

EARLY ACTION PROTOCOL ACTIVATION FINAL REPORT

Honduras | Flooding associated with Tropical Storms

May 2025



Delivery of multipurpose cash assistance to a recipient in the community of Prieta, Tocoa, November 2024. Source: German Red Cross.

EAP №: EAP2023HN01	Operation №: MDRHN020	EAP approved: 01/10/2023	EAP timeframe: 01/10/2023 to 30/09/2027
Trigger date: 14/11/2024	Early action lead time: 3-5 days	Operational timeframe: 3 Months	Period covered by this activation report: 14/11/2024 to 14/01/2025

Budget: 549,023 CHF
Assisted: 10,380 people

EARLY ACTION PROTOCOL SUMMARY



*Distribution of WASH kits in Sabá, Colón, November 2024.
Source: Honduran Red Cross.*

Back in December 2023, the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated a total of CHF 549,023 for the implementation of this Early Action Protocol. This allocation is divided into: CHF 348,133 for annual readiness activities and prepositioning supplies, and CHF 200,891 to implement early actions to reduce and mitigate the impact of flooding associated with Tropical Storms in Honduras. The early actions conducted were pre-agreed with the National Society and are described in the [Early Action Protocol](#).

According to the DesInventar disaster risk reduction database in Honduras¹, developed by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), floods represent the primary natural threat in the country between 1915 and 2015, most often associated with tropical cyclone events. In line with this historical evidence, the Honduran Red Cross prioritized flood-related risks, drawing on its extensive experience in

managing this type of emergency.

Within this context, the Early Action Protocol (EAP) included a methodology for developing an intervention map that prioritized municipalities based on their flood risk index, with a focus on the most vulnerable populations. The prioritized impacts outlined in the EAP and addressed through early actions included: potential loss of household goods and materials, addressed through Multipurpose Cash Transfer Program (CTP); potential damage to livelihoods through the loss of tools and supplies, also covered through CTP; and an increase in gastrointestinal and skin diseases caused by the consumption and contact with unsafe water, addressed through WASH interventions.

The EAP defined two activation triggers: (1) a forecast from CENAOS or NOAA indicating at least a 60% probability that a tropical storm (34-knot winds) or higher would impact the alert zone within a 3–5-day window; and (2) a GEOGLOWS/GloFAS forecast exceeding a 50% probability of a 10-year return period flood event in high-risk areas within a 3-day timeframe.

Both triggers were met. The first was activated when the National Hurricane Center (NOAA) issued a forecast with a 50–60% probability that a tropical depression would intensify into Tropical Storm “Sara,” which materialized on November 14 at 11:50 a.m., with maximum sustained winds of 35 knots. The second trigger was met through GLoFAS data indicating return periods of over 10 years and more than 50% probability in the Aguán, Patuca, and Ulúa river basins.

Upon arrival in the Colón area on November 15, several prioritized communities were already severely flooded and cut off due to the rapid intensification of the tropical system. The response team also encountered significant logistical challenges, including a lack of electricity for the first two days and no mobile network (Tigo or Claro) for the first three days, which considerably hindered field communication.

¹ [UNDRR DesInventar- Honduras](#).

OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

SUMMARY OF EAP IMPLEMENTATION

Host National Society

In accordance with the Early Action Protocol (EAP), the Honduran Red Cross developed an intervention map by combining the flood risk index with forecasts from GloFAS. Based on this analysis, municipalities with a very high flood risk index and a high likelihood of river overflow—according to GloFAS projections—were prioritized. The Colón department, located within the Aguán River basin, was identified as the most critical area. Consequently, the municipalities of Tocoa and Sabá were selected for targeted intervention through Multipurpose Cash Transfer Program (CTP).

In Tocoa, community selection was based on a flood risk index map developed in 2023 as part of an Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA). The communities of Prieta and Chiripa were identified as high-risk areas and were already experiencing flood impacts when the field team was deployed. These communities also had established coordination through the Integrated Program for Community Resilience and Preparedness, which had previously engaged with community leaders and Local Emergency Committees (CODELs) in both Tocoa and Luzón Palmera, Sabá.

For the WASH component, a meeting was held with the Municipal Emergency Committee (CODEM) of Tocoa to identify communities with the greatest needs in water and sanitation. Approximately 1,200 families were assisted as a result. Field visits were later conducted in Sabá, where one community of 167 families was reached. In addition, a meeting was held with the president of the municipal council of Sonaguera, another severely affected municipality. Following field assessments, two communities in Sonaguera were selected to receive support.

