez, 2004) is available and recommended as a complementary source of information that should be read in conjunction with the findings of this Joint Assessment.

¹⁹ Econometria, 2003.

²⁰ PAHO/WHO. 2002. *Estado de perfil epidemiológico de la población desplazada y la población vulnerable en Cali, Cartagena, Montería, y Soacha*. http://www.disaster-nfo.net/desplazados/informes/ops/epepy2002/index_toc.htm

Rationale and Scope of the Joint WFP - ICRC Assessment

An improved understanding and identification of the needs of displaced households is central in ensuring an effective response. The IDP problematique in Colombia is multifaceted, and requires concerted action on the part of the Government, civil society and the international community.

Although having distinct mandates and operational procedures, the activities of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Colombia contribute directly to improving the lives and livelihoods of the internally displaced. Both organisations have extensive experience in meeting the needs of populations affected by natural and man-made emergencies.

However, one area of common interest to both organisations is to better support Government efforts to implement sustainable solutions through clear and adapted policies and programmes. Identification of needs, in turn, is based on an *assessment* of the current socio-economic characteristics of IDP households and an *analysis* of how these characteristics are likely to contribute to current and future vulnerability of IDP households.

At the same time, however, ICRC and WFP recognise a need to engage more actively with the Government. The evolution of the conflict in Colombia, and its continuing effects, require short term humanitarian assistance in conjunction with medium and long-term policy development. As the Government is squarely responsible for policy formulation and implementation *vis-à-vis* displaced populations, WFP and ICRC are well placed to provide their respective operational support and advice within this process.

These common areas of interest formed the basis of discussions revolving around a Joint WFP-ICRC Needs Assessment in Colombia. The latter process began in early 2004 and specific modalities were agreed upon and finalised in July 2004. A full Terms of Reference for the initiative can be found in Annex I.

In brief, however, the partnership is foreseen to have two distinct phases. The initial, preparatory, phase took place from **July-August 2004**. The main focus of this phase was to review secondary data and literature related to the evolution of displacement—and its effects—in Colombia. The output from the initial phase was a comprehensive literature review prepared by a national consultant and funded by ICRC.²¹

The second phase of the partnership, from **August-September 2004**, consisted of primary data collection through household surveys and focus-group discussions in **six** departments of Colombia. This report constitutes the major output of this second phase and provides a snapshot of the socio-economic situation of IDP households and criteria for targeting IDP households. Moreover, the document offers some initial recommendations on policy and programme options.

²¹ Luis Eduardo Pérez Murcia. 2004. *Misión 'Colombia Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (CJRNA)' CICR y PMA: Investigación de la fase preparatoria*. Bogotá: CICR/PMA.

Methodology for the Joint WFP-ICRC Needs Assessment

Geographic Coverage and Sample Size

Given the level of complexity in determining the exact number of IDPs described in the previous section, and the time-frame allocated for data collection, entry and analysis activities, **the findings of the current needs assessment do not (and cannot) aim to be statistically representative of the entire IDP population in Colombia.**

Rather, in selecting the geographic areas (i.e., departments and municipalities) wherein the assessment would be implemented, a **purposive sampling frame** was designed through the analysis and review of secondary data and documentation, respectively.

The sources of secondary data/reports and datasets were:

- Econometria. 2003. *Vulnerabilidad a la inseguridad alimentaria de la población desplazada por la violencia en Colombia* (1503 households in 41 municipios distributed over 20 departamentos);
- CODHES/RUT/RSS. 2004. *Encuesta Nacional de caracterización de la población desplazada 2002-2003*. (1933 households in 112 municipios distributed over 29 departamentos);
- ICRC. 2004. *Estadísticas: Asistencia humanitaria de emergencia*;
- International Organisation for Migration. 2001. *Diagnostico sobre la población desplazada en seis departamentos de Colombia* (2,534 displaced and non-displaced households);
- Mónica Trujillo. 2001. *Estudio de caso de las necesidades alimentarias de la población desplazado de Colombia*; and
- WFP Sub-Office Monitoring Reports.

Additional documentation included:

- UNDP 2003 National Human Development Report for Colombia;
- World Bank Poverty Studies (2001/2002); and
- Inter-American Development Bank Colombia Country Briefs.

The process of geographic site selection and sample size was undertaken jointly by WFP and ICRC, comprising the following steps:

1. An initial mapping of *departments* where WFP and ICRC are currently providing humanitarian assistance. This yielded 29 out of 32 total departments.
2. This initial list was then culled to a smaller number, 17, using a criterion based on data provided by RSS: **traditional reception zones**—departments which have large cities and peri-urban areas that have served, historically, as the primary destinations for IDPs.
3. Using data from RSS and CODHES, the 17 departments were reduced further by introducing additional criteria including: (a) the presence of a large number (> 5,000 people) of **newly displaced** during 2003-2004; and (b) departments with “blockaded” zones—areas where current humanitarian access/entry is limited. This resulted with 12 departments remaining in the sample.
4. A further narrowing of the 12 departments was undertaken based on a re-analysis of raw data from the 2004 CODHES study (1933 households) and 2003 Econometria survey.

Variables related to household expenditures (food and non-food), poverty incidence, demographic characteristics, and level of access to health and sanitation were examined in order to provide an indicative picture of the socioeconomic status of households as related to food insecurity.

5. Finally, logistical constraints (i.e., number of cars, people, condition of roads), security considerations, and relative costs (i.e., financial, time) were then introduced into the selection process, both to reduce the number of departments and to inject a reality-check on potential possibilities for and constraints on data collection.

Based on steps 4 and 5, above, six departments were chosen as the sample for the needs assessment. ***It should be noted that logistical and security constraints were the over-riding factors when selecting the final survey sites.*** Within each department, and where appropriate, the department capital along with peri-urban municipalities were then selected for enumeration. These are outlined in Table 3 below:

Table 3 Survey Sites for Joint Needs Assessment

Department	Capital City	Peri-Urban Municipality	IDP Population (Registered)
Antioquia	Medellin	Sonson	223,897
Bogotá	Bogotá	Soacha	79,043
Caqueta	Florencia		35,865
Cesar/Guajira	Valledupar	San Juan de Cesar Codazzi Becerril	99,588
Choco	Quibdo	Istmina	44,635
Norte de Santander	Cúcuta	Ocaña	42,027

Source: RSS. 2004. *Registered IDPs from 1995-2004*

Data Collection and Household Enumeration

The data collection phase was undertaken in partnership with a national consultancy firm, Econometria. Questionnaires were designed jointly by WFP and ICRC and shared with Econometria for conversion into a format that could be scanned. Enumerator teams were comprised of staff from WFP, ICRC and Econometria.

Enumerator teams participated in a one-day training that covered the overall objectives of the assessment and reviewed a set of qualitative (i.e., focus group) and quantitative (i.e., household) questionnaires. Both sets of questionnaires were revised, incorporating changes proposed by participants.

Enumerator teams of 10 people were then fielded to each department for a period of seven days. Given time and security constraints, each team enumerated 80 household surveys and 3 focus group discussions (FGDs) per department. An additional 5 households were interviewed in Caqueta due to some problems in survey enumeration. This yielded a total of **485 household surveys and 18 focus groups for all six departments.**

Households were chosen randomly in each barrio/peri-urban based on lists of households prepared by ICRC sub-delegations and WFP sub-offices in consultation with local authorities. Gender disaggregated focus groups were organised in conjunction with government partners at the municipal level.

Data Entry and Data Analysis

Data entry was tasked to Econometria which provided raw data for 480 households. Data analysis was the responsibility of a team comprised of staff from WFP, ICRC and Econometria.

Household data were analysed with SPSS and yielded descriptive statistics and simple frequencies. Analysis of household data focuses on key variables such as household demography, sources of income and credit, expenditure patterns, education attainment, risk exposure, and access to external assistance. Each of these variables also attempt, where appropriate, to factor into account the time of displacement.

Finally, qualitative data from focus group discussions were analysed by using a risk and livelihood analytical framework developed by the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Unit in WFP Rome. Focus groups provided valuable information on the risk and livelihood context within each department, explaining the story behind the numbers.

ANTIOQUIA

Since 1995, over 233,000 IDPs have registered with RSS/SUR in Antioquia. This represents roughly 16% of the total number of displaced based on RSS registration data. Medellín and Sonson were chosen as the survey sites within Antioquia. Eighty households were enumerated with household questionnaires and focus group discussions (FGDs) were held in Regalo de Dios (Medellín), Moravia (Medellín), and Sonson.

Table 4, below, shows the distribution of households with respect to their time of displacement.

Table 4. Duration of Displacement of Sampled Households in Antioquia

Time Displaced	Number of Households	Percent
No response	4	5
0-3 Months	9	11
3-9 Months	31	39
More than 9 Months	36	45
Total	80	100

Male-headed households account for 56% of the sample and mean size of household is four persons. The mean number of years of schooling for household heads across the sample is three years, but 85% of all head of households are functionally literate—i.e., being able to read and write a simple message. When disaggregated for sex of head of household, however, only 43% of all female-headed households are functionally literate.

While the potential for IDPs to participate in specialised support programmes exists, actual coverage is low. In terms of receiving support from external agencies, and accounting for time of displacement categories, 52% of the sample indicated that they do not receive any external assistance. Of the remainder, the majority of households (21) indicated that they received assistance from the Colombia Red Cross.

Of the 425 individuals found in sampled households, over two-thirds are below the age of 18. Sixty-two percent of all children between the ages of 6-14 are currently attending school, and 32 households reported that their children received a school meal. With respect to time of displacement and attendance rates, children belonging to households displaced for less than three months only represented 11% of all those attending school.

FGDs highlighted that in some cases no schools exist in certain neighbourhoods. Women, in particular, were concerned about the quality of education in schools that did exist, noting that teachers were mostly volunteers and might not have the necessary level of commitment to the educational process. Costs associated with schooling also were raised in FGDs. The prices of uniforms, school fees and learning materials all placed a burden on household budgets, often resulting in parents making painful decisions in taking their children out of school and re-allocating financial resources to other household needs.

Men extended the discussion from education to health problems among children within their *barrios*. Poor sanitation systems were identified as being a cause of poor health conditions and the inability of households to afford medicines was pointed out as a pressing constraint.

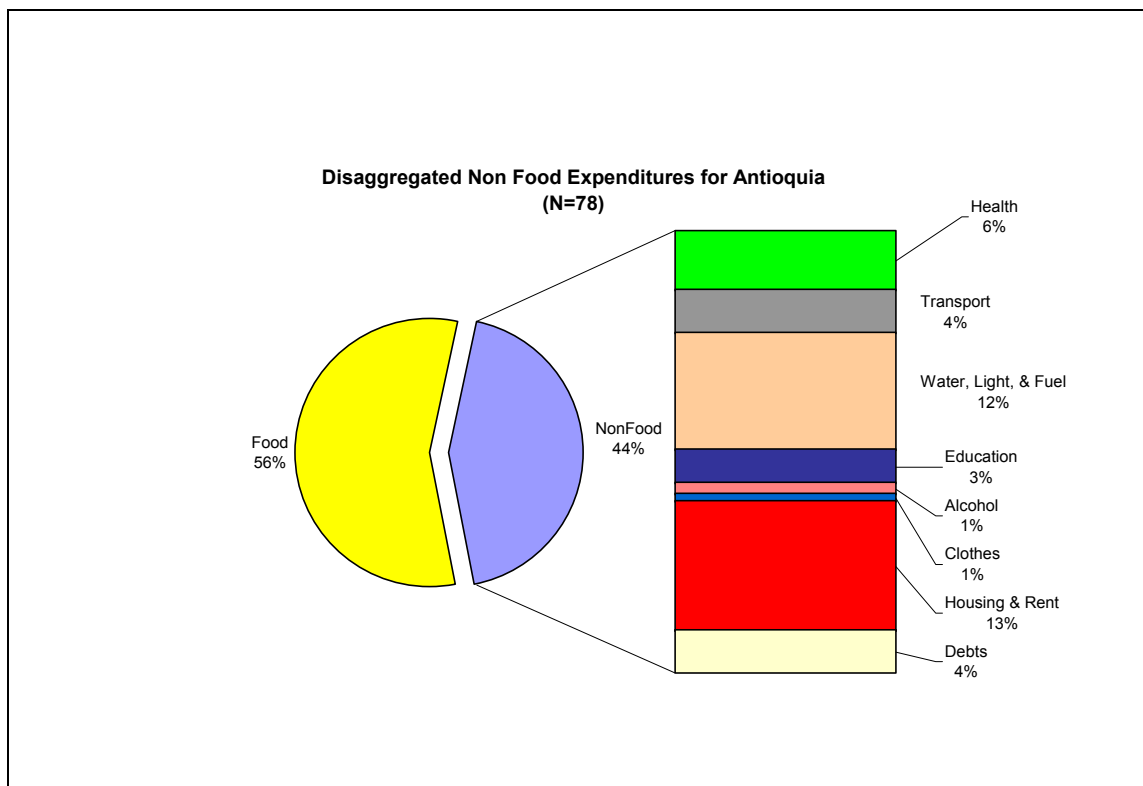
The informal sector is the primary source of livelihood of poor Colombians and IDP households are no exception. Heads of households were asked four inter-related questions related to the income generation aspect of their livelihoods: (a) if currently working and the number of days worked in the last 30 days; (b) the type of work in which they engaged and the number of days worked; (c) the manner in which they were remunerated; and (d) the *primary* sources of income for the household in the last 3 months.

Sixty-four percent of all sampled households are currently not working. Only 19 households of the total sample indicated that they had worked in the last 30 days, and on average, for 7 days. Remuneration was, in all cases, in cash. In turn, the primary source of income in the last three months as reported by 53% of households is “non-skilled labour”. Both women and men participate in this income-earning activity, with men engaging primarily in manual day labour and sale of pre-cooked foods (*arepas*) while women work mostly as domestic workers (washing and ironing).

Perceptions of men and women in FGDs are in line with household findings. One issue that came up for both was that daily wages for “non-skilled labour” were extremely low and, in some cases, off-set by transportation costs—on average, remuneration for daily wage labour is only around 10,000 pesos. Women, in particular, noted that the lack of reliable income sources resulted in “rationing strategies” that reduced food consumption and spending on social services.

