

UNHCR EL SALVADOR Response to emergencies

February 2021

Key Figures

COVID-19

58,023
confirmed cases

1,767 deaths by
17 February 2021

EMERGENCIES

150,000 people directly
affected by four tropical
storms in 2020

10,291 persons assisted
by UNHCR with family kits,
food baskets and NFIs

FUNDING

9% of UNHCR's
funding needs
received by 15
February 2021

Situational Highlights

- In 2020, amidst a country-wide lockdown and restrictions due to the global emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, four tropical storms hit El Salvador (Amanda, Cristóbal, ETA and IOTA), causing damage and loss of human life on a nationwide level. In response to these emergencies, UNHCR led the Protection Cluster, where 28 organizations converged to coordinate the response. UNHCR also co-lead the Shelter Cluster of the Humanitarian Country Team.
- During the COVID-19 emergency, UNHCR expanded its presence to 45 prioritized communities and established a helpline to maintain direct contact with persons of concern. The Office and partners also implemented 26 Quick Impact Projects (QIP) to foster a favourable protection environment and enhance community's resilience.

Coordination Mechanisms

Humanitarian Country Team

- The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is integrated by UN Agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross. The HCT is the platform activated as the COVID-19 response mechanism and coordinates with the Ministry of Interior, Civil Protection and El Salvador Agency for International Cooperation (ESCO) to ensure that resources are channelled to affected population. The HCT is led by the UN Resident Coordinator and actions are carried out through a sectoral working approach.

UNETE

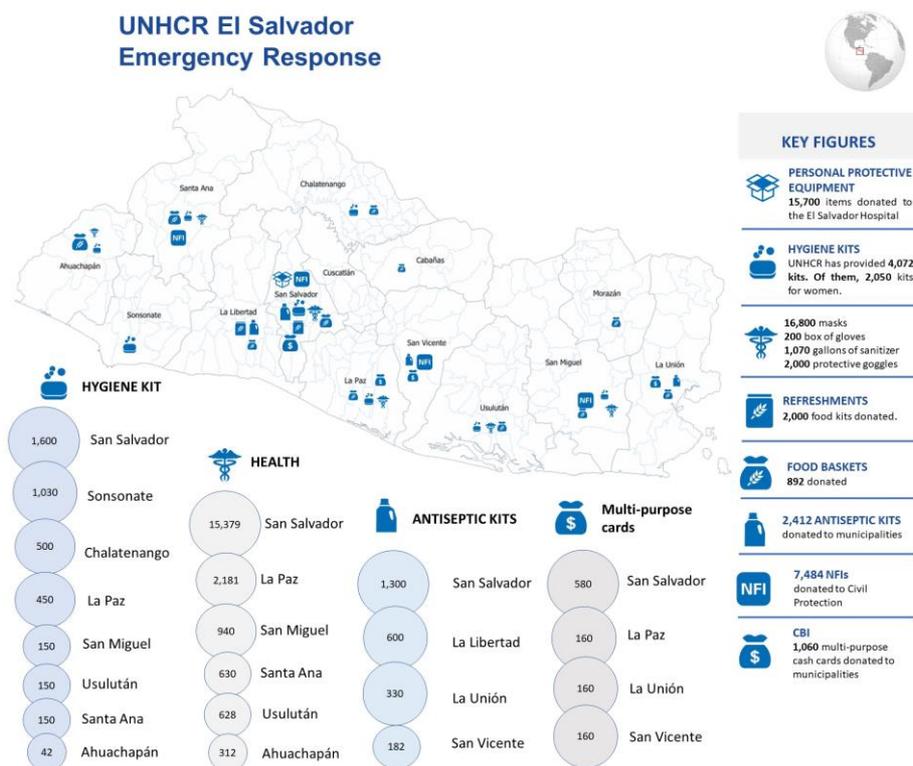
- The United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETE) is the result of a global initiative of the United Nations to strengthen capacities and promote inter-agency coordination in El Salvador. UNETE responds to a joint global and regional agreement to develop actions in the areas of emergency preparedness and response and works to build resilience to adverse climate phenomena.

Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster was reinforced to foster enhanced response capacity to emergencies through the mobilization of 28 UN agencies, organizations and NGOs. As a lead agency, UNHCR is responsible for ensuring a comprehensive approach to protection. In coordination with member organizations, UNHCR El Salvador has provided legal, psychological, and material support to some 130,000 persons, including survivors of GBV, women and girls, LGBTIQ+ people, children and elderly persons. UNHCR has led the design and implementation of an action plan with a gender perspective within the Protection Working Group to respond to the emergency. The action plan included a [survey](#) on work overload affecting women in the context of the pandemic and a communication campaign based on the results of the survey.

UNHCR's Response

In El Salvador, UNHCR seeks to promote that all displaced persons find protection from harm. UNHCR has placed protection and solutions at the center of all interventions through direct engagement with communities and internally displaced persons.



- Four-hundred copies of a psychosocial support guide elaborated in the frame of the Protection Cluster were delivered to quarantine centres for deported persons and shelters established to assist persons forced to leave their homes as a result of tropical storms Amanda and Cristóbal, to make contact details of humanitarian organizations and their services available to persons with protection needs. In addition, UNHCR designed and printed 50 posters, 100 cards with contact information and 30 posters with contact information from organizations in the Protection Cluster. UNHCR and partners also reached some 16,000 persons in communities through social media campaigns and WhatsApp groups on the prevention of COVID-19 and attention mechanisms available to forcibly displaced persons.
- UNHCR coordinated with partners, Government and local authorities for the provision of humanitarian assistance through the distribution of cash and in-kind support. Together with partners, UNHCR provided 747 cash cards to 668 vulnerable cases of concern. UNHCR supported the Government and local authorities with 1,060 cash cards that were distributed to vulnerable persons of concern.
- UNHCR delivered 1,030 hygiene kits to the Ministry of Culture for distribution to indigenous persons in Nahuizalco Municipality, Sonsonate department.
- In the framework of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), UNHCR supported the government in conducting an analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 on forced displacement in El Salvador and how this strategy could reduce protections risks and provide access to rights and opportunities to the forcibly displaced.
- A [press release](#) on how the impact of tropical storm Amanda exacerbated the needs of IDPs in El Salvador already affected by COVID-19 was distributed to local media. Another [press release](#) on UNHCR's response to storm ETA was also published.

Funding

UNHCR is appealing for USD 21.6 million to provide comprehensive solutions to forcibly displaced persons in El Salvador. The best way to support UNHCR's appeal is through unearmarked contributions. Such flexible funding at global level will be key in allowing a timely response to the evolving needs wherever required.

UNHCR is thankful to the donors who provide funds to El Salvador:

| Belgium | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Netherlands | Norway | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America | UN Peacebuilding Fund |