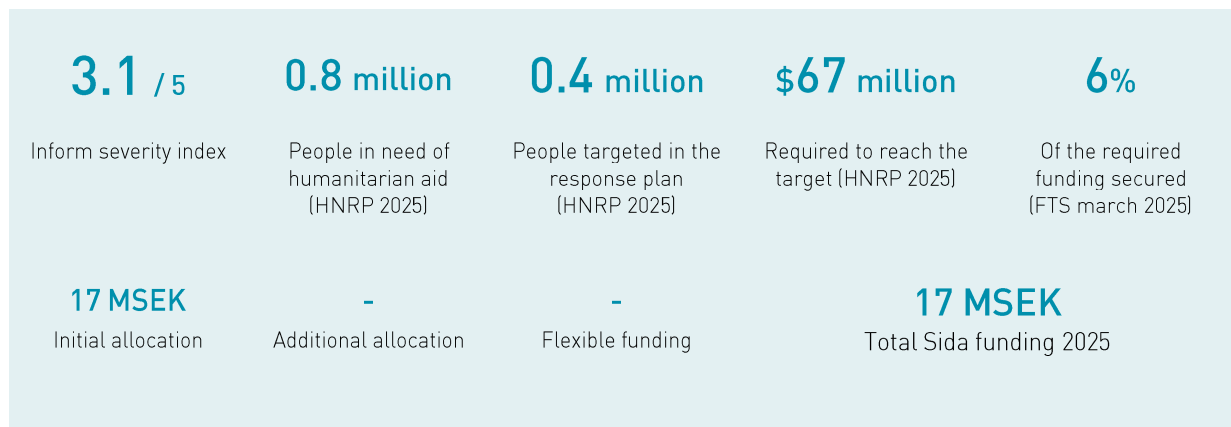


1. Crisis overview



Climate change, natural disasters and food prices influence humanitarian needs in El Salvador. In recent years the country has experienced multiple extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and tropical storms with widespread flooding, landslides, and disruption to agriculture and other sectors as a result, as well as loss of life and destruction of infrastructure. El Salvador is situated in the dry corridor of Central America, resulting in droughts, rising sea levels, and stronger El Niño and La Niña phenomena.

Natural hazards combined with a heavy migration burden, has led to an increase in food insecurity, water scarcity, poverty and inequality across the country. Additionally, El Salvador suffered health and socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and has been particularly affected by the rise in global prices of commodities. This has further limited people's resilience to shocks, diminishing coping strategies, and increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities. Violence and insecurity persist in various Salvadoran regions due to armed groups, impacting humanitarian aid access, amidst a government-imposed state of emergency that restricts civil liberties and mobility to curb gang-related violence. In a country of 6.3 million people, OCHA classified just over 800,000 people in need of assistance in 2025, and a target of 407,500 people.

2. Humanitarian needs & affected population

Central America has been identified as one of the most sensitive regions globally to climate change, resulting in loss of life and crops and damaged infrastructure, including many homes. There will be more frequent droughts with stronger heat waves and decreasing annual rainfall; at the same time, there will be more hurricanes, tropical storms, and intense rainfall leading to floods and soil erosion. El Niño affected weather patterns and in turn harvests and prices of basic goods. El Salvador as a net food importer is thus subjected to the effect of climate change directly as well as through increased costs of food imports. Subsequently, food insecurity, poverty and malnutrition increased particularly amongst rural families as a result of El Niño and inflationary pressures. The situation is improving due to falling inflation in the country and the region and the partial recovery of agricultural production in neighbouring countries.

However, multidimensional poverty continue to drive violence and displacement. The humanitarian situation in the country, as well as in neighbouring countries, have caused spirals of multi-directional forced displacement, with an increasing amount of people migrating through or from the country towards the US-Mexico border. El Salvador is both an origin and transit location for human mobility. Returnees face humanitarian needs, such as protection and access to basic services, and may overwhelm host communities who lack capacities. 2024 has again seen a sharp increase, over 35 per cent compared to 2023, of forced returns. This human mobility and displacement crisis has made El Salvador's geographical position prime for organised criminal networks, which illicitly move goods, weapons, drugs and people through the region. The violence reached such levels that El Salvador declared a state of emergency in March 2022, which in itself has had humanitarian consequences and led to reduced humanitarian access for humanitarian actors. Following the declaration of a state of emergency, violent incidents of non-state actors have decreased. Currently 2 per cent of the population is imprisoned. At the same time returns to El Salvador increased significantly since 2022, placing an extra burden on the country's already strained resources.