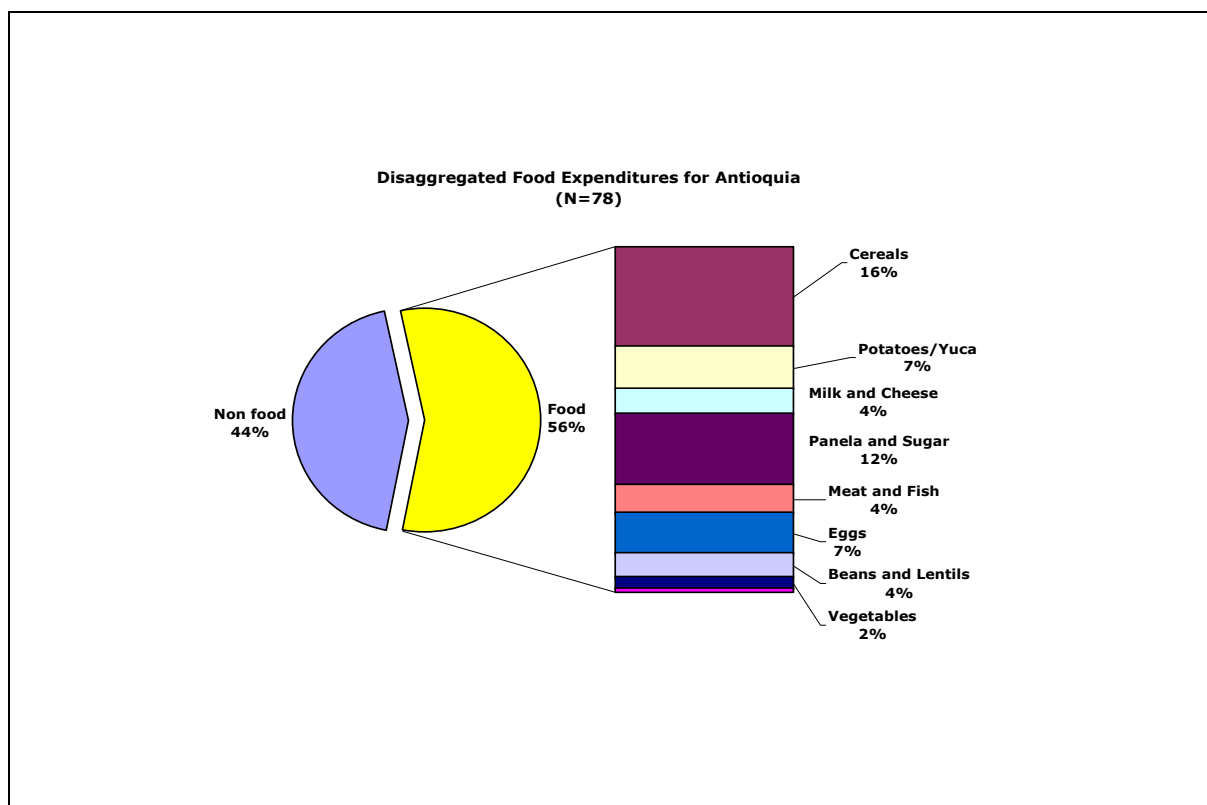
Two-thirds of all households do not have access to credit, be it informal or formal. The lack of stable income and inability to access credit facilities warrants attention as the urban economy and society primarily operates on a cash basis and certain needs (i.e., housing, utilities, transport, and food) are of paramount importance.

Questions on household expenditures were based on estimated monthly food and non-food costs. An interesting finding from the data analysis is that ***time of displacement does not affect overall expenditure patterns*** among the sample. Mean monthly household expenditures for surveyed households are 180,000 pesos. Of this, 44% goes toward non-food items, with housing and utilities (i.e., water, light, fuel) accounting for 25% of all non-food expenditures.



Education and health expenditures are considerably lower—accounting for only 9% of all non-food expenditures. Given that education, health and sanitation were all raised in FGDs as problem areas, the low proportion of expenditures devoted to these areas might indicate the inability of IDP households to afford such services.

The remaining 56% of household expenditures go, naturally, toward food. Cereals, potatoes/yuca, and sugar and *panela*—sugar in its raw form—account for 35% of all food expenditures. Reliance on carbohydrates as the main source of food is offset with the remaining 21% of food expenditures going towards items with protein content—meat and fish, eggs, pulses (beans and lentils), and milk and cheese. Nevertheless, the high dependence on cereals and tubers as the major food items purchased indicates that dietary diversity is low.



In discussing access to food in FGDs, common themes among women and men were that insufficient household income and high prices were central in not being able to access and consume adequate quantities of food. Concurrently, participants in FGDs also indicated that in some instances food is taken on credit at local shops and/or donated by neighbours and friends—indicating that a portion of overall expenditures on food is likely to go toward repayment of food-based debts.

The socioeconomic snapshot for the sampled households in Antioquia indicates that:

- Demographic trends indicate that a large proportion of the sampled population (67%) is below the age of 18—implying that IDP households have high dependency ratios. Over 60% of children between the ages of 6-14 are currently attending school, but associated costs such as fees, uniforms and learning materials are of concern to parents.
- Education levels among adults are limited to relatively high levels of functional literacy. However, economic mobility is limited given that household heads have, on average, only three years of schooling.
- In turn, IDP households living in Medellín and Sonson are *heavily dependent on one major source of income: non-skilled labour*. Over half of all interviewed also do not currently receive any external assistance and around two-thirds do not have access to credit facilities.
- In terms of livelihood strategies, women are primarily engaged as domestic help, whereas men are day-labourers or small-scale vendors of prepared foods. The returns on labour are low given that the average number of days worked in a month,

seven, are too few to ensure a steady stream of income. In focus groups, men and women reported receiving only 10,000 pesos for a day's work.

- The lack of stable income results in households having to make difficult decisions on how to allocate scarce financial resources, choosing between competing priorities such as food, health, education, housing and transport.
- Monthly household expenditure patterns indicate that food is an important priority, 56% of monthly outlays going to food. Cereals and tubers are, by and large, the primary purchases, although protein-rich foods such as meats and fish, milk and cheese, and eggs are also important. Non-food expenditures are primarily geared towards housing and utilities. Spending on health and education are low in comparison to other non-food expenditures, indicating that accessing these services might be beyond the reach of sampled households.

CAQUETA

Over 35,000 individuals have declared themselves displaced and registered with RSS/SUR in Caquetá since 1995. Traditionally, the local economy has depended on extensive cattle rearing and agriculture. Coca cultivation has increased dramatically in the last decade resulting in armed conflict aimed at gaining control over cultivation and marketing coca. The ensuing displacement—initially massive and now individual—has concentrated in the capital of Caquetá, Florencia.

The security situation at the time of this survey precluded any enumeration of households in peri-urban settlements outside of Florencia. Therefore, all focus groups and household surveys were conducted in the capital. Eighty-five households were interviewed accompanied with 3 FGDs.

Over half of all enumerated households have been displaced between three to nine months (see Table 5) and around 34% of the sample indicated that they have been displaced for more than nine months.

Table 5. Duration of Displacement of Sampled Households in Caqueta

Time Displaced	Number of Households	Percent
No response	3	4
0-3 Months	7	8
3-9 Months	46	54
More than 9 Months	29	34
Total	85	100

Women head around 33% of all surveyed households and mean household size for the entire sample is five persons. Heads of households have had, on average, four years of schooling. Eighty-three percent of all household heads are functionally literate (i.e., able to read and write a simple message). However, male-headed households are twice as likely to be functionally literate than their female counterparts. In FGDs, men and women indicated that they would like to improve their current capacities and pursue non-formal learning opportunities—especially as a means to generate additional household income.

Of the 443 individuals found in 85 households, 61% are below the age of 18. One hundred forty-six children are between the ages of 6-14. Of this number, only 48% currently attend school (71 boys and girls). School attendance among this age-cohort is also linked to time of displacement, with over 60% of children belonging to households who have been displaced between three and nine months and more than nine months. Finally, only 31% of all households enumerated indicated that their children receive a meal when at school.

Focus group interviews indicated that people felt that schooling facilities had good coverage, but did mention that distances to and from existing schools posed a problem. A more pressing issue, however, was future educational opportunities for those children who had already completed their primary cycle. Inability to afford school fees, uniforms and learning materials were the major constraints inhibiting continuing education for children.

Sixty-nine percent of the sample reported that they do not currently receive any external assistance. Those who are currently being offered support are benefiting from assistance from the Colombian Red Cross, ICRC, the United Nations, and local NGOs.

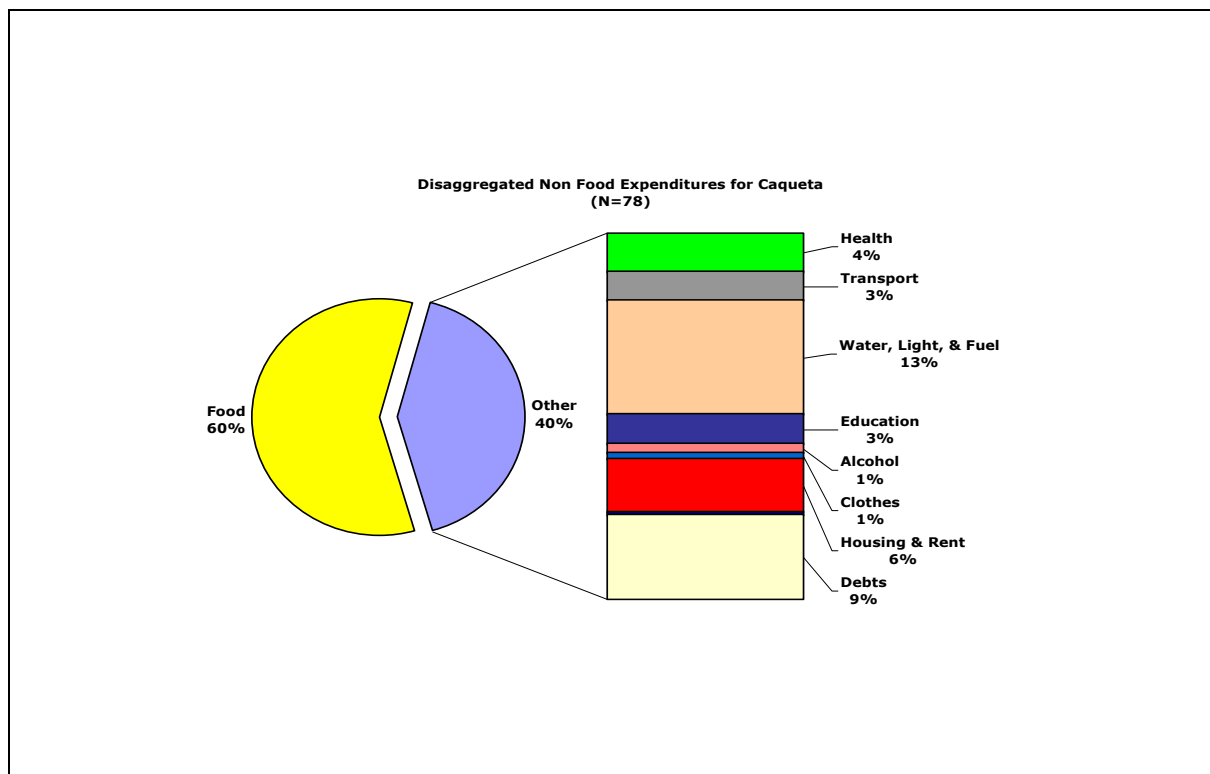
Eighty-four percent of the sample reported that they did not have access to credit.

However, FGDs did indicate that an informal system of credit does exist in many *barrios*. In most cases credit is related to food, whereby shop owners provide customers with a line of credit. Unfortunately, however, participants in FGDs also indicated that repayment is a problem due to insufficient income being generated by household members.

With respect to sources of income and income-earning opportunities, roughly half of the sample indicated that they are currently working and 76% reported that they had worked in the *last 30 days*. The average number of days worked is 17, but male-headed households were twice as likely to have worked in the last 30 days as their female counterparts. Non-skilled labour, vending and domestic service were the reported activities, and remuneration was mainly in cash. In terms of the primary and secondary sources of income of IDP households in the *last three months*, 50% of all sampled households again reported being engaged in non-skilled labour and small scale vending—indicating a limited ability to diversify income sources.

There are no significant differences among households with respect to their time of displacement and sources of income in the last three months. However, the largest concentration of households who reported working in the last 30 days belongs to the category of those who have been displaced between 3-9 months. Findings from male FGDs indicate that the skill sets possessed by IDP households are primarily farming and livestock oriented. In this context, adapting to the urban environment has been extremely difficult. Hence, one of the only opportunities for earning income is by way of non-skilled manual labour.

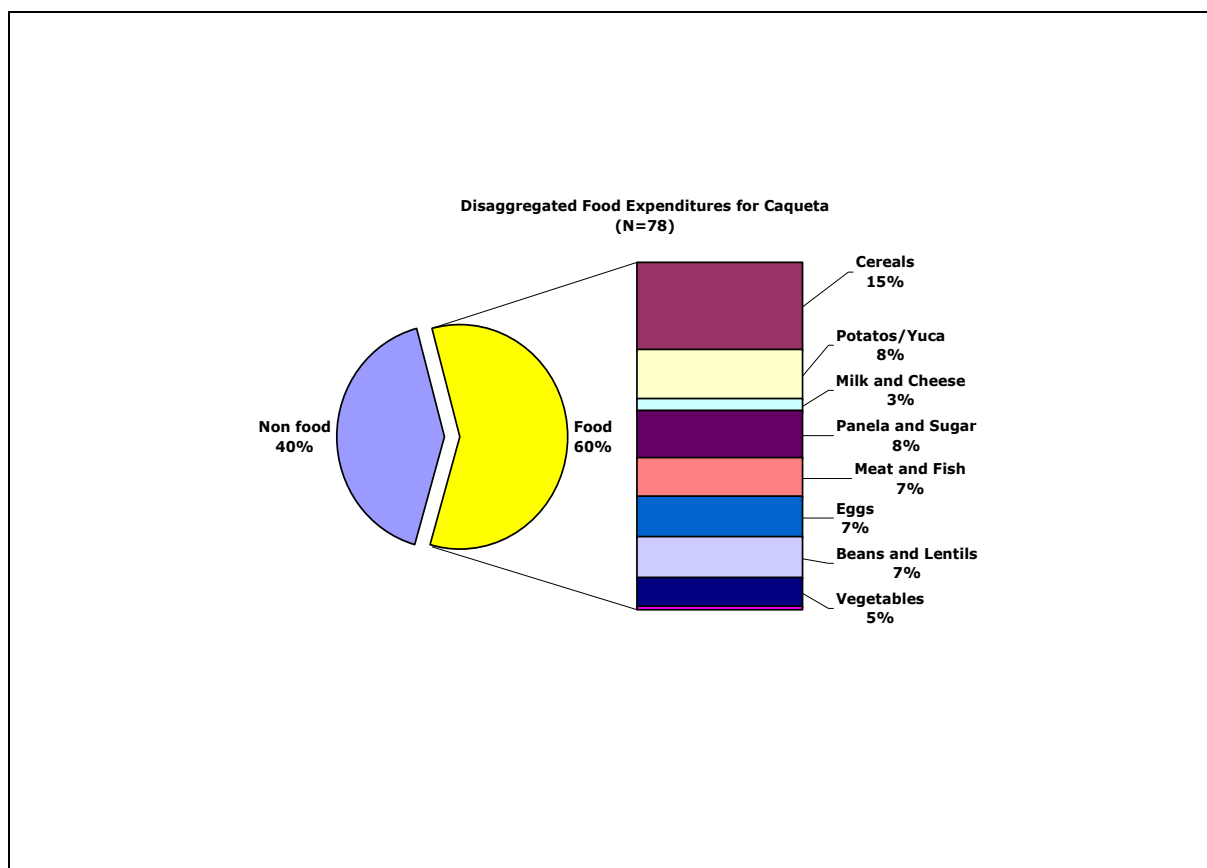
As was the case in Antioquia, monthly expenditures did not differ among households who were displaced for different time periods. Using data available for 78 households, total monthly expenditures are, on average, 200,000 pesos. Of this, non-food expenditures represent 40%. Utilities are the largest expense and when combined with housing/rent account for almost one-fifth of all non-food expenditures.



