



World Food
Programme

SAVING
LIVES

CHANGING
LIVES

Costa Rica

Annual Country Report 2025

Country Strategic Plan
2025 - 2025

Table of contents

Overview	3
Operational context	8
Story from the field	12
Programme performance	14
Strategic outcome 01	14
Cross-cutting results	16
Gender equality and women's empowerment	16
Protection and accountability to affected people	17
Environmental sustainability	18
Nutrition integration	19
Partnerships	20
Financial Overview	22
Data Notes	24
Annex	25
Reporting on beneficiary information in WFP's annual country reports	25
Figures and Indicators	26
Beneficiaries by Sex and Age Group	26
Beneficiaries by Residence Status	26
Beneficiaries by Programme Area	26
Annual Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher (USD)	26
Strategic Outcome and Output Results	28

Overview

Key messages

- At the Government's request, WFP launched a Limited Emergency Operation to provide food assistance to returning migrants transiting through Costa Rica.
- WFP delivered more than 28,800 hot meals, reaching 3,620 migrants at strategic transit points, in close coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local cooperating partners and United Nations agencies.
- The operation was extended to May 2026 to respond to continued humanitarian needs and enable a gradual phase-out.

Increased reverse migration prompted WFP emergency response.

Costa Rica has recently experienced the impact of a regional shift in human mobility dynamics, which resulted in increasing reverse migration flows. The country's northern border and the capital have become priority transit points for people returning south in vulnerable conditions and often in need of humanitarian assistance. At the same time, the sudden influx of migrants has placed severe pressure on the response capacities of national authorities, as well as on humanitarian partners and the international community.

Responding to a Government formal request, WFP activated a Limited Emergency Operation (LEO) to provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants transiting through Costa Rica, contributing directly to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 (Zero Hunger). WFP's approach aligned with the Government direction and request, respected existing service structures and prioritized a lean footprint, as WFP does not have an operational presence in the country.

A multidisciplinary team mission to Costa Rica along with in-country consultations with national and international actors informed WFP programme design and implementation. WFP was able to deliver more than 28,800 hot meals, reaching 3,620 people on the move transiting through Costa Rica after difficult journeys, often arriving with high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, reduced resources, and heightened exposure to protection risks. The LEO therefore focused on emergency food assistance to locations where arrivals and needs were expected, and partners and the humanitarian community were already operating but scaling down their capacities due to funding gaps. WFP promoted food access for vulnerable people by providing emergency food assistance. The modality selected for assistance was commodity vouchers for the provision of hot meals through the use of a prepaid card provided by WFP to cooperating partners, which enabled accurate oversight and monitoring of the food procurement process. The distribution sites were established at pre-existing community kitchens in collaboration with local cooperating partners. Menus were designed for nutritional adequacy and cultural acceptance and were supported by routine food safety and quality checks. Local procurement and bulk preparation safeguarded timeliness and reduced environmental impact.

WFP provided assistance at the country's northern border in Los Chiles and in the capital San José. A third distribution site was opened initially at La Cruz, but closed after two months as arrivals declined, which allowed resources to be refocused where flows remained highest. The operation began with a six-month window, and was later extended to May 2026, as needs persisted and authorities requested continuity, while maintaining the same initial budget. The selection of cooperating partners focused on Costa Rican civil society organizations with deep community knowledge and pre-existing facilities in the selected areas for the intervention. WFP provided onboarding and targeted training on Food Safety and Quality (FSQ) controls, Protection and Accountability to Affected Population (AAP), Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFM). This strengthened service quality and control, beneficiaries' wellbeing, and accountability.

Protection and gender equality considerations were integrated from the outset of the intervention. Sites were organized to promote safety and respectful access. Partners disseminated clear information on the free nature of assistance, people's rights and feedback channels. Staff received PSEA sensitization and followed referral pathways for health and protection, including gender-based violence (GBV). Practical measures supported dignified access for people

with specific needs, such as priority queuing for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women and Girls and women with children, as well as safe breastfeeding arrangements where feasible. Flexibility on duration of assistance was essential where specific vulnerabilities warranted longer support, such as pregnancy, recent childbirth, family reunification processes, or heightened protection risks.

As part of its commitment to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), WFP established solid collaboration efforts with civil society organizations ensuring localization, and strong coordination with United Nations agencies such as UNHCR, IOM, and UNICEF, to align distribution practices and referral pathways. Likewise, close coordination with the Resident Coordinator's Office helped maintain a unified posture with national leadership. This reduced duplication, improved information flow between sites and ensured that assistance remained people-centred and predictable. Flexible, timely resources enabled the operation to start quickly and avoid interruptions. Multilateral funding supported immediate mobilization, and additional bilateral contributions helped sustain coverage as needs persisted. The LEO contributed to national efforts to manage safe, orderly transit while preventing deterioration in food security among people on the move. It supported progress toward hunger reduction by safeguarding access to safe and nutritious food for crisis affected people.

