



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Nicaragua Country Brief December 2019



Operational Context

While 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 improved, yet the prevalence of chronic undernutrition is 17 percent, and rates are higher in Madriz (30 percent), Jinotega, and Nueva Segovia (28 percent). Additionally, 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, frequent natural disasters and the effects of climate change.

Agriculture accounts for 17 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is the primary source of livelihoods for 90 per cent of the rural population, including women and men farmers. However, women farmers face more significant challenges than men to access 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, fostering disaster risk reduction and food security of smallholder farmers. WFP has been present in Nicaragua since 1971.



Population: **6.08 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **124 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

In Numbers

USD 68 m total requirements

Operational Updates

- With the aim of increasing farmers' climatic and economic resilience to shocks, WFP continued its efforts of strengthening smallholder farmer's productive capacities through training in soil and water conservation, as well as agricultural management of beans and cocoa for 235 farmers (38% women) from 3 farmer organizations. This will allow farmers to increase their crop productivity through more efficient mechanisms of resource management.
- In December, farmer organizations continued to place productive assets among their members, meant for irrigation and land fertilization, as an effort to enhance their agricultural productivity. This allows farmers to increase their yields by applying better agricultural practices with more productive assets.
- As part of WFP's efforts to protect the livelihoods and the food security of smallholder farmers in the targeted communities, WFP supported the establishment of bio-intensive plots for 19 smallholder farmers (58% women). The plots were established with the support of farmer organizations, with women specifically supplied with tool bundles, vegetable seeds and fertilizers. In addition to this, WFP provided productive assets to another 5 farmer organizations, supporting 139 farmers (47% women) in the form of eco-stoves, water-collection tanks and water filters. All these efforts contribute to market vitality and the development of farmer's communities.
- Continuing the efforts to provide food assistance to populations affected by shocks, WFP accompanied the National System for Emergency and Disaster Prevention (SINAPRED), Government institutions and the Academia in the baseline analysis of geo-spatial data collected from 29 municipalities located in the dry corridor of the Country. This effort will allow WFP and the Government to design risk mappings of the most vulnerable populations to food insecurity and natural hazards.

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Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
68 m	23 m	0.3 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: People in targeted areas who are living in poverty or vulnerable to food insecurity have access to adequate nutritious food all year round by 2023.
Focus area: Resilience

- Activities:**
- Provide nutritious school meals to school boys and girls in targeted areas, complementing the national programme, and strengthen national nutrition and gender-sensitive social protection programmes that promote food security.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 4: Populations affected by shocks have access to adequate and nutritious food during and after an emergency
Focus area: Crisis response

- Activities:**
- Provide food assistance to populations affected by shocks.

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable communities and smallholder farmers in targeted areas benefit from sustainable food systems and have strengthened capacities to cope with shocks, climate change and natural hazards by 2023.
Focus area: Resilience

- Activities:**
- Provide government institutions with technical assistance in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to reduce the vulnerability to food insecurity of populations prone to disasters.
 - Provide technical assistance to smallholder farmers to increase their resilience, improve their livelihoods and reduce their vulnerability to adverse climate events.

Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening

Strategic Outcome 3: National institutions have improved capacities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment and to incorporate gender-transformative approaches into programmes, contributing to the achievement of zero hunger by 2023
Focus area: Root causes

- Activities:**
- Provide technical assistance to the Government in designing and implementing gender-transformative interventions for promoting gender equality and food security and nutrition.

Gender

- Within the framework of the Secretary General's campaign, UNETE to end violence against women and 16 days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, WFP Nicaragua held the workshop "Our experience counts to prevent violence based on gender in our farmer organisations" in which the Role of Youth (men and women) in violence prevention at the farmer organisation's level was highlighted. This served as a collective reflection on the importance and incidence of young facilitators that were formed by the National Centre for Violence Prevention (CEPREV). In this activity, 55 people from the Country Office participated, out of which 17 were young people and women from the economic empowerment groups.

Challenges

- WFP Nicaragua is facing severe funding constraints in the next six months for the provision of nutritious school meals of USD 1,850,000. This activity represents the backbone of the CSP, allowing school children to obtain the necessary nutrients to grow and learn. With current resources, WFP is able to cover 75 percent of the requirements of the first distribution, planned for January, and only 30 percent of the second distribution due in April. With this outlook, WFP would be forced to introduce significant ration cuts of up to 70 percent, compromising the children's access to food and their incentive to continue to attend school in some of the areas with the worst education indicators. Thus, WFP is strongly appealing to the international community to secure additional funding and therefore continue the operations of the next few months and avoid any reputational risks.
- Following an assessment of the impact of the rainfall deficit in the Dry Corridor in December 2019, WFP is preparing to provide food security assistance, in case required by the Government. While the results of the assessment are still being finalized, prepositioning food is essential to provide a rapid response, given the long lead times, with no funding available for emergency activities, WFP currently requires close to USD 1,630,000 to provide assistance to these vulnerable population and avoid food insecurity to increase in the area.

Donors

European Union, Government of Nicaragua, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Luxembourg and Switzerland.