



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP El Salvador Country Brief August 2020



Operational Context

El Salvador is the most densely populated country in the Americas with a population of 6.6 million. The country has a moderate economic growth (GDP 2.3 percent), but suffers from a high, and rising, public debt (71 percent of GDP), high prevalence of crime and weak economic competitiveness (WB rank 73). The economy is highly dependent on remittances (17 percent of GDP). Food production represents only 6 percent of GDP and the country relies heavily on food imports from neighbouring countries. 33 percent of the families live in multidimensional poverty, presenting multiple disadvantages at the same time, such as poor health or malnutrition, poor quality of work or little schooling.

Recurrent and adverse weather conditions limit the efforts to reduce poverty and food insecurity. This phenomenon is increasing over time and has disastrous consequences on production of basic grains by subsistence smallholder farmers living in rural communities. The reduction in agricultural production causes a risk of the depletion of food stocks on household level; decreases dietary diversity; and increases cases of malnutrition among children under five-year-old, particularly impacting the most vulnerable urban and rural families. The country ranks 16th in the Global Climate Risk Index (Germanwatch, 2019).

In 2020, El Salvador reports a drop in the rates of homicide (10 per 100,000 inhabitants) and femicide (0.4 per 100,000 women), after years with the highest rates in Latin America. The possible reasons of the decrease are the security plan of the Government and the control measurements to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. This contributes to social development and economic growth.

WFP El Salvador supports the capacity of the government to i) improve the social protection of vulnerable groups; ii) mitigate natural disaster risks; and iii) strengthen the ability of smallholder farmers to adapt with climate change.

WFP has been present in El Salvador since 1969.



Population: **6.6 million**

2020 Human Development Index: **121 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **14% of children between 6-59 months**

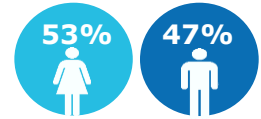
In Numbers

381,678 people in severe food insecurity

2.0 m people at risk of severe food insecurity

USD 13.3 m. six months net funding requirements

35,260 people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP and Let's Walk Foundation delivered food packages to families with a member with disability or autism, in San Salvador, La Paz and Chalatenango Departments, benefiting 2,000 people, aiming at reducing the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The food basket will be delivered monthly, for the next three months.
- With funds from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), WFP provided food assistance to 6,250 people in the departments of La Paz and Usulután, who were affected by the ravages of the tropical storm Amanda and the COVID-19 outbreak. This population were benefited with cash transfers to cover their food needs for three months.
- Recently, WFP assisted people internally displaced due to violence, which were also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. 230 people in 8 departments of the country were benefited with a cash-transfer to buy nutritious food in their own communities, revitalizing the local economy, contributing to food security and benefiting local smallholder farmers.
- WFP and the Ministry of Education signed a cooperation agreement to scale-up the production of a bio-fortified beverage in 2021, to cover more students in the country.
- A Field Level Agreement was signed between WFP and the Foundation for Agricultural Technological Innovation (FIAGRO), to carry out a study evaluating the current situation of trading among smallholder farmers. The study also aims at determining suitable alternatives for e-commerce, boosting economic activities benefiting 2,000 smallholder producers.

Contact info: Jaakko Valli, Deputy Country Director,
jaakko.valli@wfp.org
Country Director: Jaakko Valli (Interim)

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
88.5 m	28.7 m	13.3 m

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 1 (SO1): The most vulnerable households have access to effective, productive and nutrition-sensitive social protection by 2021

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

1. Provide technical assistance to the social protection system
2. Complement government transfers to pregnant and lactating women, and children under 2
3. Support government transfers to adolescents and young women and men.

Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition through improve productivity and incomes.

Strategic Outcome 2 (SO2): Food-insecure smallholder farmers and their organizations in El Salvador sustainably increase their productivity and income by 2021.

Focus area: *Resilience Building.*

Activities:

4. Provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the National Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Technology.
5. Strengthen the production, management and marketing capacities of food-insecure smallholder farmers and their organizations.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 3 (SO3): Targeted populations and communities in the most food-insecure areas have increased resilience to climate change by 2021 **Focus area:** *Resilience Building.*

Activities:

6. Enhance government capacity to assist the population in adapting to climate change.
7. Empower food-insecure smallholder farmers to adopt improved, sustainable agricultural practices.

Strategic Result 4: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 4 (SO4): Targeted people affected by rapid- and slow-onset disasters have access to food all year.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities:

8. Provide technical assistance to government institutions to strengthen emergency preparedness and response, including early warning and monitoring and evaluation systems for food security and nutrition.
9. Complement government transfers to the most vulnerable households affected by disasters to facilitate relief and early recovery

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs.

Strategic Outcome 5 (SO5): National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacity to manage food security and nutrition policies and programmes by 2021.

Focus area: *Root Causes*

Activities:

10. Strengthen the capacity of CONASAN at the national and sub-national levels.
11. Share best practices and knowledge through South-South and triangular cooperation and the SUN Business Network

Monitoring

- Since the launch of the Complaints and Feedback Mechanism in May, 1,150 tickets have been received and 96 percent of them have been resolved. In most cases people requested information about date and location for cash transfer (70 percent). This tool has allowed to identify abuse of authority from community leaders (0.43 percent) that have already been solved.
- WFP presented the results of the third Nationwide Survey on Food Security and Nutrition follow up, highlighting 381,678 people in severe food insecurity. While this figure shows a slight improvement due to economic reactivation, still a 30 percent of population are in moderate food insecurity and at risk of falling in severity, if the economy further deteriorates.

Challenges

- In spite of the Government lifting nationwide lockdown, WFP fieldwork is still limited due to the threat of a new outbreak of COVID-19, triggered by the reopening of economic activities.
- Earmarked funds for emergency response limit the focus on economic recovery and longer-term sustainability.
- Outdated information on nutritional surveillance challenges the identification of actions for priority groups.

The power of Gastronomy to overcome challenges.

"A young person may have the dream of attending a cooking class, but he/she doesn't have the money to afford it. My name is Diana, WFP gave me the opportunity to learn cooking, to eat healthy, to plan my food purchase and to make a proper use of money. The Gastromotiva project is a great incentive for me, because it gives me the uniform, the classes and the per diem. My dream has come true!". Read the complete story [here](#).

Donors

Astellas USA Foundation, EuropeAid, Germany cooperation, Italian agency for development cooperation KOICA, UK aid, USAID.

Additional support has been provided by UN CERF and UN Peacebuilding Fund.