



INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:  
STRATEGIC ALLIES IN THE FIGHT  
AGAINST HUNGER AND  
MALNUTRITION

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# CONTEXT



- Guatemala ranks **sixth for chronic malnutrition** in the world and has the highest prevalence in this aspect in the Western Hemisphere. Malnutrition is compromising the health of women and children and is undermining the country's human capital and development efforts



# THE EFFECT OF MALNUTRITION IN ECONOMY

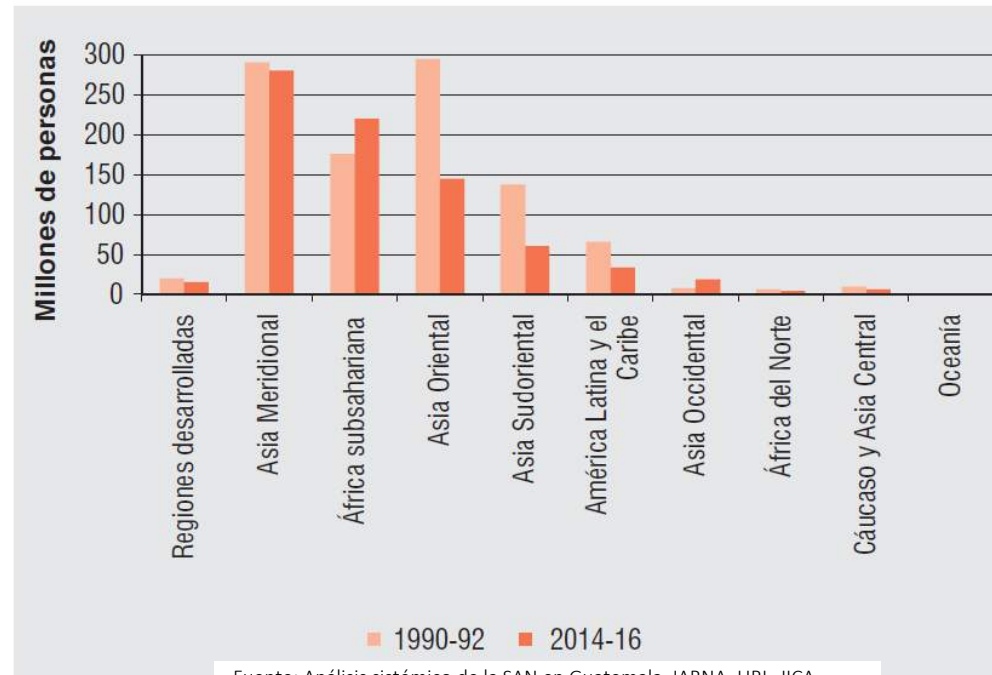
- Malnutrition weakens Guatemala's economic productivity. Iron deficiency, anemia and stunting reduce labor productivity, which impedes agricultural and industrial production and slows national development. Childhood stunting in Guatemala is also associated with future lower wages in adulthood.
- The benefits of investing in nutrition are undeniable. Every US\$1 spent on nutrition yields a return of US\$16.7



# MALNUTRITION IN THE WORLD SEPARATED BY REGIONS

(Millions of people during 1990-1992 and 2014-2016)

