



WFP Nicaragua Country Brief

Highlights

- WFP supported the Ministry of Education to up-scale school meals in the Dry Corridor of the country during the critical months of the lean season. WFP provided meals to 200,700 schoolchildren, thus facilitating access to food and preventing school dropouts in vulnerable areas recurrently affected by crisis. In addition, WFP provided school meals to 164,100 children in the department of Jinotega and the North Caribbean Region.
- A delegation from Saudi Arabia's King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre visited Nicaragua to participate in the official handover ceremony of Saudi dates, allowing it to see first-hand the benefits that this brings to the school meals programme. Every year, the Centre provides dates to pre- and primary school children, who greatly appreciate this highly nutritious Saudi treat.

WFP Assistance

Country Programme 200434 (1 April 2013 – 31 March 2018)	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
	33.5 m	32.5 m (97%)	1.4 m

*September 2017 - February 2018

The Country Programme (CP) aims to break the inter-generational cycle of undernourishment and hunger among the most vulnerable in Nicaragua.

Through Mother and Child Health activities, WFP provides nutritional support to vulnerable groups living in communities with high chronic malnutrition rates in municipalities recurrently affected by drought in Nueva Segovia and Madriz.

The school meals programme supports access to education with a daily meal to pre and primary school children in the most food insecure municipalities in Jinotega and North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCN). WFP also supports the national strategy with nutrition education, school gardens, infrastructure improvement, technical assistance and training to government staff and strengthening of community organizations.

WFP also provides an additional meal to school children in municipalities affected by shocks. This response is in line with the Government strategy to augment its existing social safety net programmes to reach the most vulnerable during times of hardship. Children receive a mid-morning meal through the National School Meals Programme and a lunch before going home, with the support of WFP.

Through the resilience programme, WFP seeks to ensure that vulnerable communities are better prepared to cope with shocks. Resilience objectives are being mainstreamed primarily through the school garden initiative and smallholder farming activities.

The mitigation and safety nets programme aims to enhance adherence to anti-retroviral therapy (ART) among HIV affected people in Managua and Chinandega.

Finally, WFP supports sustainable development by

Main Credit: WFP/Sabrina Quezada
Photo Caption: Official handover ceremony of Saudi dates at a school Ruben Dario in Leon.

improving the income of smallholder farmers associated in Farmer Organizations (FOs). To do so, WFP connects them to local markets and social safety nets, leveraging its food demand; and fosters their capacities with technical assistance. Women farmers receive particular support through WFP's economic empowerment strategy.

Restoring Food Security and Livelihoods for Vulnerable Groups Affected by Recurrent Shocks in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua Regional PRRO: 200490 (1 January 2014 – 31 December 2017)	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
	13.4 m	2.4 m (18%)	n. a.

* September 2017 – February 2018

The regional PRRO aims to respond to small and medium scale emergencies through the provision of food assistance to affected families. WFP has contingency stocks available for a rapid response.

WFP supports the National System of Disaster Attention, Prevention and Mitigation (SINPARED) capacity in emergency preparedness and response through technical assistance, training, reproduction of materials, simulation exercises and strengthening of community organizations and local governments.

In Numbers

364,800 people reached by WFP in August 2017



Operational Updates

- WFP and the Ministry of Education (MINED) conducted the last school meal distribution of the year, in support of 164,100 schoolchildren in 11 municipalities, in some of Nicaragua's most remote and vulnerable communities. The distribution will cover the needs for 60 school days. The meals encourage school attendance and access to food by children from low-income families. For some, this is the only nutritious food that they eat during day.
- WFP continued to hold food security and nutrition workshops for technicians of eight farmer organizations (FO), including 8 women and 11 men. This allows smallholder farmers and FO technicians to think about the importance of healthy nutrition at the household level, thus generating awareness in a context where diets often lack diversity and consist predominantly of carbohydrates.
- SINAPRED and WFP are working to incorporate an integral food security and nutrition (SAN) approach with a gender and protection focus in the national training plans for emergency preparedness and response. To this end, WFP conducted a workshop on best practices for food storage during emergencies and on food administration in shelters in 17 departments. The aim is to strengthen national capacities to guarantee the effective and appropriate management of food in the event of crisis and particularly climate shocks.

Gender Equality

- As part of its Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy, WFP provided a package of agricultural tools and equipment to the FOs for benefiting 100 women farmers. The women, however, are requested to repay 50 percent of the price in installments to the FO, thus helping them assert their credit management skills. The payment will go towards a revolving fund, which FOs use to keep providing credit to women members, particularly in preparation for the planting season.

Challenges

- Despite resource mobilization efforts, the Mother and Child Health component continues to be underfunded. The failure to provide continued assistance negatively impacts the nutritional status of the most vulnerable population. To continue to provide nutritional assistance in 2017, WFP needs USD 214,000.
- HIV activities have been discontinued due to lack of funding, with no distributions planned for 2017. WFP needs USD 21,000 to support 1,600 people.

Fostering Gender Awareness and Women's Participation in Rural Markets in Nicaragua

In partnership with one of its assisted FOs, UCA San Ramon, WFP implemented workshops on women's self-esteem and economic rights and business leadership' for 130 women from six FOs, with the aim of generating gender awareness within FOs. Additionally, trainings on negotiation and business administration were conducted by fellow women farmers, who were previously trained by WFP. This is part of an integral strategy that seeks to tackle some of the deep-rooted barriers to women's access to markets in rural Nicaragua. Additional gender awareness trainings will be conducted during 2017.

Country Background & Strategy



Nicaragua is a low income, food deficit country and considered one of the poorest countries in Latin America. 29.5 percent of households live in poverty and 8.3 percent in extreme poverty on less than USD 1.25 a day (INIDE 2015). Poverty levels are higher in rural areas where 50 percent of the population is poor and 11.5 percent lives in extreme poverty. The highest rates of chronic malnutrition occur in the departments of Madriz (30 percent), Jinotega and Nueva Segovia (28 percent), located in the northern Dry Corridor (ENDESA 2011/2012).

Nicaragua is vulnerable to recurrent natural disasters that impede progress in addressing poverty and food insecurity. It is ranked fourth in the Long-Term World Climate Risk Index (Germanwatch, 2016). Food insecurity in Nicaragua is closely related to poverty, recurrent natural disasters and effects of climate change. Agriculture is the primary economic activity and engages almost 70 percent of the population and contributes to 20 percent of the country's GDP.

Historically, Nicaragua has been characterized by strong gender disparities. While there has been progress in recent years, the gap between men and women remains high, especially in rural settings, where traditional roles predominate at both the workplace and household level (USAID 2012).

WFP supports the Government of Nicaragua's Zero Hunger Programme by strengthening social safety nets, addressing prevention of chronic malnutrition and improving food security of smallholder farmers.

WFP has been present in Nicaragua since 1971.

Population: **6.08 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **125 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

Donors

Australia, Canada, European Union, Japan, Nicaragua, Private Donors, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland.

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