3,620

Total beneficiaries in 2025

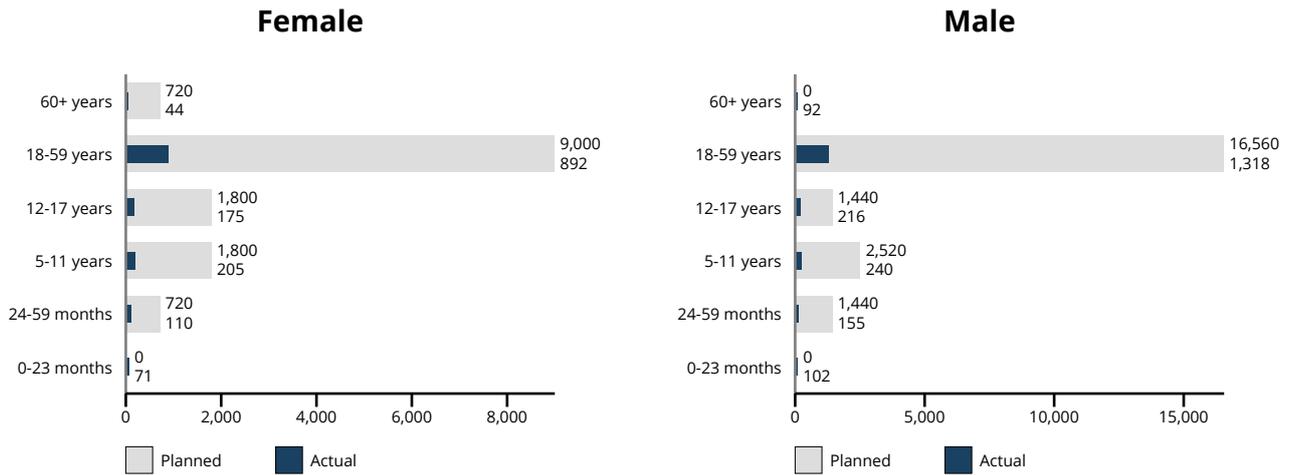


41% female

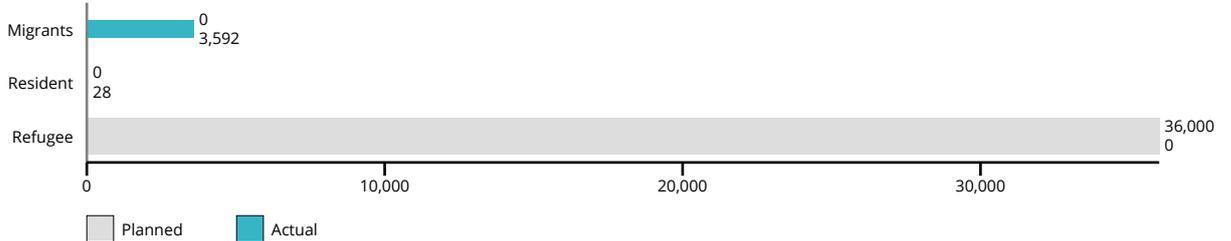


59% male

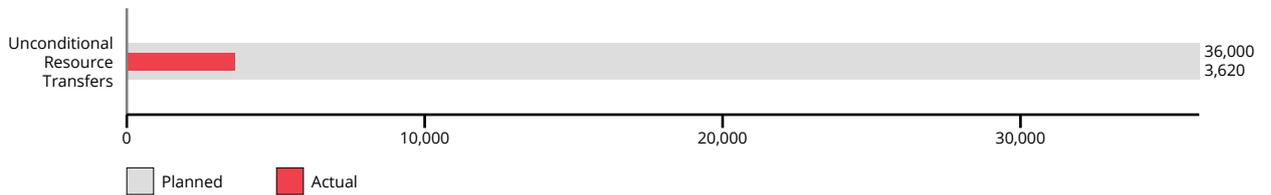
Beneficiaries by Sex and Age Group



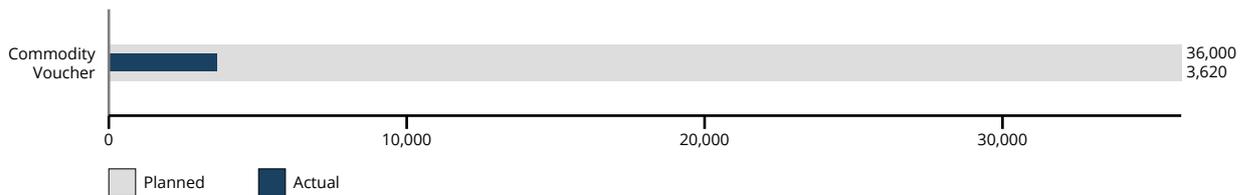
Beneficiaries by Residence Status



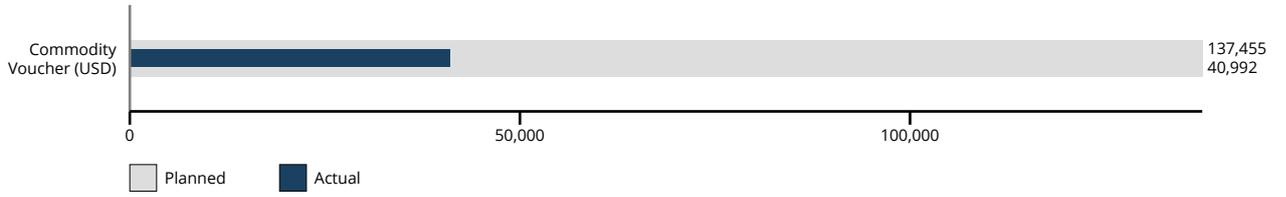
Beneficiaries by Programme Area



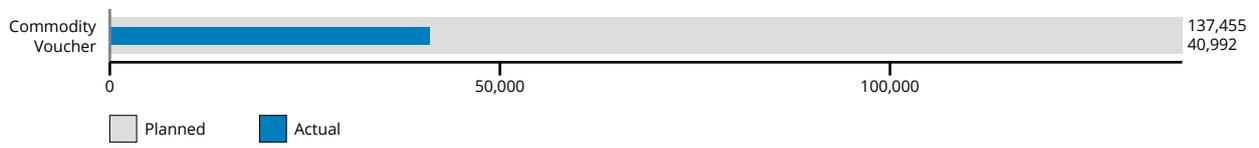
Beneficiaries by Modality



Total Transfers by Modality

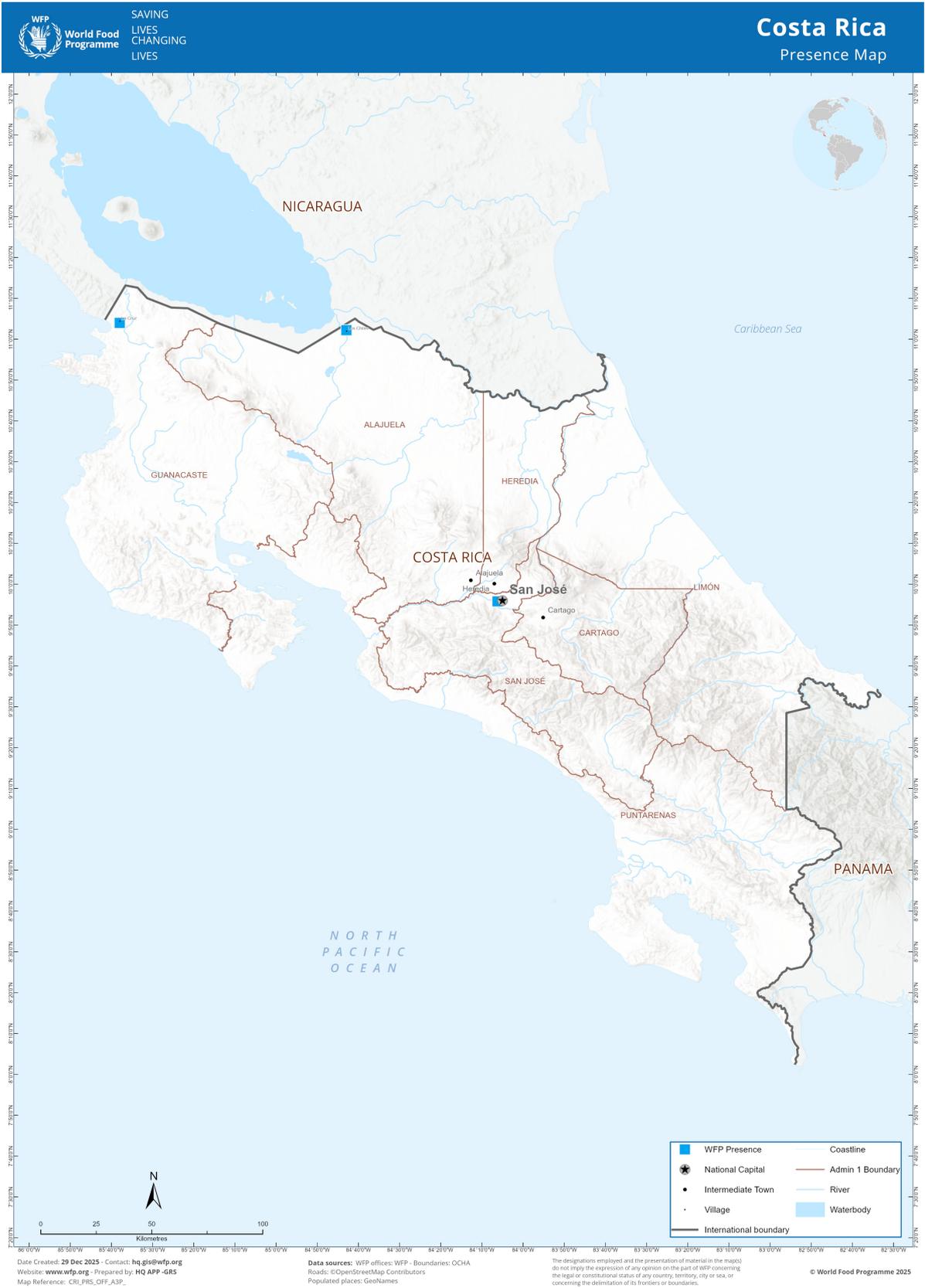


Annual Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher (USD)