Outlays for debt are, relatively speaking, quite high, but are in line with statements made during FGDs that households have access to informal credit—based primarily on the acquisition and exchange of food. Given that FGDs also indicated the difficulties in paying back debts in a timely manner, it is reasonable to assume that additional borrowing from informal credit suppliers is a common strategy among IDP households.

Food-based expenditures account for 60% of total monthly spending. Some degree of balance exists between purchases of carbohydrates and protein based food items. The former (i.e., cereals, yucca, and plantain) accounts for 23% of food expenditures whereas the latter (i.e. milk/cheese, meat and fish, eggs, beans and lentils) representing 24% of food-based outlays.

Men's and women's comments in focus groups with regards to food revolved around the lack of dietary diversity. While this is not necessary confirmed through expenditure data—as indicated by the presence of meat/fish, vegetables and pulses—given that a large number of IDP households were farming-based, the diversity and variety of foods accessible and consumed in the past is likely to be much greater than current consumption patterns.



The major socio-economic trends in Caquetá are as follows:

- Demographic patterns indicate that 61% of the sampled population is under the age of 18. Only 48% of children between the ages of 6-14 are currently attending school. School attendance linked with the duration a household has been displaced, with those displaced between 3-9 months and 9+ months sending more of their children to school.
- The average number of years of schooling for household heads is four years, but 86% of all household heads are functionally literate. Nevertheless, male-headed households are twice as likely to be functionally literate than their female counterparts.
- The inability to transfer existing skills (i.e., farming) into the urban environment has resulted in IDP households being limited to pursuing non-skilled employment— vending, manual labour and domestic service. Opportunities for low-skilled labour do exist, but there is no indication that remuneration for labour is sufficient. Moreover, male-headed households are twice as likely to find temporary work as female-headed households.
- The relatively high share (9%) of debt in monthly expenditures suggests that generated income does not fully meet the household needs and requirements. Moreover, there is also an indication that a portion of existing debt is based on purchasing or borrowing food on credit. The paradox is that credit is not readily available to households for productive activities. This leaves households with the

only option to increase informal borrowing—thereby compounding existing debt levels.

- While the data indicate that food is, by and large, not an availability problem, there remain questions related to access. Given that 60% of all expenditures go towards food, it represents an important priority to IDP households. When coupled with the fact that food is bought or borrowed on credit, there is reason to believe that food access (i.e., based on purchase) is difficult in terms of securing sufficient quantities.

CHOCO

According to RSS/SUR data, since 1995, Choco has been home to 45,000 IDPs. Eighty-eight percent of the population in Choco is Afrocolombian. The current conflict is particularly complex in Choco with 28 out of 31 municipalities being controlled by guerrilla groups (FARC, ELN, ERG), self-defences forces (AUC) and/or by government forces.

Quibdo and Istmina were chosen as the survey sites, with 80 households enumerated along with three FGDs held in Furturo (Quibdo), San Miguel (Istmina) and Bebara (Quibdo). In terms of time of displacement, over half of all enumerated households have been displaced for more than nine months. However, in comparison to other departments, there exist a larger number of households that are newly displaced (i.e., 0-3 months).

Table 6. Duration of Displacement of Sampled Households in Caqueta

Time Displaced	Number of Households	Percent
No response	9	11
0-3 Months	18	23
3-9 Months	8	10
More than 9 Months	45	56
Total	80	100

Fifty-eight percent of all households enumerated are female-headed and mean household size is six persons. The average number of years of schooling for household heads is two years. Functional literacy among household heads is also low. A shocking 95% of heads of households cannot read or write a simple message. This is spread evenly across both male and female-headed households.

Sixty two percent of the total sampled population in Choco (505 individuals) is below the age of 18—indicating a high dependency ratio among sampled households. This being said, 69% of children between the ages of 6-14 are currently attending school. Yet only 29 households indicated that their children were receiving a meal during the day.

School attendance for 6-14 year olds is higher in households who have been displaced for more than 9 months—over two-thirds of the households reporting that their children are currently attending school. By comparison, only 33% of households who have been displaced between 0-3 months reporting the same the same.

Focus group discussions tended to confirm household data findings with respect to education issues among children and adults. In terms of children, FGDs raised the point that school costs and overall coverage is limited. This has led to children, especially teen-agers, entering the informal labour market as a means to generate additional income for the household. Among adults, the high levels of illiteracy have limited employment opportunities that can offer a stable income stream. Several men and women reported attending basic literacy courses training courses, but did not always complete them.

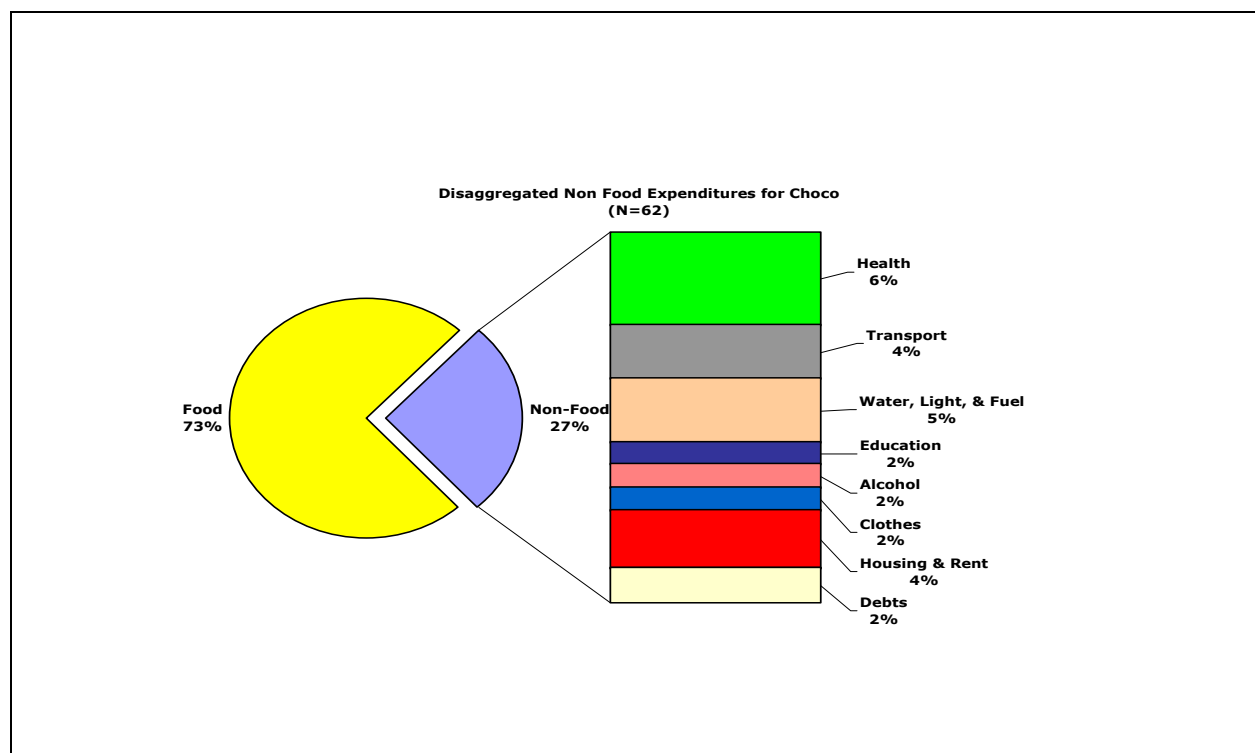
External assistance is also limited in Choco. Only 38% of all households are receiving external support. The Government is, by and large, the major provider of assistance.

Eighty-three percent of households who are displaced between 0-3 months are receiving assistance as compared to only 26 percent who have been displaced for over 9 months.

Sixty-five percent of all households do not have access to credit, and those that do—28 households—rely on friends and family as the major source. Over 60% of all sampled households are currently not working and close to 50% have not worked in the last 30 days. Only 14 households reported that they had worked in the last 30 days. In terms of primary sources of income in the last three months, 24 households reported that *begging* was their primary source of income in the last three months. This was followed by 18 households reporting non-skilled labour; 10 households relying on remittances; and finally nine households vending goods. Focus group discussions in Quibdo indicated that daily wages ranged between 5,000-10,000 pesos, with some men and women reporting that 10,000 pesos goes toward daily food purchases.

Expenditure data from 62 households Choco is also interesting when compared to other regions. Again, time of displacement did not factor in to expenditure decision-making. Mean total monthly expenditures for 62 households are 310,000 pesos. Non-food expenditures only account for 27% of total expenses. Health, transport, utilities and housing make up 19% of all non-food expenses.

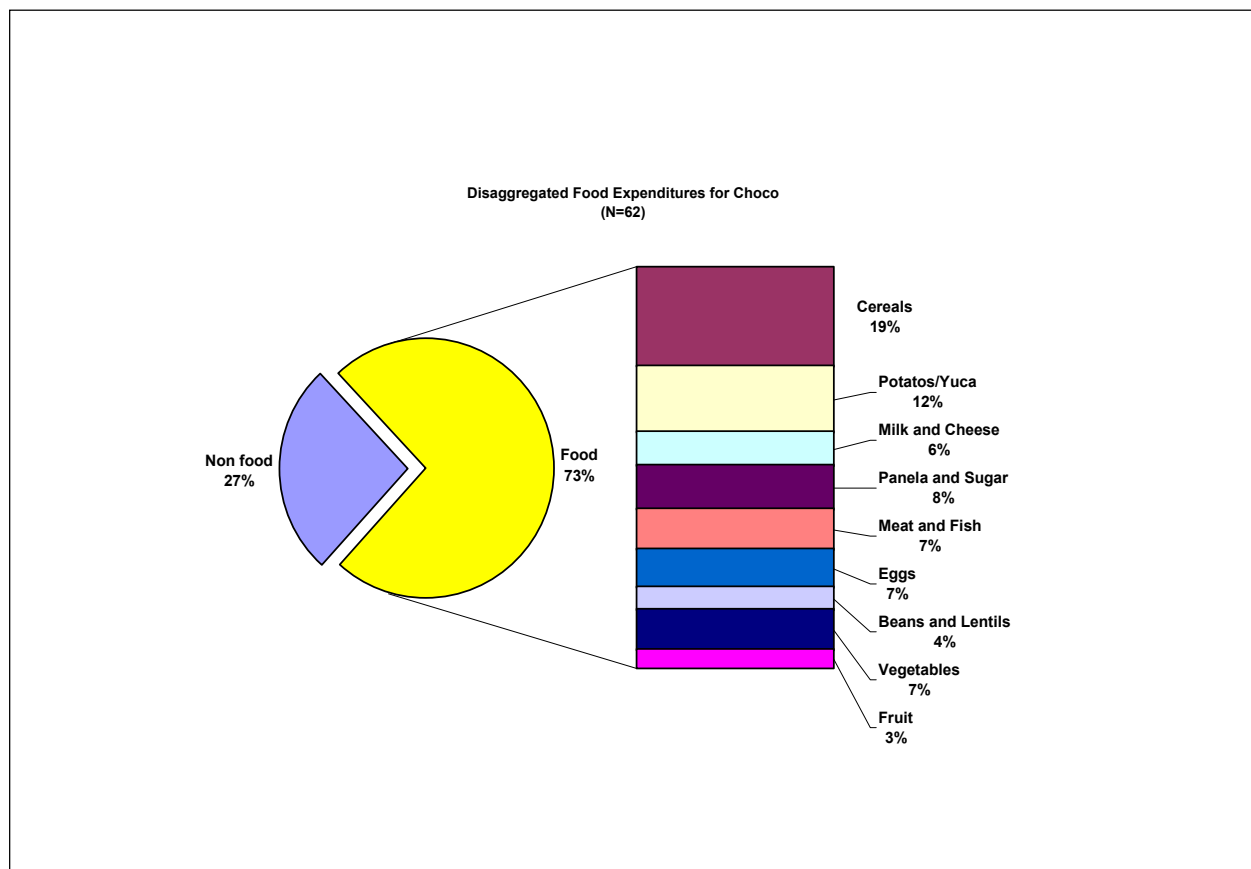
Focus group discussions are in line with expenditure data insofar as both men and women indicated that that existing water and sanitation systems are of poor quality, yet have high user costs. Women, in particular, noted that children were more prone to illness due to the unsanitary living conditions.



Expenditures on food, on the other hand, make up 73% of monthly outlays. Within this expenditure category, cereals and tubers (potatoes/yuca/plantain) make up 31% of the total amount spent on food. However, milk and cheese, meat and fish, eggs, pulses, vegetables

and fruit account for 34%, indicating a good level of dietary diversity—although not necessarily in adequate quantities.

Another important finding emanating from the analysis of expenditure data is that households that monthly outlays on food often impute the value of food transfers—i.e., gifts, bought on credit, donations, and external assistance. In other words, household are incorporating the monetary value of non-purchased food items into their monthly expenditure recalls.



