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# Emergency appeal operation update

## Honduras: Drought

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**Emergency appeal no. MDRHN008**  
**GLIDE n° [DR-2014-000132-HND](#)**  
**Operation update**  
**10 September 2015**

**Period covered by this Ops Update:**  
October 2014 to August 2015

**Appeal target (current):** 500,543 Swiss francs

**Appeal coverage:** Approx. 95%;  
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#### Appeal history:

- This [Emergency Appeal](#) was initially launched on 14 October 2014 for 1,227,172 Swiss francs months to assist 3,500 families affected by drought.
- On March 2015, the [Emergency appeal was revised](#) to 553,005 Swiss francs due to limited funding and reprioritization of activities.
- On 1 July a [6 month operation update](#) was published to reflect an operational timeframe extension, the progress achieved and a revised budget to 500,543 Swiss francs.
- In this Operations Update, features a timeframe extension to 13 months (ending on 14 November 2015) to complete the final distributions thanks to a recent contribution to the Appeal and to report on the latest completed activities. This extension will permit to do an additional food distribution with budget savings and to carry out an external evaluation. This Appeal is open to receive additional support from donors since reports forecast an increase in food insecurity in Honduras. Thousands of families have lost their livelihoods and do not have access to food. The outlook for the next months is critical and the Honduran Red Cross hopes to continue providing support to the affected families. Water harvesting has been an option, but it has not been possible due to limited funds received and other internal factors in the country like improper use of the land, poor farming practices and extreme poverty in the communities.



**Support has been provided to the reactivation of the agricultural livelihoods of 250 producers. Source: Honduran Red Cross.**

#### Summary:

Within the framework of the drought operation's plan of action, 3,500 families (17,500 people) living in the municipalities of San Marcos de la Sierra (661) and Camasca (1089) in the department of Intibucá and the municipalities of Alauca (692), Oropolí (637) and Teupasenti (421) in the department of El Paraíso were defined as the target population. They were selected according to previously defined vulnerability criteria and prioritized based on the degree of involvement in terms of livelihoods, food insecurity, poverty and development level, coverage by the National Society and in accordance with the emergency declared by the government of Honduras on 28 July 2014. It was determined that the intervention would involve the following areas: food, nutrition, livelihoods, and water and sanitation.

The Honduran Red Cross conducted rapid assessment in the departments of El Paraíso and Intibucá, and beneficiary families were identified and registered based on this analysis (further details in the needs assessment section).

To date, the operation has procured and distributed food parcels to 3,500 families in the municipalities of San Marcos de La Sierra and Camasca, in the department of Intibucá, Alauca, Oropoli, Teupasenti in the department of El Paraiso. Each kit meets the food needs of a 5-person family for one month. A second distribution was made consisting of 692 food parcels for the municipality of Alauca, El Paraiso, and a second one consisting of 660 food parcels is scheduled for the municipality of San Marcos de la Sierra, Intibucá, and 250 food parcels for the municipality of Camasca, Intibucá.

With bilateral support from the Swiss Red Cross, the Honduran Red distributed food parcels to 2,000 beneficiary families in the municipalities of San Jose and Pespire in the department of Choluteca and Aramecina in the department of Valle.

To address the issue of livelihoods, the Honduran Red Cross delivered 250 agricultural packages containing 25 pounds of improved maize seeds (for 1 *manzana*) and 25 pounds of improved bean seeds (for 1/2 *manzana*). The package was supplemented with 100 pounds of urea 46% and 200 pounds of formula NPK (12-24-16 or fertimaiz). Despite adverse weather conditions, some corn is being harvested. Technical assistance and provision of drought-resistant seed by the Honduran Red Cross has been extremely helpful, thus supporting the reactivation of the agricultural livelihoods of 250 families.

**Summary of Changes to this operation update:** In view of the new State of Emergency declared by the government and savings obtained in the budget, additional food parcels can be distributed to the affected families. The following changes are proposed:

**Operational timeframe:** Taking into account the activities still to be conducted, such as the final distribution of food parcels and the closing of the operation, a timeframe extension is needed, therefore ending on 14 November 2015. Initially this operation had a timeframe of 11 months, and with this operations update the timeframe would be increased to 13 months.

**Areas in common:** In view of the activities still pending and the operation's closure, the work contracts of administrative and operational staff will need to be extended up until 14 November 2015.