Operational context

Reverse migration flows put pressure on Costa Rica response



Costa Rica ranks among the wealthiest nations in Latin America, enjoying a relatively stable socio-economic environment. However, this positive context is increasingly challenged by complex migration dynamics across the region. Historically, the Western Hemisphere has experienced large-scale population movements along a south-north axis, with Costa Rica serving as a key transit point on the migratory route from Panama’s Darién Reserve to the Mexico-United States of America border.

Over the past two years, northbound migration flows have declined significantly. At the same time, evolving geopolitical factors have triggered a surge in reverse movements, with migrants returning southwards, often seeking to reach their

countries of origin. As a result, Costa Rica has become a critical corridor for these southbound movements, facing a new migration crisis characterized by large numbers of migrants arriving at its northern border in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. This sudden influx along with a high increase of asylum requests has placed severe pressure on the response capacities of the Government and national authorities as well as its humanitarian partners and international community.

In June 2025, at the Government's request, WFP launched a Limited Emergency Operation (LEO) to address the immediate food needs of returning migrants transiting through Costa Rica. At the onset of the operation, approximately 200 new arrivals per day were reported, with projections of up to 36,000 migrants expected over the following months.

Data from the Mixed Migration Monitoring (MMM) platform, jointly managed by WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF reporting on the population movement northbound, had revealed that 75 percent of interviewed migrants faced food insecurity and resorted to severe coping strategies such as skipping meals or reducing food intake to prioritize children's needs. Furthermore, 79 percent identified food as their most urgent requirement, underscoring the humanitarian imperative for WFP's intervention. The returning migrant population, primarily from South America, arrived in Costa Rica after unsuccessful migration attempts, often traumatized by adverse experiences during their journey. Many had depleted household assets to cover transportation and basic needs while in Mexico, leaving them highly vulnerable and food insecure.

The Government of Costa Rica, alongside international and local partners, has made commendable efforts to ensure safe passage and provide assistance. Facilities such as *Casa Esperanza* in Los Chiles - at the northern border - and *Fundación Lloverá* in the capital San José, have offered shelter and essential services, including hot meals. However, growing gaps in response capacity and funding shortages for the entire humanitarian community have hindered efforts to meet the escalating needs. Consequently, the Government requested WFP to scale up food assistance temporarily until the situation stabilizes.

Since WFP has no permanent staff and operation in Costa Rica, emergency food assistance in the form of hot meals was initiated for six months leveraging WFP's capacity from the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LACRO) based in Panama and in close coordination with national authorities and humanitarian actors. Therefore, following the Government's request in February 2025, WFP deployed a rapid response team to engage with government counterparts and local authorities, coordinate with United Nations partners, and assess conditions at pre-existing migrant assistance facilities, which ultimately led to the establishment of the LEO.

Risk management

In 2025, the operation faced a risk landscape shaped by unpredictable migration flows, and the need for effective country ownership, along with WFP limited in-country presence. Ahead of the operation, a risk register was developed.

The most significant risk reported was the volatility of migrant arrivals due to ongoing regional geopolitical dynamics, which could have threatened to overwhelm response capacity and disrupt food assistance pipelines. This included the potential decrease or redirection of migration flows across the country. To address this, WFP implemented monthly beneficiary planning, closely monitored migration trends with partners, and advocated for flexible donor contributions. As the migration flows decreased in La Cruz area, WFP prioritized assistance in Los Chiles and San José and decided to close La Cruz distribution site.

WFP maintained regular engagement with national authorities, and formalized technical agreements. At the same time, the ongoing need for assistance led to the extension of the operation for additional six months until May 2026 to secure the urgent humanitarian needs of people in transit and gradual phase-out.

Operational risks included possible limited capacity among cooperating partners. WFP responded by delivering targeted onboarding and training along field spot checks. The absence of a permanent WFP presence heightened the need for robust monitoring and accountability, including regular field visits by joint team of experts and Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFM) at the distribution sites.

Risk management processes were embedded in activity management, with regular review and updating of the risk register, integration of risk monitoring into management meetings, and oversight of partner performance.

Lessons learned

The design of the LEO in Costa Rica was informed by external evidence, scoping missions, and interagency consultations, along prior engagements with Costa Rica as a non-presence country in WFP regional portfolio. Ahead of the LEO implementation, a WFP team from LACRO held an interagency mission to Costa Rica whose insights have been fully integrated into the design of the LEO.

A key lesson learned was the importance of robust geographic prioritization to guide assistance planning. The targeting strategy proved effectively by considering migration influx points, humanitarian needs, partners capacity, and existing assistance. This approach enabled WFP to adapt to evolving dynamics, such as closing the La Cruz site due to reduced migration flows and identifying two strategic locations in Los Chiles and San José.

Another lesson related to operational flexibility. WFP successfully absorbed new contributions, including from Luxembourg, within the existing budget ceiling, demonstrating the value of scalable design. Partnerships with national authorities and local actors have been critical for sustainability and ownership, informing WFP's planned exit strategy.

Finally, continuous risk assessment during scale-up has reinforced the need for proactive risk management to ensure timely mitigation.

Story from the field

More than a hot meal: finding safety and dignity in transit



© WFP / Romolo Giangregorio
A family supported by WFP in Costa Rica

Over the past two years, as reverse migration increased and many people began journeys southward, Costa Rica became a critical transit point in Central America.

"We left because of hunger," Luis says. "It's what made us leave." He remembers days when "we shared one small flatbread among the three of us," and a week when "we went seven days without eating."

Luis is the father of Carlos and José, who arrived in Costa Rica after years on the move across several countries—first from south to north and then, after months of risk and increasing vulnerabilities, from north to south as they tried to make their way home. Crossing the jungle, "the danger was always there" - Luis says.

As prospects in North America dimmed, they decided to return. Thanks to WFP and partners, they found a plate on the table while staying in a temporary shelter in San José.

At midday, they go to the community kitchen where WFP's local cooperating partners serve hot meals as part of a WFP timebound emergency operation designed with national authorities and local organizations. "We like Costa Rica because we have been passing through and there is no xenophobia or persecution," Luis says.