The major findings and conclusions for Choco are:

- Demographic patterns are similar to other regions insofar that the percentage of individuals under the age of 18 is high. Sixty-two percent of the total sampled population falls below this age. Of those children between the ages of 6-14 attending school, over 65% belong to households who have been displaced for longer than 9 months.
- Functional literacy levels among adults are low—95% of all household heads cannot read or write a simple message. Economic mobility is further constrained by the fact that the average number of years of schooling for heads of households is two years.
- If IDP households in Choco are to be better integrated into their new environment then some investments must be made in strengthening human capital among adults. Skills development is one possible option, but needs to be linked to productive activities that can generate assets and income.
- Only 38% of households are currently receiving external assistance and over 65% do not have access to credit. Deployment of household labour is also ineffective as over 50% of the sample is currently not working, nor have they been able to find work in the last 30 days. For those lucky enough to find temporary work, remuneration is also low. Focus group findings indicate that wages only amount to 5,000-10,000 pesos per day.

- Low wages are linked to expenditures insofar as the limited money that households possess goes principally towards food purchases. Over 70% of monthly expenditures are devoted to food—meaning that it is a high priority. This being said, other basic needs are neglected, especially health and education. High user fees for both services places restrictions on access, affecting the overall health of the household and future educational opportunities for children.

CUNDINAMARCA

Over 79,000 IDPs have been registered in Bogotá since 1995, with much of the displacement is individual, rather than massive. Given that Bogotá is the capital of Colombia, it has been a traditional receiver of the displaced. *Barrios* in Bogotá and Soacha were visited to enumerate 81 household surveys and three focus group discussions. Of the 80 households, a majority of households have been displaced between 3-9 months or more than 9 months.

Table 7. Duration of Displacement of Sampled Households in Cundinamarca

Time Displaced	Number of Households	Percent
No response	19	25
0-3 Months	13	16
3-9 Months	25	31
More than 9 Months	23	28
Total	80	100

Of the 81 households enumerated, 66% are male-headed, with a mean household size of 6 persons. The average number of years of schooling for head of households is 4. Eighty-seven percent of all household heads can read and write a simple message. However, of this number, only 30% of female-headed households reported being able to read and write such a message.

Two-thirds of the total sampled population (478 persons) is below the age of 18, and the largest household age cohort is between the ages of 6-14 years, with a total of 147 individuals. Of this number, falling in the 6-14 year cohort, 61% (90 children) are currently attending school. Focus group discussions revealed that households who were not sending their children to school were not doing so because of the associated costs (i.e., tuition fees, uniforms, textbooks).

Only 12% of all sampled households receive external assistance, mostly from the government. On average, assistance has only been received for 3 months, indicating that it is going towards those who are newly displaced (0-3 month displacement). Over 70% of sampled households indicated that, at the time of the survey, they were not currently working, but 50% indicated that they had worked in the last 30 days.

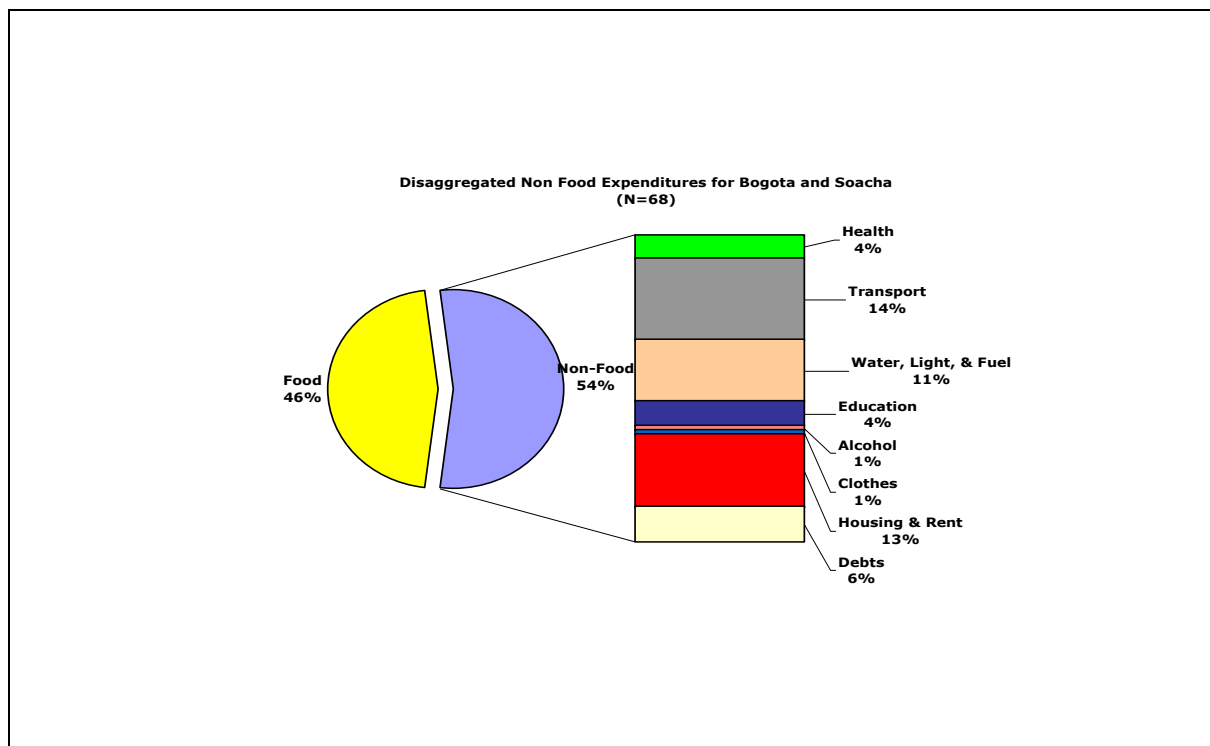
The average number of days worked is 12, but again remuneration is low and there is greater competition, for the same type of work, among low-skilled labourers in Bogotá as it is a large urban centre. Households displaced for longer than 9 months are three times more likely to have reported that they found work in the last 30 days than those displaced for less than 3 months. Moreover, male-headed households are four times more likely to have found short-term employment than female headed households.

Sources of income for sampled households in the last 3 months are primarily “non-skilled labour”—43% of the sample—along with small-scale vending and petty trade. Payment for labour is cash and food based, with women more likely to be paid for their services in food.

In FGDs, women noted that they are engaged in domestic service (washing and ironing clothing), but that payment (whether in food or cash) for their services is often delayed for

months on end. Ability to generate additional income is hampered by the fact that almost 98% of all households do not have access to credit. However, FGDs indicated that there are informal credit systems where households can borrow cash and food on a regular basis. Nevertheless, women noted that repayment rates were low and households found it difficult to pay back borrowed capital in a timely manner.

Expenditure data available for 68 households follows patterns found in other departments (with the exception of Choco). Total monthly expenditures for 68 households are 250,000 pesos. Non-food expenditures, representing 54% of total expenditures, are mainly geared towards rent/housing (13%), transport (14%) and utilities (11%). Focus groups explained the importance of transport costs as many need to travel considerable distances within and around Bogotá in search of daily employment.



Education expenditures are relatively low due to government policies that have a quota system for enrolling children from IDP households. Nevertheless, the ability of IDP household to pay additional costs—uniforms, school fees—limits the effectiveness of the policy in keeping IDP children in school.

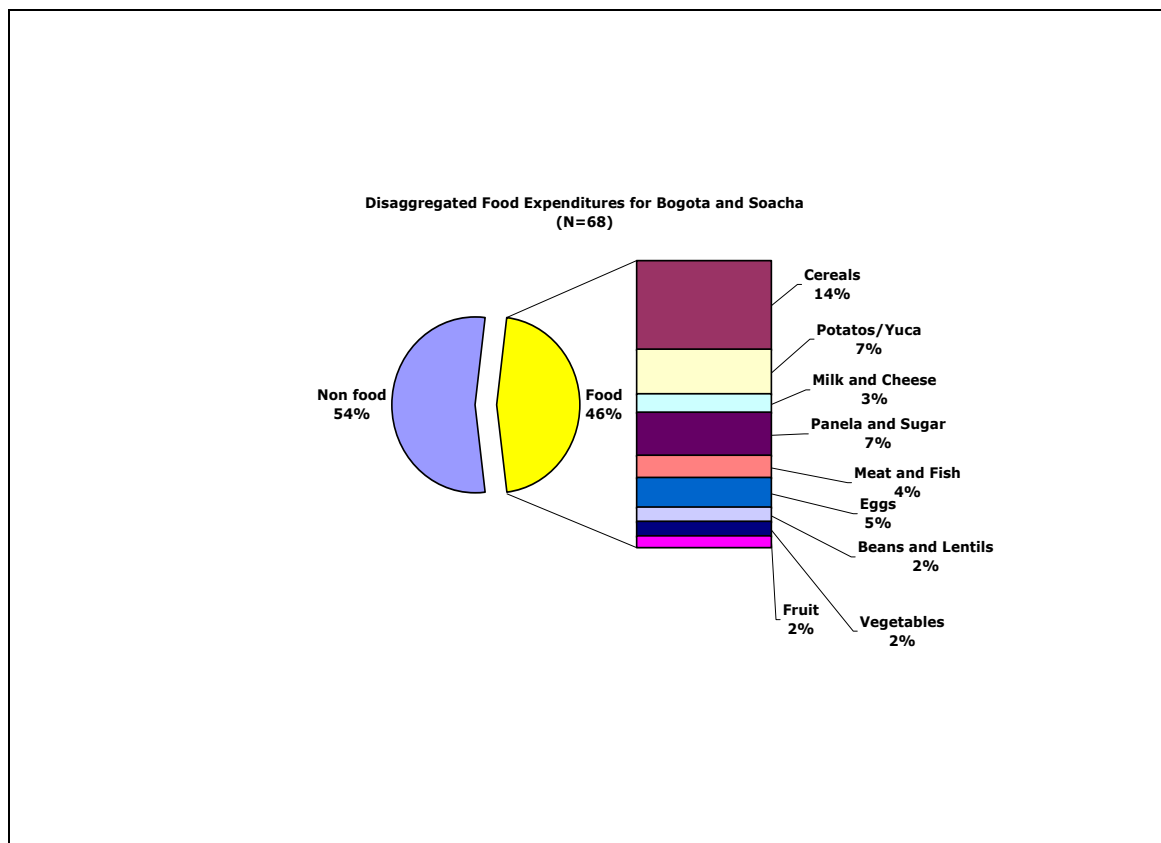
Health expenditures, too, are low. Again, this is partly due to the fact that consultations with government-approved doctors are largely a free service. Women in FGDs were also concerned with water, sewage and sanitation systems. Unsanitary conditions have contributed to respiratory problems among children, frequent cases of diarrhoea and chronic illness.

Local authorities have been notified of the conditions, but communities were informed that they would have to pay additional costs for cleaning and rehabilitation of existing sewage and sanitation systems. Other medical services (i.e., consultations) are mostly subsidized

by the government, but medicines and other essential drugs are sold at market values and relatively expensive.

The other major expenditure found among IDP households is debt—six percent of total monthly expenditures. Given that access to credit is limited, informal lending is likely to be extremely common—especially in an urban context. This figure also suggests that inter-household exchanges of cash and other forms of non-monetary capital plays an active role in closing consumption gaps.

Expenditures on food, which accounts for 46% of remaining monthly expenditures, mostly revolve around purchase of cereals and tubers—representing 21% of total food expenses. Cumulatively, 13% of total food expenditures go toward meat/fish, eggs, beans, and lentils and vegetables.



The main conclusions emanating from an analysis of IDP households in Cundinamarca are:

- As with other departments, demographic patterns indicate that up to 66%--or 316 individuals—of the total sample population is below the age of 18. Of this figure, children under 5, and children between the ages of 6-14 represent 35% and 46%, respectively.
- Sixty-one percent of children between 6-14 years are currently attending school. However, increased attendance is hampered by lack of sufficient financial resources needed to pay for uniforms, school fees and textbooks.

- Household livelihoods are largely dependent on low-skilled labour opportunities which, by and large, do not compensate enough to off-set transportation costs. Women, in particular, are vulnerable insofar as they often do not get paid for their services as domestic workers. However, households that are displaced for longer than 9 months are more likely to find temporary employment than those displaced between 0-3 months.
- Water and sanitation systems are a priority for IDP households as they currently are not functioning properly and contributing to a general increase in illness and infections among children.
- When compared to other departments, IDP households in Cundinamarca tend to spend less on food than on non-food items. This is not entirely surprising as most of the interviewed households lived in and around Bogotá. The non-food costs associated with city life are substantial. Nevertheless, there is a risk that current and future access to food and social services will be a problem if existing income earning opportunities cannot generate sufficient resources.

CESAR/GUAJIRA

Sharing a border with Venezuela, Cesar and Guajira have hosted up to 100,000 IDPs since 1995. Known for fertile lands, extensive cattle rearing, and palm plantations, Cesar and Guajira are also home to self-defences forces and the guerrillas. The conflict, while affecting the majority of households has been particularly damaging on the indigenous population. Eighty households and 3 focus groups were implemented in Becerril, Codazzi, Valledupar and San Juan del Cesar.

Table 8. Duration of Displacement of Sampled Households in Cesar/Guajira

Time Displaced	Number of Households	Percent
No response	0	
0-3 Months	13	16
3-9 Months	47	59
More than 9 Months	20	25
Total	80	100

Of the 80 households enumerated, 44% are headed by women, with mean household size of 7 persons. The average number of years of schooling for household heads is 3, and 41% percent of sampled head of households reported that they *cannot* read or write a simple message. This is evenly spread across both male and female headed households.

Fifty-eight percent of the total sample population (529 persons) is below the age of 18. Of this figure, under-fives account for 35% of the population below 18 and 47% are between the ages of 6-14. Within this latter cohort, 76% are currently attending school. At the same time, however, only 30 households reported that their children were receiving a meal while at school. Focus groups, especially women's, placed a premium on education and noted that many households wanted to ensure that their children could use education as means to improve their opportunities to get regular employment.

In terms of external assistance, over 60% of enumerated households indicated they received support from external organisations. Overwhelmingly, government programmes accounted for much of this assistance. At the same time, however, external assistance is time-bound and households seem not to have sufficient income-earnings to offset gradual reductions in outside assistance.

