WFP Nicaragua
Country Brief
February 2021

Operational Context
Nicaragua has been experiencing economic decline due to constant socio-political 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 30 percent. Additionally, obesity and malnutrition 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 farming 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.

In Numbers
USD 99.6 million in total funding requirements
204,522 people assisted
February 2021

Operational Updates
- In February, WFP supported the Government of Nicaragua’s emergency response following Hurricanes Eta and Iota by dispatching 1,441 mt of rice, beans, corn, wheat flour, SuperCereal, vegetable oil and salt to the North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCN). WFP’s food distributions will benefit 198,300 schoolchildren in shock-affected communities with a second plate of hot food for 60 school days, complementing the regular mid-morning breakfast. The delivery of an additional meal will alleviate the food burden at home and is part of the response that the Government of Nicaragua and WFP are implementing to ensure uninterrupted access to nutritious food as families transition towards a recovery phase.
- WFP trained field office employees on what aspects to consider from a nutritional point of view during and after an emergency to prevent further deterioration of the population’s food security and nutrition, especially of children.
- WFP and national authorities coordinated and defined the content, quantity, and delivery plans of livelihood recovery packages, including seeds and tubers, agricultural inputs and farm animals. These packages are part of the early recovery phase to assist 9,000 low-income households. The hurricanes disrupted these households livelihoods, and they now need assistance to prepare for the upcoming harvest in 2021.
- In February, WFP carried out with the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response (SINAPRED in Spanish acronym) four workshops to validate the results of seasonal livelihood consultations, implemented in 19 municipalities of the North and South Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region.

As a result of the participatory exercise co-facilitated by WFP, national and local DRR institutions have a deeper understanding of the Atlantic Coast’s livelihoods and what affected populations need of future interventions.
- In parallel, WFP held participatory, working sessions with 26 farmer organizations located in the country’s north-central region and Dry Corridor. The object of these sessions is to define annual operational plans, establish the activities for 7,500 smallholder farmer economic and climate resilience and, consequently, their food security and nutrition. This month WFP also started exploring a pilot programme of crop or
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
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<tr>
<td>99.6 million</td>
<td>70 million</td>
<td>1.9 million</td>
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**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 2: 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 3: 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.

**Strategic Result 4: 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 5: Crisis response**

**Strategic Outcome 5:** Resilience

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

**Donors**

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

**COVID-19 response**

- As of late February, Nicaragua’s Ministry of Health (MINSA) reported 6,445 positive COVID-19 cases and 173 fatalities. Additionally, WFP continues promoting practices to reduce contagion risk and this month purchased hygiene and protection kits for WFP schoolchildren beneficiaries.

**Gender**

- As part of its commitment to strengthening national institutions’ capacities to advance gender equality and women empowerment, WFP assisted SINAPRED in designing an online database of local women’s networks engaged in crises and emergencies response. WFP also trained ten SINAPRED officials in the management of the platform. By promoting women’s inclusion in activities to prevent, prepare, confront, and recover from disasters, WFP works towards more effective and sustainable achievements in risk-reduction and gender equality.

**Monitoring**

- WFP adapted school feeding data collection tools and methodology so that field monitors and technical staff can collect data on the implementation of the school feeding scale-up, emergency food distributions and early-recovery activities.

**Challenges**

- WFP is still responding to the emergency due to the effects of Hurricanes Eta and Iota. WFP has worked closely with Nicaragua’s Government to assist the country’s most vulnerable populations, especially the North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCN) and Jinotega. Although WFP has an optimistic forecast to help the hurricane-affected populations, most of the confirmed contribution and forecasts have geographic restrictions. Thus, WFP is exploring with donors flexibility on these.

**Impact of Limited Funding**

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Women, WFP began to identify activities to reduce knowledge and infrastructure gaps to incorporate gender equality and the empowerment of women in national programs to contribute to achieving zero hunger. The implementation of these activities in 2021 may require up to USD 180,000.