These multidimensional factors and risks continued to fuel multi-sectoral humanitarian needs, primarily in the protection sector although needs also remain in the food security and WASH sectors. A quarter of the country's 6.3 million inhabitants live in multidimensional poverty with several vulnerabilities. Although non-state violence has decreased, gangs are still active to some extent, and El Salvador remains as one of the countries with the highest homicide rate in the region.

Out of those identified in need of assistance, certain groups are more vulnerable. These are people on the move (internally displaced people, refugees, migrants, returnees, and displaced people), children and adolescents, and women of childbearing age, pregnant or breastfeeding. Across these groups people living in rural areas, gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, LGBTIQ+ persons, indigenous communities and people with disabilities remain even more affected. About 2 per cent of the adult population is believed to be deprived of freedom.

3. The humanitarian response

The Government of El Salvador has responded to these humanitarian and protection needs. The Directorate General of Civil Protection (DGCP), the national institution for prevention of and response to disasters, monitors the situation and shares prevention measures, and a legal framework is in place. In terms of security, protection and prevention of different types of violence, the country is currently facing important reforms and the creation of legal frameworks. Further, El Salvador joined the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) for refugees in 2019 which encourages regional cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination. UNHCR and the Organization of American States (OAS) together provide technical support to the MIRPS implementation. However, the national implementation and enforcement of these legal policies and agreements varies with the available resources, and the response has differed depending on the target group – Salvadorians or migrants. Hence, the Government response has not been sufficient to minimise humanitarian impacts for the most vulnerable.

To assist the Government and the National Civil Protection System in this endeavour, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) takes on the role of effective coordination and integration of the humanitarian community. The HCT is led by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Directorate General of Civil Protection (DGCP), with technical assistance from the regional OCHA team and the leadership of the UN agencies coordinating the sectors and sub-sectors.

The HCT publishes appeals and response plans annually. 2025 will be the last year with a humanitarian response plan. As of March 2025, the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was 6 per cent funded. Its main sectors, food security is funded at 15% and funding for protection is under 1%. The global freeze and scale-back of US humanitarian funding announced in January 2025 is having major consequences on aid operations, and the Humanitarian Country Team is adapting the response in light of the new funding landscape.

4. Sida's humanitarian allocation

Considering the development of the humanitarian needs, Sida will be phasing out support to the crisis in 2025 with SEK 17 million allocated to respond to the most urgent humanitarian needs. The support will primarily be aligned with the objective of the HNRP i.e. “to protect and save the lives of people in humanitarian need, or at risk of humanitarian need, due to the impact of climate events and the effects of human mobility, by supporting the exercise of rights, improving access to quality essential services in emergencies, ensuring intersectoral humanitarian assistance, with a focus on protection, age, gender, diversity and inclusion.” The allocation will aim to target the most vulnerable, regardless of status and nationality.

The sectoral focus will be protection with a specific focus on people with intersectional vulnerabilities such as people on the move, children and adolescence, women, LGBTIQ+ persons, indigenous communities and people with disabilities. Considering the widespread

violence, gendered in nature, organisations need to demonstrate conflict sensitivity in their projects and have a proper gender analysis. Promoting international humanitarian law will also be essential, considering the multiple armed actors. Further, as El Salvador is highly vulnerable to climate change and natural hazards, therefore organisations supported need to take into consideration environmental aspects when designing activities. Through this approach, Sida will promote and ensure compliance with the humanitarian principles and encourage partners to have greater impact, while avoiding aggravating the crisis.

The allocation also takes into consideration where the needs are greatest, to ensure a good geographic coverage. Insecurity and violence in turn persists particularly in Ahuachapán, Cabaña, La Libertad, La Paz, Morazán and San Salvador where armed groups are present. Regarding migration, people moving through or from El Salvador usually go from Morazán state (east of the country) to the capital city of El Salvador (central) and onwards to La Hachadura (western) on the border with Guatemala.

INITIAL ALLOCATION (SEK)		
PARTNER	SECTOR	INITIAL ALLOCATION
ICRC	Protection, IHL, Health	10,000,000
NRC	Protection, Shelter, WASH, Education, FSL, ICLA	7,000,000
TOTAL		17,000,000

ⁱ The 2025 initial allocation of humanitarian funding is based on Sida's humanitarian allocation analysis methodology. The analysis reflects the current humanitarian situation across crises and is being updated continuously with the latest available data. The information in the HCA is based on reports, data, and information from partner organisations and other entities, as well as observations from field visits and dialogue with partners.