

Action Update- November 9

Hurricane Eta Impacts Communities in Central America



Several communities in Central America were among those impacted by Hurricane Eta, which reached Nicaragua as a Category 4 storm on November 3. Over the coming days, the storm-- one of the most significant to hit the area in decades-- extended reach to other parts of the region as well. In

Guatemala, at least 50 people have died--though that total could reach up to 150 people as assessments and rescue efforts continue. In Honduras, days of rain devastated crops and damaged infrastructure such as roads, bridges and water sources. Hundreds of thousands of people across Central America have been displaced from their homes. Of these, about 5,500 are in emergency shelters where our partners are working.

For years, Week of Compassion has built on partner connections in the region, supporting agricultural development programs that empower communities, improve food security, and address root causes of poverty. Through these programs, farmers adopt new practices that improve their harvests, and parents find new ways to improve their children's health and nutrition.

While communications have been difficult due to phone outages and lack of ground access from the storm, Week of Compassion has been in touch with partners and learning of initial impact and response. Many of those most affected by the storm are in communities where Week of Compassion has a long history, having invested in relationships and programs over many years. While the full extent of the damage is not yet known, many of the farmers involved in our partner programs face significant crop and property loss as a result of this storm. Week of Compassion is supporting these communities through immediate relief, helping our partners meet needs such as shelter, food items and hygiene kits.

"The good news is that a hurricane doesn't destroy the social structure" says Martin Coria, CWS Regional Director, Latin America and Caribbean. He notes that, particularly in the places where the impact was most severe, the work that we support together through intentional relationship has been building capacity

for years. “Communities and families are not powerless- they are prepared, they are organized. So even if a water system was destroyed, they are prepared to work together with the local community and government to rebuild that system. People are not passively waiting for aid to come from somewhere... We build capacity and leadership over time. These men and women are now the ones getting organized and mobilized to support recovery.”

Your support through Week of Compassion provided for a flash flood warning system in Guatemala; and better road construction, less vulnerable to landslides, in Honduras. Alongside agricultural support, these programs are specifically designed to foster resilient communities. Part of the immediate hurricane response will include seed distribution, as well as food aid, to those places where crops were lost. Because our partners were doing this work before the hurricane, response can focus on the ability of communities to recover using their own resources.

Now a Tropical Storm, Eta is forecast to impact Cuba later today, possibly approaching the Florida Gulf Coast later this week. Heavy rainfall with the potential for dangerous flooding is expected. Even as we prepare for a possible domestic impact, Week of Compassion remains committed to accompanying our long-time partners and friends in Central America: both in the immediate aftermath of this disaster, and the long-term rebuilding process ahead.

*To support this response, you can designate your gift “Hurricane:” on our [website](#); by **mailing a check**; or by texting “**WoC**” to **41444**.*

Thanks to your faithful support over the years, communities in Central America are already better prepared and empowered to rebuild following this disaster. Your continued generosity helps sustain the connections that make this critical, life-giving work possible. Your giving--plus long-term relationships through Week of Compassion partners--means that the roots of resilience continue to grow strong, even after the storm.

Week of Compassion Responses Since October 27



Louisiana, Hurricane
Laura Relief



Oregon,
COVID-19 Relief



Florida, Hurricane Irma
Long-Term Recovery



Louisiana, Hurricane
Delta Relief



Alabama, Hurricane
Sally Relief



Florida, Hurricane Michael
Long-Term Recovery



Idaho,
COVID-19 Relief



Texas, Hurricane Harvey
Long-Term Recovery

For an interactive map of all 2020 responses, [visit our website](#).

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

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