



This executive brief presents key points and recommendations from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) Data in Emergencies Monitoring (DIEM-Monitoring) assessments related to human mobility conducted in El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras. The data were collected in each country over a 30-day period between May and September 2024. The surveys covered all departments of these countries and reached a total of 12 089 households.

Figure 1. Survey details (by country)

	Guatemala	Haiti	Honduras	El Salvador	Total (weighted regionally)
Date surveyed (2024)	7 May–22 June	13 June–10 July	5 July–22 August	25 August–25 September	
Number of households surveyed	4 919	2 700	1 983	2 487	12 089
Percentage of households with a member that migrated	10%	23%	15%	5%	12%
Main migration destination					
<i>United States of America</i>	87%	49%	85%	81%	77%
<i>Neighbouring countries</i>	5%	34%	6%	4%	12%

Source: FAO. 2025. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM) Hub*. [Cited 1 March 2025]. Rome. <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring>

Key points

- Migration was primarily driven by economic hardship, with 12 percent of households having had a member migrate during the first half of 2024 mostly due to unemployment and loss of livelihood (67 percent). The United States of America was reported as the main destination for migrants (77 percent).
- Haiti had the highest migration rate (23 percent), and both violence and unemployment were major drivers, while in Honduras (15 percent), Guatemala (10 percent) and El Salvador (5 percent), the main driver was lack of employment.
- Households with migration tended to face worse food insecurity and relied more on harmful coping strategies though remittances helped to alleviate some food insecurity.
- Respondents in Haiti (45 percent) received the most remittances followed by El Salvador (15 percent), Honduras (13 percent) and Guatemala (13 percent). Agricultural households in Guatemala received significantly more than non-agricultural households.
- Remittances were mainly used for food (61 percent), rent and household expenses (32 percent), health (17 percent) and education (15 percent). Agricultural households invested more in farming activities and education – spending varied by country.
- While remittances do not fully shield households from the negative effects of shocks, they help mitigate some of their impacts.

Migration

Human mobility plays an important role in shaping household livelihoods across the region, with economic hardship being the primary reason for migration. Twelve percent of all households reported that at least one member had migrated during the first half of 2024, predominantly due to unemployment, loss of livelihoods, or insufficient means of livelihood (67 percent). While migration patterns vary by country, the United States of America was the primary destination for migrants. Households that had a member migrate tended to have worse food security outcomes and used more harmful coping strategies.

Haiti presents a distinct migration dynamic and had the highest migration rate among the four countries (23 percent) – two thirds migrated abroad and a third internally. While unemployment (43 percent) remained a major factor, violence and social insecurity (43 percent) played an equally crucial role. A substantial portion (34 percent) migrated to the Dominican Republic – while 49 percent migrated to the United States of America. In the Dry Corridor, Honduras had the highest migration rates (15 percent) followed by Guatemala (10 percent) and El Salvador (5 percent). The United States of America was the main destination (86 percent), while a smaller percentage migrated to a neighbouring country (5 percent) from the Dry Corridor.

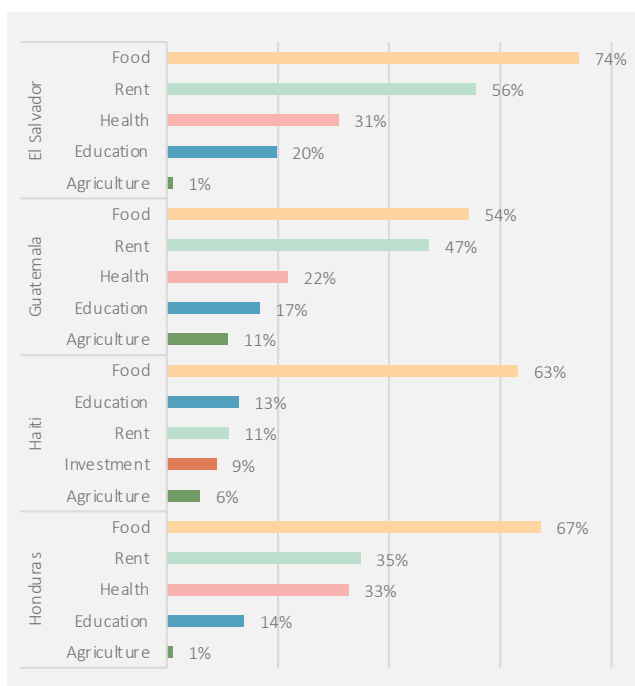
There was no significant difference in the types of households from which members tended to migrate, except in Guatemala. Migration was more common among agricultural households than non-agricultural households (12 compared with 7 percent). Across both household types, the primary reason for migration was unemployment. However, in Haiti, migration patterns differed. Members of non-agricultural households primarily migrated due to violence and social insecurity, whereas members of agricultural households migrated mainly in search of employment. Additionally, those with higher education were more likely to migrate due to violence and less likely to migrate due to lack of employment than those with no education.