Additionally, 30 volunteer families heavily affected by Tropical Storm Sara in Region IV were identified for CVA support. These families were located in the municipalities of Tela and La Ceiba (Atlántida), Olanchito (Yoro), and Tocoa and Sonaguera (Colón).

The early actions implemented by the National Society included:

1. Distribution of multipurpose cash transfers.
2. Distribution of household water purification kits.
3. Distribution of family hygiene kits.
4. Provision of water quality monitoring kits to community water management boards.

According to the post-distribution cash surveys, 65% of respondents spent the funds on food and hygiene items, 15% used the money to purchase medication, and 10% invested in home reinforcement materials. During the survey process, many families expressed that the humanitarian assistance arrived at a critical time and helped them meet urgent needs such as paying debts, covering rent, and purchasing household goods. These findings underscore the timeliness and relevance of the early action response implemented.

Red Cross Red Crescent Movement

The Honduran Red Cross received technical support from the German Red Cross, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to develop and implement its Early Action Protocol (EAP). This technical assistance played a crucial role in enhancing the planning process, improving the execution of early actions, and fostering stronger coordination among all involved stakeholders.

The collaboration allowed for the integration of previous experiences from these partner organizations in activating similar protocols in other contexts, thereby enriching the decision-making process in Honduras. In preparation for the activation, coordination meetings were held starting on Monday, November 11, where forecasts, predictive models, and potential impact areas were discussed. Additionally, key meteorological information provided by the Center for Atmospheric, Oceanographic, and Seismic Studies (CENAOS) was used to technically substantiate the activation and guide operational decisions.

Overview of non Red Cross Red Crescent actors in country

The Honduran Red Cross received technical support from the Center for Atmospheric, Oceanographic, and Seismic Studies (CENAOS) of the Secretariat of State for Risk Management and National Contingencies (COPECO) for the monitoring and tracking of Tropical Storm Sara. This collaboration proved instrumental in supporting timely decision-making during the activation of the Early Action Protocol, as it provided accurate and up-to-date information on the storm's development.

Furthermore, in the targeted intervention areas, effective coordination was established with the Municipal Emergency Committees (CODEM) in the municipality of Tocoa and the Local Emergency Committees (CODEL). These local structures played a vital role in identifying beneficiaries and facilitating the distribution of humanitarian assistance. Their involvement contributed to a more efficient and context-sensitive implementation of the planned early actions.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Human Resources

During the implementation of the Early Action Protocol (EAP), the Honduran Red Cross was supported by a multidisciplinary team that strengthened the execution of field activities. From the National Society Headquarters, three members of the Disaster Risk Management team provided technical and operational support to coordinate the plan. At the local level, five staff members from the intervention area contributed to logistical tasks and community liaison efforts. Additionally, 15 local volunteers played a key role in community mobilization, distribution of supplies, and awareness-raising activities.

This process was further supported by personnel from the German Red Cross, who provided direct technical assistance, ensured adherence to operational standards, and shared their expertise from previous EAP activations. The combined efforts of all involved parties helped optimize available resources and enhanced the anticipatory response to the impact of Tropical Storm Sara.

Logistics and supply chain

The Honduran Red Cross has a well-structured procurement system for goods and services, with defined procedures that align with the standards of the IFRC. The National Society also maintains a spacious and secure warehouse for the proper storage of supplies prior to distribution.

Procurements planned under the Action Plan were carried out locally, based on the capacity and availability of national suppliers. All acquisitions related to this operation adhered to standard procedures and IFRC technical scope requirements, ensuring transparency and the quality of goods.

Regarding field logistics, the National Society dispatched two trucks from its headquarters, loaded with water purification filters, to the intervention area. The Tocoa Branch served as a collection and assembly point for the filters, facilitating a more efficient distribution process to the targeted communities.

Information Technology

During the Early Action Protocol activation, the Honduran Red Cross utilized the Open Data Kit (ODK) toolset for data collection and information management. This digital platform enabled the efficient gathering of key information, including the registration of individuals selected for assistance, as well as the administration of exit surveys and post-distribution monitoring for cash assistance.