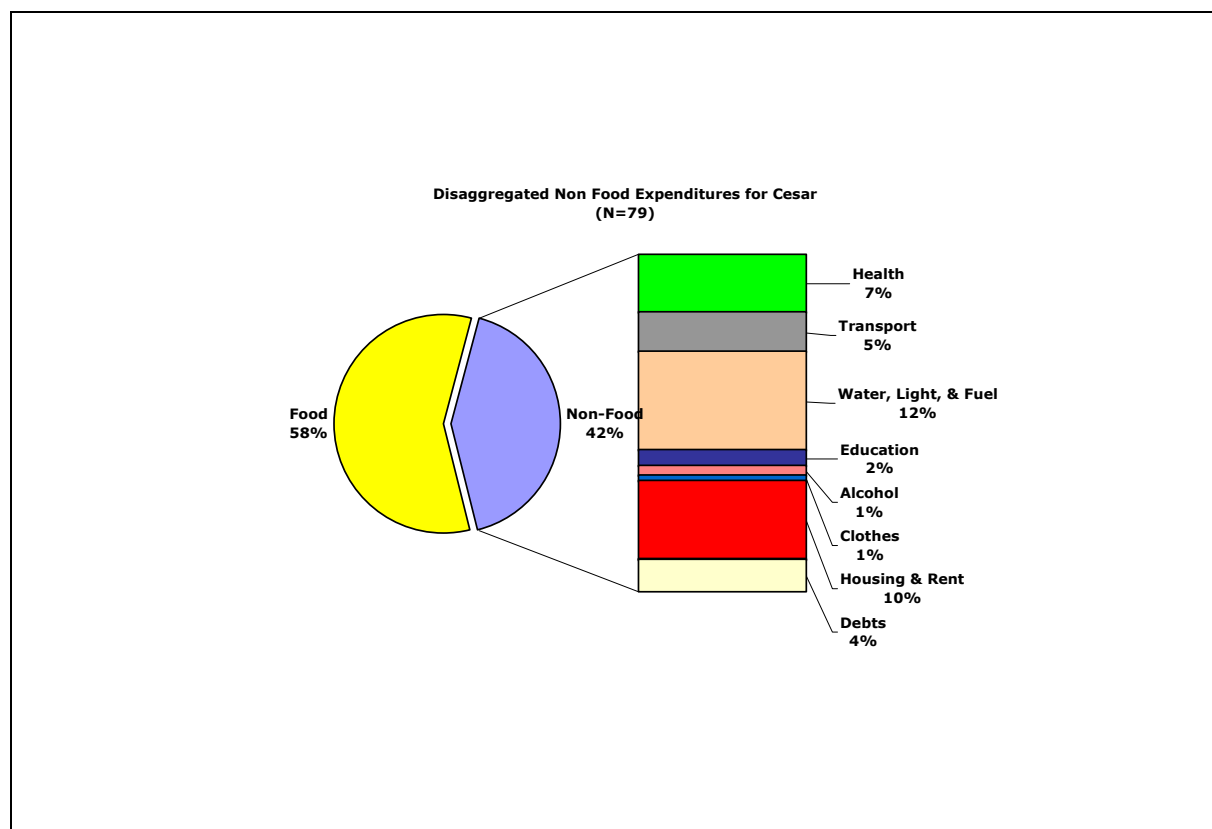
While a majority of households—52%—do not have access to credit, a significant number do receive credit (in cash and kind) from informal lenders (16 households) and from friends and family (21 households). Focus group discussions in Becerril confirmed the importance of informal support from family and friends. The entire barrio—including non-IDP households—is currently in an economic slump. In this context, social networks and support systems have enabled IDP households to spread risk through borrowing small amounts of capital or food to meet immediate consumption needs.

Sixty-one percent of the sample indicated that, at the time of the survey, they were not currently working. Only 18 heads of households reported that they had worked in the last 30 days, working, on average, only 9 days per month. Moreover, male-headed households were twice as likely to report working in the last 30 days than female-headed households.

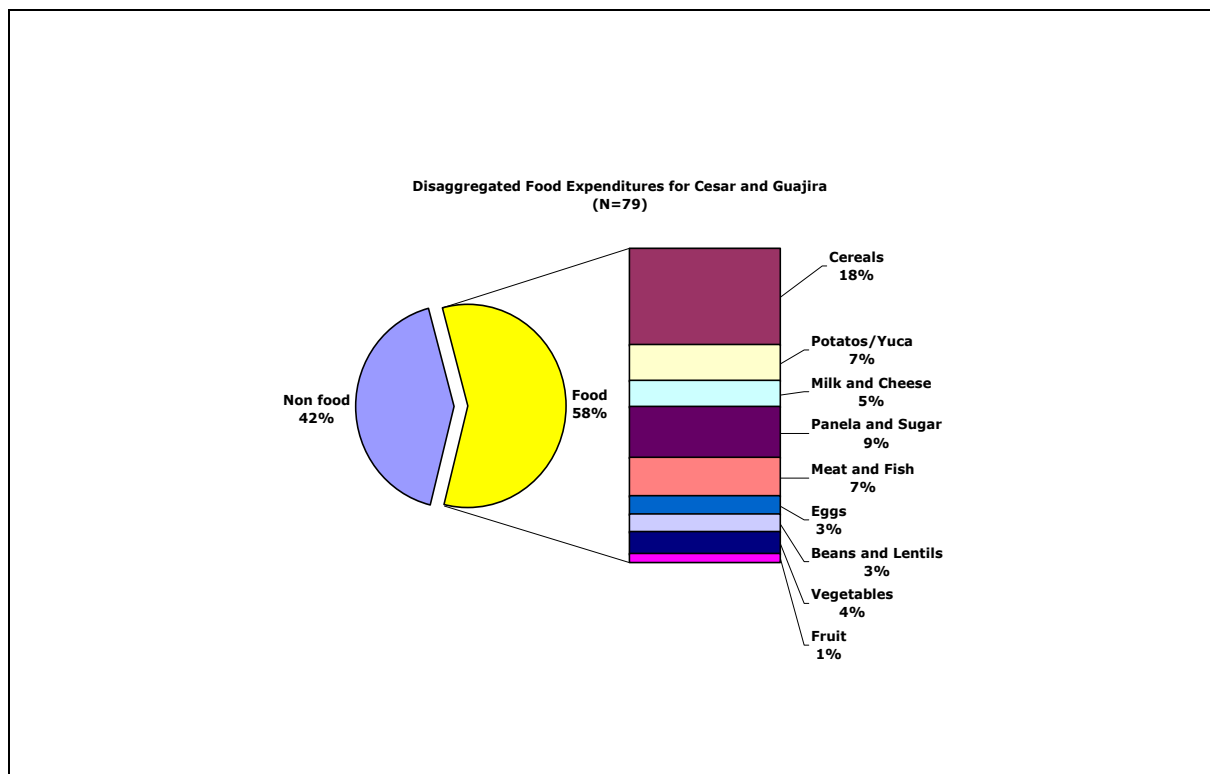
In terms of major sources of income in the last 3 months, a little over half of all households indicated that “non-skilled” labour. Small-scale agriculture and remittances accounted for other important sources of income.

Men’s and women’s focus groups echoed findings from other region *vis-à-vis* income sources. For women, domestic service was the only type of activity they could pursue. Men were limited to working as daily farm labour in large plantations. Both men and women reported that payment for their labour was not sufficient to meet the basic needs of their households—averaging 15,000-20,000 pesos for a day’s work. Some women complained that they had not been paid by their employers for up to three months.

As with other regions, time of displacement did not affect overall expenditure patterns. Total monthly expenditures for sampled households are 200,000 pesos. Non-food expenditures account for 42% of monthly outlays. Utilities, housing, health and transport account for around 34% of all non-food expenses. The cost of living was noted as becoming more and more expensive within focus group discussions. Housing, in particular, was of concern to households in Cesar. Constantly moving and changing housing is a strategy that IDPs are using in order to avoid being targeted by armed groups. While such protection is important, the monetary costs are evidently high.



Food expenditures are quite high, but comparable to other departments. Of the 58% of monthly expenditures devoted to food, around 25% goes toward cereals and tubers (yucca/plantain/potatoes). Meat consumption in Cesar is slightly better than other areas due to large-scale cattle rearing in the plantations—meaning that meat is available in local markets, but prices vary.



A small amount of expenditures goes toward other sources of protein. For example, eggs, beans and lentils only account for 10% of food expenditures.

The main findings emanating from Cesar are the following:

- Social networks and solidarity systems play an important role in meeting immediate food and non-food needs of IDP households. These networks provide a crucial safety net to IDP households. Access to credit is limited, but informal lending—both in food and cash—is becoming increasingly important given the overall economic problems found within the departments.
- Dependency ratios within households are likely to be high as 58% of the sampled population is below the age of 18. At the same time, however, education is an important priority for all households. Seventy-six percent of children between the ages of 6-14 are currently attending school.
- Income sources are similar to other departments—with a reliance on non-skilled labour and domestic service. According to focus groups, daily wage rates range between 15,000-20,000 Pesos, but incidences of non-payment by employers, especially for domestic service, were frequently reported in focus groups. Given that households who were able to work in the last month did so, on average, for only 9 days, it is reasonable to assume current wages are insufficient to cover basic household needs.
- Given the paucity of earned income, expenditure patterns take on more importance. Housing, utilities and health represent a third of all non-food expenditures, followed by debt and transport in terms of priority outlays. The high proportion of expenditures for food items is partially offset by the fact that there is greater

diversity among the foods purchased. Nevertheless, focus groups indicated that prices for major food items are generally rising—potentially making future access to basic food items increasingly difficult.

NORTE DE SANTANDER

The state of Norte de Santander is a zone which illustrates the broadening of the geography of the armed conflict in Colombia - whose main characteristic is its strategic location as a frontier zone, and the existence of oil, carbon, illicit plantations, and more recently, biodiversity and water resources. This history has had an effect on the transformation of the state from zone of invasion and control from guerrilla groups to a configuration of the conflict which is characterized by the dispersion and dissemination of the armed groups.

Since 1995, over 42,000 people have been displaced and, subsequently, registered with RSS/SUR. The main destinations for displaced populations are Cúcuta and Ocaña, where 80 household surveys and focus group discussions were enumerated. Unfortunately, due to data collection problems, time of displacement among enumerated households was not fully completed. Therefore, over half of the sampled households did not respond to this question. In this context, findings cannot be disaggregated according to categories of displacement.

Table 9. Duration of Displacement of Sampled Households Norte de Santander

Time Displaced	Number of Households	Percent
No response	50	63
0-3 Months	6	8
3-9 Months	3	4
More than 9 Months	21	26
Total	80	100

Out of 80 households surveyed, 49% of households are headed by women and mean household size for the sample is 6 persons. Household heads have, on average, only 3 years of schooling. In terms of functional literacy, around 60% of all household heads can read and write a simple message.

Over 77% of the total sampled population (402 individuals) are below the age of 18, significantly higher than in other departments. Of the number of children between 6-14 years (159 boys and girls), 78% are currently attending school. In households where children are not attending school, taking care of a family member who is ill and not being able to afford school fees and costs were the predominant reasons for non-attendance. At the same time, only 37 households indicated that their child was receiving a meal while at school, suggesting that food plays a role in household decision-making on education issues.

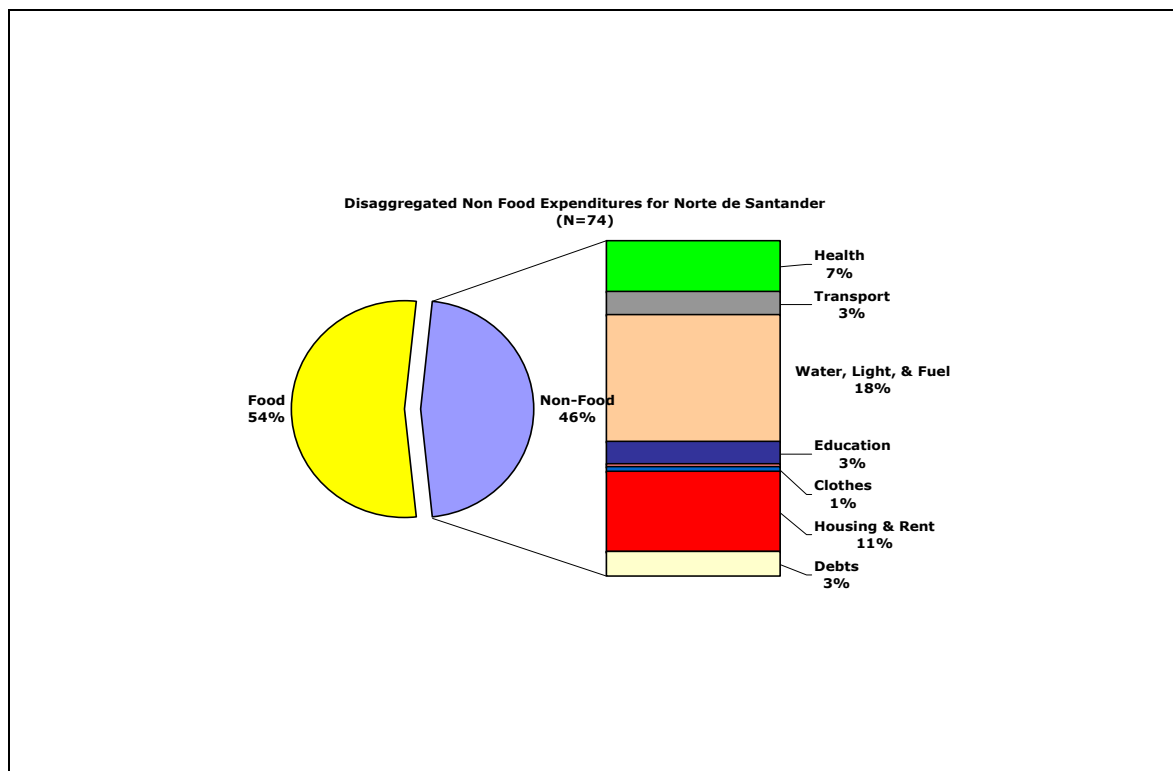
Seventy-one percent of enumerated households indicated that they were not benefiting from external assistance. Support from other sources, notably credit, is also limited. Eight-eight percent of households reported that they do not have access to credit facilities. Limited external assistance and lack of access to credit is compounded by the fact that, at the time of the survey, 55% of all households reported that they were not currently working.

This being said, 48 households indicated that they had worked in the last 30 days. The distribution among female and male-headed households was surprisingly equal (23 female and 25 male). Cash was the primary source of remuneration for 90% of households who had, on average, worked 14 days in the past month.

Primary sources of income for the last three months, however, are similar to other departments. Thirty-six households reported that non-skilled manual labour was the main source of income in the last 3 months. Vending of various goods (i.e., sweets, batteries) was reported as being important for an additional 15 households.

