

# Impact of Drought and Desertification on the Livelihood and Health of the Wayúu Indigenous People of La Guajira, Colombia.



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## Introduction

- It is well acknowledged that indigenous groups suffer from high rates of poverty due to isolation or marginalization, low levels of education and high rates of disease.<sup>1</sup>
- This research focuses on the Wayúu people living in La Guajira, Colombia.
- Reports show drought and desertification trigger the loss of natural resources and biodiversity in La Guajira and may influence the high rates of childhood malnutrition and mortality among the Wayúu.<sup>2</sup>



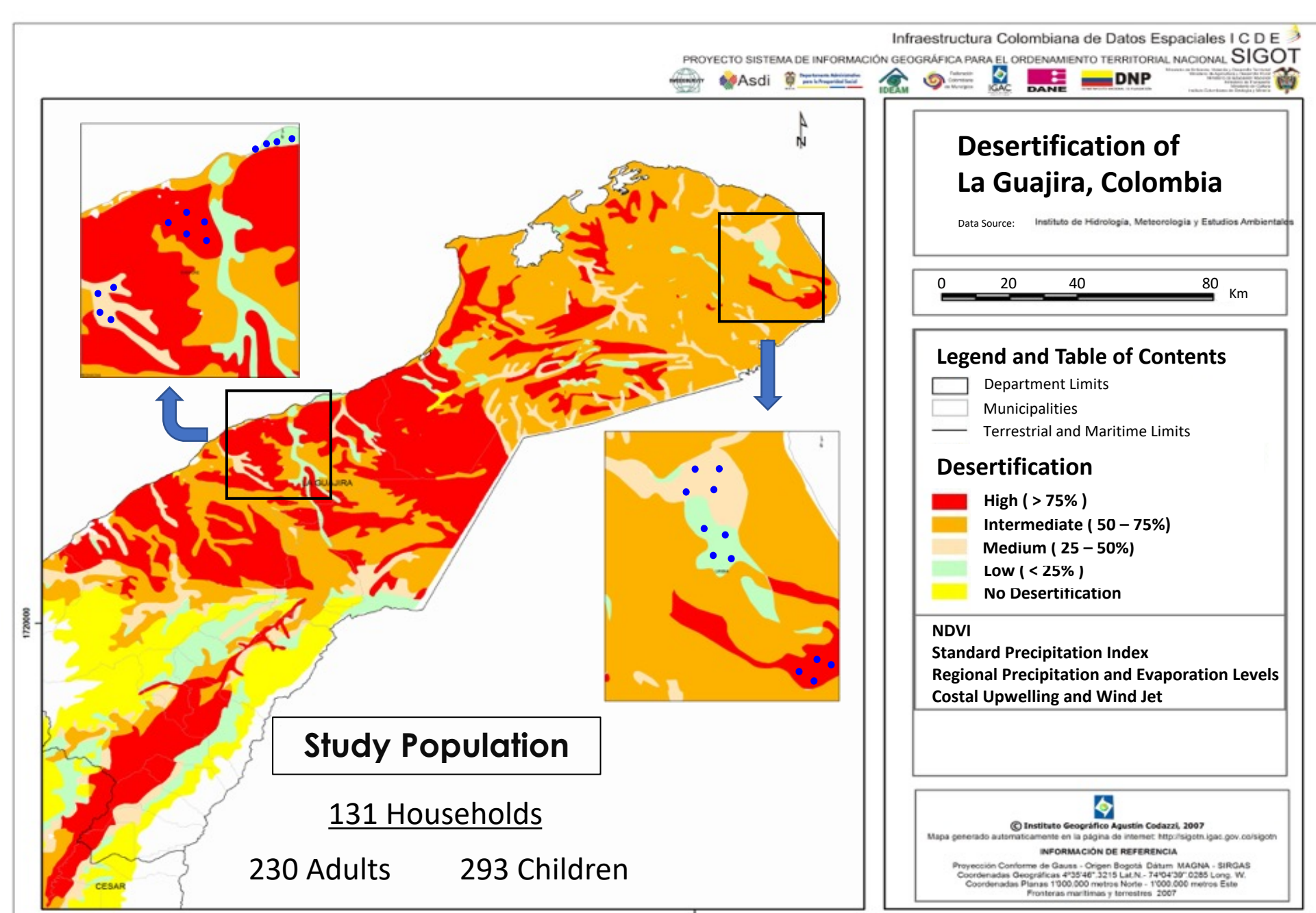
## Hypothesis

- Wayúu people living in areas with the highest desertification levels present worst livelihood and health conditions in comparison to people living in areas with lesser levels of desertification.



## Methods

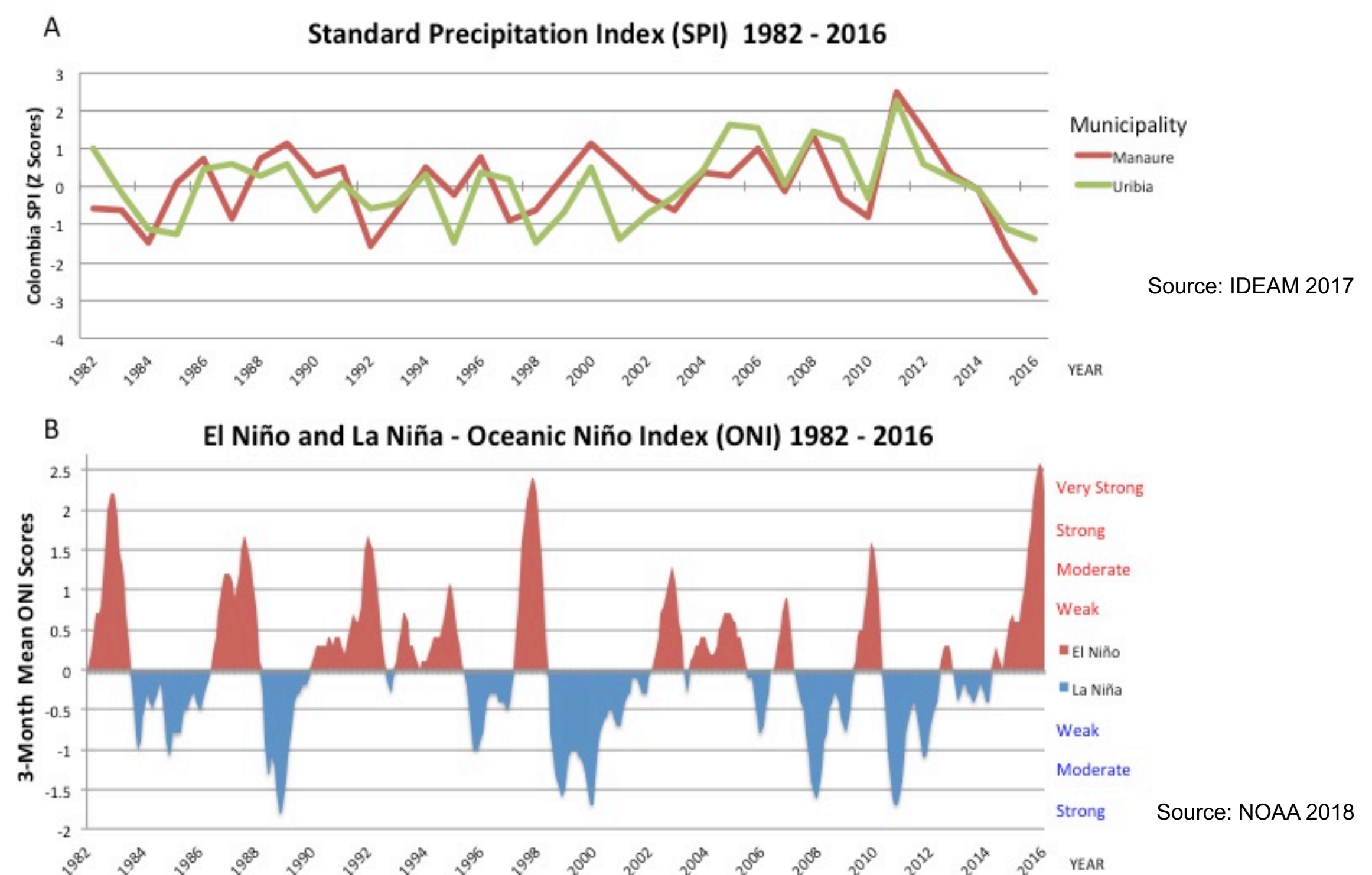
- Gathering existing data from international and Colombian departments of statistics, meteorology and environmental studies.<sup>3</sup>