Ingredients are purchased locally through a voucher model and cooked on site; menus are planned for nutritional adequacy; and routine food safety checks keep standards high. For Luis, the quality of the food is as good as the people who work there. "We are grateful for the food," he says, "and for the way we are treated."

"There isn't a single meal that people dislike". It's not just about calories; it's about being seen and served with dignity after days of "eating fast and moving on."

For his sons, a nutritious hot meal gave a sense of hope. Asked about the food, Carlos, the youngest child, smiles: "Yes—it's tasty." Between activities at the shelter and the walk to lunch, jokes are back—who eats more rice, who gets the last spoon of oats. "Here, my children can have breakfast, lunch, and dinner—and, more importantly, a sense of stability," Luis says.

"These are not just meals; this is a small, steady space where people in transit can catch their breath", Luis adds. He also values how the team considers people's preferences or allergies, adapting plates when needed so no one is left out.

The recipe is simple: WFP works through local cooperating partners at existing community kitchens in San José and at the country northern border, close to where people cross. By strengthening facilities and local capacities, the operation keeps the footprint lean, reduces barriers, and focuses on safe and nutritious food. Food quality, accountability and

protection measures are woven into daily practice, from meals preparation and clear messages about rights to practical steps that prioritize those with specific needs.

As the lunch service winds down, Luis shows his gratitude: "Thank you very much. God bless you." He asks that this gratitude reaches the people who cook and serve every day. For a family still in transit, that plate—made available by WFP and its partners—is more than a meal, it is the chance to breathe, to think about the next step, and to keep going.

Programme performance

Strategic outcome 01: Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs



WFP distributed over **28,800 hot meals**.



WFP assisted **3,620 migrants** transiting through Costa Rica.



WFP operated across **three distribution sites** in close coordination with **local cooperating partners**.

Within a complex and evolving geopolitical context, Costa Rica has become a critical corridor for southbound populations movements which placed the Central American country at the center of a new reverse migration crisis. These new circumstances posed significant pressure on national systems and created urgent humanitarian needs. At the request of the Government of Costa Rica, in February 2025, WFP activated a six-month Limited Emergency Operation (LEO) to assist crisis-affected population to meet their basic food needs under one Strategic outcome. Under Strategic outcome 01, WFP promoted food access for people in vulnerable conditions by providing emergency food assistance to returning migrants transiting through Costa Rica (Activity 01). The modality selected for assistance was commodity vouchers for the provision of hot meals, a modality that offered flexibility, and nutritional adequacy while supporting local service. The intervention originally planned for six months (June-November 2025) was gradually adapted as population flows and operational needs evolved.

During the reporting period (June-December 2025), WFP delivered more than 28,800 hot meals, reaching 3,620 migrants transiting through Costa Rica. Of all people supported, 41 percent were women and 35 percent were children. The initial planned figures were based on the assumption that each person in transit would receive one meal per day. However, operational realities during the LEO implementation differed due to external factors since migrants stayed in shelters - managed by partners and connected to WFP distributions sites - for an average of seven days, receiving two or three meals per day over multiple days by the WFP cooperating partners. In addition, by December 2025, migration dynamics shifted and flows steadily declined over the months. Despite this decrease, humanitarian needs among migrants in transit remained substantial and continued to require sustained attention.

Assistance was provided across three distribution sites located along the northern border with Nicaragua and in the capital city, San José. WFP leveraged existing local facilities and active local civil society organizations by strengthening their assistance models and distribution capacities. The cooperating partners working at the distribution sites received more than USD 40,000 in commodity vouchers through the use of a prepaid card provided by WFP, which enabled better oversight and monitoring of the food procurement process. WFP's cooperating partners were therefore responsible for food procurement, transformation and delivery of hot meals against a pre-validated list of items, in accordance with WFP corporate norms. WFP also provided oversight and capacity strengthening to cooperating partners related to food safety and quality.

In northern Costa Rica, WFP operated at the *Casa Esperanza* facility in Los Chiles, in collaboration with the *Asociación Casa Adobe*, which supports migrants entering the country through Las Tablillas. In the San José area, WFP supported migrants in transit at the *Fundación Lloverá* facility, which plays a critical role in assisting migrants within the capital area. Both facilities were already well established and operational, and WFP duly signed field-level agreements with each to start its operations. Additionally, in the north of the country, WFP also established a third distribution point at La Cruz in collaboration with Corner of Love facility to reach migrants crossing through Peñas Blancas. Throughout the LEO intervention, the assistance strategy was adapted to the changing context and emerging needs. Adjustments were made to the location of distribution sites, the duration of the assistance, and the ration scale to ensure the response remained relevant and effective. As population movements shifted and decreased around Peñas Blancas, the La Cruz distribution site was closed in August, while assistance continued at full operational capacity in Los Chiles and San José. At the same time, due to the scale down of assistance from other agencies, WFP assumed the delivery of additional hot meals in both San José and Los Chiles to cover increasing basic food needs at the distribution site. Finally, the ongoing need for assistance led to the extension of the operation for an additional six months, until May 2026, to address urgent humanitarian needs of people in transit and to support a gradual exit strategy for the LEO. This extension will

facilitate WFP's phase-out and handover, enabling a progressive transition of implementation responsibilities to national actors once the situation stabilizes.

Due to the emergency nature of the operation, outcome monitoring was not required. In addition, the LEO supported migrants in transit, making follow-up and monitoring after they left the distribution sites not viable. As a result, emphasis was placed on robust process monitoring. Monthly visits to the distribution sites supported continuous process monitoring, confirming that WFP's assistance played a significant role in safeguarding immediate food access for migrants in transit. These visits enabled WFP and cooperating partners to consider all beneficiary feedback and incorporate culturally sensitive suggestions related to food type and quality. The questionnaires also revealed that, for many beneficiaries, WFP support turned out to be their only meal of the day. Beneficiaries reported that the meals were timely, adequate, and culturally appropriate. Feedback emphasized the good quality and taste of the food, as well as the respectful and welcoming treatment provided by the dining hall staff. Some beneficiaries suggested increasing menu variety to better reflect their preferences. Others recommended offering alternatives for foods that cannot be consumed for religious or dietary reasons, for example, by collecting this information during registration. The results gathered were useful for WFP to adjust menus and distribution practices accordingly.

Strategic outcome 01 was fully funded through WFP multilateral funding and additional support from the Government of Luxembourg through its Embassy in Costa Rica. Partnerships with the Government, local authorities and partners, as well as the United Nations agencies in Costa Rica along the international community were fundamental for the design and the effective implementation of the operation.

Gender and age considerations were integrated into targeting, distribution practices, cooperating partners trainings, and monitoring efforts, including Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFM). Although, due to the emergency nature and the initial short-term design of the LEO, a formal Gender and Age Marker score was not calculated.

Cross-cutting results

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Improved gender equality and women's empowerment among WFP-assisted population

Costa Rica ranks 2nd in Latin America and 16th globally in the Global Gender Gap Index 2025 [1], reflecting notable progress in gender equality. However, persistent structural inequalities and gender-based violence (GBV) remain critical challenges. Reverse migration dynamics observed have intensified gender-related risks, exposing women and girls to exploitation, limited access to services, and heightened exclusion.