The diversity of income sources for IDP households is limited and, following a familiar pattern, women tend to be mostly engaged in domestic service while men are active in manual labour of different types. FGDs in Ocaña highlighted the fact that limited opportunities for work had negative effects on the household—especially related to accessing food, health care and housing. Women indicated that households had resorted to eating fewer meals, moving into housing with relatives and friends and using traditional medicines to treat illnesses.

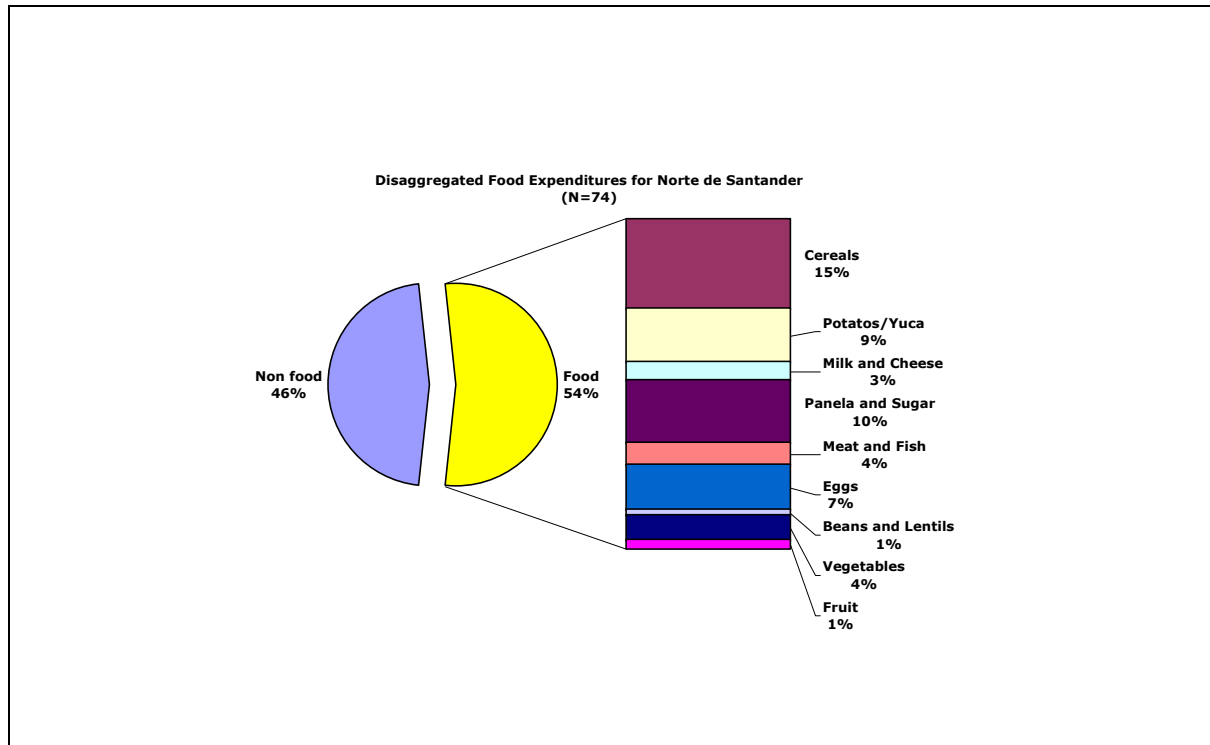
Sampled households have mean monthly total expenditures of 165,000 pesos. In the area of non-food expenditures, which account for 46% of total monthly spending, utilities (water, light), housing/rent and health constitute 36%.



FGDs in Cúcuta reported that access to health care is limited to consultations as medicines are costly to purchase. Women reported increased incidences of skin diseases and respiratory infections. Basic sanitation was also noted as causing greater illnesses as many households are not connected to sources of fresh water.

Food expenditures, on the other hand, reveal a continued dependence on cereals and tubers (24%). Very little—only 5%— goes toward vegetables and pulses (i.e., beans and lentils) and milk and cheese products are also not prioritised among expenditures (only 3%).

Focus group discussions indicated that food is often bought on credit or exchanged for labour. In some instances men noted that they had attempted to cultivate food on small plots outside of Ocaña. However, security and small landholdings have prevented any sustainable attempt at urban agriculture.



The main findings from Norte de Santander are:

- Seventy-seven percent of the total sampled population is below the age of 18. This is considerably higher than for other departments. With mean household size at 6 persons, it is reasonable to conclude that dependency ratios are placing a burden on the economically active adult population to provide for greater numbers of family members.
- While 78% of children between the ages of 6-14 years are currently attending school, households are also reporting that increased incidences of illnesses in the family, accompanied by high health care costs, are some of the reasons why some children are being taken out of school.
- The relatively high number of female-headed households means that their burden as income-earners and care-givers is being increased while very few support mechanisms are in place to alleviate this burden. Although men and women reported being able to find work in the last month, overall employment opportunities for women are much more limited than for men.
- Monthly expenditure patterns highlight that water, lighting, and fuel and housing account for 28% of all non-food expenditures—higher than in other departments. Interestingly, however, expenditures on education are quite low—3%—considering the high levels of school attendance.

- Fifty-four percent of monthly expenditures go to food. In particular cereals, tubers and *panela*—which is consumed rather than used as a condiment—account for 34% of all food expenditures. This being said, FGDs indicated that food is increasingly being purchased on credit, which can lead to greater levels of debt as repayment is often difficult given unreliable income streams.

Risk Exposure and Household Response

The previous section outlined the basic socio-economic status of sampled households. The factors affecting household vulnerability to food insecurity and poverty are, in turn, influenced by exogenous and endogenous risks such as violence and physical insecurity, policy failure, loss of employment, and economic decline.

In this context, households were asked to respond to a series of questions that attempted to determine the three major risk factors which have had a negative effect on household welfare in the last six months. In turn, households were also asked how they responded, adapted and/or coped with the effects of such risks.

The risk factors most frequently mentioned were: (a) price increases in basic food items; (b) illness of a family member; and (c) inability of head of household to work/loss of income sources.

Seventy-six percent of all households reported a combination of these three risks as affecting their households in the last six months. At the same time, around *two-thirds* of this total number indicated that these risks had an effect on their ability to access food for own consumption.

Household responses to these risk factors were, in most cases, consumption smoothing—specifically in terms of food intake. The two types of consumption smoothing were to either: (a) reduce the number of meals eaten every day; or (b) switch to lower quality and cheaper foods.

If placed in the broader context of the socioeconomic data presented in the previous section, the responses seem consistent. Lack of stable income, savings, or credit precludes liquidation of financial capital to cope with external shocks.

At the same time, IDP households do not have other productive assets that can be sold or exchanged for goods and services. This leaves only their food stocks which, in essence, become the only assets that can be rationed in order to reduce the negative outcomes of and cope with identified risks.

Monthly expenditure data shows that debt plays an important role in household expenses. The major sources of such debt are family and friends. When viewed in through the lens of risk exposure, it can be inferred that reliance on social networks and solidarity systems goes beyond simply meeting *ad hoc* consumption needs.

Such networks are, probably, essential in supporting vulnerable IDP households who are affected by such risks. The sustainability of these social networks, however, is questionable as they are, by their very nature, informal. In the absence of concrete policies that aim to boost the incomes and assets of IDP households, social networks and solidarity systems, along with external assistance, will be the main means by which IDP households will be able to meet emerging challenges.

One risk factor that was not mentioned directly was HIV/AIDS. Nevertheless, one module in the household survey aimed to see the level of understanding and awareness of the issues related to HIV/AIDS. The objective of the module was to gain a general understanding on awareness levels among the sampled population and ascertain whether respondents could identify measures that could prevent transmission.

Of the 485 households sampled, 61% reported that they knew of the pandemic. A smaller number, 53%, claimed that they knew how to avoid transmission of the virus. In terms of specific responses on how to avoid transmission, the overwhelming response by 43% of all households was to use a condom. A smaller number of households, 16%, reported that HIV/AIDS could be avoided by limiting oneself to one partner, and 13% of households reported that abstaining from sex is an effective strategy.

The general conclusions garnered from the data are that there is a high level of awareness among IDP populations of HIV/AIDS. It is also encouraging that respondents reported that using condoms is an effective way of preventing transmission. Even though there is a degree of understanding, other efforts can build on this foundation. In particular counselling services for those individuals living with HIV/AIDS can be introduced into ongoing health programmes. Free testing at neighbourhood clinics can also be another programme option or, alternatively, informal briefings on the subject given by health workers can act as effective "preventive measures."

Household Consumption Typologies: Screening for Vulnerable Households

Using data on dietary diversity and frequency—*defined as the number of different foods consumed during the week prior to the survey and the frequency by which these foods are consumed*—the sample of 485 households from all six departments were analysed in order to identify homogenous groups of households.

The analysis used information on frequency of consumption (0-7 days) for nine food items: (a) cereals; (b) tubers (i.e., potatoes/yuca/plantain); (c) milk and cheese; (d) sugar/*panela*; (e) meat and fish; (f) eggs; (g) pulses; (h) vegetables; and (i) fruit.

A third variable, *sources of foods consumed*, was introduced, based on the household questionnaire, to distinguish among households who normally: (a) purchase the food items consumed; (b) receive food consumed as a gift and/or donation; and (c) acquire consumed food through an “other” source.

Lowest Level of Consumption

This first household typology represents the *lowest level of consumption—meaning that households do not consume any staple food items on a daily basis—i.e., cereals and tubers which constitute the bulk of any diet*. Rather, cereals, tubers and eggs are consumed, in combination, 3-4 days a week. With respect to sugar consumption (3-6 days a week), it is consumed in its raw form—*panela*—rather than used as a sweetener or condiment.

One hundred-nineteen households are found within this profile. On average, 65% of households in this typology indicated that the source of all food items was through purchases. At the same time, however, 30% of these same households reported receiving at least a portion of all food times as a donation or gift.

Lowest Level of Consumption	Always 7	Often 5 - 6	Sometimes 3 - 4	Rarely 1 - 2	Never 0
Cereals					
Tubers					
Milk and Cheese					
Sugar/Panela					
Meat/Fish					
Eggs					
Pulses					
Vegetables					
Fruit					

Low Level of Consumption

Households with a *low level of consumption* are the second major household typology—**meaning that households eat cereals every day of the week and at least one other food item each day**. In this particular case, sugar and *panela* is the second food item, but there is very little integration of other foods such as meat, pulses and vegetables. This implies that there is low food diversity, but that the frequency of consuming staples **might** indicate a minimum level of food-intake.

Ninety-one households from the entire sample belong to this typology. On average, within this typology, 72% of households indicated that the source of all food items consumed was through purchases. A smaller percentage, only 18%, of these same households indicated that they received food items as gifts and donations.

Low Level of Consumption	Always 7	Often 5 - 6	Sometimes 3 - 4	Rarely 1 - 2	Never 0
Cereal					
Tubers					
Milk and Cheese					
Sugar/Panela					
Meat/Fish					
Eggs					
Pulses					
Vegetables					
Fruit					

Normal Level of Consumption

The third typology is composed of households who have a *normal level of consumption*—**meaning that households consume, on a daily basis, at least two staple food items and at least two other food items on a regular basis (3-6 days a week)**. This grouping constitutes 101 of all sampled households.

Households found within this typology have the necessary levels of staple food consumption and an average level of food diversity. While meat and fish consumption are lower, proteins come mostly from eggs and pulses.

On average, 74% of these households indicated that they bought the food consumed and 16 % of the same households received the consumed food as gifts.

Normal Level of Consumption	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
	7	5 - 6	3 - 4	1 - 2	0
Cereal					
Tubers					
Milk and Cheese					
Sugar/Panela					
Meat/Fish					
Eggs					
Pulses					
Vegetables					
Fruit					

Good Level of Consumption

The final typology, *good level of consumption*, represents 174 out of 485 households.

Households consume at least four main food items a daily basis and all other food items consumed on a regular basis.

This typology reflects the best level of dietary diversity among all households. This is not to say that the quantities are always sufficient. Rather, the diversity of food ensures a balanced diet for household members.

Of the 174 households found within this typology, 63 indicated that they purchased the food they consumed, whereas 17% of the same households reported that they received a portion of their food as gifts/donations. However, 33% of the households also reported that they had an “other” source of food—above and beyond purchases and gifts/donations—that was not specified in the questionnaire.²²

The additional source of food for these 33% of households is important insofar as the transfer was in all non-staple food items. In other words, excluding cereals and tubers, all other food items were covered by the additional transfer.

Good	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
	7	5 - 6	3 - 4	1 - 2	0
Cereals					
Tubers					
Milk and Cheese					
Sugar/Panela					
Meat/Fish					
Eggs					
Pulses					
Vegetables					
Fruit					

²² Respondents were given three response choices *vis-à-vis* the source of food consumed: (a) purchase; (b) gift/donations; and (c) other (specify). However, in almost all cases, option (c) was only marked, not specified.

Interpreting Findings

When looking at the distribution of households who fall into the four consumption typologies across the six departments, we find the following:

Table 10. Distribution of Household Consumption Typologies across Sampled Departments

Consumption Typology	ANTIOQUIA % HH	CAQUETA % HH	CESAR & GUAJIRA % HH	CHOCO % HH	BOGOTA & SOACHA % HH	NORTE DE SANTANDER % HH	Total Number of Households
Lowest Level	18%	16%	18%	1%	24%	21%	119
Low Level	25%	14%	14%	1%	13%	31%	91
Normal Level	21%	34%	8%	0%	24%	10%	101
Good Level	8%	9%	20%	43%	8%	8%	174

The highest concentration of households belonging to *the lowest level of consumption typology* can be found in Cundinamarca (Bogotá and Soacha) and Norte de Santander. However, when looking at the combination of the lowest and low levels of consumption, Norte de Santander has the highest proportion of households belonging to the two categories.

With respect to households with a *good level of consumption*, Choco accounts for 43% of all households in this typology, followed by Cesar and Guajira with 20% of sampled households. The findings for this category, in particular, warrant further explanation. Analysis of data from focus groups and households in Choco and Cesar/Guajira seem to indicate a bleak picture. Lack of employment opportunities, low levels of remuneration for daily wage labour, high expenditures on food, and low levels of functional literacy among heads of households are not encouraging indicators.

However, as is noted in the previous paragraphs, households who have a good level of consumption benefit from three sources of food—purchase, gifts/donations, and “other”. The importance of the “other” category cannot be overstated as it allows for access to non-staple food items. When combined with gifts/donations, this “additional” food source was reported by around 50% of sampled households within this typology.

