



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Nicaragua Country Brief December 2020



Operational Context

Nicaragua has been experiencing an economic decline due to a socio-political and economic crisis, which continues to place it as 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 some regions, up to a 30 percent. Additionally, obesity and overweight are on the rise.

Nicaragua is vulnerable to recurrent natural disasters, ranking 21st in the World Risk Report (2019). Food insecurity is closely related to poverty, frequent natural disasters and the effects of climate change. Agriculture accounts for 17 percent of the Gross Domestic Product and is the primary source of livelihoods for 90 percent of the rural population. Women farmers face higher challenges to access agricultural markets due to the persistence of structural gender inequality in terms of participation in agricultural activities, land ownership and access to agricultural resources in rural areas.

WFP supports the Government's Zero Hunger efforts by strengthening national social protection programmes, 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**

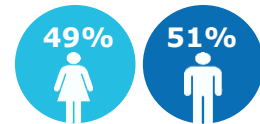
Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

In Numbers

USD 68.4 m total requirements

85,945 people assisted
December 2020*



Operational Updates

- This month, general food distributions continued in the most affected areas in the North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCN) post Hurricane Eta and Iota. In December alone, WFP assisted approximately 85,230 people and distributed 642 MT of food items. Since November, 200 communities have been reached in seven municipalities in RACCN, a logistical challenge given many of these communities are only accessible by small artisanal boats. In parallel, WFP also prepared for an expansion of the school-feeding programme targeting 183,000 children and the delivery of in-kind early-recovery, productive vouchers for approximately 26,000 families.
- In December, WFP supported 715 smallholder farmers, including rural and peri-urban families with vegetable gardens and food items. Amongst them, 680 smallholder farmers (65 percent women) participated in WFP-facilitated training activities on crop production and improving financial literacy. Furthermore, WFP supplied beneficiaries with agricultural tools and equipment, including backpack sprayers to fumigate and protect crops from pests and disease, silos for post-harvest grain storage, micro-irrigation and water harvesting systems. These are key to improve yields of farming activities and increase crop resiliency.
- WFP began preparations for the first school meal distribution of 2021. After coordination with the Ministry of Education, WFP plans to deliver hot and nutritious school meals to 182,000 school children in Jinotega and RACCN, when school starts again in February 2021.
- At the start of December, WFP trained 15 technicians from four national institutions on Seasonal Livelihood Programming. The trained technicians will be responsible, jointly with WFP, for the implementation of the seasonal livelihood consultations on the Caribbean coast. These consultations are key to understanding local realities and will guide the implementation of tailored programmes to alleviate economic stress and food insecurity.

*WFP initial estimates

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Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/Nicaragua

Country Strategic Plan (2019–2023)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
68.4 m	55.6 m	6.1 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.

Donors

Canada, European Union, Germany, Japan, Government of Nicaragua, Luxembourg, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland.

COVID-19 response

- As of late December, Nicaragua’s Ministry of Health (MINSa) reported 5,991 positive COVID-19 cases and 164 fatalities. WFP continues limiting in-person activities and promotes the use of masks, and distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Gender

- WFP Nicaragua assisted the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation, and Response (SINAPRED) in the design and implementation of an online database of the women’s network to address crises and emergencies. By promoting the inclusion of women in activities to prevent, prepare, confront, and recover from disasters, WFP is working towards more effective and sustainable achievements in risk-reduction and gender equality. The Nicaragua Country Office promoted a 16-day campaign amongst the staff to raise awareness about gender-based violence and promote behavioral changes.

Monitoring

- In December, following each food distribution as part of WFP’s emergency response post-Hurricane ETA and IOTA in RACCN, the team in the field launched monitoring exercises to ensure that the delivery for the affected communities were met WFP’s corporate standards of neutrality and transparency, respecting the dignity and all rights of beneficiaries.

Challenges

- Challenges have been mostly faced during the last-mile of delivery, where transporters have shown resistance for distribution requirements. Nevertheless, WFP is addressing these issues and potential solutions with field staff and local authorities in lessons learned exercises.

Impact of Limited Funding

- WFP estimates it needs approximately USD 5.9 million to assist 169,000 people through food assistance, 183,000 children through scale-up of school feeding, and reach 26,000 households with livelihood recovery for the next six months post Eta and Iota storms.