



WFP Guatemala

Country Brief

December 2024

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Photo: @WFP/Guatemala

Operational Context

Guatemala is a multicultural country with over 40 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 almost 60 percent. Guatemala has the third 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 Latin America and the Caribbean.

WFP's 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 development 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:
17.8 million

2021 Human Development Index:
136 out of 191

Income Level:
Middle

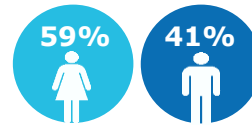
Chronic malnutrition:
46.5% of children between 6-59

In Numbers

USD 704,181 in cash-based transfers and commodity vouchers

USD 10.6 m six months (January to June 2025) net funding requirements, representing 39 percent of total needs

23,367 people assisted
in December 2024



Operational Updates

- **WFP provided emergency assistance to 17,743 individuals**, 52% of whom were women and girls, in Huehuetenango, Alta Verapaz, and Izabal departments through a combination of unconditional Cash-Based Transfers (27%) and in-kind food kits (73%) to address acute food insecurity and malnutrition. Furthermore, 196 people in the department of Izabal participated in capacity-strengthening sessions for early recovery activities.
- As part of malnutrition prevention activities, **1,317 individuals participated in capacity-strengthening sessions** in Quetzaltenango, Alta Verapaz, Quiché, Huehuetenango, Retalhuleu, Izabal, and San Marcos departments. Of these participants, 66% were part of households engaged in Integrated Resilience Programmes, while 29% were involved in emergency response interventions. **Additionally, 2,008 individuals received nutritional monitoring and counseling through 5 WFP-supported Nutrition Brigades** in Huehuetenango and Izabal. Across all these activities, 76% of the total beneficiaries were women and girls.
- A total of **2,266 participants attended capacity-strengthening sessions focused on sustainable agricultural production** in the departments of Huehuetenango, Alta Verapaz, and Quiché. Notably, women comprised 97% of the participants across all these interventions.
- From December 2nd to 4th, **Guatemala hosted the 2nd Regional Workshop on Innovation and Data: "Leadership for Innovation"** organized by WFP. The event brought together representatives from 14 WFP Country Offices across the Latin America and Caribbean region to strengthen capacities in innovation and sustainable solutions, fostering the exchange of best practices, and advancing WFP's strategic interventions.
- **WFP Guatemala conducted a field visit in Huehuetenango from December 4th to 6th with the Ambassador of Germany to Guatemala**, centered on showcasing the progress and impact of WFP's crisis response and integrated resilience interventions. Additionally, On December 9th, **WFP Guatemala's Country Director held a formal courtesy call with the Ambassador of Sweden to Guatemala to reinforce bilateral relations** and explore collaborative strategies for addressing food security and nutrition challenges.
- **WFP's Head of Programme and an Integrated Resilience-Building participant presented at COP 16 Desertification in Saudi Arabia**, highlighting women's distinctive and influential contributions to combating drought, restoring land, and managing sustainable land and food systems.
- On December 13th, **WFP Guatemala participated as a key speaker at the symposium on food security and nutrition organized by the Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition**. During the event, WFP presented findings from the National Food Security Survey and the Fill the Nutrient Gap analysis, contributing to evidence-based discussions on addressing food and nutrition challenges.

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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	270.8 m	10.6 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

- From December 5th to 13th, the Research Assessment and Monitoring (RAM) unit implemented midline monitoring activities as part of the Integrated Resilience Programme in the department of Huehuetenango. The data collection process **involved 1,572 structured household interviews**. Analysis of the midline data revealed a **24% increase in the proportion of households classified as "food secure"** compared to baseline measurements.
- Between December 9th to 16th, the RAM unit conducted a Post-Distribution Monitoring exercise as part of the emergency response operations in the departments of Alta Verapaz, Huehuetenango, and Izabal. The exercise involved **395 in-person household interviews**, with the findings showing a **38% improvement in the proportion of households categorized as "food secure"** compared to the baseline assessment.

Challenges

- [According to estimates from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food](#), the agricultural sector in 2024 incurred substantial losses, with over 54,000 hectares of crops affected by both droughts and excess rain, directly impacting approximately 117,000 households (equivalent to more than 586,000 people) and resulting in an estimated economic loss of almost USD 127 million (approximately GTQ 991 million).
- Furthermore, the unpredictability of climatic conditions introduced uncertainty into rural labour markets, further destabilizing the livelihoods of smallholder producers who rely heavily on consistent agricultural and other primary rural activities' productivity. [According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#), **2.9 million people—approximately 17% of the population—were classified as being in crisis and emergency phases of acute food insecurity** (IPC Phases 3 and 4) during the lean season, from June to August 2024. Projections suggest these conditions will persist into 2025, with an **estimated 2.8 million people remaining in critical phases from March to May 2025**.
- **Acute malnutrition also presents a pressing concern, with approximately 29,000 cases reported nationwide in 2024**, representing a 16% increase compared to 2023, with 83 reported fatalities.
- The confluence of climatic shocks, declining agricultural productivity, and increasing malnutrition highlights the urgent need for coordinated and targeted interventions to address the escalating risks to food security and nutrition in Guatemala. WFP urgently requires additional funding to address critical gaps in its operations. Net funding requirements for crisis response stand at USD 4.9 million over the next six months (January to June 2025), representing a 69% shortfall, and USD 12.7 million over the next twelve months (January to December 2025), reflecting an 85% funding gap.

Donors

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

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