



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP GuatemalaCountry Brief

May 2024



Photo: WFP/Guatemala

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 for 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:

Income Level: **Middle**

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

In Numbers

USD 508,355 in cash-based transfers and commodity vouchers

USD 17.3m six months (June 2024- November 2024) net funding requirements, representing 42 percent of total needs

31,212 people assisted in May 2024



Operational Updates

3,808 people received unconditional cash-based transfers in Sololá and 5,428 people received food-kits in Izabal to respond to both slow and sudden-onset food security and malnutrition emergencies.

Concerning malnutrition prevention activities, 5,400 people received capacity strengthening sessions in Alta Verapaz, Huehuetenango, Sololá, Izabal and Quiché (89% are Integrated Resilience Programme beneficiaries). Additionally, 2,456 individuals were monitored through WFP-supported in Huehuetenango (part of an Integrated Resilience Programme), and 734 individuals in the department of Izabal (crisis response activities). Of total beneficiaries, 89% were women and girls.

Under school feeding activities, 72 individuals participated in capacity strengthening sessions to link local family agriculture with schools in the departments of Huehuetenango and Quiché.

As part of the Integrated Resilience Programmes, 14,192 people received assistance through conditional cash-based transfers in the department of Quiché. Additionally, 6,236 individuals received capacity strengthening support in the departments of Alta Verapaz, Chiquimula, El Progreso, Huehuetenango, Quiché and Zacapa (64% women).

On May 14th, WFP, UNICEF and PAHO supported the Food Security and Nutrition Secretariat in the organization of “The Cost of the Double Burden of Malnutrition in Guatemala” event, during which the Government informed members of the public and private sectors, and Academia, about the impact of under and overnutrition as reported by WFP in 2020, and the Government’s approach to address them.

From May 29th to 30th, WFP presented to authorities and stakeholders the results and lessons learned from the Anticipatory Actions Pilot implemented in the Dry Corridor in 2023, and 2024 scale-up plans.

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Research, Assessment and Monitoring

WFP's National Food Security Survey (ESA) 2024, which informs IPC numbers, began data gathering on May 27th. Forty enumerators will conduct 6,460 household interviews across all 22 departments, including Ladino, Garífuna and Mayan indigenous populations, aiming to inform the new Government and the international cooperation's food security interventions in 2024-2025.

From May 13th to 23rd, a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise was carried out as part of the unconditional cash-based-transfer (CBT) intervention in Sololá. The RAM unit conducted 289 face-to-face interviews, with 98% of respondents expressing satisfaction and high satisfaction with the cash delivery process.

Between May 20th and 24th, the RAM unit conducted a PDM to monitor the conditional CBT distribution for the Integrated Resilience Programme in Quiché. This exercise involved 286 face-to-face interviews, with 89% of respondents declaring themselves satisfied and very satisfied with the cash delivery process.

Challenges

Forecasts indicate that Central America could be affected by up to 23 named storms, including 5 hurricanes, until the end of the year. Based on the impacts of Eta and Iota in 2020-2021, WFP estimates that 1.8 million people could be directly impacted by torrential rains, floods and landslides, requiring emergency food and nutrition assistance. The Government also reported over 12,300 child acute malnutrition cases from January to May 2024, an 18% increase compared to the same period last year.

As in 2020-2021, WFP Guatemala plans to cover 16% of the affected population by La Niña, approximately 280,000 people. WFP would require USD 2 million only to respond to the immediate needs of 30,000 people displaced by the initial torrential rains expected from mid-year.

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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