Of those who migrated, most came from male-headed households (8 compared with 4 percent of female-headed households). Households experiencing income loss or a shock in the year preceding the survey were more likely to have had a member migrate.

Remittances

Overall, 19 percent of households received remittances in the region. Households who had a member migrate were more likely to receive remittances, and to receive them more frequently. Haiti received the most remittances by far with 45 percent of households receiving remittances, 11 percent of which came from other regions within the country. This high share of internal remittances is distinct from the Dry Corridor, where only 0–2 percent of remittances originated domestically. In El Salvador, 15 percent of households received remittances, followed by Honduras (13 percent) and Guatemala (13 percent).

Figure 4. Usage of remittances



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM) Hub*. Rome. [Cited 11 March 2025]. <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring>

Figures 2 and 3. Percentage of households with a member that migrated in the six months preceding the survey



Note: Refer to the disclaimer on the last page for the names and boundaries used in this map.

Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM) Hub*. Rome. [Cited 11 March 2025]. <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring>

The association between having had a household member migrate and receiving remittances was strongest for Honduras and Guatemala. In Guatemala, agricultural households received significantly more remittances than non-agricultural households. This difference was not significant in the other countries.

The likelihood of receiving remittances did not significantly vary based on the household head's gender, recent income loss (within the three months preceding the survey), experience of floods or drought, or the number of children under 5 years of age in the household.

Remittances were mainly used for food (61 percent), rent and household expenses (32 percent), health (17 percent) and education (15 percent). Agricultural households invested more of their remittances than non-agricultural households (12 compared with 5 percent) primarily in agricultural activities, such as farming, and fishing or aquaculture production. Country-specific differences indicated that in Haiti and Honduras, agricultural households allocated more to education (16 compared with 10 percent) than non-agricultural households, while in El Salvador the opposite was observed. In Honduras, agricultural households spent less on food than non-agricultural households.

Households that allocated remittances toward rent, household expenses, health and clothing tended to have a significantly lower livelihood coping strategies index (LCSI) and household hunger scale (HHS) compared to those that did not. In contrast, households using remittances for rent, household expenses and education had a higher food consumption score (FCS) than those who did not allocate remittances to these categories.

Households receiving remittances once or twice per month tended to have lower HHS than those receiving remittances less frequently.

While remittances do not fully shield households from the negative effects of shocks, they help mitigate some of their impacts. Among households affected by movement restrictions, those receiving remittances faced less hunger than those without remittances. Similarly, remittances helped to reduce the negative impact of hurricanes and drought on hunger levels. While job loss often results in reduced food consumption, households receiving remittances experienced a smaller decline in the FCS compared to those without remittances. Additionally, households facing shocks, such as animal disease or illness of a household member, relied less on coping strategies (as measured by the LCSI) when they received remittances. Overall, remittances played a crucial role in cushioning the effects of various shocks, reducing food insecurity and the use of harmful coping mechanisms.

Recommendations

- Provide rapid food and cash assistance to households most affected by food insecurity to cover basic needs, especially for vulnerable groups like female-headed households, households with children under 5 years of age and households that experienced income loss.
- Support agricultural households by improving access to irrigation, and inputs such as fertilizer and pesticides ahead of key planting seasons. Implementing and/or improving community-level production of bioinputs may reduce costs, improve access and create job opportunities.
- Implement job creation programmes in the Dry Corridor to reduce economic vulnerability and pressures to migrate.
- Given the significant role of remittances in food security and livelihoods, continued monitoring will be essential to understanding the long-term effects of migration dynamics and policy shifts on household resilience across the region.

REQUIRED CITATION

FAO. 2025. *El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras: Regional analysis on human mobility, May–September 2024*. Rome.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution – 4.0 International licence (CC BY 4.0)

Contact

Office of Emergencies and Resilience
Data-in-emergencies@fao.org
data-in-emergencies.fao.org

Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
Rome, Italy