To address these inequalities as part of its operation in Costa Rica, WFP included gender equality principles as part of the programme design and implementation, working with cooperating partners embedding gender equality commitments into field-level agreements and mainstreamed them during cooperating partners training. Separate focus group discussions with both women and men captured distinct perspectives to inform programming. Operational prioritization ensured that gender was a decisive factor in access to assistance, with particular attention to Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women and Girls, adolescent girls, and women facing heightened protection risks. Capacity strengthening in Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) emphasized the vulnerabilities of women and girls, while the rollout of Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFM), accompanied by missions in distribution sites and face-to-face monitoring with cooperating partners and beneficiaries, created safe and accessible channels for women to voice concerns and influence programming. GBV and gender concerns were addressed through service mapping, referral pathways for violence and health needs, and strengthened operational safeguards designed to reduce risks of exploitation and abuse.

These gender-focused initiatives produced tangible results. Priority access to food and services was granted to women in vulnerable conditions, including those pregnant, lactating, or living with disabilities. Women became the primary users of feedback channels, demonstrating increased confidence in reporting mechanisms. GBV prevention and response capacity improved through clearer referral pathways and stronger coordination with protection actors. Awareness of SEA reporting channels among women increased, reinforcing prevention and accountability. Safe and dignified breastfeeding areas were established in community kitchens, reinforcing women's rights to privacy and dignity.

Although the Costa Rica operation did not directly report on the WFP gender equality indicators due to emergency nature of the intervention, the results achieved contribute significantly for the progress of gender equality for migrants in transit. Challenges included a reduction in institutions providing response services, which limited referral options. However, WFP was able to achieve safe and effective referrals, particularly in cases of GBV. Progress to gender equality was driven by the achievement of strong cooperating partners' understanding and a clear commitment. Also, women and girls have been the primary users of the community kitchens as well as of safe feedback mechanisms and SEA which strengthened women's voice and agency while operational adjustments based on women's input—such as menu changes in community kitchens—reflect meaningful participation. Additionally, women and girls have been able to access assistance for longer periods when needs required extended stays in shelters provided by partners, mainly in situations related to pregnancy, recent childbirth, family reunification processes, or GBV risk.

Protection and accountability to affected people

Affected people are able to benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity and integrity. Affected people are able to hold WFP and partners accountable for meeting their hunger needs in a manner that reflects their views and preferences

The humanitarian situation in Costa Rica, linked to the increase of reverse migration flows, presented significant protection challenges for migrants in transit. From a protection perspective, insecurity and lack of economic opportunities emerged as the main drivers of reverse migration. A multidisciplinary team mission to Costa Rica confirmed that migrants were exposed to kidnappings, sexual violence, forced labour and theft along the route. Families, especially those with children, faced acute risks due to the absence of safe spaces and care networks, and parents were often forced to choose between income generation and child safety. Gender-based violence response mechanisms were limited, and adults encountered barriers to employment, social services and legal protection. At the same time, the humanitarian ecosystem showed reduced capacity to provide assistance, advocacy and coordination, leaving people with less access to reliable information and greater risk of exclusion, and food insecurity remained severe as community kitchens sought to provide culturally appropriate meals despite constraints in dietary diversity and nutritional standards.

In this context, WFP coordinated closely with UNHCR on protection and UNICEF on child protection and nutrition to maintain safe, dignified distribution environments and responsive assistance for different groups. To mitigate identified protection risks in Costa Rica LEO, WFP actions focused on Protection and Accountability to Affected People (AAP) and on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), the main risks identified being the lack of feedback mechanisms for community kitchen users and the need to train cooperating partners on Zero Tolerance for PSEA. An action plan was developed with mitigation measures and follow-up conducted in person and virtually.

WFP and cooperating partners' actions included the design, printing and dissemination of information banners, the installation of suggestion boxes and dissemination of dedicated email addresses for community kitchen users, the development and daily delivery of key messages on the free nature of assistance, people's rights, Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) channels and PSEA safeguards. WFP also established a process for partners to collect, share and act on feedback with WFP, in-person PSEA sensitization for partner staff with targeted strengthening of internal capacities, adjustments to hot meals to ensure cultural appropriateness. Additionally, a Security Risk Management Analysis was conducted, with recommendations made regarding the placement of video security cameras and the protection of families' privacy.

Protection, AAP, and PSEA were included as part of the field-level agreements signed with cooperating partners and mainstreamed into the induction process at the start of implementation. As a result, cooperating partners clearly understood WFP's expectations regarding a people-centered approach, the obligation to ensure dignity, safety, and do no harm; the need to establish feedback mechanisms, the daily dissemination of key messages, and the importance of risk identification, case escalation, and activation of referral pathways for community kitchen users.

Although the Costa Rica operation did not directly report on WFP protection and AAP indicators, the results achieved contribute significantly to outcomes for migrants in transit. The steps taken by WFP translated into a functioning CFM that improved responsiveness to community input and led to programme adjustments based on complaints and suggestions. No safety concerns and no barriers to accessing food and nutrition assistance were reported. Stronger partner awareness on PSEA and prevention of cases was also achieved. Accessible information about WFP programmes, including PSEA, and daily dissemination of WFP key messages to community kitchen users were also ensured, along with improved coordination with activation of referral pathways, particularly in case of illness, violence and family reunification.

Environmental sustainability

WFP works to enhance the environmental and social sustainability of its operations while limiting the potentially negative impacts on people, communities and the natural environment resulting from WFP programme activities and support operations such as administration, procurement, logistics, information technology and travel

Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

The recent influx of reverse migrants in transit placed considerable strain on municipalities along the northern border, including Los Chiles and La Cruz, and reception centers across San José, as well as the country capacity to respond. This sudden arrival of an increasing number of people in transit with food insecurity and humanitarian needs resulted in increased demand for essential services in areas already managing limited capacities. This also generated localized environmental pressures.

Although no specific ESS assessment was completed before the starting of the activities, WFP demonstrated alignment with WFP's standards through the reliance on pre-existing facilities, the avoidance of environmentally impactful infrastructure development, the coordination with other United Nations agencies which allowed WFP to minimize unintended harm to the environment and maintain safe, dignified conditions for people in transit.

Environmental Management System (EMS)

WFP's environmental footprint in Costa Rica during 2025 was inherently minimal due to the absence of a permanent WFP country office or infrastructures. All activities under the LEO were implemented through existing cooperating partner facilities, remote oversight and short-term deployments from the WFP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Therefore, WFP did not establish monitoring systems for Environmental Sustainability indicators, and an Environmental Management System (EMS) was not launched.

However, the operational model itself supported low environmental impact. WFP relied entirely on community kitchens already operating before the LEO, including *Fundación Lloverá*, *Casa Esperanza*, and Corner of Love. These facilities had established food preparation systems, water access arrangements, and waste management practices, which meant that the emergency response did not require new construction, installation of energy systems, or expansion of physical infrastructure. By strengthening partner capacities rather than creating parallel service structures, WFP avoided additional pressure on local environments and safeguarded communities from the environmental burden often associated with sudden humanitarian scale-up. The choice of assistance modality further supported environmental sustainability. Hot meals prepared in bulk significantly reduced reliance on disposable packaging and minimized the volume of waste generated at distribution points. Local procurement of food items reduced transport requirements and associated emissions.

