



# WFP Nicaragua Country Brief

May 2018

## Operational Context

Whilst Nicaragua has achieved sustained economic growth and human development in recent years, it continues to be a food deficit country (FAO 2016) and one of the poorest countries in Latin America. Undernourishment has decreased, yet the prevalence of chronic undernutrition is 17 per cent and rates are higher in Madriz (30 per cent), Jinotega, and Nueva Segovia (28 per cent). Nevertheless, obesity and overweight are on the rise.

Nicaragua is vulnerable to recurrent natural disasters, ranking fourth in the Long-Term World Climate Risk Index (Germanwatch, 2016). Food insecurity is closely related to poverty, recurrent natural disasters and the effects of climate change.

Agriculture accounts for 17 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is the main source of livelihoods for 90 per cent of the population, including women and men farmers. However, women farmers face greater challenges than men in accessing agricultural markets due to the persistence of a gender gap in rural areas.

WFP supports the Government's Zero Hunger efforts by strengthening social safety nets and fostering disaster risk reduction and food security of smallholder farmers. WFP has been present in Nicaragua since 1971.



Population: **6.08 million**

2016 Human Development Index:  
**124 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **17% of children between 6-59 months**

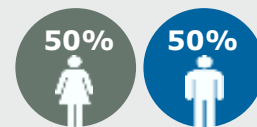
**Main Photo**

Credit: WFP/Sabrina Quezada  
Caption: Children receiving their daily meal through the School Meals Programme in RACCN

## In Numbers

**USD 1.84 m** six months (June - November 2018) net funding requirements

**164,200 people** assisted in April 2018



## Operational Updates

- Since mid-April, Nicaragua has been experiencing social, economic, and political turmoil, prompted by protests against a proposal to reform the social security system. The protests have escalated, turning into a national civil society movement that demands social justice and political and institutional change. This has triggered clashes between pro and anti-government forces. A preliminary report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights indicates that there have been at least 127 fatalities and 1,000 people injured from 18 April to 21 May. The economic consequences are already palpable, as daily business and tourism have been severely disrupted. The Central Bank estimates economic losses of over USD 259 million. This may affect the life of Nicaraguan families, particularly those of low incomes and those who are vulnerable to food insecurity. WFP is committed to supporting the Nicaraguan people so that they continue to have uninterrupted access to nutritious food.
- WFP and the Ministry of Education supported 164,200 pre and primary schoolchildren with school meals, delivered every day in some of the most remote and poorest communities in the Northern Autonomous Caribbean Coast (RACCN) and Jinotega. However, due to funding constraints WFP had to make significant ration cuts, leaving out some products from the food basket. WFP is seeking the support of the donor community to guarantee full rations in the upcoming months. At this time of civil unrest it is essential to ensure that full rations are delivered to schools, since these serve as a key safety net to support those in need.
- WFP continued to strengthen the capacities of its assisted farmers, associated in farmer organizations (FOs) to promote their climate resilience and access to formal agricultural markets. In May, WFP provided them with technical assistance and agricultural inputs to promote the diversification of their production and generate new market opportunities. Together with the Nicaraguan Institute of Agriculture Technology

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| WFP Country Strategy  |                                  |   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Total Requirement (in USD)  | Confirmed Contributions (in USD) | Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
| <b>Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (2018)</b>   |                                  |   |
| <b>10.2</b>   | <b>4.58m</b>                     | <b>1.84m</b>                                |
| <b>Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food</b>  |                                  |   |
| <b>Strategic Outcome 1:</b> Pre and primary schoolchildren and persons living with HIV have access to adequate food and nutrition during 2018<br><i>Focus area: Root Causes</i> |                                  |   |
| <b>6.42 m</b>   | <b>2.21m</b>                     | <b>1.51m</b>                                |
| <b>Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food</b>  |                                  |   |
| <b>Strategic Outcome 4:</b> Shock affected populations have access to adequate and nutritious food after an emergency<br><i>Focus area: Crises Response</i>                     |                                  |   |
| <b>0.72 m</b>   | <b>0.68 m</b>                    | <b>0.22 m</b>                               |
| <b>Strategic Result 2: End Malnutrition</b>   |                                  |   |
| <b>Strategic Outcome 2:</b> Nutritionally vulnerable groups in the targeted areas meet their nutritional needs during 2018<br><i>Focus area: Root Causes</i>                    |                                  |   |
| <b>0.25 m</b>   | <b>. m</b>                       | <b>0.15 m</b>                               |
| <b>Strategic Result 3: Smallholder Farmer Productivity</b>  |                                  |   |
| <b>Strategic Outcome 3:</b> Smallholder farmers in targeted departments increase their food security and access to markets all year round<br><i>Focus area: Resilience</i>      |                                  |   |
| <b>0.96 m</b>   | <b>0.88 m</b>                    | <b>. m</b>                                  |
| <b>Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening</b>   |                                  |   |
| <b>Strategic Outcome 5:</b> National institutions and programmes are strengthened to prevent and respond to shocks during 2018<br><i>Focus area: Resilience</i>                 |                                  |   |
| <b>0.21 m</b>   | <b>0.24 m</b>                    | <b>-0.03 m</b>                              |

## WFP Country Activities

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>SO 1</b> | Provide school meals to pre and primary school children in targeted municipalities to incentivise access to the NSMP and increase access to food<br>Provide food assistance to HIV patients |
| <b>SO 2</b> | Provide food assistance to PLW/G and children aged 6-36 months to prevent malnutrition.   |
| <b>SO 3</b> | Assist smallholder farmers to enhance access to formal markets, generating linkages with national social safety nets and empowering women.  |
| <b>SO 4</b> | Scale-up school meals for schoolchildren in shock-affected areas<br>Provide food assistance to shock-affected populations.  |
| <b>SO 5</b> | Provide technical assistance to the government in disaster risk management, supporting national programmes.   |

(INTA), WFP also promoted the validation of bio-enriched seeds, which are higher in zinc and iron, bringing about nutritional benefits to the community and schools through local purchases for the school meals programme.

## Monitoring

- With the second school meal distribution of the year taking place in May, WFP's monitoring team is preparing for post distribution monitoring and follow up on process indicators.

## Challenges

- In order to provide much needed support to 164,200 schoolchildren through the School Meal Programme until the end of the year, WFP is urgently seeking USD 1.5 million for the next six months. The funds are needed to cover food requirements including maize, beans, and Super Cereal. In the absence of funds, rations will be cut by up to 65 per cent, affecting children's access to food.
- Despite resource mobilization efforts, the Mother and Child Health activities have been severely underfunded since the beginning of the County Programme. Failing to provide assistance negatively impacts the status of nutritionally vulnerable groups. WFP is seeking USD 284,700 to cover current needs..

## Promoting Women Empowerment and Nutrition in Rural Nicaragua

With the aim of bridging the gender gap that prevails in rural areas of the country, WFP is implementing a Women Economic Empowerment Strategy with its assisted smallholder farmers. This will be done by providing the targeted women with an additional boost of technical assistance and inputs and promoting gender awareness. In May, WFP incorporated another one of its Farmer Organizations, which had not yet joined the strategy, to allow women to benefit from this enhanced package of support. WFP is expanding the reach of these activities by incorporating 30 new members who have already begun to participate in activities such as financial education to improve their access to formal markets. Additionally, WFP holds two workshops with its strategy participants: one on nutrition to promote healthy nutritional behaviour and promote the adoption of healthy diets, and one on the implementation of family gardens as a mechanism to guarantee access to nutritious food.

## Donors

Canada, European Union, Japan, Nicaragua, Private Donors, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland.

