

USAID'S BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (USAID/BHA)

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA



In mid-January, Global Communities delivered the first transitional shelter to an Honduran family in Villanueva Municipality, Cortés Department. *Photo courtesy of Global Communities*

USAID/BHA Helps Honduran Families Return Home Safely After Eta and Iota

Two major hurricanes hit Central America last November, causing widespread damage and exacerbating humanitarian needs among vulnerable populations across the region. In Honduras, strong winds, flooding, and landslides associated with tropical storms Eta and Iota affected most of the country, heavily impacting public infrastructure—including

water supply systems and roads—and displacing an estimated 34,800 households, representing approximately 174,000 people, to official and informal shelters across the country. In addition, the storms damaged at least 73,000 homes and destroyed nearly 9,300 homes in Honduras, according to the UN.



Global Communities developed a timber-based transitional shelter, which can be modified progressively to add more living space and meet households' longer-term needs. *Photo courtesy of Global Communities*

In the immediate aftermath of the hurricanes, USAID/BHA worked in close coordination with the Government of Honduras (GoH) and relief agencies to provide life-saving assistance to the most severely affected populations. More than two months after the first storm hit, USAID/BHA is shifting focus to early recovery while still monitoring and addressing urgent humanitarian needs. USAID/BHA is laying the groundwork for Honduran families to return home safely and restore their lives.

USAID/BHA, through non-governmental organizations Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Global Communities, and GOAL, is addressing the immediate and longer-term

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Providing Food Assistance to Storm-Affected Hondurans

The damage caused by tropical storms Eta and Iota exacerbated food insecurity among the most vulnerable households in Honduras. With thousands of people in need of immediate food and nutritional support, USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) is providing immediate food assistance through a combination of in-kind food and commodity vouchers to most affected households in Atlántida, Colón, Cortés, Gracias a Dios, and Yoro departments. This food assistance will complement GoH response activities in hard-hit communities reporting the highest levels of food insecurity.

USAID/BHA partner WFP is providing a 30-day food ration to 18,000 households and vouchers for relief commodities to 2,000 families in Atlántida, Colón, Gracias a Dios, and Yoro. Most of these families' livelihoods were severely affected by the storms and the strict coronavirus disease (COVID-19) confinement measures. WFP will provide a second round of

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USAID/BHA partner WFP is providing commodity vouchers to storm-affected in Honduras. This modality of assistance offers people affected by a disaster or a crisis the flexibility and dignity to purchase preferred goods and services while also boosting local markets. *Photo courtesy of WFP*

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one-month food assistance to these families and an additional 7,500 households in Cortés, through the provision of vouchers. In addition, with USAID/BHA support, WFP is expanding food assistance to communities in Honduras' western departments of Copan, Lempira, Ocotepeque, and Santa Barbara, which were particularly impacted by Iota.

“We have prioritized emergency food assistance to prevent the adoption of negative coping strategies and the further deterioration of these vulnerable populations' nutritional status and health,” said USAID/BHA Senior Regional Advisor Tim Callaghan.

With USAID/BHA funding, WFP has also expanded logistics support—including air, sea, and road transport—to help response authorities and relief actors deliver humanitarian assistance to vulnerable Hondurans in hard-to-reach areas. This funding will also provide storage for humanitarian supplies, as well as humanitarian coordination and information management support to ensure humanitarian operations are efficient and effective.



With USAID/BHA support, WFP augmented logistics capacities in Honduras to ensure the humanitarian community can deliver life-saving aid to hard-to-reach communities in the most efficient way. Photo courtesy of WFP

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term shelter needs of adversely affected communities across Honduras. USAID/BHA partners are targeting nearly 8,000 households—representing approximately 41,000 individuals—in Honduras with shelter interventions, as well as multi-sector activities to ensure safe and dignified returns to their communities of origin and support efforts to build back safer, thereby mitigating the risk of future natural hazards. Additionally, USAID/BHA provided 380 rolls of plastic sheeting, sufficient to meet the emergency shelter needs of up to 17,000 people and is supporting the provision of multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to help individuals who lost their livelihoods due to the storms meet basic needs and purchase household items they lost during the flood.

“We really admire the strength and spirit of the Honduran people. While having lived through so much during the flooding and with what seems like an insurmountable challenge, communities are motivated and ready to take on the recovery process actively,” noted USAID/BHA Senior Program Officer Peter Schechter.

In Honduras' northwestern departments of Copan, Cortes, Ocotepeque, and Santa Barbara, Global Communities plans to provide shelter assistance to approximately 2,300 hurricane-affected families and improve access to safe drinking water, proper sanitation facilities, and hygiene products for nearly 54,000 people in most hard-hit communities. Global Communities is providing repair materials, training, and technical assistance to families whose houses were partially, enabling them to restore their homes utilizing technically sound flood and cyclone-resistant techniques. For households whose homes were destroyed by the storms, Global Communities plans to provide a transitional shelter, which can be modified progressively to add more living space and meet their longer-term needs.

Likewise, CRS will implement a multi-sector MPCA, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) intervention to assist 2,500 disaster-affected families—representing approximately 12,500 individuals—in Cortes, Santa Barbara, and Yoro departments. CRS will support vulnerable households' early recovery efforts in the most affected communities by rehabilitating water supply and sanitation infrastructure and providing various flexible sheltering packages tailored to their needs, minimizing health risks and ensuring safe returns to communities of origin.

Additionally, with USAID/BHA support, GOAL, in coordination with local partners Fundación para la Investigación Participativa con Agricultores de Honduras (FIPAH) and Water Mission, are working with GoH national and municipal authorities to improve shelter and WASH conditions and support early recovery and livelihood restoration efforts of hard-hit communities in Atlántida, Colón, Cortés, Gracias a Dios, and Yoro departments. GOAL will provide housing rehabilitation support—including shelter repair materials and technical assistance—to nearly 2,000 households and is working with Water Mission to rehabilitate water supply systems in targeted communities. Additionally, GOAL and FIPAH will facilitate access to agricultural inputs such as seeds, tools, and fertilizers to help nearly 4,000 small farmer households reactivate their bean, corn, and rice production systems.

As of January 28, USAID/BHA had provided nearly \$53.6 million in humanitarian aid to help people affected by the hurricanes. This includes more than \$27.7 million in Honduras, \$16.1 million in Guatemala, \$6.6 million in Nicaragua, and more than \$3 million in Colombia to provide emergency shelter, food assistance, hygiene supplies, critical relief supplies, and protection for the most vulnerable people.

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