Overall, WFP's operational decisions ensured that essential humanitarian assistance was delivered with minimal environmental impact throughout 2025.

Nutrition integration

Communities, households and individuals supported by WFP are able to meet their nutritional needs and protect their nutrition status in the face of shocks and long-term stressors, through an effective combination of fortified food, specialized nutritious products and actions to support diet diversification

Although WFP's operation in Costa Rica was launched as a Limited Emergency Operation (LEO) and therefore did not directly report on WFP nutrition integration indicators, the LEO demonstrated alignment with WFP's standards for nutrition-sensitive programming. During the programme design and implementation, WFP placed strong emphasis on safeguarding dietary quality for returning migrants transiting through the country, particularly women, children, and individuals facing cumulative shocks along their journey. Ensuring adequate diets under these conditions helped prevent malnutrition, reduce longer-term vulnerabilities, and support more resilient wellbeing outcomes. By positioning meal services at key transit points (Los Chiles and San José, and initially La Cruz before its closure) the operation ensured that migrants with limited resources could reliably access nutritious food, especially after extended periods without adequate meals.

Informed by mixed-movement monitoring data and in-country consultations with multiple actors, the LEO centered on the provision of nutritionally balanced hot meals delivered through a commodity-voucher modality. The hot-meal ration was built around a daily intake of 2,131 kcal, with structured quantities of fortified cereals, legumes, proteins, vegetables, fruits, and oils aligned with technical nutritional criteria. This ensured that beneficiaries received not only adequate calories but also diverse, nutrient-rich foods, helping them avoid negative coping strategies such as skipping meals or reducing intake.

Nutrition sensitive considerations continued throughout implementation. As part of trainings for cooperating partners, the menus and portion sizes were prepared followed by weekly cycles incorporating a wide range of food groups, including high value sources of protein, iron, vitamin A, folates, and calcium. Additionally, WFP worked in coordination with UNICEF to ensure the specific nutritional needs of children.

The operation also included Food Safety and Quality (FSQ) controls across all distribution sites, through regular monitoring, random food sampling, and targeted FSQ missions, including assessments of new distribution locations. Visits to *Casa Esperanza* and *Fundación Lloverá*, for example, confirmed that cooperating partners applied WFP nutritional standards in meal preparation, portioning, and food handling, while follow-up and risk mitigation actions contributed to improvements in the meal's nutritional quality and safety.

Overall, WFP effectively integrated nutrition within an emergency context by structuring assistance around nutrient adequate hot meals, embedding robust quality controls, and coordinating closely with national and international partners. These efforts ensured that dietary quality and nutritional wellbeing were protected during a period of acute instability and food insecurity.

Partnerships

Following a formal request from the Government of Costa Rica, WFP launched a Limited Emergency Operation (LEO) to provide life-saving assistance to migrants in transit. The operation was supported by USD 500,000 in multilateral flexible funding and a timely EUR 100,000 (around USD 116,000) contribution from Luxembourg through its Embassy in Costa Rica. Close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the General Directorate of Migration ensured alignment with national priorities, reinforced national leadership in the response, and safeguarded adherence to Costa Rica's human rights commitments.

Partnerships with local civil society organizations were essential, as local actors implemented meal distribution and community engagement activities while strengthening operational capacities and accountability systems. Local actors selected were very established at community level and with local authorities, and this facilitated a smooth and rapid scale up of WFP operations.

Quality and flexible funding played a vital role in enabling rapid mobilization and uninterrupted assistance.

Focus on localization

WFP advanced the localization agenda by expanding its collaboration with Costa Rican civil society organizations, increasing the role of national actors in the delivery of food assistance, and promoting equitable access to partnership opportunities. Local partners led the implementation of hot meals provision during the LEO, demonstrating strong operational capacity, community engagement, and accountability.

Accordingly, 100 percent of cooperating partners engaged in 2025 were local organizations, reflecting WFP's commitment to diversifying its partnership base and strengthening in-country leadership. To further reinforce local capacities, WFP delivered targeted training on safe food handling, reporting, protection mainstreaming, and beneficiary feedback mechanisms. These efforts improved service quality while laying out the groundwork for potential handover strategies.

Across the activity, WFP prioritized engagement with affected communities and national consultations to ensure that assistance modalities reflected their preferences and considerations. These combined efforts helped operationalize the global localization agenda in the Costa Rica intervention by promoting stronger local actors.

Focus on UN inter-agency collaboration

United Nations Inter-Agency Collaboration was essential to the design and implementation of the LEO due to the lack of WFP presence in Costa Rica and the valuable insights gained from different United Nations agencies and partners.

WFP primarily coordinated with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office obtaining an overview of the existing coordination mechanisms in the country. This ensured alignment with national priorities and broader United Nations frameworks. Further, WFP strengthened collaboration across the United Nations system with UNICEF, IOM and UNHCR to ensure a coherent, protection-sensitive response to reverse migration flows. The scale and complexity of population movements required coordinated action and inter-agency platforms (such as the Human Mobility group), joint planning, shared assessments, and more efficient delivery of complementary services. Cooperation with UNICEF contributed essential technical inputs on child protection, nutrition, and risk communication, ensuring that services at distribution points were adapted to the needs of children and families. UNICEF was a key partner as it was funding all the migrant shelters in the country, while WFP stepped in successfully complemented its work with hot meals and community kitchens. WFP worked with IOM leveraging its expertise on population movements and migrant protection, ensuring that assistance was aligned with mobility trends and complemented broader migration-management efforts. The IOM-led Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) was instrumental for WFP to plan the preparation of meals according to movement trends [1].

Joint assessments and harmonized beneficiary identification processes reduced duplication, improved data consistency, and enhanced operational decision-making. At the field level, agencies coordinated monitoring missions and consultations with community leaders, allowing interventions to adapt to real-time needs and ensuring that protection principles remained central. These coordinated approaches improved the quality of assistance,

strengthened inter-agency complementarity, and supported a unified UN response during one of Costa Rica's most challenging migration contexts in recent years.

Financial Overview

The initial approved budget for the Limited Emergency Operation (LEO) in Costa Rica was USD 1.05 million, while the Implementation Plan was 51 percent of the approved budget.

The implementation plan for 2025 was fully funded for this reporting period, initially receiving flexible funding of USD 532,500. Towards the end of the year, an additional USD 116,900 was received, which will be carried over to 2026.

The operational planning was impacted by an initial overestimation of beneficiary numbers at the beginning of the project. As the migration context evolved and actual flows shifted in the following months, the original projections no longer reflected the operational reality. As a result, the project reached 33 percent implementation against total available resources, equivalent to 40 percent of the approved implementation plan for 2025.

Given the changes in the plan, the original approved budget of USD 1.05 million was revised downwards in 2025, to USD 490,000. In addition, this revision included an extension in time until May 2026 to ensure adequate time for the completion of the activities.