**Food, Nutrition and Livelihoods:** Considering the current food insecurity in areas targeted by the Emergency Appeal and that the second delivery of food parcels is underway in the municipalities of Alauca, San Marcos de la Sierra and Camasca, a second delivery consisting of 637 food parcels to the municipality of Oropoli, El Paraiso will be conducted. Due to the continuing food insecurity, there are more people affected, but with limited funds it is difficult to reach more families.

The Partner National Societies that have contributed to this Appeal are: American Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross Society, Finnish Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross Society, Monaco Red Cross and Norwegian Red Cross. The IFRC on behalf of the Honduran Red Cross thank all for these contributions. Additionally, the Swiss Red Cross has made a bilateral contribution to the Honduran Red Cross in order to assist 2,000 families in the municipalities of San Jose and Pespire in the department of Choluteca and Aramecina in the department of Valle.

## The situation

A 50 per cent to 70 per cent reduction in average rainfall levels had been forecast since June 2014 for Honduras and other parts of the Central American region. The lack of rainfall has caused water shortages in several areas, especially in Honduras, causing crop failures and affecting the food security of thousands of families living in the Dry Corridor. Crop losses during the first season (May 15 to August 15) were estimated to be between 17 per cent and 44 per cent; however, the most affected areas reported losses of over 70 per cent, making the food security of affected families even more precarious.

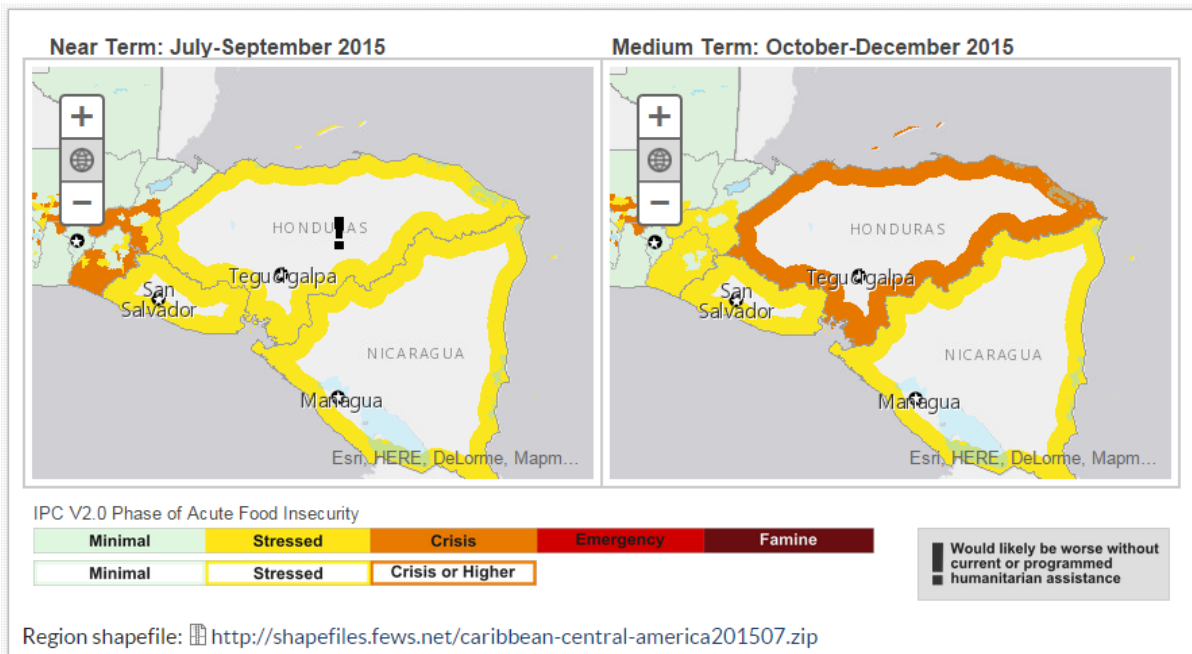
According to forecasts by experts from COPECO's National Center for Atmospheric, Oceanographic and Seismic Studies (CENAOS), this year the 'dog days' (midsummer dry spell) will be exceptional, as these will last almost one month longer than average. Basic grain crops will be seriously affected and the people's livelihoods will be at risk, especially those of people living in the Dry Corridor. Based on the analyses conducted, it is expected that the drought will continue to affect 146 municipalities - a total of 161,403 families. The impact will be severe in 81 municipalities (83,229 families) and moderate in 65 municipalities (78,174 families).

