



I. Introduction

During the last week of October, Hurricane Mitch devastated Honduras with 250 kph winds, torrential rains, and landslides. Registered as a class 5 Hurricane, Mitch punished the country with human and infrastructure losses that remain difficult to measure in terms of total damage and magnitude.

Although evaluations to date have often concentrated on physical aspects of the destruction, the UN System has emphasized the need to analyze the hurricane's disastrous impact on human development in the country.

II. Situation of the country

Hurricane Mitch inflicted immediate dramatic damages on the emergency structure serving human development. Based on preliminary data from the Government of Honduras, about 19% of the people in the nation were directly affected. (See annex map 1.1) In eight departments, (Choluteca 40.2%, Colón 35.6%, Yoro 26.9%, Cortés 24.7%, Valle 24.1%, Francisco Morazán 23.8%, Comayagua 21.4% and Olancho 20.3%) the affected population is more than 20%, and half of these correspond to departments, with levels of human development that is higher than the national average (0.575 INDH).

It is also necessary to take into consideration that the losses in educational services, health, and income are greater in the rural population and in communities with populations of less than 5,000. The education sector is confronted with the challenge of providing for 200,000 Hondurans between the ages of 15 and 30 years old who cannot read and write, as well as the 336, 853 between 5 and 15 years old who do not attend any educational center in the country. In addition, about 28% of the children less than 5 years old are malnourished. An average of 22 doctors provide services for each 100,000 citizens, and 13% of the population has no access to health services.

In addition and because of the destruction of the hurricane to the educational centers and the use of the schools for shelters for victims, over 150,000 children of school age will not be able to return to their classes next year, and 75,000 children less than 6 years old will have been affected by damages to infant care services. At the same time, owing to the deterioration of care in 40 health services units because of damages to aqueducts and water distribution lines, risks have increased for diseases caused by vectors, and unhealthy water and food have created increased risks of cases of diarrhea, malaria, dengue, leptospirosis.

Similarly, it is necessary to take into account the situation of human settlements since in Honduras about the 60% of the population lives in rural areas. It is essential to focus on



the rural population with the goal to improve its relations with urban factions towards to rescue the elements that can be most helpful to human development.

Given the diversity of achievement in the country, the reconstruction efforts should take appropriate steps to ensure integration and equity.

III. United Nations System Immediate Response

Since Mitch struck, the System has responded with an integrated strategy that focuses initially on immediate emergency needs, while at the same time providing basis for emergency, reconstruction and rehabilitation operations which are seen as inter-related steps.

The UN System has assisted the Honduran Government in relief operations by providing food, water, medicines, clothing and transportation for the victims, having a total value of over US\$2.8 million. The System also provided technical assistance to both local and national entities including the Ministry of Health, National Service of Aqueducts and Sewer System (SANAA), the Permanent Commission of Contingencies (COPECO), the National Commission of Emergency, the Ministry of Education, and the Committees of Regional Emergency (CODERs).

The UN agencies also reinforced their response capability by adding personnel and experts in the areas of emergency and rehabilitation.

In co-ordination with the Office of Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN team also prepared a contribution to the "United Nations Inter-Agency Transitional appeal for Hurricane Mitch, which was submitted on Dec. 3, 1998. The appeal is intended to cover needs for six month, with a total request for approximately US\$153 million for the Central American region. Of this total, approximately US\$83 million is budgeted for Honduras. The detailed budget for Honduras covers the sectors of:

Health

Shelter

Food and Agriculture

Education and psychosocial support for children and women

Coordination and Administration

IV. Reconstruction with Equity

Because of the vast scale of reconstruction needs, all national and international agencies must collaborate closely, with division of responsibilities according to comparative



advantages. In the initial emergency activities, the UN system concentrated its efforts on human development, taking into account:

- An integrated focus for social and economic sectors, including health, education, food security and environmental management.
- People-oriented with priority for the most vulnerable groups, children and women.
- Emphasis on the action of municipalities.
- Strengthening of the human and social capital
- Governance and institutional reinforcement
- Environmental and ecological sustainability

This strategy ensures coordination of the many complex activities that the country is carrying out with support of the international financial institutions in large-scale infrastructure rebuilding and repair, as well as other production facilities.