Annual CSP Financial Overview by Strategic Outcome (Amount in USD)

Result chain	Country Portfolio Needs	Implementation Plan	Available Resources	Expenditure
SDG Target 1. Access to Food	969,011	497,048	607,238	169,622
SO01: Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs	969,011	497,048	607,238	169,622
Activity 01: Provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants	969,011	497,048	607,238	169,622
Total Direct Operational Costs	969,011	497,048	607,238	169,622
Direct Support Costs (DSC)	16,904	2,952	2,582	2,008
Total Direct Costs	985,915	500,000	609,821	171,629
Indirect Support Costs (ISC)	64,084	32,500	39,638	39,638
Grand Total	1,050,000	532,500	649,459	211,267

Data Notes

Gender equality and women's empowerment

[1] The Global Gender Gap Index annually benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across four key dimensions (subindexes): Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment. Since launching in 2006, it is the longest-standing index tracking the progress of numerous countries' efforts towards closing these gaps over time.

Cross-cutting indicators were not reported given the emergency nature of the operation and the fact that LEO assisted migrants in transit, for whom follow up monitoring was not feasible once they left the distribution sites.

Protection and accountability to affected people

Cross-cutting indicators were not reported given the emergency nature of the operation and the fact that LEO assisted migrants in transit, for whom follow up monitoring was not feasible once they left the distribution sites.

Environmental sustainability

Cross-cutting indicators were not reported given the emergency nature of the operation and the fact that LEO assisted migrants in transit, for whom follow up monitoring was not feasible once they left the distribution sites.

Nutrition integration

Cross-cutting indicators were not reported given the emergency nature of the operation and the fact that LEO assisted migrants in transit, for whom follow up monitoring was not feasible once they left the distribution sites.

Partnerships

[1] The IOM-led Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) gathers and analyzes data to disseminate critical multi layered information on the mobility, vulnerabilities, and needs of displaced and mobile populations that enables decision makers and responders to provide these populations with better context specific assistance.

Annex

Reporting on beneficiary information in WFP's annual country reports

To produce estimates of the total number of unique beneficiaries WFP has assisted yearly, the data from all activities and transfer modalities must be adjusted to eliminate overlaps and add new beneficiaries.

The final estimated number of beneficiaries assisted in each country is validated by country offices and entered in COMET (the tool for programme design, implementation, monitoring and performance management) at the end of every year:

- the total number of beneficiaries, which is the sum of all direct beneficiaries reached under all country level activities and outputs, based on the adjusted totals that seek to eliminate overlap;
- the total number of beneficiaries receiving food transfers, cash-based transfers and commodity vouchers or capacity strengthening, the sum of all direct beneficiaries reached under the activities and outputs for each of these transfer modalities, based on the adjusted estimates that seek to eliminate overlap;
- the total number of beneficiaries assisted under outputs defined by country offices and specific to their operations;
- the total number of beneficiaries assisted under each programme area, the sum of all direct beneficiaries reached under WFP's eight programme areas at the country level;
- the number of schoolchildren assisted under school-based programmes, the sum of all participants assisted under the school-based programmes, adjusted to exclude overlaps and activity supporters such as teachers and cooks.

Although WFP conducts quality assurance to provide beneficiary data which are as accurate as possible, numerous challenges remain regarding data collection, verification, entry and processing. Beneficiary numbers in ACRs should be considered "best estimates", subject to over- and under- estimation.

Disclaimer for gender-disaggregated indicators

WFP introduced mandatory gender disaggregation for some Corporate Results Framework indicators in 2024. In such cases, gender-disaggregated data may not be available for 2023 values.

«No data» function in outcome & cross-cutting indicators

The "No data" function has been introduced in the logframe module for reporting on outcome indicators (from 2025) and on cross-cutting indicators (from 2024 onwards). This function ensures that no data fields in the ACR data tables remain empty without explanation. The "No data" function can be applied to outcome and cross-cutting indicators at the target and follow-up levels and to cross-cutting indicators at the baseline as well. This function can be used for reporting an indicator at one level (baseline, target, or follow-up) or at two levels (baseline and follow-up). Country offices must choose either "Not collected" or "Not applicable" option.

- A. **Not applicable:** used when data is not collected for **methodological note requirements**.
- B. **Not collected:** used when data is not collected for **context-related reasons**.

Figures and Indicators

Beneficiaries by Sex and Age Group

Beneficiary Category	Gender	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
Total Beneficiaries	male	21,960	2,123	10%
	female	14,040	1,497	11%
	total	36,000	3,620	10%
By Age Group				
0-23 months	male	0	102	-
	female	0	71	-
	total	0	173	-
24-59 months	male	1,440	155	11%
	female	720	110	15%
	total	2,160	265	12%
5-11 years	male	2,520	240	10%
	female	1,800	205	11%
	total	4,320	445	10%
12-17 years	male	1,440	216	15%
	female	1,800	175	10%
	total	3,240	391	12%
18-59 years	male	16,560	1,318	8%
	female	9,000	892	10%
	total	25,560	2,210	9%
60+ years	male	0	92	-
	female	720	44	6%
	total	720	136	19%

Beneficiaries by Residence Status

Residence Status	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
Refugee	36,000	0	0%
Resident	0	28	-
Migrants	0	3,592	-

Beneficiaries by Programme Area

Programme Area	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
Unconditional Resource Transfers	36,000	3,620	10%

Annual Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher (USD)

Modality	Planned Distribution (CBT)	Actual Distribution (CBT)	% Actual vs. Planned
Access to Food			
Strategic Outcome 01			
Commodity Voucher	137,455	40,992	30%

Strategic Outcome and Output Results

Strategic Outcome 01: Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs				Crisis Response	
Output Results					
Activity 01: Provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants					
Corporate output 1.1: Food insecure and crisis-affected populations have access to nutritious food and cash-based assistance, restored assets and services to meet their urgent needs					
CSP Output 01: Migrant populations receive hot meals in order to meet basic food needs					
Output Indicator	Beneficiary Group	Sub Activity	Unit of measure	Planned	Actual
A.1.1 Number of people receiving assistance unconditionally or conditionally (complementary with UNICEF, FAO, WHO)	All	General Distribution	Female	14,040	1,497
			Male	21,960	2,123
			Total	36,000	3,620
A.4.1 Total value of vouchers transferred to people disaggregated by type (value voucher or commodity voucher)			USD	137,455	40,991
A.8 Number of rations provided through conditional or unconditional assistance		General Distribution	Number	36,000	28,819

Cover page photo © WFP / Romolo Giangregorio

Hot meals distribution at San José community kitchen.