The National Weather Service has said that based on analyses of oceanic and atmospheric conditions; historic rainfall records; the results of climate forecast models; projections of dynamic atmospheric variables models; and the climate conditions in May, a moderate to strong El Niño is expected to continue throughout 2015. This affects rainfall levels, translating into a considerable reduction during July and August. The analog years used for this study were 1982 and 1997.

This forecast presupposes that there will be reduced precipitation during the rainy season, which was evident from late June to late August. This has had the greatest impact in the Dry Corridor: Choluteca, Valle, La Paz, El Paraíso and Ocotepeque, also affecting southwestern Intibucá, Lempira and Copán; municipalities in northern Francisco Morazán; south-central Comayagua; and north-central Olancho.

The population of the Dry Corridor is characterized by having low income, limited access to land and to basic health and education services, and having difficulty obtaining basic basket food items. It is made up of small subsistence basic grain producers, mostly day laborers, landless farmers and women heads of household - 25.5 per cent of households are led by women. The average income of small basic grain producers is US \$72 per month. If we include contributions from other family members, this figure might rise to US \$122 a month.

### Forecast for Honduras according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET):

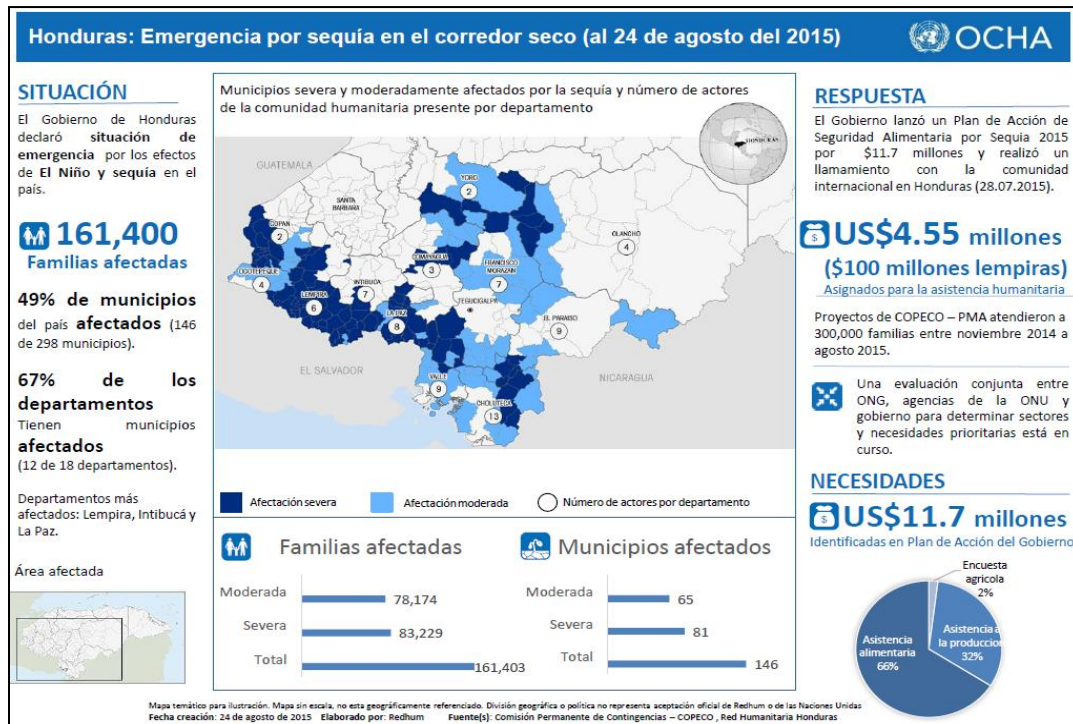


The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) forecasts Honduras having a food crisis between April and June 2015.

The government of Honduras declared a State of Emergency for the Honduran Dry Corridor on 28 June 2014 through its Ministry of Human Rights, Justice, Interior and Decentralization, which issued Executive Decree PCM 32-2014. A State of Emergency due to drought was once again declared on 28 June (Executive Decree PCM-36-2015) as food security issues in the country were exacerbated by El Niño. Additionally, on 24 August 2015, member countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA, for its acronym in Spanish) agreed to declare an agricultural alert for Central America.

