



WFP El Salvador Country Brief

March 2021

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Operational Context

El Salvador is the most densely populated country in the Americas with a population of 6.6 million. The country reported a GDP contracted by 8.7 percent in 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19 outbreak. The country closed 2020 with a public debt of 87 percent of GDP. The weak economic competitiveness has deteriorated (WB rank 91). The economy is highly dependent on remittances (20 percent of GDP). Food production represents only 5 percent of GDP and the country relies heavily on food imports from neighbouring countries. 30 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 30th in the Global Climate Risk Index (Germanwatch, 2020).

In 2021, El Salvador reports a drop of 78 percent in the rate of homicide (5 per 100,000 inhabitants), meanwhile the rate of femicide increased 88 percent (6 per 100,000 women). The possible reasons of the decrease are the security plan of the Government. However, control measurements to contain the COVID-19 outbreak such as lockdown negatively impacted femicide rate (67 percent of feminicides were perpetrated during lockdown).

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**

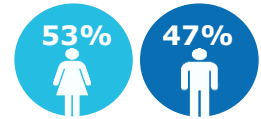
In Numbers

985,000 food insecure people

2.4 million people at risk of food insecurity

USD 13.8 million six-month funding shortfall for the Country Strategic Plan

9,175 people assisted
March 2021



Operational Updates

- With the support of the Government of Canada, WFP launched the Humanitarian Assistance and Early Recovery Programme that will help communities affected by multiples crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the tropical storms that hit the country in 2020. The six-month programme has four components: (1) cash assistance through three distributions of USD 100 per family, (2) sensitization in nutrition, (3) livelihood creation and (4) technical support for associativity and market access. This effort aims to reach more than 13,000 beneficiaries in departments of Usulután and Morazán in the western part of the country.
- WFP facilitated the purchase of 91 TM of grains from an association of 150 smallholder farmers in Usulután. The grains, corn and sorghum, will allow to produce biofortified beverage that will reach 104,000 students through the school feeding programme implemented by the Ministry of Education.
- WFP trained 150 smallholder farmers in the municipality of Tacuba that aim to enhance capacities in organic agriculture, post-harvest handling and trading, as well as guidance how work during the current COVID-19 context.
- Emergency preparedness:** WFP trained 33 members of the national Civil Protection (DGPC by its acronym in Spanish) in warehouse management. In addition, WFP handed over information technology equipment to enhance the situation room in DGPC headquarters as a preparation action for the upcoming hurricane season that has been forecasted to be intense this year.

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Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
99.3 million	36.0 million	14.7 million

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 and IOM started the “Migration from Central America Study” that comprises Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. The objective of this study is to understand the complex and emerging nexus between food security, COVID-19 and human mobility in Central America, informing decision making by the government and humanitarian actors. Results are expected in July 2021.

Challenges

- The maintenance of social distancing measures to avoid COVID-19 contagious may impact cost of operations due to a greater reduced number of people that can be accommodated in trainings, more vehicles required for field missions, among others.

Women in El Salvador: “Failed crops? We'll make hammocks”

At the age of 67, Elba works as a subsistence farmer and is treasurer of Women with Hope, a cooperative born of the efforts of a group of women who clubbed together to weave hammocks to sell after climate change destroyed their crops.

Over a few years, the group of entrepreneurship succeeded in taking their traditional craft to the national and international markets.

WFP support helped the group develop its own hammock brand: Hamacas Marinera. “They make a lot of orders from us through our Facebook page and the colleagues who have a telephone contact other people to order the hammocks,” says María, a group member who has made hammocks for more than 20 years. They received training on topics such as food handling, nutrition, sales and customer service.

Before joining the cooperative, the women earned about US\$5 for each hammock. Weaving just one hammock took two to three weeks. Today, through the cooperative, they earn up to USD 22 for hammock.

To read the complete history click [here](#).

Donors

ADM, Canada Global Affairs, European Union, German Federal Foreign Office, Government of El Salvador, Italian agency for development cooperation, KOICA, Latter-Day Saints Foundation, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Aid.