World Food Programme

Contact info

Giorgia Testolin

giorgia.testolin@wfp.org

Financial Section

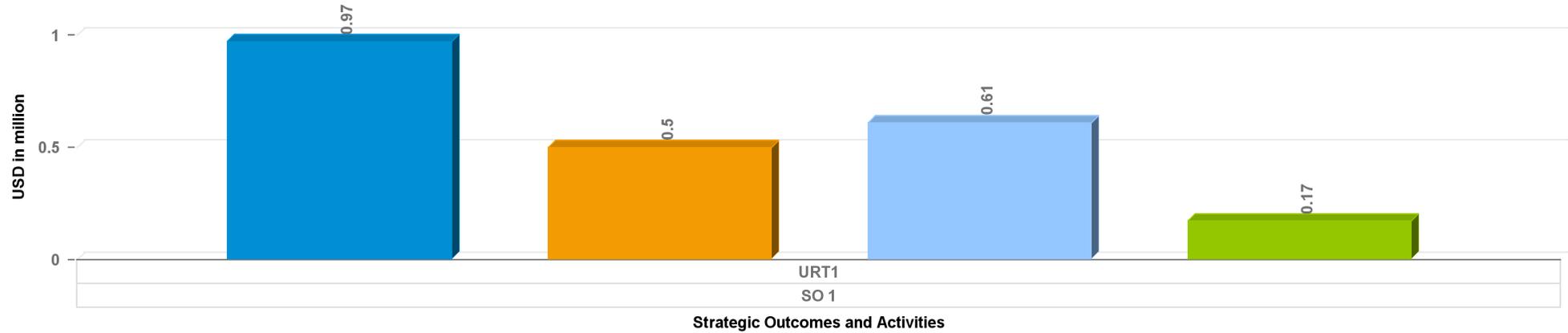
Financial information is taken from WFP's financial records which have been submitted to WFP's auditors.

Annual Country Report

Costa Rica Country Portfolio Budget 2025 (2025-2026)

Annual Financial Overview for the period 1 January to 31 December 2025 (Amount in USD)

Annual CPB Overview



■ Country Portfolio Needs
 ■ Implementation Plan
 ■ Available Resources
 ■ Expenditures

Code	Strategic Outcome	
SO 1		Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs
Code	Activity Code	Country Activity Long Description
SO 1	URT1	Provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants

Annual Country Report

Costa Rica Country Portfolio Budget 2025 (2025-2026)

Annual Financial Overview for the period 1 January to 31 December 2025 (Amount in USD)

SDG Target	Strategic Outcome	Country Activity Description	Country Portfolio Needs	Implementation Plan	Available Resources	Expenditures
2.1	Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs	Provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants	969,011	497,048	607,239	169,622
Subtotal SDG Target 2.1 Access to Food (SDG Target 2.1)			969,011	497,048	607,239	169,622
Total Direct Operational Cost			969,011	497,048	607,239	169,622
Direct Support Cost (DSC)			16,904	2,952	2,582	2,008
Total Direct Costs			985,915	500,000	609,821	171,629
Indirect Support Cost (ISC)			64,085	32,500	39,638	39,638
Grand Total			1,050,000	532,500	649,459	211,267



Michael Henning

Chief

Contribution Accounting and Donor Financial Reporting Branch

Columns Definition

Country Portfolio Needs

Latest annual approved version of operational needs as of December of the reporting year. WFP's needs-based plans constitute an appeal for resources to implement operations which are designed based on needs assessments undertaken in collaboration with government counterparts and partners

Implementation Plan

Latest approved prioritized funding requirements, derived from needs-based plan (incl. ISC), which is prioritized and adjusted based on the funding forecasts, available resources, and operational challenges

Available Resources

Unspent Balance of Resources carried forward, Allocated contribution in the current year, Advances and Other resources in the current year. It excludes contributions that are stipulated by donor for use in future years

Expenditures

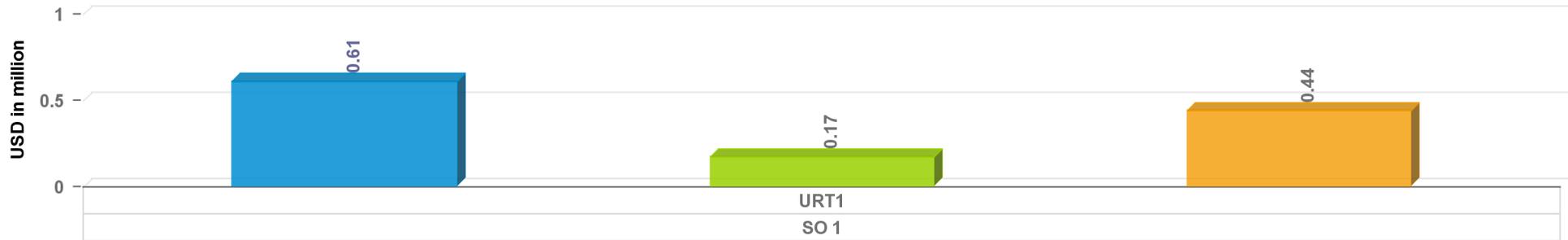
Monetary value of goods and services received and recorded within the reporting year

Annual Country Report

Costa Rica Country Portfolio Budget 2025 (2025-2026)

Cumulative Financial Overview as at 31 December 2025 (Amount in USD)

Cumulative CPB Overview



Strategic Outcomes and Activities

■ Allocated Resources
 ■ Expenditures
 ■ Balance of Resources

Code	Strategic Outcome	
SO 1	Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs	
Code	Activity Code	Country Activity - Long Description
SO 1	URT1	Provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants

Annual Country Report

Costa Rica Country Portfolio Budget 2025 (2025-2026)

Cumulative Financial Overview as at 31 December 2025 (Amount in USD)

SDG Target	Strategic Outcome	Country Activity Description	Country Portfolio Needs	Allocated Contributions	Advance and Allocation	Allocated Resources	Expenditures	Balance of Resources
2.1	Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food needs	Provide emergency food assistance to returning migrants	969,011	607,239	0	607,239	169,622	437,617
Subtotal SDG Target 2.1 Access to Food (SDG Target 2.1)			969,011	607,239	0	607,239	169,622	437,617
Total Direct Operational Cost			969,011	607,239	0	607,239	169,622	437,617
Direct Support Cost (DSC)			16,904	2,582	0	2,582	2,008	575
Total Direct Costs			985,915	609,821	0	609,821	171,629	438,192
Indirect Support Cost (ISC)			64,085	39,638		39,638	39,638	0
Grand Total			1,050,000	649,459	0	649,459	211,267	438,192

This donor financial report is interim


 Michael Hemling
 Chief

Contribution Accounting and Donor Financial Reporting Branch

Columns Definition

Country Portfolio Needs

Latest approved version of operational needs. WFP's needs-based plans constitute an appeal for resources to implement operations which are designed based on needs assessments undertaken in collaboration with government counterparts and partners

Allocated Contributions

Allocated contributions include confirmed contributions with exchange rate variations, multilateral contributions, miscellaneous income, resource transferred, cost recovery and other financial adjustments (e.g. refinancing). It excludes internal advance and allocation and contributions that are stipulated by donor for use in future years.

Advance and allocation

Internal advanced/allocated resources but not repaid. This includes different types of internal advance (Internal Project Lending or Macro-advance Financing) and allocation (Immediate Response Account)

Allocated Resources

Sum of Allocated Contributions, Advance and Allocation

Expenditures

Cumulative monetary value of goods and services received and recorded within the reporting period

Balance of Resources

Allocated Resources minus Expenditures