The use of ODK facilitated the timely systematization and analysis of data, thereby enhancing decision-making processes and enabling more agile and accurate tracking of the impact of interventions in the prioritized communities.

Communications and Information

The Honduran Red Cross was supported by the communications team from its headquarters to ensure proper coverage of the actions carried out during the activation. One member of the communications team, along with support from the German Red Cross, directly contributed in the field to document and disseminate the activities. These actions were shared through the National Society official social media channels to promote visibility and reinforce accountability to communities.

It is worth highlighting that continuous communication was maintained with community leaders, who played a key role in disseminating information. Additionally, a dedicated phone line was provided to assist individuals selected for cash assistance in case of difficulties with access or usage.

Security

The Honduran Red Cross has a designated security focal point and a Safe Access Framework that outlines the safety protocols and protective measures personnel must follow during field operations. The activities under this Early Action Protocol (EAP) were carried out in a region of the country identified as having high security risks. This context required continuous reinforcement of established protocols and close, frequent monitoring to ensure the safety and well-being of personnel on the ground.

Ensuring staff safety remained a top priority throughout the operation. Regular reminders about safety protocols were issued, and preventive measures were implemented, including the use of safe

routes, coordination with local actors, and ongoing context assessments. As a result of these efforts, no security incidents were reported by the end of the implementation period.

Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)

The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) Unit of the Honduran Red Cross carried out the supervision and follow-up of activities to measure indicators, results, outputs, and actions at the end of the Early Action Protocol (EAP) activation. This process enabled the collection of systematic and useful information for decision-making and contributed to the final reporting of the operation.

Additionally, the National Society received virtual technical support from the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Central America before, during, and after the activation of the EAP. This support helped ensure that all processes were implemented in accordance with the agreed plan. As part of this support, the Delegation also assisted in the facilitation of the post-activation lessons learned workshop, which provided an opportunity to reflect on achievements, identify challenges, and highlight areas for improvement in future activations.

Administration and Finance

The Honduran Red Cross has a robust financial accountability system and an internal audit department that ensures the proper and transparent use of financial resources in accordance with the conditions outlined in memoranda of understanding between the National Society and its donors.

For the implementation of the Early Action Protocol (EAP), financial management was carried out in compliance with the procedures and regulations of the IFRC. The expenditure justification process followed the internal procedures of the Honduran Red Cross and used the formats and guidelines established by the IFRC, ensuring consistency and traceability in the use of funds.

Additionally, the National Society received virtual technical support from the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Central America through its finance department before, during, and after the activation. This support was instrumental in ensuring effective financial management aligned with international standards.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

During the 2022 activation in response to Tropical Storm Julia, one of the main challenges was the delay in delivering multipurpose cash transfers, as pre-positioned cards were not available. As a result, affected families received assistance almost a month after registration. In contrast, during the 2024 activation following Tropical Storm Sara, the process improved significantly. Pre-positioned cards were distributed on the fourth and fifth day after activation. However, despite the IFRC transferring early action funds to the National Society account in less than 24 hours, the funds were only available after three business days due to the transaction being made on a Friday. Additionally, the account used for loading the cards was held at a different bank than the one receiving the funds, which added three more business days due to interbank transfer times. Consequently, cards were loaded 10 days after activation—highlighting an ongoing challenge for timely multipurpose cash transfers implementation, as families had to wait over a week before being able to use the assistance.

In the 2022 activation, the distribution of household water treatment kits (WASH) was carried out in two phases due to logistical constraints, with the second phase occurring after the activation period. In contrast, the 2024 activation saw the full WASH distribution completed within the first seven days, with 69% delivered during the initial five-day window. This demonstrated a significant improvement in operational efficiency. However, the WASH component requires community sensitization actions, which are difficult to fully implement within the five-day timeframe. An additional challenge arose from the fact that preparedness activities were conducted in areas that did not correspond to the final activation zone. This mismatch led to difficulties in community access, context understanding, and coordination with local actors.

For more details on the lessons learned, please access [the following link](#) to consult the full report from the activation of this Early Action Plan (EAP).

