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Notes On Welfare Indicators, Guatemala & El Salvador

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A recent survey conducted by Guatemala's University of San Carlos indicated that 86.3% of all Guatemalans live in poverty, compared to 63% in 1981. In El Salvador, a report by Deputy Planning Minister Ernesto Mauricio Altschul said 70% of the population lives in "relative poverty," unemployment in 1988 reached 57.9%, and the country's housing shortage totals 600,000 units. Next, the Salvadoran Health Ministry reported that infant mortality is 8 per 1000 live births and the maternal mortality rate is 7.4%. Malnutrition affects 60% of the population. Only 37% of all Salvadorans have access to hospital care; the ratio of hospital beds and nurses is 14 and three, respectively, per 10,000 citizens. UNICEF reports that 400 children die every week in El Salvador, result of malnutrition and lack of medical care. (Basic data from 07/29/89 report by Regional Coordination for Economic and Social Research of Central America and the Caribbean-CRIES, Managua)

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