WFP Guatemala
Country Brief
July 2021

Operational Context

Guatemala is a multicultural country with 40 percent of inhabitants being indigenous Mayan. Despite its middle-income status, two-thirds of its population lives on less than USD2 per day, and among indigenous people, poverty averages 79 percent, with 40 percent living in extreme poverty, with the highest gender inequality index in the region. Highly correlated to poverty, stunting in children aged 6-59 months is among the highest in the world and the highest in the region.

WFP assistance in Guatemala aims at achieving a sustainable improvement in food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable people. It is aligned to the National Plan, “K’atun: Our Guatemala 2032”, and the government’s national plan to attain progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

As Guatemala is among the ten countries in the world most vulnerable to climate change and most exposed to natural hazards in the region, WFP supports the national response to drought-affected smallholder farmers to help them cope with the lean season while restoring their livelihoods.

WFP has been present in Guatemala since 1984.

Operational Updates

- As part of its emergency response operation, WFP continued the distribution of unconditional Cash-Based Transfers (CBT) in 7 departments across the country. In July, over 30,000 beneficiaries received the first round of assistance. This response aims to support households affected by seasonal hunger period (June-September).
- WFP and the Ministry of Education continued the delivery of school-kitchen items aimed to support 500 schools countrywide. In July, WFP reached 368 schools and 62,000 school children. The Minister of Education and the President of Guatemala and WFP DCD Irene del Río attended one of these distributions.
- In July, Guatemala joined the School Meals Coalition. The Minister of Education participated in the Panel Discussion “More than a Meal: School Meals as a transformational intervention for the entire food system”. Guatemala’s Minister of Agriculture and Secretary for Food Security and Nutrition were amongst the in-person delegations attending the Pre-Summit.
- As part of its resilience building programming in Huehuetenango, WFP delivered conditional CBT to 175 households. Conditionality was based on the creation of assets such as family gardens, soil, water, and forest conservation.
- As part of its risk-finance strategy, WFP is working on the scale-up of the microinsurance product currently being piloted. To this end, Country Office has convened workshops with local partners, private sector companies and GIZ, among others.
- WFP strengthened capacities of local cooperating partners and of government counterparts on the use of its corporate system MODA. To support the identification and registry of beneficiaries, WFP provided tablets to partners.

In Numbers

USD 671,627 in cash transfers (January-July 2021)

USD 10 million six-month net funding requirements

173,411 people assisted
(cash transfers)
January-July 2021

Population: 16.9 million
2018 Human Development Index: 126 out of 189
Income Level: Middle
Chronic malnutrition: 46.5% of children between 6-59 months

Contact info: Giovanna Maselli (Giovanna.maselli@wfp.org)
Country Director: Laura Melo
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/Guatemala
Monitoring

- In July, Country Office finished the identification and registration of beneficiary households participating in its emergency response operation.
- WFP and AECID conducted a monitoring visit to nutrition funded activities in Sololá. During the visit, WFP facilitated meetings with local authorities, cooperating partners, and women participating in WFP’s community counseling strategy and savings and loans groups.

Challenges

- Protests to demand the resignation of President Giammattei and Attorney General Consuelo Porras took place for more than 10 consecutive days. Roadblocks impacted personnel mobilization from Guatemala City to certain areas, and several donor visits were cancelled.
- Movement restrictions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 significantly decreased staff movement, and compromised livelihoods, daily and informal labour opportunities, reducing household purchasing power.
- WFP has adapted its activities to comply with the Government measures, limiting activities convening large groups of people.

Donors

Canada, European Union (EU), Republic of Korea, Switzerland, United States.