

## SUMMARY ON THE STATUS OF RIGHTS HUMAN

from the perspective of Transparency Venezuela

SEPTIEMBRE 2016



### FOOD

In the 2016 national budget, the amount allocated to food increased nominally by 116.38%. However, when taking into account the 185% inflation rate of 2015, there is a decrease of 25%.<sup>1</sup>

From the 2015 Report and Accounts of the Ministry of Food, inadequate planning due to the existence of budget deficits in 10 of its 15 affiliated entities is observed<sup>2</sup>. Failure to comply with the targets set is evident - the ministry only complied with 38% of its goals- lack of information, detail of implementation and compliance of the rest 8% of the 25 planned projects.

The food and nutritional situation in Venezuela is characterized by the absence of items, mainly those that comprise the basic food basket. Either official establishments or private ones, the permanent unavailability of basic products is the most recurrent variable. Restrictions to purchase food are increasingly numerous, both its scarcity as its inflation rate, which has been estimated in 750% for 2016, has destroyed the Venezuelan citizen purchasing power. One of the new methods of 2016 to buy food are the lists made through community censuses, where the Production and Supply Local Committees (Comités Locales de Abastecimiento y Producción - CLAP by its acronym in Spanish) promise to manage and distribute food bags for each sector, which quickly led to corruption and greater frustration.

The main problem with this distribution system is the politicization of food delivery because each

community committee is composed of the National Union of Women (Unamujer) , Battle Unit Bolívar-Chávez (UBCH) , Francisco de Miranda Front (FFM ) and the communal councils of each entity are elected, approved or rely on funding from the Presidency of the Republic , all co-opted referents by the government. Moreover, the contents of the bags of food delivered monthly to the family who manage to have access to it, equivalent to 2 packs of black beans, 2 packs of rice, 2 packs of sugar, 1 kilo of pasta, 2 packs of pre-cooked corn flour and 2 monthly packs of coffee.

According to the 2014 survey on living conditions, Venezuela is a country with a double burden of malnutrition: malnutrition and obesity, in which 11% of respondents are in hunger situation and 39% of those who made less than three meals belong to the poorest sectors.

The basic diet is of low quality. The food bought by the poor are calorically denser, cheaper and are regulated<sup>3</sup>. By 2016 , several private pollsters maintain the trend: Datos found that 90% say they buy less food, Venebarómetro estimated 31% eat less than three times a day and ENCOVI 2015 found that 15% consider their diet monotonous or poor<sup>4</sup>.

The last of the studies (ENCOVI 2015) found that 87% of respondents said his income is not enough to buy food and food purchases in 2015 dropped

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1. Transparencia Venezuela. Nuestro Presupuesto 2016. Disponible en: <https://transparencia.org.ve/la-nueva-asamblea-nacional-debe-aprobar-otro-presupuesto/>

2. La memoria y cuenta solo hace referencia a 10 entes adscritos al Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Alimentación, por lo que se desconoce los resultados del cumplimiento de las metas asociadas a 5 entes.

3. Disponible en: [http://www.rectorado.usb.ve/vida/sites/default/files/UCV\\_UCAB\\_USB\\_2015\\_alimentacion.pdf](http://www.rectorado.usb.ve/vida/sites/default/files/UCV_UCAB_USB_2015_alimentacion.pdf)

4. Daniel Pardo. ¿Cuánta hambre hay realmente en la Venezuela de la "emergencia alimentaria"? Disponible en: [http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2016/04/160412\\_venezuela\\_hambre\\_escasez\\_dp](http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2016/04/160412_venezuela_hambre_escasez_dp)

to critical levels, to the point that 12.1% eat two times or less a day<sup>5</sup>. According to the Center for Documentation and Social Analysis of the Venezuelan Federation of Teachers (Cendas-FVM), the Standard Food Basket for December 2015 summed up Bs. 93,600, which means an increase of 443.2% compared to 2014, while for April 2016 reached Bs. 184,906. By May 2016, the same institution placed it in Bs. 226,462, representing an increase of 22.5% compared to April, and 817.1% compared to May 2015. This positions the basic food basket in Bs. 303,615<sup>6</sup>. Meanwhile, the minimum wage in Bs. is 22,576.50 + Cesta Ticket Bs. 42,480 (additional food bonus) -this latter does not apply to pensioners or independent workers- is located in Bs. 65,056.50.

In this regard, the intermittency in the publication of official figures on the shortage rate still persists. To this is added that, in January 2016, the Central Bank of Venezuela modified the scarcity index by the index of “hoarding existence appreciation” that to date was 87%<sup>7</sup>. However, Datanálisis estimates that, for June 2015, this figure was around 58.9%<sup>8</sup>, and for 2016, shortage of basic foods was around 80% in supermarkets and 40% in households<sup>9</sup>. Meanwhile, the pollster Hinterlaces

says that the general scarcity index at point of sale was 74.20% (April 2016) and 61.79% in households (May 2016), drawing attention the scarcity index in public establishments of 92.4% and 71.6% in private ones<sup>10</sup>. This confirms the low levels of production and distribution, since purchases of domestic products only account for 9.97% of total marketed-by-the-state food, serious figure taking into account that 40% of the country food production is in government hands<sup>11</sup>.

In parallel to this situation, there have been allegations of irregularities in the implementation of social missions linked to this right, such as: The increase by 9%, between 2014 and 2015, of the child malnutrition in programs directly dependent on the Ministry of Food and the Misión Alimentación -according to the Bengoa Foundation- and allegations of food diversions and corruption in the state-run Abastos Bicentenarios’ 53 establishments. In 11 years, the acquisition of domestic food dropped from 50.2% to 9.97%, reflecting an acute shortage of basic foodstuffs, without regular official figures that can explain this situation.

5. Maritza Landaeta-Jiménez (Fundación Bengoa), Marianella Herrera Cuenca (CENDES-UCV), Guillermo Ramírez y Maura Vásquez (UCV). Encuesta sobre Condiciones de Vida en Venezuela (ENCOVI 2015). Disponible en: [http://www.rectorado.usb.ve/vida/sites/default/files/alimentacion\\_2015.pdf](http://www.rectorado.usb.ve/vida/sites/default/files/alimentacion_2015.pdf)

6. Pedro Pablo Carreño. Cendas dice que canasta básica subió a Bs 303.615. Publicado el 0 de julio de 2016. Disponible en: <http://eltiempo.com.ve/venezuela/consumo/cendas-dice-que-canasta-basica-subio-a-bs-303615/222625>

7. Banco Central de Venezuela. Resultados del Índice Nacional de Precios al Consumidos, Producto Interno y Balanza de Pagos. Tercer trimestre de 2015. Disponible en: <http://www.bcv.org.ve/Upload/Comunicados/aviso150116.pdf>

8. Provea. Informe sobre la situación de Derechos Humanos en Venezuela 2015. Capítulo Derecho a la Alimentación. Disponible en: <http://www.derechos.org/wp-content/uploads/Derecho-a-la-Alimentaci%C3%B3n.pdf>

9. Globovisión. Datanálisis: Escasez de alimentos en Venezuela supera el 80. Disponible en: <http://globovision.com/article/datanalisis-escasez-de-alimentos-en-venezuela-supera-el-80>

10. Estudio disponible en: <http://www.hinterlaces.com/analisis/politica/oscar-schemel-61-de-los-venezolanos-hoy-apoya-el-revocatorio>

11. Transparencia Venezuela. Alimentos: Estado productor, Estado importador. Disponible en: <https://transparencia.org.ve/alimentos-estado-productor-estado-importador/?platform=hootsuite>

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