As part of the Emergency declaration, the government has developed an Emergency Plan of Action for 11.7 million US dollars.

**Map of municipalities severely and moderately affected by drought (OCHA- Redhum)**



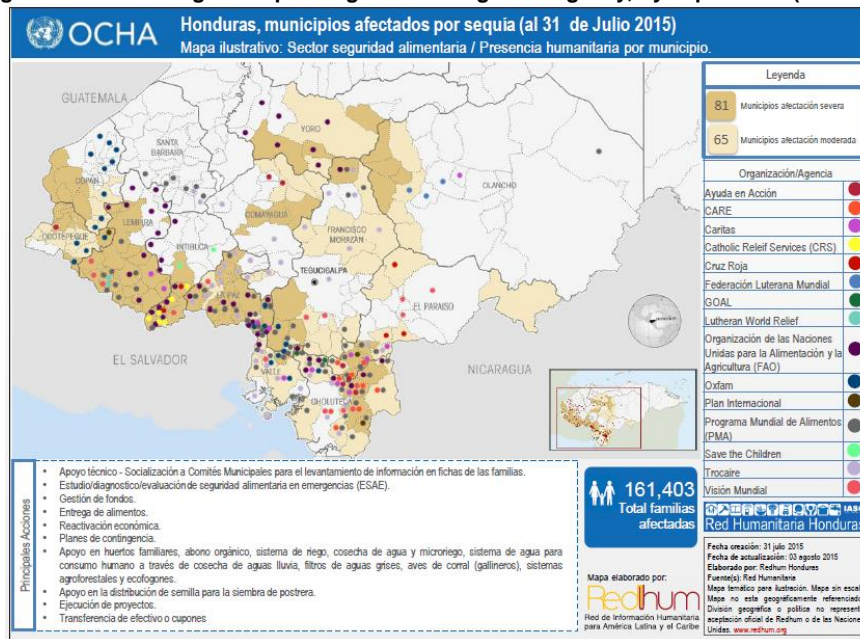
## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Through its Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, in coordination with COPECO and with support from the Inter-agency Technical Risk Management Committee, the government of Honduras activated a response plan initially allocating 5 million US dollars in emergency funds for the distribution of food rations to families whose livelihoods were affected by the food crisis triggered by the drought. Municipal governments have played an important role in collecting information and selecting the most affected communities.

The Inter-agency Technical Drought Risk Management Committee is made up of members of the National Risk Management System - convened by COPECO - where civil society, humanitarian aid NGOs and agencies working in the nutritional food security sector are grouped. The Committee defined the national strategy to address the Drought issue.

The following organizations have been involved in the drought emergency: Honduran Red Cross, Trocaire, WFP, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Save the Children, Plan Honduras, Ayuda en Acción, Oxfam, CARE, GOAL, World Vision, FAO, Lutheran World Relief, among others. Details regarding organizations, actions, targeted areas and amounts can be seen here:

### Map of organizations working on responding to the drought emergency, by department (OCHA – Redhum)



### Overall objective

Providing humanitarian aid to 3,500 families affected by drought through the distribution of food, improved access to safe water and recovery of their livelihoods.

### The operational strategy

#### Needs assessment and beneficiary selection:

The initial plan of action planned to target 17,500 people (3,500 families) in the municipalities of San Marcos de la Sierra and Camasca in the department of Intibucá and the municipalities of Alauca, Oropolí and Teupanseti in the department of El Paraíso. The immediate needs are detailed assessments, food parcels, provision of water and the procurement of seeds. The intermediate term needs are micro-projects for diversification of livelihoods, water storage, and water storage and collection systems in homes.

The strategy in the original plan of action included assisting the municipality of Morocelí; however, rapid assessment results led to the decision not to conduct any humanitarian actions in the municipality since food insecurity conditions were not as severe as in other selected municipalities (Alauca, Oropolí and Teupanseti).

#### Population targeted by the operation

DEPARTAMENT	MUNICIPALITY	PEOPLE	FAMILIES	Type of assistance
Intibucá	San Marcos de la Sierra	3,305	661	food parcels
	Camasca	5,445	1,089	Food parcels and Livelihood
El Paraíso	Alauca	3,565	692	Food parcels and CTP
	Oropolí	3,080	637	food parcels
	Teupanseti	2,105	421	food parcels
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17,500</b>	<b>3,500</b>	

## Operational support services

### Human resources:

In order to provide emergency assistance, the Honduran Red Cross has a National Disaster Intervention Team (48) specializing in emergency health (44), as well as a Risk Management Office and a Programs and Projects office. At the local level there are volunteers (60) assigned to the various Honduran Red Cross Councils contributing to implementing the plan of action.

The following personnel were hired after taking into account the amount of resources raised by the appeal and the prioritization of activities:

- One operations coordinator
- One field coordinator
- One Livelihoods Coordinator
- One administrative assistant

The Honduran Red Cross set up the Project's Technical Team and the Procurement Committee, which was composed of the programs and regional development manager, the programs director, the communications coordinator, the projects administrative unit coordinator, the legal adviser, the procurement and logistics coordinator and the risk management coordinator to establish the strategic guidelines and deal with procurement processes.

As part of the assistance and technical support from the IFRC, a Regional Intervention Team member specializing in livelihoods from Paraguayan Red Cross was deployed for one month to support the coordination and implementation of the plan of action. When requested, technical support and administrative assistance was provided by the regional disaster management coordinator as the liaison between the Honduran Red Cross and the IFRC. The operation also had the support of PADRU's Communications Unit.

**Logistics and supply chain:** Through its Coordination of Essential Services, the Honduran Red Cross has a department for procurement of goods and services with established National Society procedures and in line with the IFRC procedures. Procurements are being done locally, taking into account the supply and quality of products and services. The IFRCGLS in Panama has provided procurement support to the local purchases.

**Information Technology:** The Honduran Red Cross has an Information and Technology Department (IT) that provides the services the operation requires, such as data links and internet, access to networks and technical support, and phones with GPS to conduct the evaluation using the ODK tool.

The Honduran Red Cross has a nationwide radio network to facilitate communication between the operational and the administrative teams. The network has 9 repeaters, 130 portable radios, 168 radios in mobile units and 50 radios bases. Administrative and computer equipment will be required to conduct training activities and coordination activities, necessitating the purchase a laptop computer.

**Communications:** The National Society has a Communications and Image Department that covers the operations actions, provides information to national media and shares information with the IFRC so that it can be disseminated over the official platform.

The operation was launched with a press conference attended by at least 10 media representatives, which disseminated the nationwide emergency situation as well as the Honduras Red Cross response plan. The Communications Department maintains close communications and exchanges information with those responsible for IFRC communications in order to share information by using the available mass media.

**Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting:** The National Society has a Monitoring and Evaluation Office responsible for reviewing intermediate and final project evaluations.

The following monitoring and evaluation activities will be conducted:

- ✓ Field visits to monitor humanitarian aid delivery processes
- ✓ Regular evaluation meetings during the course of the operation
- ✓ Monthly progress reports of activities and coordination actions conducted within the context of the appeal

- ✓ Indicators will be periodically reviewed to measure each one's level of progress
- ✓ Beneficiary satisfaction surveys

In addition, the regional disaster management coordinator and the IFRC country coordinator will support all relevant processes.

### Risk assessment

Prior to food transfers and distributions, an advance team will investigate with local authorities and police whether any violent or criminal acts have occurred recently at distribution sites in order to avoid risking the lives and assets of both the people delivering and receiving the products.

Humanitarian aid will be delivered in coordination with local governments and community leaders between 6:00 am and 5:00 pm in order to reduce security risks during transport and distribution.

Secure and strategic distribution points will be established prior to delivery in order to avoid security risks to Red Cross staff, cooperating authorities and to the families themselves. Community leaders will organize families so that they receive the aid safely, in an orderly manner and without crowds and delays during delivery.

The food is transported in accordance with the Safe Access procedures established by the Honduran Red Cross and by the institution's own vehicles. Each vehicle carries the amount allocated to each community while also taking into account the vehicles' cargo capacity and the number of registered families.

The Red Cross staff, vehicles and distribution points have visible official institutional logos on clothes, signs and banners.

## Progress towards outcomes

### Areas common to all sectors

Outcome 1: Continuous and detailed evaluation and analysis to design and implement the operation	Outputs		% achieved
	<b>Output 1.1.</b> Initial and multi-sector needs assessment is made in consultation with beneficiaries		
<b>Output 1.2.</b> Operation management is implemented through a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system			80%
<b>Output 1.3:</b> The activities of the project are disseminated at the local and national level through an adequate communications system			60%
Activities	Implementation on time		% of progress
	Yes	No	
Rapid assessment of the emergency by affected municipality	X		100%
Registration and census of beneficiaries	X		100%
Hiring of operational staff and support for field operations	X		100%
1 workshop on preparing ODK forms	X		100%
Technical tracking and monitoring by the National Society	X		80%
Support and monitoring visits by the IFRC	X		80%
Beneficiary satisfaction survey	X		100%
Evaluation of the operation.	X		0%
Production of 4 videos about the operation	X		50%
Holding of 2 press conferences	X		50%
Preparation of 7 information bulletins	X		43%

Communication internship for the project	X		70%
Development of 6 stories on beneficiaries	X		32%
Purchase of one computer for project staff	X		100%

### Progress toward results

**Conducting a rapid assessment of the emergency per affected municipality:** The rapid assessment was conducted in the municipalities of Camasca and San Marcos de la Sierra in the department of Intibucá and in Teupasenti, Alacuca, Morocelí and Oropolí in the department of El Paraíso by a team of volunteers from various branches throughout the country who received guidance from the IFRC through a Livelihoods RIT and an intern RIT in ODK and Mega V. They surveyed 346 families distributed in the abovementioned municipalities using field techniques such as direct observation, interviews and surveys. Three aspects were evaluated in water and sanitation: availability, access and water quality and quantity. In livelihoods, the availability of basic grains was assessed. The sampling determined that families planted corn, beans, and sorghum; family planting areas are between 1 *tarea* and 32 *tareas* (1 *tarea* = 441 m<sup>2</sup>). Since drought-related crop loss is between 80 per cent and 100 per cent, families will have to buy basic grains until they are able to harvest what they planted during the first planting period.

**Identification and registration of beneficiaries:** A census of beneficiaries was drawn up by a team of Honduran Red Cross volunteers from across the country that travelled to the various municipalities under the coordination of the Risk Management Office and guidance from the IFRC through a livelihoods RIT. Beneficiaries were distributed as follows:

#### Population targeted by the operation

DEPARTAMENT	MUNICIPALITY	PEOPLE	FAMILIES
Intibucá	San Marcos de la Sierra	3,305	661
	Camasca	5,445	1,089
El Paraíso	Alauca	3,460	692
	Oropolí	3,185	637
	Teupasenti	2,105	421
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17,500</b>	<b>3,500</b>

**Hiring of operational staff and support for field operations:** Staff was hired according to procedures established by the National Society's national human resources coordinator, which covered the publication of vacancies, receipt of resumes, shortlisting of candidates, interviews, and hiring of one operations coordinator and one field technician. The operations coordinator is responsible for leading all areas of the operation, and the field technician is responsible for working directly with the beneficiary communities.

**Workshop on preparing Open Data Kit (ODK) forms:** ODK training was held in November 2014 for 12 volunteers from various Honduras Red Cross branches. This workshop was led by an IFRC Regional Intervention Team member.

**Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey:** 348 satisfaction surveys were conducted to beneficiaries in municipalities targeted by the Appeal, using the ODK tool. Follow the link below to see the report (more details in the last update published): <https://www.dropbox.com/s/g1ci2xujlqsbgr2/Informe%20Encuestas%20de%20satisfaccion.pdf?dl=0>

**Communications:** A second press conference will be held in early October, as part of the closing of the Operation, to inform the national media of all activities carried out by the Emergency Appeal. The stories of beneficiaries and the videos shot during the Operation will be released on that day.