PLANNED OPERATIONS

 Multi-purpose Cash	CHF budget: 215,961	CHF actual: 201,089
	People targeted: 2,750	People reached: 2,750
	Female: 1,430	Female: 1,430
	Male: 1,320	Male: 1,320
Indicator:	550 families (2,750 people) reached with multipurpose cash in advance of a hazard.	
Early actions:	1. Affected individuals' identification and registry. 2. Cash Transfer program (CTP) distribution in prioritized 3. Communities. 4. Awareness sessions on the use of CTP. 5. Per diem for volunteers who will carry out the registration and distribution of CTP (20 volunteers x 4 days). 6. Per diem for technical staff (5 people x 10 days, including food and accommodation). 7. Fuel expenses. 8. Hydration and snacks for volunteers.	

Narrative description of achievements

The Honduran Red Cross successfully identified and registered individuals selected to receive assistance through the Multipurpose Cash Transfer Program (CTP) within the five-day window established in the Early Action Protocol (EAP). During the same period, prepaid cards were distributed and personalized orientation sessions were conducted to explain the purpose of the CTP, suggestions for use, security measures, and other key guidance to ensure the safe and informed use of the funds.

The cash distribution under the CTP component was carried out in the department of Colón, reaching a total of 550 families (2,750 people), distributed as follows:

- 99 CTP in the community of Luzón Palmera, municipality of Sabá,
- 451 CTP in the communities of Chiripa and Prieta, and to Honduran Red Cross volunteers from Region IV who were affected by the storm in the municipality of Tocoa.

While the cards were distributed within the planned operational timeframe, their activation (recharge) occurred ten days later due to the delay in bank-to-bank fund transfers between the early action account and the card provider's account. This was recognized as a critical challenge during the lessons learned workshop.

As a corrective measure, the National Society has decided that for future EAP activations, the designated EAP account should be held in the same bank that issues the prepaid cards, if this continues to be the mechanism of choice. Additionally, it is recommended that IFRC explore the option of pre-positioning early action funds—either in a local IFRC account or in a designated National Society account—to avoid fund transfer delays and ensure timely implementation within critical windows, particularly in cases of weekend or holiday activations.

 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	CHF budget: 145,029	CHF actual: 95,088
	People targeted: 10,000	People reached: 10,380
	Female: 5,200	Female: 6,285
	Male: 4,800	Male: 4,095
Indicator:	<i>2,000 families (10,000 people) reached with WASH interventions in advance of a hazard.</i>	
Early actions:	<i>1. Distribution of household water purification kits.</i> <i>2. Distribution of water quality kits for Water Management Boards of prioritized communities.</i> <i>3. Fuel for distribution of household water purification kits.</i> <i>4. Per diem for 1 driver and 2 volunteers during the prepositioning of household water purification kits.</i> <i>5. Food for volunteers (4 days) during the distribution of household water purification kits and water quality kits for water board.</i> <i>6. Purchase of hydration supplies and snacks for volunteers.</i>	
Narrative description of achievements		

Access to safe drinking water is one of the primary needs of communities affected by floods. In this context, the distribution of water purification filters has been identified as a key intervention to mitigate health risks. However, based on field experience and insights gathered during the lessons learned workshop, the Honduran Red Cross has recognized the need to assess the logistical feasibility of this intervention—especially in situations where families are displaced to temporary shelters and are unable to carry bulky kits. Based on this experience, future Early Action Protocols (EAPs) may consider complementing this intervention with personal WASH kits, maintaining family hygiene kits, and strengthening the distribution of water quality monitoring kits.

To expand the reach of the operation, household water treatment kits were distributed in communities different from those that received support through the Multipurpose Cash Transfer Program (MPC). A total of 1,986 water treatment kits were distributed, reaching 9,930 people, with the following breakdown:

- Tocoa Municipality: 802 kits in Tocoa Centro, 142 in Cayo Campo, 103 in Lérica, 41 in Desvío a Cuaca, and 113 in Zamora.
- Sabá Municipality: 167 kits in the community of Ceibita Neronas.
- Sonaguera Municipality: 218 kits in La Monroy and 400 in the community of Isletas.

Regarding family hygiene kits, these were prioritized for women with children under three years old. A total of 200 kits were distributed, reaching 1,000 people:

- Tocoa Municipality: 110 kits in the community of Zamora.
- Sonaguera Municipality: 58 kits in Cuyulapa and 32 in Sonaguera Centro.

