



UNDP El Salvador

Support to the National Response and Recovery to Contain the Impact of COVID-19



1- Government Response

As 29 May 2020, the Government of El Salvador indicates that there were 1,219 COVID19 cases in the country with 42 deaths and 1,017 recovered, and affirms the country has entered the phase of massive contagion <https://covid19.gob.sv/>

El Salvador had a prompt response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government began implementing a plan before the first COVID-19 case was confirmed on 18 March. The State of National Emergency declared on 14 March, in force until 29 May as per court decision of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice.

The Government is working simultaneously in the preparation and response phases and laying the groundwork for recovery. The preparation has been characterized by strong measures to contain the spread of the epidemic. At the same time, progress has been made in strengthening the health system with the construction of a new hospital specialized in COVID-19 care, the activation of temporary hospitals and the evaluation and improvement of the network of 30 national hospitals.

Similarly, the prescribed measures seek to minimize the recovery period, with important measures of economic protection for the affected population, as well as incentives for the business sectors, mainly small and medium-sized enterprises. Based on the multidimensional poverty index

(MPI), it is estimated that 28.8% of households (537 thousand) live in multidimensional poverty, and that 85.5% of national households present one of the 6 main privations (lack of access to social security, water, health services and sanitation, overcrowding, under employment) Approximately seven out of ten Salvadorans work in the informal sector; in particular, women will be the hardest hit, making up 64% of this sector present more serious risks in the face of the pandemic. An estimated 164,000 households (20% of total) are recipients of remittances, a reduction in remittance income is expected due to the international emergency and global economic recession. It is estimated that more than 80,000 employments will be lost in 2020

In addition to the economic impact of the pandemic, the Government has made credit acquisition and payment more flexible, suspended payment of basic services. During the first month of the confinement USD 300 money transfers worth USD 300 to an estimate 1.5 million households were transferred. In addition, distribution of food supplies house-to-house through-out the country is being carried out to ensure food security of the population.

The effects of the pandemic on public finances, the amount of new debt required to meet the emergency could reach 87% of GDP, while GDP may fall 4,3% or more.

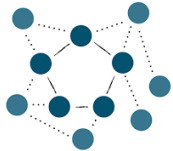
2- UNDP Support to Prepare, Respond and Recover

Strengthening Health Systems



- Design of a situation room for the Ministry of Health, which will coordinate the information from the COVID-19 Hospitals, the main lab, the support hospitals, and hotels, as well as ambulances, for fast, transparent exchange of information and evidence-based decision making.
- Support to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport for the procurement plan of equipment and the construction and supervision of the Grand Specialty Hospital to care for patients of COVID-19.
- Purchase of supplies of protective equipment for the staff of El Salvador mail system to facilitate the delivery of medicines and for users of specialized pharmacies of the Ministry of Health.
- Purchase of protective equipment for the health personnel of the Ministry of Health through reprogramming of ongoing projects.
- South-South Cooperation between Paraguay- El Salvador, to launch an online platform to register health professional volunteers, focusing on assistance to pregnant women and mental health to the frontline staff. This platform is implemented at the initiative of the First Lady of El Salvador, Gabriela de Bukele, and the First Lady of Paraguay, Silvana Abdo, with the leadership of the Ministry of Health, in coordination with the Ministry of Innovation.
- Home delivery of medications to chronic patients, pregnant women, users of contraceptive methods, people with HIV and users of specialized pharmacies.

**Inclusive and
Multi-Sectoral
Crisis
Management and
Response**



- Rapid deployment of SIGOB tool with the Secretariat of Strategic Projects to manage international cooperation, donor coordination, procurement, and follow-up to the implementation of the Grand Specialty Hospital.
- Modernization and digitization of critical procedures of the Vice-Ministry of Transport, through the SIGOB platform, to avoid the mobilization and physical presence of users: authorization of compensations, automation of the Fund for the Care of Victims of Accidents and Complaints.
- Identification of COVID-19 emergency impacts to groups at risk from violence, including evangelical churches and youth in communities in San Salvador and Cuscatancingo and Mexicanos, under the project Pioneer Social Reintegration financed by USAID.
- Design and dissemination of information and data on violence against women in the COVID-19 emergency and social media campaign within the framework of the Spotlight project. Also, UNDP is contributing to monitor rule of law through the COVID-19 Pandemic, particularly citizen security, human rights, and inter-institutional checks and balances.

**Socio-Economic
Impact and
Recovery**



- Revitalization of the early recovery value chains, mainly for food production, in 87 vulnerable municipalities of San Miguel, Morazán, Usulután, and La Unión. This initiative is part of the Rural Adelante programme, implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- Analysis of "COVID-19 and Vulnerability: A Look at Multidimensional Poverty" that uses the multidimensional poverty tool to identify vulnerable homes. Pre-existing conditions of poverty and inequalities based on 6 risk factors to COVID-19 are shown and 4 vulnerable household groups are identified, based on gender characteristics, poverty, the elderly population, and remittance dependence. Furthermore, it contains maps with the incidence of each group or in the 14 departments of the country.
- Analysis of efficiency and sustainability of immediate and short-term measures of economic relief and recovery and proposal of policy options.
- Plan for reopen the economy under different scenarios.

3- UNDP Support to UN Country Team

- UNDP coordinates activities as part of the wider UNCT response to the COVID-19 and mechanisms in place, such as the Protection and Health clusters and leads the Early Recovery Cluster.

4- Resources COVID-19 Response

<i>Areas of Response</i>	<i>Reprogramming (Existing Projects) USD</i>	<i>New Resources (USD)</i>
Strengthening Health Systems	223,000	322,000
Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Crisis Management and Response	110,000	163,000
Socio-Economic Impact and Recovery	1,470,000	65,000
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>1,803,000</i>	<i>550,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,353,000</i>	

In dialogue with the Government and donors, UNDP has reprogrammed USD 1.8 million from current projects. Key counterparts and donors include IFAD, UNDP, and the Government of El Salvador.

New resources include USD 550,000 from the Rapid Response Fund, and MPTF-UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery