WFP Nicaragua
Country Brief
June 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 hazards, ranking 20th in the World Risk Report (2020). Food insecurity is closely related to poverty, frequent natural hazards 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 3.1 million six-month net funding requirements

220,151 people assisted June 2021

Operational Updates

- In June, WFP continued supporting Nicaragua’s emergency response post-Hurricanes Eta and Iota with the scale-up of the school feeding programme and the delivery of take-home rations. This month, 202,800 children (48 percent girls) from 2,400 schools located in communities impacted by Eta and Iota were assisted with two nutritious hot meals. The close and ongoing communication and coordination with the Ministry of Education (MINED) continues to be key to the distribution of food and materials.
- In June, WFP and the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) continued delivering seeds, bio-inputs, small livestock and tools to over 4,500 families (over 23,100 people). WFP also provided informative material about the programme in Spanish and Miskito and technical guidance to improve their productive capacities, income and knowledge on food security, gender and resilience.
- WFP carried out structural repairs in 11 school kitchens affected by Eta and Iota. Significant damage to the kitchen infrastructure in these schools posed food safety risks as well as risks for the mothers who volunteer to cook school meals. By carrying out these repairs, WFP ensures the safe and ongoing implementation of the school meal programme.
- As part of its school feeding activity, WFP is also building water-harvesting systems, kitchens storage areas and handwashing stations in schools in the North Caribbean region. Improvements in infrastructure provide schools with increased resilience to climate change and extreme weather conditions, while also enabling COVID-19 prevention through WASH facilities.
- In June, WFP continued working with SINAPRED to enhance their emergency response capacity by facilitating IT equipment including laptops, tablets and high-frequency radios. Additionally, WFP has put together a list of proposed actions to enhance emergency preparedness in the case of an atypically strong hurricane season.
- A gender specialist provided training to staff of local institutions and indigenous leaders of the Waspan municipality (61 percent female) on the integration of gender perspective and food safety risk management. WFP also continued working with the Ministry of Women (MINIM) to draft the WFP-MINIM 2021-2023 Strategic Plan.

Population: 6.63 million
2020 Human Development Index: 128 out of 189
Income Level: Lower middle
Chronic malnutrition: 17% of children between 6-59 months

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**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>109.4 million</td>
<td>$71.6 million</td>
<td>$3.1 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 food 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: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology**

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Humanitarian and government partners have access to reliable services during crises

**Focus area:** Crisis response

**Activities:**
- Provide on demand supply chain services to humanitarian and government partners.
- Provide supply chain services to government partners on a free-to-user basis to support emergency responses.

**Strategic Result 5:** Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 5:** 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 6:** Sustainable Food Systems

**Strategic Outcome 6:** 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 7:** Capacity Strengthening

**Strategic Outcome 7:** 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 8:** Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology

**Strategic Outcome 8:** Humanitarian and government partners have access to reliable services during crises

**Focus area:** Crisis response

**Activities:**
- Provide on demand supply chain services to humanitarian and government partners.
- Provide supply chain services to government partners on a free-to-user basis to support emergency responses.

- As a part of WFP’s actions to generate evidence that can inform decision-making and inform future food security initiatives, WFP is launching several studies. These include studies on the linkages between women empowerment and food security as well as the supply chain and social participation of the school feeding programme.

- Drought and below-average rainfall annually threaten smallholder farmers’ crops and food security in the Dry Corridor. To increase their resilience and reduce risks posed by the late start of the winter season, 12 large water harvesting systems were built to aid farmers in the collection of rainwater to be used for farming purposes.

**COVID-19 Response**

- As of late June, Nicaragua’s Ministry of Health (MINSA) reported 8,461 positive COVID-19 cases and 192 fatalities. Thus, WFP continues promoting practices among beneficiaries and staff to reduce contagion risk. Furthermore, WFP and UNICEF are carrying out complementary actions to support schools with handwashing facilities.

**Monitoring**

- WFP field monitors and technical staff continue collecting information on the implementation of the school feeding programme, scale-up and community-level data. In June, field monitors collected baseline information on vulnerable families in the Dry Corridor, who will be assisted with an additional meal for schoolchildren during lean season.

**Challenges**

- Late start of the raining season caused significant delays in planting for the first season. In fact, 30 to 40 percent of smallholder farmers currently assisted by WFP decided against planting. Added to the harvest loss caused by Eta and Iota and off-season rainfall, this sets a difficult stage for smallholder farmers. Field staff continues to monitor rainfall levels to be prepared to respond to the situation accordingly.

**Impact of Limited Funding**

- In line with the WFP-MINIM 2021-2023 Strategic Plan, WFP will continue conducting awareness campaigns on gender-based violence, as well as supporting MINIM in increasing its focus on the Caribbean Coast and strengthening its partnerships to promote the participation of women in science and technology. The implementation of these activities in 2021 may require up to USD 150,000.

**Donors**

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