Keeping the previous caveat in mind, the introduction of new variables, to be combined with the consumption typologies, can help in better explaining household characteristics. In looking at monthly expenditures, we see that, on average, total monthly expenditures across the sample are 214,000 pesos per month. Of this number, 58% goes toward food. When disaggregated among the food consumption groups, we see gradual increases in the share of monthly expenditures devoted to food among the consumption typologies.

Table 11. Proportion of Monthly Expenditures Devoted to Food along Consumption Typologies

Consumption Typology	Total Monthly Expenditures (in Pesos)	Percentage of Total Expenditures Devoted to Food
Lowest Level	156,106	48%
Low Level	183,494	54%
Normal Level	210,019	58%
Good Level	276,838	64%

In terms of *per capita monthly expenditures on food* across the consumption typologies, we see similar patterns. Households in the highest consumption typology spend almost three times as much, per capita, on food than a household in the lowest consumption typology.

Table 12. Monthly Expenditures on Food Per Capita by Consumption Typology

Consumption Typology	Per Capita Expenditure on Food (in Pesos)
Lowest Level	13,459
Low Level	18,054
Normal Level	21,586
Good Level	35,915
Total	23,860

This indicates that households in the better consumption categories have greater access to income and, therefore, can meet the food consumption needs. However, when comparing expenditure patterns with other variables, we find the following:

- Roughly 40% of all households belonging to the *good level of consumption typology* indicated that they currently receive **external assistance** as compared to only 30% in the *lowest level of consumption typology*;
- Around 24% of all households with *good level of consumption* also indicated that they were receiving **credit** (in cash and kind) from family and friends. Only 9% of households with the lowest level of consumption reported the same; and
- Around 50% of all households having a good level of food consumption reported that the sources of food consumed are from donations/gifts and “other” sources.

One conclusion, therefore, is that households which have better levels of consumption are able to draw upon several sources to cover immediate deficits—without necessarily draining their income stocks. The opposite is true for households with the lowest level of consumption, who are more likely to draw down their financial assets (i.e., income earnings) to purchase food as they are unable to access alternative sources.

In comparing the length of displacement and consumption typologies (Table 13), we do not see a linear pattern among categories of displacement and consumption patterns. This implies that food consumption does not necessarily improve over time.

There is no indication that households who have been displaced long have the ability to generate sufficient income to access food—this being important given that a majority of households purchase their food. Another explanation is, perhaps, that IDP households are unable to access other non-humanitarian government services that can alleviate monetary burdens on non-food expenditures.

Table 13. Time of Displacement by Consumption Typology

	Consumption Typology				Total
	Lowest Level	Low Level	Normal Level	Good Level	
No Response	17	29	13	27	86
0-3 months	21	10	9	26	66
3-9 months	40	25	44	51	160
9 + months	41	27	35	70	173
Total	119	91	101	174	485

In terms of looking at sources of income and consumption typologies, there are not too many differences in terms of the sources of income. By and large, *non-skilled labour is the primary income-earning activity*, irrespective of consumption typology. However, households falling in the lowest and low consumption typologies had the following additional sources of income:

- Small-scale vending (sweets, batteries, cigarettes);
- Sale of pre-prepared foods;
- Begging; and
- Firewood sales.

While there is a demand for low-skilled labour, finding such labour opportunities is not always possible. Sixty-one percent of the households in all consumption categories reported that, at the time of the survey, they were not currently working. Households belonging to the *lowest consumption profile* accounted for the largest percentage within the overall figure, but we also find a large proportion within the *good level consumption category*.

		Consumption Typology (% of Households)			
		Lowest Level	Low Level	Normal Level	Good Level
Are you currently working?	Yes	30%	43%	44%	40%
	No	70%	57%	56%	60%
Total		119	91	101	174

When looking at the different scenarios presented in the previous paragraphs, some general conclusions emerge:

The income earning dimensions of IDP livelihoods are neither stable nor diversified. All households, more or less, depend on temporary, low-skilled labour. Therefore, there is no clear indication that IDP households having better food consumption patterns have more access to financial resources that enable them to purchase a greater quantity and variety of food.

As noted above, IDPs having a good level of consumption are better able to draw upon informal safety nets, external assistance, and informal sources of credit, thereby protecting their income stocks. On the other hand, households with the lowest level of food consumption are more likely to deplete their financial assets so as to buy food given that they have not been able to take advantage of informal networks.

Length of displacement does not drastically affect food consumption patterns. Households that have better consumption patterns are likely to consume a greater variety/diversity of food items—irrespective of the time that they have been displaced. However, there is no guarantee that the same households are consuming adequate quantities.

Overall Findings and Conclusions

Displaced households face considerable risks in adapting to urban environments—the main destination once displaced. In addition to security concerns, lack of stable income, insecure housing, inability to access health and education services, and poor sanitation are all factors that increase the vulnerability of IDP households to food and livelihood insecurity.

Although findings from the six departments are not representative of the entire IDP population, they do offer an insight into current socioeconomic trends among IDP households. These findings should be read in conjunction with previous surveys and studies on the displaced.

The main findings and conclusions of the Joint Assessment are:

1. Demographic Patterns Reveal a Young Population

Across sampled households in the six departments, average household size is 6 persons. However, taking a step back and looking at the entire sample population—2847 people—62% are below the age of 18. In Norte de Santander, this percentage increases to 77%, considerably higher than in other departments.

Sixty-six percent of children between the ages of 6-14 (i.e., 580 children) are currently attending school. Time of displacement greatly affects whether or not children within this age range are sent to school. Over two thirds of the households reporting that their children are attending school have been displaced between 3-9 months and over 9 months.

For comparison purposes, although the age range differs, the World Bank Colombia Poverty Report noted that in 1999 the enrolment rate of **non-displaced** children between the ages of 7-11 was 95%.²³ Ensuring that children from IDP households remain in school is not guaranteed. The 2003 Econometria survey of displaced populations found that the highest drop out rate was among children aged 12-15.

Focus group discussions conducted across the six departments as part of the Joint Assessment offer a qualitative explanation for the Econometria findings. Women and men reported that the associated costs with schooling—uniforms, school fees, learning materials—place a monetary constraint on IDP households. Youth represent an additional source of labour that can be deployed to generate income that goes towards the fulfilment of basic needs. This trade-off increasingly influences parents' choices of sending their children to, or keeping them in, school.

The burden of providing basic needs for this young population is daunting. The average number of years of schooling of head of households across the sample is 4 years. However, 62% of household heads can read and write a simple message. Given that economic mobility is linked with educational attainment, adults within the sample are not likely to find well remunerated employment.

In urban centres, IDP households juggle several priorities—food, shelter, clothing, transport, and health care. All of these require financial outlays. In trying to meet other basic needs, education, as a priority, might be neglected. This is confirmed with expenditure data that

²³ World Bank, 2002. *Colombia Poverty Report*.

indicate that, on average, sampled households only allocate 3% of their monthly expenditures on education.

Men and women in focus groups echoed the findings from expenditure data. Children's education is considered to be valuable insofar as it increases the possibilities for escaping poverty. However, other priorities are also important and children are expected to contribute to meeting the basic needs of IDP households. This gives rise to a situation wherein current needs threaten the economic mobility of future generations—limiting the possibilities to escape poverty and destitution.

2. Food and Livelihood Security are Intertwined

Findings from the six departments show that food and livelihood security are intertwined in the lives of IDP households. Prior to their displacement, IDPs were predominantly farmers. Such skills are no longer relevant, nor marketable in an urban setting.

In effect, displacement has stripped IDP households of the one, productive, means that can contribute toward their food and livelihood security: land. The loss of this particular resource hampers the ability to meet current food consumption needs, access social services and generate savings and assets. Sixty-seven percent of sampled households pointed out that their major source of food is through purchases.

Given that food is mostly bought, the only asset available to IDP households that can help them access food is their labour. Gaining access to labour opportunities, however, proves difficult. Around 61% of the heads of households interviewed indicated that, at the time of the survey, they were not working. Moreover, 78% reported that they do not have access to formal or informal credit. Of those who do have access, 19% reported that they had access to informal sources of credit, mostly from family and friends.

Despite the fact that the numbers point out that access to credit is limited, there are strong indications that informal borrowing is much more common than reported. In all surveyed departments, focus groups reported that food is often purchased on credit and that small loans are offered by local moneylenders. Therefore, it is important to recognise that household data may mask informal exchange networks.

Only 42% of all households reported working in the last 30 days. In some cases the number of days worked are too few to generate sufficient income. The average numbers of days worked per month are 15 for the entire sample. However, this varies from department to department. For example, in Antioquia, households who reported finding work in the last 30 days worked, on average, only 7 days; in Caqueta, 17; and 8 in Cesar/Guajira.

Focus group discussions revealed that daily wage rates are extremely low—ranging from 5,000-10,000 pesos per day (USD\$2-4). Using these wage rates as an indicative guide, if multiplied by the average number of working days (i.e., 15), the estimated monthly income of an IDP household ranges from 75,000 to 150,000 pesos (USD\$30-60/month). Although the variance within this range is quite high, and also based on wage rates reported in focus groups, the findings do provide an analytical benchmark for comparison purposes.

For example, in the 2003 Econometria survey, with data for 1500 households, monthly income for IDP households averaged 227,000 pesos (USD\$88). The latter represented only 61% of the minimum wage for the country (365,000 pesos/month). If taking the high-end

figure of 150,000 pesos, as reported in focus groups from this survey, sampled households are currently making only 42% of the minimum wage.

There are no noticeable advantages in being displaced for a longer period of time and the type of income sources available and accessible to IDP households. Looking at income sources over the three months, 45% reported that their primary source of income was “non-skilled” labour. Small scale vending and begging were reported by roughly 20% of sampled households as being secondary sources of income, with sale of pre-prepared foods and firewood indicated as additional activities.

The sustainability of livelihoods based primarily on one source of income is questionable. For men, manual labour is the main activity, while women work as domestic servants. In both instances, wages are likely to be depressed as IDP households are competing with each other for the same type of jobs in the same locations and employers will seek to pay the least amount possible for services.

Finally, IDP households face a set of covariate risks that have a direct bearing on their food and livelihood security. The exogenous and endogenous risk factors most frequently mentioned are: (a) price increases in basic food items; (b) illness of a family member; and (c) inability of head of household to work/loss of income sources.

Seventy-six percent of all households reported a combination of these three risks as affecting their households in the last six months. At the same time, around *two-thirds* of this total number indicated that these risks had an effect on their ability to access food for own consumption.

Household responses to these risk factors were, in most cases, consumption smoothing—both in term of food intake and food purchases. The two types of consumption smoothing strategies were to either: (a) reduce the number of meals eaten every day; or (b) switch to lower quality and cheaper foods.

When placed in the broader context of food and livelihood security, household responses to risk factors are not surprising. Lack of stable income, savings, or credit precludes liquidation of financial capital to cope with external shocks. In the absence of any other productive assets that can be sold or exchanged for goods and services, food stocks become the one resource that can be rationed in order to mitigate and cope with the negative effects of identified risks.

3. Household Expenditure Patterns are Geared towards Food

Expenditure patterns across the sample indicate that mean total monthly expenditures are 214,000 pesos. As was the case for sources of income, expenditure patterns did not differ drastically among households displaced for different periods of time. On average, 58% of monthly expenditures go toward food. Of this, cereals and tubers account, on average, for **25% of all food expenditures**.

In comparison, the 2003 Econometria survey reported an average monthly expenditure of 335,000 pesos, with around 59% going towards food. Official figures from a 1995 DANE survey on income and expenditures reported that non-displaced poor households spent around 45% of their total monthly expenditures on food. However viewed, the proportion of household budgets devoted to food among sampled households is quite high.

In looking at non-food expenditures, which make up the remaining 42% of total expenditures, utilities (i.e., water, electricity, gas) and housing are the main items. These, on average across the sample, account for 12% and 9% of non-food expenditures, respectively. Health and education are less prominent in monthly non-food outlays, averaging six and three percent, respectively.

Findings from FGDs reported that both health and education were important areas for IDP households. Men and women noted that the poor quality of existing sanitation and sewage systems are contributing to illnesses among children, but that they are not able to afford treatments. In terms of education, school fees were mentioned as being the major constraint to keeping children enrolled.

However, and as noted earlier, IDP households have to prioritise among several demands that require financial outlays. It is apparent that food is a major priority. Resources needed for human capital development are increasingly being diverted towards purchasing food which, while important, has negative effects on children in terms of education opportunities and well-being.

Finally, debt repayment is an important factor in monthly expenditures. Average monthly expenditures on debt are 5% across sampled households—more than what is afforded for education. Debt is likely to be food-related as households are known to purchase/borrow food on credit from local shops. Thus, the focus of IDP households on prioritising food may create recurring cycles of debt given that current income levels are not sufficient to buy adequate quantities of food.

4. Current Food Consumption Patterns

Forty-three percent of sampled households fall into the lowest and low level of consumption categories—***meaning that they do not: (a) consume any staple foods (i.e., rice, yuca, plantain); or: (b) consume only staple foods and at least one additional non-staple food item on a daily basis.*** This implies that both the quantity and diversity of food consumed is low.

Seventy-three of all households found in the lowest and low levels of consumption typologies indicated that they had purchased their food and 17% indicated that had received food as a donation/gift. Non-skilled labour, vending, begging, and sales of pre-cooked foods and firewood constituted the major income earning activities among households found within these two typologies. Households that had worked in the last month reported that they had worked, on average, only 14 days.

Households with *good levels of food consumption* are more likely to: (a) benefit from external assistance programmes; (b) have access to informal credit (cash and kind) from family and friends; and (c) consume greater amounts of food that is received via gifts and donations. ***This implies that such households can draw upon several sources of support to meet immediate consumption deficits.*** The opposite is true for households in the *lowest level of consumption typology* who are more likely to draw down their financial assets—i.e., income earnings—as they do not have the same level of support.

Food consumption does not necessarily improve the longer a household is displaced. There is no indication that households who have been displaced long have the ability to generate sufficient income to access food—this being important given that a majority of households purchase their food.

5. Social Networks and External Assistance

Sixty-two percent of sampled households reported that they did not have access to external assistance. Two-thirds of these households have been displaced between 3-9 months and over 9 months. This suggests that such households are not able to access non-humanitarian government programmes, especially those related to economic stabilisation, relocation and resettlement.

