



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
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LIVES

WFP Guatemala Country Brief March 2024



Operational Context

Guatemala is a multicultural country with 41 percent of inhabitants self-identifying as indigenous Mayan. Despite its middle-income status, two thirds of its population live on less than USD 2 per day, and among indigenous peoples, poverty averages 79 percent. Guatemala has the second 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 Latin America and the Caribbean region.

WFP assistance in Guatemala aims to achieve 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 UN System and the Government's joint and national plans to attain progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

As Guatemala is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change and most exposed to natural hazards in the world, WFP supports drought and flood-affected smallholder producers to help them cope with the lean, rainy and hurricane seasons, while restoring, building, and diversifying their livelihoods.

WFP has been present in Guatemala since 1974, and has three field offices in Quetzaltenango, Coban and Chiquimula.



Population: **17.6 million**

2021 Human Development Index: **135 out of 191**

Income Level: **Middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **46.5% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

USD 668,506 cash-based transfers and commodity voucher made

USD 20.7m six months (April 2024-September 2024) net funding requirements, representing 51 percent of total needs

32,244 people assisted in March 2024



Operational Updates

- 18,158 people were assisted with cash-based transfers and commodity vouchers (food kits) across four departments (Alta Verapaz, Huehuetenango, Izabal, and Jalapa) of which 53 percent were women and girls.
- Concerning malnutrition prevention activities, 4,881 individuals participated in capacity-strengthening sessions, all of whom were resilience programme beneficiaries. Another 3,079 individuals received services through WFP-supported [nutrition brigades](#) in Quiché and Huehuetenango and 638 individuals in the department of Izabal. This month, 85 percent of these beneficiaries were women and girls.
- Advancing its schoolfeeding activities in four technical field schools (Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango, Quiché), WFP organized early childhood development trainings for 531 pregnant and breastfeeding women and staff at 15 community centres in Quiché, benefitting 707 children.
- 6,089 people received USD 206,992 in cash-based transfers in Quiché, primarily from a France-funded intervention, including households from ProRES project and youth from the Project Fénix in five departments (Chiquimula, El Progreso, Guatemala City, Quiché and Zacapa). Another 4,972 individuals in six departments (Alta Verapaz, Chiquimula, El Progreso, Huehuetenango, Quiché, Zacapa) participated in capacity-building sessions (72 percent of them were women and girls).
- From 11 to 13 March, Stanlake Samkange, Acting Assistant Executive Director for Workplace and Management, with Lola Castro, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean visited Guatemala to meet newly appointed Government representatives from International Financial Institutions (IFIs).

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Country Strategic Plan (2021-2025)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
438.2 m	207 m	20.7 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome #1: Crisis-affected population in Guatemala are able to meet their essential needs during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide direct nutrition and gender responsive assistance to crisis-affected populations.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome #2: Vulnerable populations in targeted areas have access to comprehensive services and programmes that promote healthy diets by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Strengthen national and local capacities in nutrition and healthy diets promotion for vulnerable population.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome #3: Rural vulnerable populations and local institutions engage in nutrition and gender-sensitive, sustainable, and climate-resilient food systems throughout the year.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Strengthen capacities of institutions responsible for school feeding, school communities and smallholder farmers.
- Provide training, equipment, cash-based transfers and technical assistance to vulnerable smallholder farmers, communities, cooperatives and local institutions.

Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome #4: National institutions have strengthened capacities and improve their coordination to manage an integrated social protection system by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Provide technical assistance at policy and operational level to social protection institutions.
- Provide technical assistance to national and subnational institutions of the emergency preparedness and response system.

Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs

Strategic Outcome #5: National partners have access to efficient services and technical assistance throughout the year.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Provide food procurement services to national institutions and other partners.
- Provide services and technical assistance to national institutions and other partners.
- Provide on-demand cash-based transfer services.

Research, Assessment and Monitoring

- A WFP analysis showed that 24 percent of Guatemalan households did not consume sufficient amounts of food due to rising food prices and lower incomes since January 2024. This decline is because of the El Niño phenomenon which exacerbated acute malnutrition.
- Between 29 January and 15 February, a midline survey of the "Strengthening climate resilience for vulnerable rural areas in Quiché" project, covering Santa María Nebaj, San Gaspar Chajul, and San Juan Cotzal with 373 interviews, showed households had improved food consumption (27 to 69 percent acceptable) and food security (27 to 65 percent safe/marginal).
- Between 26 February to 07 March, a final survey of the "Attention to families affected seasonal hunger" project in Huehuetenango (Santa Cruz Barillas, Santiago Chimaltenango, San Mateo Ixtatán) with 365 interviews showed that affected families improved their food security (44 to 64 percent safe/marginal).

Challenges

- In the first quarter of 2024, the Ministry of Health reported 6,146 cases of acute malnutrition among children aged 24-59 months, an 8 percent increase over the same period of 2023. The Government forecasts that temperatures from March to May 2024 will average above 43 degrees Celsius in the Dry Corridor, adversely affecting crop yields, food availability and rural incomes. Food prices in February 2024 were 5 percent higher than the previous year.
- Immediate funding is critical to expand WFP's resilience programmes for 32,500 vulnerable individuals, mainly Indigenous women, youth and children aged 24-59 months. Some 64 percent of the 195,000 people to receive crisis response support in 2024 may not receive food or nutrition assistance unless funding is received.

Donors

Canada, European Union, France, Germany, Guatemala, Ireland, Korea (Republic of), Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States of America, Howard G. Buffett Foundation, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and other private sector and multilateral donors.

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