



The SHARE Foundation: *Building a New El Salvador Today*

El Salvador at a Glance: Statistics from the UN's Human Development Report

To build a relationship of solidarity, it is important that we are aware of the reality which our brothers and sisters are facing on a daily basis. According to the 2006 United Nations Human Development Report, El Salvador ranks 101st out of over 180 countries in the Human Development Index, and is thereby considered a median country. The distribution of wealth in El Salvador, however, creates a dramatic gap between the small number of elite and the poor, working class majority. Here are some numbers that provide a window into the reality:

- About 6.8 million people live in El Salvador, which is comparable in population and size to the state of Massachusetts. The population is actually less than the stated figure, however, as it is estimated that between one and two million Salvadorans currently live in the US.
- 58% of Salvadorans live on less than \$2 per day, while 31% live on less than \$1 per day.
- In El Salvador, the wealthiest 10% of the population manages over 40% of the total resources in the country, whereas the poorest 10% manage less than 1% of those resources.
- Life expectancy at birth over the past 30 years has increased from roughly 58 years in 1970 to 71 years in 2004.
- El Salvador has seen improvement in the decline of infant deaths per 1,000 live births from 111 in 1970 to 24 in 2004. It still lags dramatically behind developed countries in the hemisphere, such as the US which saw 7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births and Chile, which registered 8. El Salvador's maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births stood at 150 as of 2000, while the US' is 17 and Chile's is 31.
- The Adult Literacy Rate as of 2003 was 79.7%. The Youth Literacy Rate stood at 88.9% up from 83.8% in 1990. The Combined Gross Enrollment ratio for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools is roughly 70%.
- 16% of the population lacks sustainable access to an improved water source. 62% of the population has sustainable access to improved sanitation, an improvement from 51% in 1990. 11% of the population is undernourished.

- Currently, El Salvador spends 2.9% of its GDP on education, accounting for 20% of government expenditure. Military spending as a percentage of GDP has decreased from 2.7% during the Civil War in 1990 to 0.7% in 2003.
- 30% of Salvadorans are less than 15 years old, while half are under 20.
- Total US military and police assistance to El Salvador was over \$11 million in 2006/07 (ciponline.org). From 1980-1991, US military aid to El Salvador was \$1.1 billion, at the height of the war, military aid was equivalent to \$1 - \$1.5 million per day. (ciponline.org)
- It is estimated that anywhere from 817,000 to 2.7 million Salvadorans live outside the country. While Salvadorans can be found in almost any part of the world, an overwhelming majority migrate to the US. According to US census data, Salvadoran immigrants are predominantly of working age and a high percentage are women. (migrationinformation.org)
- In 1975, 41.5% of Salvadorans lived in urban areas. That number has increased to 59.5% according to 2004 data. It is expected to increase to 63.2% by 2015.
- Remittances to El Salvador totaled \$2.5 billion in 2004, representing 16% of GDP. Nearly one fifth of all households in El Salvador are recipients of remittances. (migrationinformation.org)
- 17% of seats in Parliament are held by women. Women make up 33% of legislators, senior officials and managers. 45% of professional and technical workers are female. Women, however, earn only 45% of what men do.