In the absence of official assistance, IDP households rely heavily on informal social networks that offer economic and social support. Such networks are extremely important insofar as they offer goods and services that are not currently accessible to displaced households.

By all counts, the socio-economic welfare of IDPs shows little difference whether they are displaced for less than three months or over nine. The importance of food, housing and utilities are all reflected as priorities in household expenditures. Social networks fill in the gaps, especially in terms of food and housing.

Despite their social function, informal networks also have negative characteristics. There is a tendency for such networks to encourage taking on household debt that cannot be easily repaid. At the same time, there is a danger that taking on further debt, especially that which is food-based, will have an effect on accessing other basic needs, notably health and education.

Recommendations

The Government of Colombia has the overall responsibility to ensure that IDPs are awarded their constitutional rights and receive both humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance. The state is obliged under the sentence T-327 of 2001 to put into action mechanisms that will investigate the causes of displacement, set in place judicial processes in regards to the acts causing the displacement and to ensure the reparation for the damage or loss caused by the displacement. Moreover, in order to assure the rights of displaced populations, the Constitutional Court ruled in 2004 (sentence T-025) that to withhold rights from a displaced population is unconstitutional. National and departmental authorities are obliged to respond in a timely and appropriate fashion ensuring at least the minimum fundamental rights for the displaced. By contributing to bridging certain gaps, organisations such as ICRC and WFP can play an important supporting role in the implementation of adapted policies and programs geared towards sustainable solutions. In this context, the following recommendations are offered to guide the government and its partners in their endeavours.

The role of humanitarian assistance should be seen in the framework of the major findings and recommendations of this report. While not able to address certain structural problems (i.e., violence, poverty, lack of social integration) facing IDPs, humanitarian assistance may contribute, by securing IDPs during the initial phase, to the implementation of sustainable solutions, provided clear and adapted policies and programs are enforced by the Government of Colombia.

If current modalities for targeting vulnerable households can be collectively refined and programmes and projects designed on the basis of improved targeting, humanitarian assistance can strengthen the initial coping capacity of IDP households meet the immediate food and non-food needs of the most vulnerable households; likewise, it can pave the way for more structural, long-term changes that aim to raise the socio-economic welfare of displaced populations.

Policy Recommendations

1. **Implement existing policy priorities to ensure the protection of the civilian population.** Continued violence is the main contributor to ongoing displacement. Although there are legislative and institutional means by which the population at large should be protected, reality shows that in many occasion this is not the case. The Government of Colombia should ensure the respect of IHL, in particular the principles of limitation, distinction and proportionality, in order to avoid displacement, when feasible, and ensure the protection of the displaced ones.

In order to avoid displacement and/or protect the displaced population, the armed groups should comply with the humanitarian principles of limitation, distinction and proportionality and the general obligation to protect the civilian population; they should as well guarantee access to vulnerable population.

2. **Strengthen and adapt existing policies and mechanisms to ensure the social and economical reestablishment of the IDP population.** While the emergency needs of assisted IDP's are generally met during the first months of displacement, existing programs do not ensure sustainable solutions for the IDP's population, in particular in terms of income generation, access to land, credit, education, health and housing. The

Government of Colombia should analyse gaps between what is foreseen within its legal framework and the current implementation of its programs in order to ensure the restoration of self-reliance and reduce the vulnerability of the IDP population.

3. ***Current efforts to harmonise the manner in which IDPs are identified, characterised and supported should be refined so as to account for the dynamic nature of displacement.*** The RSS is working towards an improved set of methodologies that can track IDP households. While this is an important process, there is a danger that future methods will be static in nature, not accounting for evolving dynamics of displacement. A number of international and national organisations are currently grappling with how to incorporate the changing nature of displacement into their determination of IDP numbers, their characteristics, and their relative vulnerability. The RSS should work with these agencies so as to ensure consistency and flexibility of methodological approaches.
4. ***Expand the focus and coverage of current social protection programmes.*** The government, in partnership with the World Bank, has embarked on an ambitious programme of social protection. However, much of the focus is on the mitigating the effects of the economic recession which began in the late 1990s. The impact of displacement on social sectors, while recognised, is almost a policy and programme afterthought. There is a great deal of potential to expand the focus of specific elements within social protection programmes (i.e., health, education, employment) to cover IDP populations. As such, IDPs who are eligible to benefit from this support need to be chosen on the basis of sound selection criteria that can build upon the work of the RSS and others (see Recommendation 2). In essence, this would represent the link between humanitarian and development assistance. One possibility is to explore the feasibility of a burden-sharing agreement whereby a certain number of IDP households could be gradually incorporated into mainstream social protection programmes.
4. ***Reduce the barriers for gaining access to and benefiting from basic social services.*** While IDP households are entitled to basic education and health services, their ability to take advantage of such opportunities is limited. User fees and costs are prohibitively high, especially for tuition, uniforms, and medicines. Communicable diseases are common among children of IDP households due to high population densities and poor water and sanitation systems. Two policy options to improve efficiency and equity of social services in IDP settlement are recommended: (a) increase the share of public expenditures on basic health and education, with targeted investments; (b) promote labour-intensive public works that aim to rehabilitate sewage and sanitation systems. Both have short term payoffs in terms of meeting IDP needs as well as longer-term benefits in terms of improved health status and educational opportunities for children.

Operational Recommendations

1. ***Design and implement an in-depth survey methodology on the socio-economic status of both IDP and non-IDP households which could be used as a reference methodology by other agencies.*** To date, several surveys have been conducted on the socio-economic conditions of displaced and non-displaced households. However, different methodologies, sample sizes and objectives have precluded any systematic comparison of trends. In order to better understand the differences, similarities, and relationships between and response options for displaced and non-displaced populations,

a more in-depth survey is required. This methodology survey should be shared and used where feasible by government, civil society and the international community so as to build on current partnerships. In turn, having a multi-agency effort can facilitate an improved set of humanitarian and non-humanitarian response options.

2. **Launch and advocacy campaign highlighting the IDP situation.** Displaced populations do not always have a voice or an ability to increase public awareness on their situation. The launching of an advocacy campaign on behalf of IDPs can greatly strengthen national and international understanding of the needs and aspirations of the displaced. Such a campaign should focus not only on macro-level issues, but also on good operational practice in supporting displaced populations. Examples of good practice should emanate from ongoing government, civil society and international programmes and projects.
3. **Consider the use of food consumption typologies as a one of the elements for targeting food assistance if and when appropriate** such as in the case of WFP's recovery type activities. Other criteria could include for example 1. (a) households with 8 or more members; (b) households with a majority of members below the age of 18; (c) households who have only worked for 10 days or less in the last month; and (d) households with monthly expenditures less than 200,000 pesos. Finally, food consumption typologies will need to be refined and updated according to the changing socioeconomic situation of IDP households. Such changes can, for example, build on the findings from an in-depth survey. In this manner, food and non-food needs can be identified simultaneously.
4. **Modalities for delivering humanitarian assistance should focus on human capital development.** Humanitarian assistance, if targeted appropriately, can help strengthen the human capital of IDP households, especially in the area of health and education. Food and non-food based interventions can: (a) help rehabilitate water and sanitation systems; (b) free up household resources that are normally devoted to food, but can now be allocated towards social services; and (c) improve knowledge and awareness among displaced populations of nutrition, care practices, and reproductive health
5. **Capacity development and skills training for adults can help build livelihood security among IDP households.** Both humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance should focus on building the capacity of adults in IDP households. Given the low levels of education and limited scope for transferring previous skills into the urban economy, existing livelihood strategies are unable to generate sufficient income. In terms of livelihood support, interventions should seek to facilitate productive employment that can generate income, savings and assets. Provision of group-based credit is one option—including a component for skills training for adults. The one caveat is that any effort will need careful planning and design so as to ensure that initiatives are given enough time to generate returns and results.

Annex I: Terms of Reference

Background

Forty years of conflict in Colombia and recent economic downturns have led to a severe deterioration in basic conditions of the population, in general, and those affected by the conflict, IDPs and host communities, in particular.

Colombia faces severe income disparities, poverty and inadequate social services. The World Bank estimates that 65% of the population lives below the poverty line and rural poverty is especially acute. The poverty rate for rural dwellers in Colombia is estimated at 80% of which 42% is considered extreme. The patterns of displacement suggest that most people are from rural areas, thus increasing their vulnerability to poverty in their new environment, usually urban settings.

Displacement of civilians in Colombia has been an endemic feature of the country's 40 year conflict, with between two and three million persons have been displaced since 1985. This makes it the third largest internally displaced population in the world.

New displacements have averaged 300,000 per year since 2000, with a clear increase in 2002 with over 400,000 people and a decline in 2003. The latest figures indicate that an estimated 207,000 have been displaced in 2003²⁴. Sixty five percent of displaced households who owned land have had to abandon their holdings as a result of the acts of violence perpetrated against them, forcing them to flee.

Another phenomenon emerging from the current conflict is the creation of "blockaded zones". Blockaded zones not only influence the displacement statistics but also reflect an increase in violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Other factors compound the ongoing problems with displacement. Violence and intimidation results in displaced persons being reluctant to register with any of the official registration systems. Areas of enforced displacement have increased substantially, now affecting most of the country, indicating that displacement is increasingly used as a military strategy.

The recognition of the intensification of the humanitarian crisis has recently been highlighted by visits of the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner, WFP's Executive Deputy Director and the UN Under-secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs.

The Humanitarian Action Plan 2004-2005 (HAP2), currently under preparation, also places attention to the recent intensification of the conflict. Finally, discussions in the United Nations Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) and a ruling by the Constitutional Court have highlighted policy and operational deficiencies regarding support given to the displaced.

The evolving situation requires a stronger strategic commitment and response of the Government. This commitment will, of course, be complemented by the international community to cover the both short and longer-term basic needs of conflict-affected populations, especially IDPs.

Assessing Current Needs of IDP Populations

²⁴ Based on latest estimates provided by CODHES.

A 2003 study by WFP showed that:

(a) The socioeconomic conditions of IDP household did not necessarily improve after support was given in the initial displacement period of 3 months. Findings suggest that even after two years of displacement, the situation has not improved significantly or has afforded durable solutions; and

(b) Up to 80% of the displaced do not have access to nutritionally-balanced food. Women and children are most affected, especially in terms of micro-nutrient intake.

An ICRC study showed that food security remains fragile for some households/communities living in both urban and rural contexts. For the latter, food security is inextricably linked to 1) security incidents, 2) the ability to move (affecting people's access/willingness to approach health services); and 3) the resilience of community solidarity networks and safety nets that are, on the whole, not tenable.

In urban contexts, households for whom sustainable incomes is not guaranteed, and for whom feeding patterns drastically differ from those in the IDP's place of origin, the risk of deteriorating health/nutrition status persists. Safety nets in urban areas, although more varied than in the countryside, are in most instances difficult to access, unreliable, inappropriate and unsustainable.

Rationale for Rapid Needs Assessment

An improved understanding and identification of the displaced and their needs is crucial to support any humanitarian response. The current mechanisms in place in terms of understanding the dynamics and characteristics of the displaced need to be complemented with a better understanding of the evolving needs of displaced households.

ICRC and WFP will carry-out a joint needs assessment of IDP households in selected areas in Colombia. The information gathered therein will complement and fill in the gaps of information required to justify food and non-food interventions, time-frames and modalities. Specifically, the following issues are central to the assessment:

- Socio-economic factors contributing to food insecurity;
- Current risks faced by IDP households, especially related to food access, employment and other livelihood opportunities, and health and education services.

The methodology for site selection, questionnaire design, and data collection will build on and complement secondary data and other analyses collected and prepared by:

- WFP Reports and Briefs
- National research institutes (Econometria)
- ICRC documentation and selected internal reports,
- National and international NGOs (CODHES, Plan International, RUT)
- UN agencies (OCHA and UNDP); and
- Government of Colombia Agencies (ICBF, RSS).

First Phase: Preparation (July 2004)

This phase will be undertaken through the recruitment of a national consultant and will entail a comprehensive and thorough review of the existing data so as to:

- Provide a clear picture of the results of previous studies and finding on the situation of IDPs in Colombia.
- Outline the current IDP household profiles upon which assistance is based
- Identify cross cutting issues (gender, ethnicity, and geographic dimensions of the problems)
- Review of macro and micro socioeconomic indicators and trends
- A comparative review of different survey methodologies and findings from previous surveys—as data relate to food and livelihood security.

Second Phase: Rapid Assessment mission (August 9-September 3 2004)

In collaboration with ICRC, the following activities are envisaged:

- Review and analysis of secondary data (political, social, economic and institutional) so as to determine overall trends for the IDP situation.
- Preparation of a joint WFP ICRC workplan for the rapid assessment
- Verification of poverty line for Colombia
- Definition of the areas where the rapid assessment will be carried out.
- Definition of the sampling frame (geographic and household).
- Revision of existing tools and adjustment or development of additional instruments.
- Training of enumerators
- Pre-testing of survey instruments
- Supervision of data collection in selected areas
- Supervision of data entry.
- Analysis of primary data
- Report writing.

Outputs

Based on the analysis of both primary and secondary data, the final report of the rapid assessment should include the following:

- Identification of IDP populations who are most vulnerable to food and livelihood insecurity, with special emphasis on Afro-Colombian and Indigenous populations
- Identification of the risks/shocks affecting food and livelihood security
- Analysis of the extent to which affected IDP households are coping with and adapting to risk factors—household livelihood strategies, support from external actors, traditional safety nets
- Compatibility of the WFP and ICRC intervention programmes with the social protection programmes of the Government or state agencies mandated to address the needs of IDPs
- Vulnerability of the IDPs in comparison with the poverty line (disaggregated according to socio-economic criteria within the IDP population.
- Identification of the need and rationale for food assistance.
- Recommendations on the number of IDP households requiring assistance, the types of interventions and their duration, and the ration size.
- Recommendations on the selection criteria for beneficiary households who will receive food assistance.
- Recommendations on future use of rapid assessment methodologies for understanding emerging food needs of IDP households.
- Recommendations on follow-up activities, with specific reference to: (a) joint ICRC-WFP advocacy towards the Government on IDP issues; (b) feasibility of launching a more in-depth survey; and (c) ongoing monitoring of displacement processes.

The first draft of the report should be made available during the second week of September 2004. Subsequent revisions will be made by WFP and ICRC and a final draft should be submitted no later than first week of October 2004 to WFP CO, RB in Panama, and the ICRC Delegation-Colombia.

A detailed workplan and assessment methodology, including institutional arrangements, will be prepared and distributed to all partners by 16 August 2004.

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