**Link to the operation's video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ILyqfWRv5c>

Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods			
Outcome 2: Affected families have immediate access to food, improve their nutritional condition and recover livelihoods through the implementation of micro-agricultural projects	Outputs		% achieved
	Output 2.1. 3,500 families have received humanitarian food aid items during the first months of the operation		100%
	Output 2.4. 250 families have reactivated their livelihoods production.		100%
Activities	Implementation on time		% of progress
	Yes	No	
Procurement of 5,739 food parcels.	X		73%
Distribution of food parcels.	X		73%
1 Livelihoods training for 20 volunteers.	X		100%
Procurement and distribution of seed for 250 families.	X		100%
2 technical crop improvement workshops.	X		100%
Technical assistance to 250 families for 4 months	X		75%
CTP Feasibility Study	X		100%
Cash Transfer Program for 100 families	X		100 %

### Progress toward results

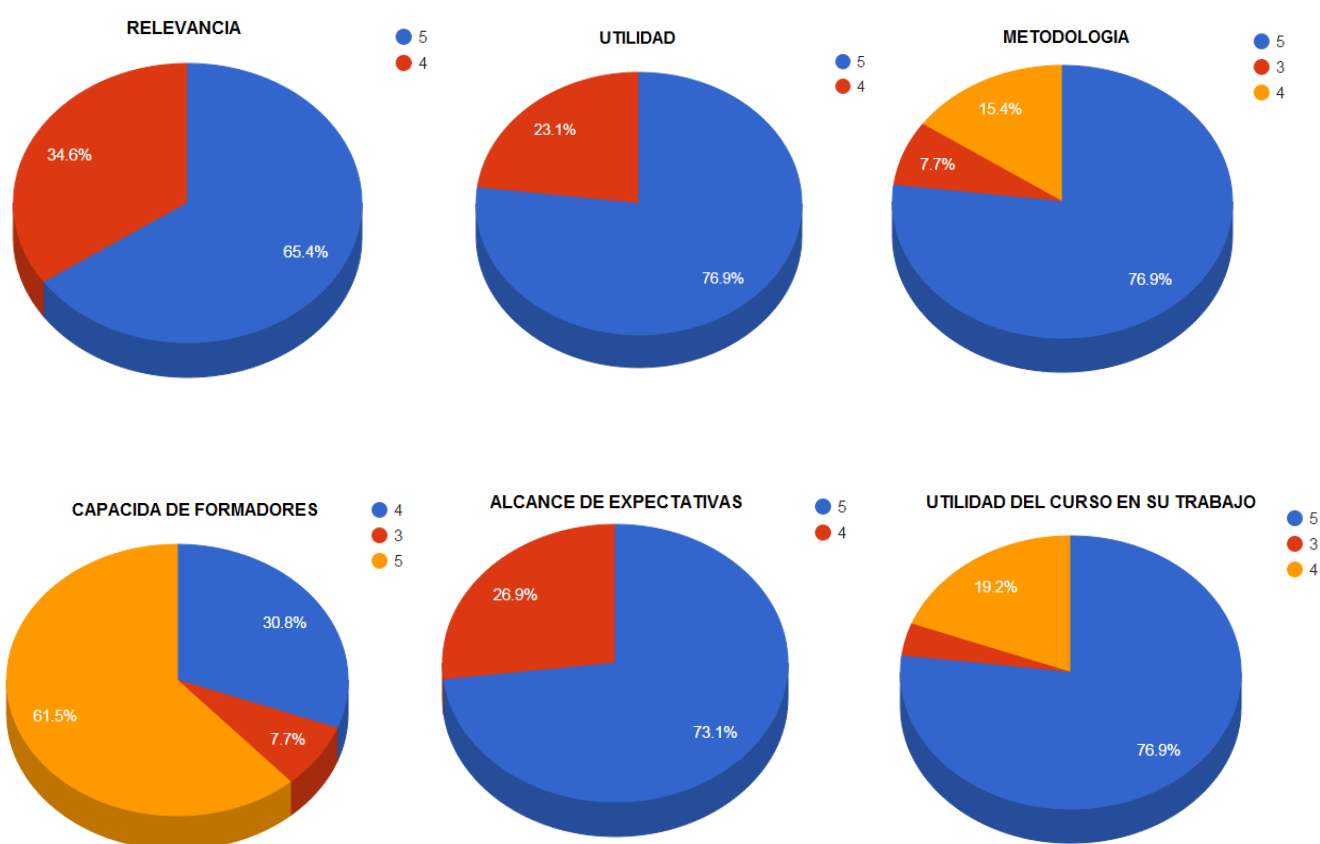
**Procurement of 5,739 food parcels:** So far 3,500 1-month food parcels have been delivered to an equal number of families, as well as a second delivery of 692 food parcels for the municipality of Alauca. A satisfaction survey was conducted using the ODK tool to a sample of 375 beneficiaries from the municipalities of Alauca, Teupasenti and Oropolí in the Department of El Paraíso and San Marcos de la Sierra and Camasca in the Department of Intibucá, obtaining the following information:

