



World Food Programme

WFP El Salvador Country Brief

September 2020

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Operational Context

El Salvador is the most densely populated country in the Americas with a population of 6.6 million. GDP could contract 8.7 percent in 2020 and public debt could increase from 71 percent to 92 percent of GDP. The weak economic competitiveness has deteriorated (WB rank 91). 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**

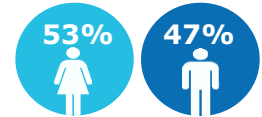
In Numbers

381,678 people in severe food insecurity

2.0 m people at risk of severe food insecurity

USD 21.7 m. six months net funding requirements

45,900 people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP provided food assistance to 44,175 beneficiaries in the departments of Ahuachapán, Santa Ana, La Libertad, San Salvador, Cabañas, La Paz, San Vicente, Usulután, Morazán and La Unión, who were affected by the ravages of the tropical storm Amanda and the COVID-19 outbreak. This population were supported with USD 100 per household to cover their immediate food needs.
- 55 young people graduated as specialists in gastronomy after completing the preparation course that is part of the "Peace and Reintegration of Migrants on their Return Home" programme, which promotes peace and the reintegration of returned Salvadorans. The participants obtained a professional certification, after 200 hours of training in basic cooking techniques, nutrition, hygiene and food safety, customer service, personal development and citizenship.
- WFP delivered 350 post-harvest kits to families in food insecurity condition in the municipality of Tacuba in Ahuachapán department, for the proper handling of grains, minimizing post-harvest losses. This initiative was carried out in cooperation with the National Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Technology and the Tacuba mayor.
- WFP conducted an emergency drill to assess the country office's readiness to respond to sudden emergencies, validating both the Minimum Preparedness Measures and Advanced Preparedness Actions; evaluating the roles and responsibilities, as well as the coordination to give an effective response. WFP has well adapted to the new COVID-19 pandemic context, efficiently responding even under the remote work modality.

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Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
88.5 m	29.8 m	21.7 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

- WFP has started the process for the evaluation of the Country Strategy Plan (CSP) covering the period 2016-2020. The evaluation will focus on WFP contributions to strategic outcomes, establishing plausible causal relations between the outputs of WFP activities and the changes observed at the outcome level, as well as the contribution to capacity strengthening at national and local level.
- WFP conducted a baseline evaluation to determine the food security condition of beneficiaries impacted by the double emergency COVID-19 and tropical storm Amanda in the dry corridor. The results reveal that 65 percent are using crisis strategies as follows: 75 percent are availing of their savings, 62 percent seek other sources of income and 40 percent reduce other household expenses.

Challenges

- Earmarked funds for emergency response limit the focus on economic recovery and longer-term sustainability.
- The upcoming legislative and municipal elections impact coordination with local governments due to political priorities that could cause bias in beneficiary targeting.

A story of hope in the middle of chaos

Abilio Pineda, husband and father of two children, lives in the Usulután department located in the Dry Corridor of El Salvador. He had been selling ice cream for twenty years, but due to the COVID-19 outbreak the company he worked for close their operations. A few months later, the tropical storms Amanda and Cristobal hit the zone, his house was flooded, and the family lost their crop of beans. After a few months without income, Abilio's family was selected by WFP to receive a cash transfer to cover their food needs for three months. "We are very grateful, happy with the assistance. We bought coffee, sugar, eggs, tomatoes and onions." Abilio was empowered to buy nutritious food for his family from the local shops and markets, boosting the local economy and supporting small-holder farmers selling their produce.

Donors

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