



World Food Programme

WFP Nicaragua Country Brief September 2020

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Operational Context

Nicaragua has been experiencing an economic decline due to a socio-political and economic crisis, which continues to place it as one of the poorest countries in Latin America. Undernourishment has improved, yet the prevalence of chronic undernutrition is 17 percent, and rates are higher in some regions, up to a 30 percent. Additionally, obesity and overweight are on the rise.

Nicaragua is vulnerable to recurrent natural disasters, ranking 21st in the World Risk Report (2019). Food insecurity is closely related to poverty, frequent natural disasters 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 agricultural 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: **6.08 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **124 out of 189**

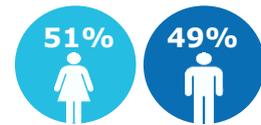
Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **17% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

USD 68.4 m total requirements

184,366 people assisted
September 2020



Operational Updates

- The Government of Nicaragua conducted a country-wide emergency drill, with national institutions and members of civil society, to simulate responses to events like a hurricanes, earthquakes and tsunami, as part of regular efforts to improve the country's preparedness. To support such efforts, WFP trained members of 72 national institutions integrating the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response (SINAPRED). The support focused on the use of digital tools for gathering information in real-time for faster and more effective response during disasters. Strengthening national capacity is key to advise decision-making in the event of an emergency.
- WFP assisted SINAPRED and the national institute of geological studies in designing a methodology to map areas' level of risk based on hazard, exposure, vulnerability, response capacity and population characteristics, in order to inform risk management at national level.
- WFP continued to support female and male smallholder farmers, reaching 907 people in the month of September. WFP promoted the construction of water reservoirs and supplied farmers with cisterns, filters, and pumps to encourage climate-resilient agriculture.
- Since schools remain open, WFP continues delivering school meals to 183,450 pre- and primary children in some of the poorest and most remote areas of the country, with limited infrastructure, rampant poverty, and high prevalence of indigenous communities.

COVID-19 response

- By the end of September, the Government reported 5,170 cases, including 51 deaths. To mitigate the impact of the pandemic on beneficiary's income, food insecurity and malnutrition, WFP delivered hygiene and prevention kits to 7,600 families, and provided the Ministry of Women with sanitizer and surgical masks.

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Country Strategic Plan (2019–2023)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
68.4 m	25.5 m	4.2 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.

Gender

- WFP finalized a study on women’s economic empowerment strategy, being implemented since 2016 in rural areas. With this initiative 440 female farmers received assistance from WFP, including agricultural inputs, training in basic accounting and financial issues, gender, access to credit and production, amongst other topics. Through the initiative, women are now able to access their own resources and increase the yield and quality of their production. they also increased their self-confidence, autonomy and empowerment.

Monitoring

- WFP completed the data-collection process to evaluate progress towards results and assess the support to smallholder farmers and schools. During the months of September and October, the results of the monitoring exercise will be cleaned, processed, analysed and validated .

Challenges

- WFP is preparing for the next school feeding food distribution, which will cover needs through the end of the year. It has been delayed, as parents abstained from sending their children to classes due to the pandemic. The drop in attendance led to a decrease in the consumption of school meals and thus schools’ capacity to handle and store food is strained. WFP continues to monitor remotely the management and consumption of school meals as well as school attendance, while working with the Ministry of Education to adjust the volume and timing of the next distribution.

Impact of Limited Funding

- WFP is in urgent need of resources to continue disaster risk reduction activities, aimed at strengthening national capacities and institutions. These activities have been underfunded since 2019 and there is no funding forecast in sight for 2021. At least USD 350,000 are needed for 2021.

Donors

Canada, European Union, Government of Nicaragua, Luxembourg, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland.