



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Nicaragua Country Brief July 2023



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Operational Context

After a two-year recession, Nicaragua experienced economic growth in 2021 and 2022. However, it continues to be one of the poorest countries in Latin America. Undernourishment has improved, yet the prevalence of chronic undernutrition is 14 percent, with some regions reaching rates of up to 30 percent. Additionally, obesity and malnutrition are on the rise.

Nicaragua is vulnerable to recurrent natural hazards, ranking 21st in the World Risk Report (2022). 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.



Population: **6.7 million**

2022 Human Development Index: **126 out of 191**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **14% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

USD 6.6m six months (August 2023 – January 2024) net funding requirements, representing 38 percent of total

427,000 people assisted*
in JULY 2023



*Preliminary figures

Operational Updates

- In July, WFP launched a three-month women's leadership academy for 75 women from 30 smallholder farmers' organizations, strengthening their self-esteem, empowerment, and knowledge on preventing gender-based violence. This course uses a train-the-trainers model which will enable participants to train up to 1,000 additional women. In addition, the school will provide 75 men with training on new masculinities to support the transformation of gender dynamics in smallholder farmer organizations, households and communities.
- WFP completed the rehabilitation of seven school kitchens in Chinandega and Leon, both part of the Nicaraguan Dry Corridor. Eco stoves were installed in these kitchens, which enable up to a 50 percent reduction in smoke, protecting the health of parents and teachers who prepare school meals. These rehabilitated spaces will contribute to the safe preparation and consumption of meals.
- On 11 July, WFP held a working session with multiple government institutions to discuss the vision and objectives for school feeding after the end of the current WFP country strategic plan in 2024. The Government of Honduras also participated and both countries shared their experiences and best practices on school feeding programmes.
- WFP supported the National Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER) in establishing triggers for its drought early warning system, an important step in developing this disaster risk management tool. WFP will continue providing technical assistance to INETER to develop a cellphone application that will provide information on potential droughts and how to mitigate their effects for smallholder farmers and the wider population.

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Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

Total Requirement (in USD) as of June 2023	Allocated Contributions (in USD) as of June 2023	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
122.5 m	116.6 m	6.6 m

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 1: 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 4: 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 5: 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 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and tech

Strategic Outcome 5: 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.

- In July, WFP supported the National System for Production, Consumption and Trade's specialized working group to produce two weather bulletins. The first bulletin advised smallholder farmers to harvest water before the *canicula*, a dry period during the rainy season. The second bulletin recommended that farmers delay planting until the end of the *canicula* to increase the likelihood of rain. These bulletins currently reach 700 farmers nationwide and aim to expand their audience with WFP's assistance. The goal is to provide farmers with easy-to-understand weather and climate forecasts to help them make informed decisions about their agriculture.

Monitoring

- In July, WFP collected and analyzed outcome data for three major projects. This data will allow WFP to evaluate its progress towards goals and make any adjustments needed to ensure the assistance WFP provides responds to people's needs, considering the specific needs of each different groups.

Challenges

- Conditions for the El Niño phenomenon have developed and are forecasted to impact the 2023-2024 agricultural production cycles. This could increase food insecurity in some of the most vulnerable areas of the country. WFP is preparing to support populations in the Dry Corridor through the provision of additional school meals to 120,000 children.

Impact of Limited Funding

- WFP has a USD 5.5 funding gap to be able to continue its school feeding activities in 2024. Without this funding, WFP will not be able to provide warm meals to 182,000 children in some of the most remote areas of Nicaragua. To avoid interruptions in assistance, WFP needs to begin its food procurement processes in the fourth quarter of 2023.

Donors

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