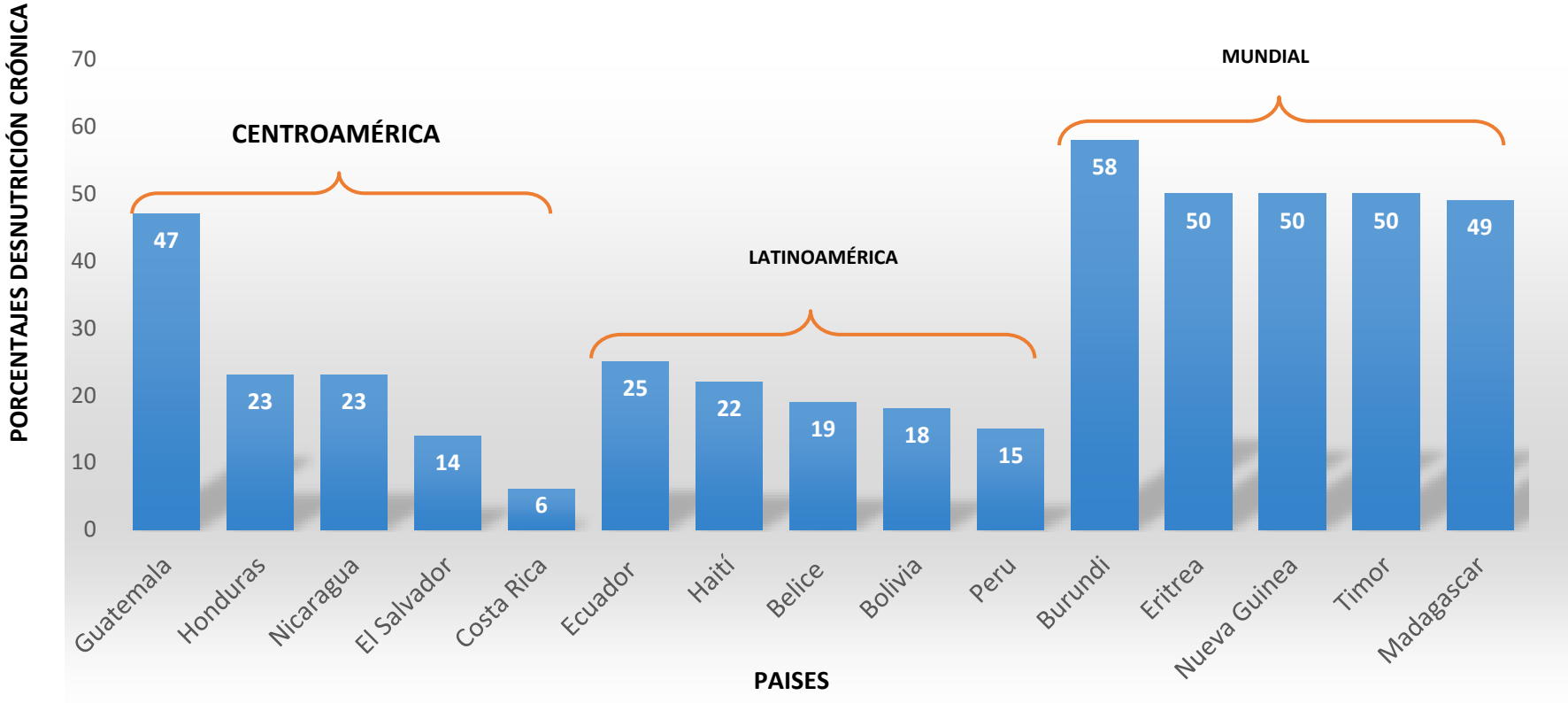
- Malnutrition is a worldwide problem. We can see that Asia and Africa present the highest rates, however Latin America and even developed countries also suffer from this issue.



Fuente: Análisis sistémico de la SAN en Guatemala. IARNA, URL, IICA. 2015. con base en información de FAO, FIDA, PMA.



# COMPARISON OF CHRONIC MALNUTRITION RATES SEPARATED BY COUNTRY



Fuente: Estado Mundial de la Infancia 2017



- According to estimations, the indigenous population of Latin America reaches around **44 million people**, belonging to more than 800 communities, which represents approximately **10% of the total population** of the region and **40% of the rural population** in Latin America.
- Apart from Uruguay, El Salvador and Panama, most of the countries in the region have ratified ILO Convention 169. We can find in this international instrument the rights of indigenous communities to have their own food systems.
- The separation of the ethical variable used to analyze the different dimensions and characteristics of the indigenous population continues to be insufficient and dispersed, both in census information and sector statistics.



Países y Año de la encuesta	Condición étnica	Desnutrición <sup>3</sup>					
		Crónica			Global		
		Moderada	Severa	Total	Moderada	Severa	Total
Bolivia 2008	INDÍGENA	20,8	7,2	28,0	6,4	1,1	7,5
	NO INDÍGENA	9,8	2,6	12,4	3,2	0,4	3,6
	TOTAL	16,9	5,6	22,5	5,3	0,8	6,1
	Brecha Relativa	2,1	2,8	2,3	2,0	2,8	2,1
Colombia 2010	INDÍGENA	16,4	5,9	22,3	7,0	1,6	8,6
	NO INDÍGENA	7,2	1,3	8,5	4,2	0,4	4,6
	TOTAL	7,7	1,5	9,2	4,4	0,4	4,8
	Brecha Relativa	2,3	4,7	2,6	1,7	4,3	1,9
Ecuador 2004	INDÍGENA	29,9	17,7	47,6	12,2	4,2	16,5
	NO INDÍGENA	16,2	5,4	21,5	7,8	1,5	9,3
	TOTAL	17,6	6,5	24,1	8,3	1,8	10,1
	Brecha Relativa	1,8	3,3	2,2	1,6	2,8	1,8
Guatemala 2008-09	INDÍGENA	33,9	24,5	58,4	21,6	3,4	25,0
	NO INDÍGENA	21,4	9,1	30,5	13,1	1,5	14,6
	TOTAL	27,1	16,1	43,3	17,0	2,4	19,4
	Brecha Relativa	1,6	2,7	1,9	1,6	2,3	1,7
Honduras 2011-12	INDÍGENA	17,1	6,6	23,7	10,6	1,2	11,8
	NO INDÍGENA	12,8	3,4	16,2	8,3	1,0	9,2
	TOTAL	13,3	3,8	17,1	8,6	1,0	9,5
	Brecha Relativa	1,3	1,9	1,5	1,3	1,3	1,3
Nicaragua 2006-07	INDÍGENA	16,0	9,8	25,8	9,9	1,6	11,5
	NO INDÍGENA	13,6	5,8	19,4	7,0	1,0	8,0
	TOTAL	13,8	6,1	19,9	7,3	1,0	8,3
	Brecha Relativa	1,2	1,7	1,3	1,4	1,7	1,4
Perú 2012	INDÍGENA	18,8	4,3	23,1	8,3	0,8	9,0
	NO INDÍGENA	9,5	1,7	11,2	4,1	0,4	4,5
	TOTAL	11,4	2,2	13,7	5,0	0,5	5,5
	Brecha Relativa	2,0	2,5	2,1	2,0	2,0	2,0