- Applying a set of surveys with factual and perception types of questions to assess the livelihood and opinions of the Wayúu people living in areas experiencing different levels of desertification.

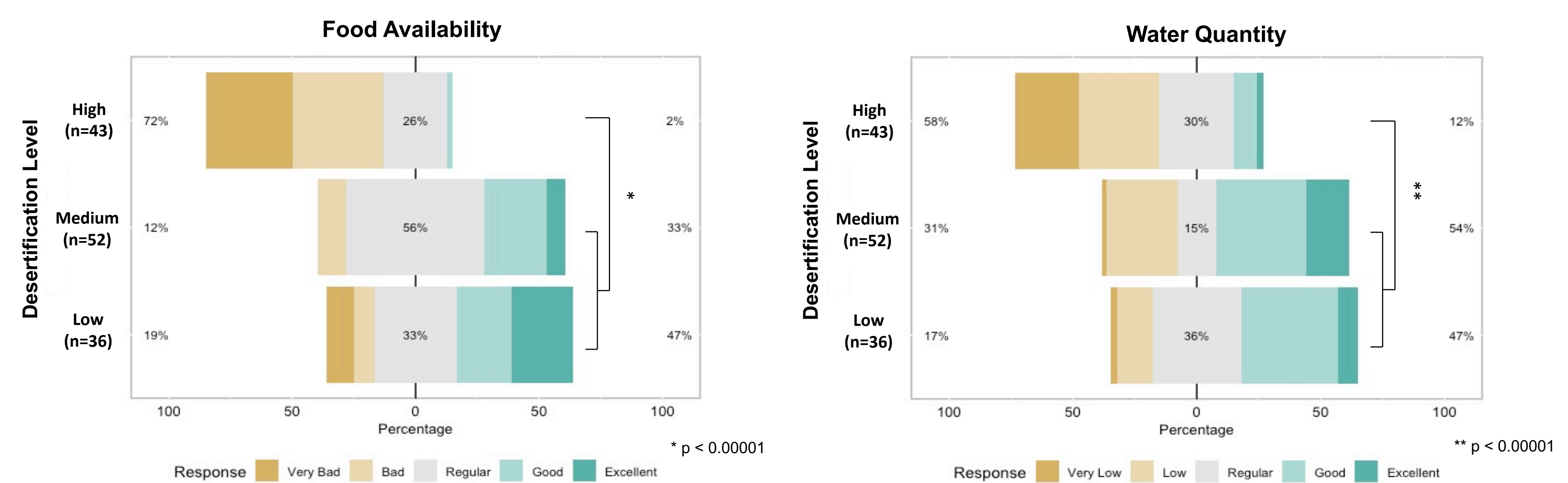
## Results

- La Guajira weather patterns are influenced by **EL NIÑO** events:

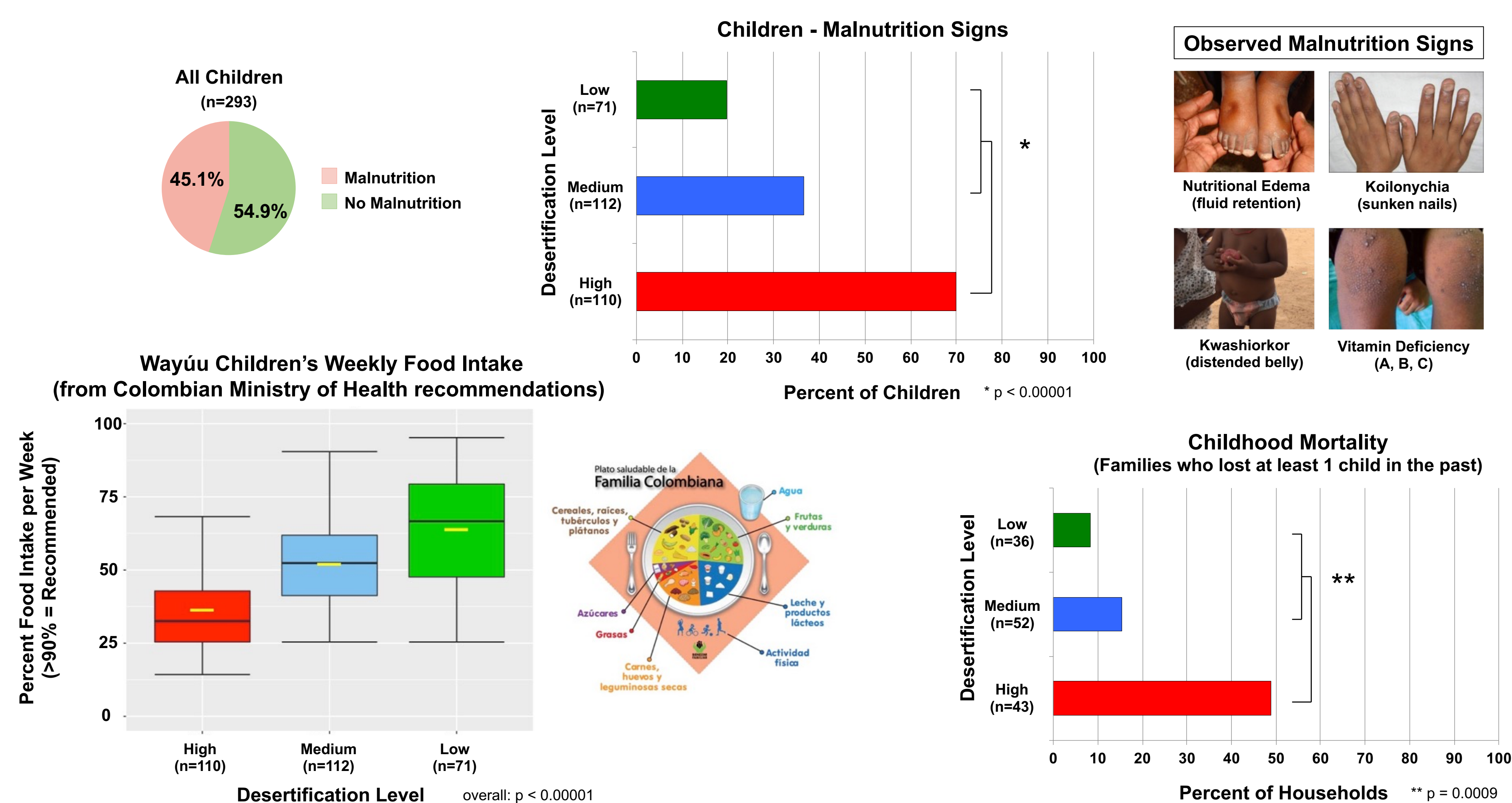


- Wayúu living in areas experiencing **HIGH DESERTIFICATION** present:

### LOWEST FOOD AND WATER SECURITIES



### HIGHEST INCIDENCE OF CHILDHOOD MALNUTRITION AND MORTALITY



## Conclusions

Seasonal weather patterns in La Guajira are affected by the El Niño Southern Oscillation. Stronger El Niño events can trigger intense and prolonged droughts which contributes towards the loss of biodiversity.

Wayúu living in areas with high desertification are at an increased risk for food and water insecurities, childhood malnutrition and mortality. Such areas should be targeted for basic infrastructural development.

## Acknowledgements and References

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