**Livelihoods training for 20 volunteers:** The first introductory course in Livelihoods in Honduras was held from 20 to 25 July, with technical support from the Livelihoods Resource Center, which was attended by 9 women and 20 men. 23 of these were trained through the Livelihoods introductory course, and 2 instructors from the Livelihoods Resource Center provided ToT training to 3 Honduran Red Cross staff members. This course was attended by volunteers from the 4 Honduran Red Cross regions, and left installed capacity in the country to teach future Livelihoods courses through the NS instructors who received the training. The ODK tool was used to gather the information for the satisfaction surveys as part of the learning process for National Society volunteers in the use and innovation of technologies.





Below is an example of the results from the satisfaction survey conducted to Livelihoods course participants, who answered the questions using a scale from 1 to 5.



**2 technical crop improvement workshops:** Two trainings were held, one on rational use of fertilizers and the second on integrated pest and disease management. Trainings were conducted in all communities that had previously received the agricultural package, and were attended by 248 people, 199 men and 49 women, all of them farmers. Trainings included how to prepare homemade mixtures to prevent pests - and at the same time to identify the different types of pests affecting crops in the area - using readily available and low-cost materials. These farmers will now be able to fertilize and to prepare mixtures to prevent crop pests, thus optimizing resources and maximizing their yields.



**Technical assistance to 250 families for 4 months:** Ongoing technical assistance to 250 producers continues, who have managed to harvest corn despite El Niño-related issues. Support has been provided to the reactivation of the agricultural livelihoods of 250 producers, who will now have seed to plant during the second season.



**CTP Feasibility Study:** A feasibility study was conducted from 2 to 5 June to implement the CTP in Alauca, where families preferred to receive food due to the food insecurity in the area as no crops have been harvested for 2 years; however, people mentioned the need to supplement the food parcels with cash in order to be able to meet several needs, such as paying for public services, purchasing agricultural inputs and hygiene products, among others. Therefore, the Honduran Red Cross implemented the Cash Transfer Program for the first time with 99 families from Alauca as a supplement to the food parcels.

**Cash Transfer Program for 99 families:** The piloting of the Cash Transfer Program was conducted with 99 families affected by drought in the municipality of Alauca, El Paraíso, specifically in the communities of Agua Zarca and Momotombo. An unconditional transfer of 535 Lempiras (USD 25.00) in cash was made to supplement the food parcels they had received in order to enable them to meet the various needs found during the feasibility study. This first experience has provided the Honduran Red Cross with the installed capacity to implement the CTP during future emergencies.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Outcome1: Affected families have improved access to water and safe hygienic conditions.	Outputs		% achieved
		<b>Output 3.1.</b> 3,500 families have received jerry cans and have been reached through hygiene <b>promotion</b> .	
Activities	Implementation on time		% of progress
	Yes	No	
Acquisition of 7,000 10-liter jerry cans	X		100%
Distribution of 10-liter jerry cans.	X		100%
2 radio spots promoting hygiene	X		100%

Progress toward results
<p><b>Acquisition of 10-liter jerry cans:</b> 7,000 jerry cans were provided by the Canadian Red Cross Society and channeled through the Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the IFRC's Global Logistics Services (GLS).</p> <p><b>Distribution of 10-liter jerry cans:</b> 7,000 jerry Cans were distributed to 3500 families (two per family) in the municipalities of Camasca and San Marcos de Sierra in Intibucá and in Alauca, Oropolí and Teupasenti in El Paraíso.</p> <p>Jerry cans were distributed since families had access to water but had to carry it, which ruled out the distribution of water through water tanks.</p> <p><b>2 radio spots promoting hygiene:</b> 2 radio spots were aired over the stations with the highest ratings in Intibucá and El Paraíso which provided key hygiene promotion messages, as a supplement to the jerry can delivery.</p>

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## Contact information

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The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
  2. Enable healthy and safe living.
  3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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