Comparisson of chronic malnutrition rates between indigenous and non-indigenous population

Fuente: CELADE-CEPAL, procesamientos especiales de las encuestas de demografía y salud, 2014





## *FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY*

People have the **right** to have physical, economic and social **access** to an appropriate nutrition, quality and quantity-wise, that is **well timed and permanent**. It is also **culturally relevant**, local, as well as an **adequate biological use** to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.



# THE SIX PILLARS OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

1. **To center around food for the indigenous population:** a) It establishes the community's nutrition as the center of policies. b) It insists that food is more than mere commodity.
2. **To value food providers:** a) Supports sustainable lifestyles. b) Respects the labor of every food provider.
3. **To locate food systems:** a) It reduces the breach between food providers and consumers. b) It rejects dumping and inappropriate food assistance. c) Resists the dependence on remote and irresponsible corporations.
4. **To establish local control:** a) Control points are in handled by local food providers. b) It recognizes the need to enable and share territories. c) It rejects the privatization of natural resources.
5. **To promote knowledge and abilities:** a) It is based on traditional knowledge. b) Uses research to support and pass on this knowledge to future generations. c) It rejects technologies that threaten local food systems.
6. **To be compatible with nature:** a) Maximizes the contributions from ecosystems. b) Improves recovery capacity. c) Rejects the intensive use of industrialized monoculture energies and other destructive methods.



# ANCESTRAL PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS WITH HIGH NUTRITIONAL VALUE

It is important to recognize the indigenous conceptions about food:

- Food is **communion with Mother Earth**. (Communities of Colombia).
- Communion with the human being (**Indigenous people in Latin America, we identify ourselves as children of corn, cassava, beans, quinoa, potatoes or pigeon peas**)
- Understanding and use of **food** without distinguishing it from nutrition. (way'-Mayan language from Guatemala).



# ANCESTRAL PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS WITH HIGH NUTRITIONAL VALUE

- The **spiritual connection** of food. (to offer, to thank, to ask through spiritual ceremonies, in the sowing and harvesting cycles).
- Even the solemn act of respect, when consuming food. (To be silent during meal times).



# ANCESTRAL PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS WITH HIGH NUTRITIONAL VALUE

- Fundamentally, the indigenous food is based on corn, herbs, potatoes, quinoa, beans, amaranth, land and aquatic animals.
- Reduced use of fats.
- In general, products with high nutritional value.
- Low cost products / family production / fishing / agriculture.
- Barter or exchange with other families was relevant for diversification.



# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, STRATEGIC ALLIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER / MALNUTRITION

- Current increase in diseases are associated with malnutrition.
- The communities not only face hunger, but also obesity, ***double burden of malnutrition***.
- Persistence and growing consensus of indigenous peoples to preserve their ancestral food systems.
- Interest and empathy for knowing and adopting ancestral practices, as an alternative for a better quality of life.



# CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- The State must consolidate efforts to recognize, value and promote indigenous food practices and products.
- To promote policies and regulations for the protection of native products.
- To communicate and sensitize the population about its importance.



# CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS



- Enterprises should respect the ancestral practices and products and guarantee the non-use of them to the detriment of the indigenous population.
- Offer technology and tools for the promotion of the consumption of ancestral products, outside of their commercialization.





# CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS



Indigenous people and organizations must consolidate their organization and articulation in defense and promotion of practices and consumption of ancestral products of high nutritional value.



# CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- The academy should open spaces for analysis, systematization and promotion of ancestral practices and products of high nutritional value, based on researched evidence.
- Studies of successful cases must be promoted in the use and consumption of native products for the prevention of diseases.
- Spaces for the exchange of experiences and knowledge should be facilitated.



# CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- It is imperative to define differential public policies.
- To focus on policies in prioritized areas.
- It is important to implement plural policies for societies that are plural, working on the cultural adaptation of both the responses and the mechanisms to implement them, taking into account the **contributions of the visions, experiences, knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples.**



# CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- Recognition of the significance and connection of Nutritional Food Safety and to the holistic framework of worldviews.
- Training and strengthening the role of women in the productive cycle as well as in the reproduction and improvement of consumption habits.
- To protect the diversity of the agrobiological heritage of traditional food systems from the threat of transgenics.
- To study the impact of Climate Change on agricultural systems and the food autonomy of indigenous people, promoting preventive actions that include the evaluation and adaptation of food assistance programs under emergency conditions



# **MALTIOX.**

Thank you.