Also, the System is concentrating its resources and collaborative efforts in areas in which they have operated previously, taking advantage of local networks and technical capacity such as:

Recovery of safe health conditions

- Water and Sanitation
- Food Security (nutrition, protection and control of food)
- Improvement of the epidemic surveillance and control of vectors
- Rehabilitation of health services
- Full attention to mental health problems
- Support to reduce and prevent maternal mortality, abortions, unwanted pregnancy, pregnancy in adolescents and domestic violence.
- Re-establishment of communities services to provide a full range of medical services for children and women

Generation of opportunities and sustainable ways of living

- Territorial coding
- Training and development of skills
- Strengthening of the social fabric and promotion of community organizations
- Micro-credit

Transformation of education

- Support for the decentralization of educational services
- Collaboration in creating quick and effective educational and administrative procedures.
- Orientation to the processes of managing the transformation of the educational sector



- Collaboration in the design of strategies and processes used in the transformation of education.
- Collaboration with groups of the civil society related to education
- Support for non-formal methodologies, in particular those related to the pre-school and adolescent education.

Ensuring Equity

- Promotion of procedures to achieve equity in the access to goods, services, and available resources for national reconstruction and rehabilitation.
- Strengthening of leadership abilities of women in the areas of rehabilitation and reconstruction at community, city and national levels.
- Facilitation of social stability and improved community organizations

VIH/SIDA

- Support to the VIH/SIDA emergency actions of affected victims
- Support to the National Emergency Plan for care of VIH/SIDA victims, in collaboration with the Government of Honduras
- Strengthening of the community response to VIH/SIDA victims, within the framework of responsibilities of rehabilitation and reconstruction

Restoration of the rural productive capacity

- Retraining
- Training and up-grading of the rural sector labor force
- Improvement of the secondary roads and community transportation
- Rebuilding of rural micro-financing resources.
- Association Enterprise

Institutional Strengthening

- Institutional strengthening and governmental management capabilities for reconstruction efforts.
- Establishment of mechanisms for coordination among the public and private sectors.
- Coordination of the technical assistance and for reconstruction financing
- Decentralization and support for communities and cities.
- Development of intermediate cities
- Promotion of civic participation
- Support for municipalities

Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources

- Soil conservation
- Reforestation and reforestation
- Increase national and local capacities in natural resources management.
- Ensure sustainability in the use of the natural resources



- Environmental education included in project planning and scholarly curricula.
- Environmental advertising campaign at national level based on scientific data.
- Income sources for micro producers
- Natural tourism promotion for national and foreigners.

V. Field Operations

Since the onset of the disaster, field operations by the UN System were moved quickly. These operations were enlarged in order to respond to the emergency and their presence is being reinforced with the conformation of the Field Operations of the United Nations System:

Northern zone

- San Pedro Sula
- The Ceiba
- Yoro

Coastal zone

- Puerto Lempira
- Tocoa
- Guanaja

Eastern zone

- Olancho

Western zone

- Santa Rosa de Copán

Southern Zone

- Choluteca

(See annex map 2)

VI. Strengthening Co-Ordination for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

The Thematic Groups have been formed which include members of the bilateral and multilateral Agencies, NGO's and government counterparts. Their objective is to facilitate the coordination of cooperation and serve as a forum for the exchange of information. In some cases, as with health, water and sanitation, a group already functioning is being used to serve as a forum.



The following matrix provides detailed information for each group:

PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCCION

THEMATIC GROUPS	ORGANIZATION/ AGENCY
WATER, SANITATION AND HEALTH	Ministry of Health, WHO/PAHO, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, CARE Honduras Canadá-CARE, Doctors without Borders, European Union, Catholic Relief Services, SANAA, DIMA, COSUDE, Water for the People.
Agriculture	FAO, WFP, IDB, GTZ, ACDI, CARITAS, UNDP, USAID, European Union, Catholic Relief Services.
Shelters	Ministry of the Presidency, (Office of Census) IOM, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, CARE, CARITAS, Red Spanish Cruz, FOPRIDEH.
Housing	Secretary of Public Works, Transport and Housing, KFW, UNDP, Social Fund for Housing, National Fund of Production and Housing, Federation of Communal Development of Honduras
Natural Resources, Agro-forestry and Environmental Protection	Secretary of Natural Resources, Honduran Corporation of Forest Development, USAID, ACDI, GTZ, FAO, UNDP, Biological Corridor Mesoamericano, Central American Council of forest.
Education	Secretary of Education, UNICEF, World Bank, USAID, EDUCATODOS, UNDP, GTZ, PROMEB.
Infrastructure	Secretary of Public Works, Transport and Housing, World Bank, USAID, GTZ, Spanish Government, Japanese Government, UNDP IDB.



Also, the Office of the Resident Coordinator will be strengthened by a temporary special unit to coordinate, administer and provide information on the humanitarian help received. This office also will develop reports on the impact of assistance efforts.

Field Operations of the UN System in Honduras

