



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP El Salvador Country Brief

June 2021



Operational Context

El Salvador is the most densely populated country in the Americas with a population of 6.7 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.

The country ranks 30th in the Global Climate Risk Index (Germanwatch, 2020). 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 (14 percent stunted). On the other hand, 30 percent of first graders are overweight or obese.

In 2021, El Salvador reports a drop of 68 percent in the rates of homicide (7 per 100,000 inhabitants) meanwhile the femicide rate increase 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 national 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**

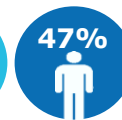
In Numbers

985,000 food insecure people

2.4 million people at risk of food insecurity

USD 3.5 million six-month net funding requirements

39,830 people assisted in June 2021



Operational Updates

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- WFP, with the support of the Government of Canada, carried out the last round of cash-based transfers, benefiting 12,950 individuals (6,864 women), including people who are part of the LGBTIQ population, affected by the multiple emergencies in 2020. This project also incorporated early recovery actions such as the establishment of community gardens and poultry farming.
- WFP supported 16,335 people (8,658 women) affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple climate shocks in 2020. The initiative includes USD 100 monthly cash-based transfers per family for a period of three months to buy food and early recovery actions including community gardens. The intervention is being implemented in the departments of San Miguel, Usulután and Morazán.
- WFP provided food assistance to 880 people with disabilities (466 women) in the departments of Ahuachapán and Sonsonate, through the delivery of a food basket that included beans, rice, corn flour, oil and other basic products.

Capacity Strengthening

- WFP has initiated a coordination process with the Government of El Salvador's six main ministries. The purpose of this effort is to develop an integrated work plan aligned with the national priorities for 2021.
- WFP, together with Seguros Futuro Cooperative, launched a pilot project of microinsurance for smallholder farmers and microentrepreneurs. The project seeks to protect these sectors from the impact of droughts, excess rainfall and earthquakes. This project is expected to benefit 1,250 participants nationwide.

Market Access

- Supported by the WFP, two associations of smallholder farmers closed the sale of 340 MT of fortified corn to the Ministry of Education for USD 157,500. The fortified corn will be used for the production of the biofortified beverage that is handed out to students through the national school feeding programme.

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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	47.9 million	3.5 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

- As part of the Central America Migration Study, WFP held an analysis workshop with key partners to discuss the links between food security, migration, violence and climate change, and how the COVID-19 pandemic may have exacerbated the migration situation in the country. As a result of the workshop, aspects for further study were identified. The National Board of Food Security and Nutrition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IOM, FAO, UNHCR and OXFAM participated in the workshop.

Gender

- WFP conducted a diagnosis of gender gaps in its El Salvador Country Office staff to measure the progress made in its target to achieve gender parity across general roles and in decision-making positions, as well as to obtain inputs to develop an action plan to reduce the gender gaps still existing in the organization.

Challenges

- El Salvador is experiencing a 33 percent increase in COVID-19 cases compared to May. WFP maintains surveillance and sanitary measures to protect beneficiaries and staff.

Help arrived just in time

Araceli belongs to one of the communities in the Dry Corridor that were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative impact caused by tropical storms Amanda and Cristobal. She was forced to suspend her economy activity that allowed her to provide for the basic needs of her children and family. "After the storm I could no longer bake" said Araceli.

The storms also affected their crops, "the sorghum has been hard to grow, it has been born all thin, it has not been able to grow as in previous times", added Araceli referring to the losses in the crops due to the excess of water the crops received during the storms.

The Government of El Salvador, with the aid of the United States Government through the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the support of the WFP, provided food assistance to the affected communities in the Dry Corridor through cash transfers to buy their food in local stores. "We have already used the money to buy main things children needed, such as juice and milk" said Araceli. Review the full story [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.