Additionally, 20 water quality monitoring kits were distributed to Community Water Boards in communities with active distribution systems, reaching a total of 12,418 people. The distribution was as follows:

- Tocoa Municipality: 5 kits in Lérica, Prieta, Chiripa, La Bolsa, and Barranco Chele (4,695 people).
- Sonaguera Municipality: 8 kits in Sabana de los Santos, Cuyulapa, El Sastre, Río de Piedra, Faust, Sabana de Utila, and Planes (3,496 people).
- Trujillo Municipality: 7 kits in 19 de Abril, San Martín, Cristales, Pueblo Castilla, Honduras Aguán, Agua Amarilla, and Chapagua (4,227 people).

In total, through all implemented actions, the Honduran Red Cross reached 14,157 people, taking into account that some families received more than one type of distributed item. Furthermore, the total number of people reached exceeded the initial target, as the distribution of water quality testing kits enabled the National Society to extend its reach to additional individuals within the same communities prioritized under the EAP.



Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery

CHF budget: 104,748

CHF actual: 15,428

Early actions:

1. Internship on logistics and administration (1 person x 1 month).

Narrative description of achievements

Due to the limited time available for the activation, it was not possible to complete the administrative procedures required to onboard a logistics and administrative intern. In response to this situation, the Honduran Red Cross opted to request support from volunteers with experience in administrative tasks, which allowed for the continuity of priority operational activities during the implementation of the Early Action Protocol (EAP).

The incurred expenses were used to cover the transportation and mobilization costs of the volunteers who supported these functions.

 Community Engagement and Accountability	CHF budget: 13,117	CHF actual: 4,679
	People targeted: 2,750	People reached: 356
	Female: 1,430	Female: 214
	Male: 1,320	Male: 142
Indicator:	<i>Number of people reached with community engagement and accountability interventions in advance of a hazard.</i>	
Early actions:	<i>1. Dissemination (payment of spaces on radio, TV and social networks).</i> <i>2. Development of exit survey and Post Distribution Monitoring.</i> <i>3. Development of lessons learned workshop to evaluate activation.</i>	

Narrative description of achievements

The Honduran Red Cross had pre-developed key messages and media spots on storm preparedness, flood prevention measures, and other relevant topics. These materials were intended for use in a public awareness campaign across radio, television, and social media prior to the storm's impact. However, the campaign could not be implemented as there was less than one day between the activation and the landfall of Tropical Storm Sara. This limitation was highlighted during the lessons learned workshop, emphasizing the need for rapid communication strategies in short-notice activation scenarios.

In addition, post-distribution monitoring surveys were carried out to assess beneficiary satisfaction levels and track the use of multipurpose cash assistance. This initiative also formed part of the National Society's accountability efforts toward affected communities. A total of 60% (330 people) of the population reached through the Multipurpose Cash Transfer Program (CTP) was surveyed.

Likewise, a lessons learned workshop was organized with the participation of all key stakeholders involved in the EAP activation. The objective was to document achievements, identify challenges, and develop practical recommendations for future responses. The workshop was held in person, with 26 participants, and was facilitated by the Senior Officer for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER) from the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Central America.

Enabling approaches

 Secretariat Services	CHF budget: 47,813	CHF actual: 49,635
Early actions:	1. <i>Translation of documents.</i> 2. <i>Mobilization for coordination visit.</i>	
Narrative description of achievements During the activation of the Early Action Protocol, the Project and Operations Coordinator, the Senior Officer for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER), and the Senior Finance Officer from the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Central America provided ongoing technical support to the Honduran Red Cross. This support contributed to the effective technical and financial implementation of planned activities, while ensuring alignment with IFRC procedures. Additionally, the Senior PMER Officer facilitated the in-person lessons learned workshop, which was also attended by the Project and Operations Coordinator. This session served as a valuable opportunity to collectively reflect on achievements, identify key challenges, and generate actionable recommendations for future activations.		
 National Society Strengthening	CHF budget: 22,355	CHF actual: 13,963
Early actions:	1. <i>Warehousing rental for prepositioning.</i> 2. <i>Vehicle rental.</i>	
Narrative description of achievements During this activation, the Honduran Red Cross was unable to rent a warehouse in the intervention area due to the limited time available. However, the space provided by the Tocoa Branche was used for the pre-positioning and assembly of household water treatment kits. To ensure adequate storage and operational conditions, specific adjustments were made to the branches' premises, resulting in additional costs. Furthermore, a vehicle was rented and made available throughout the activation period to support the timely transport of supplies and facilitate the effective implementation of planned field activities.		

FINANCIAL REPORT

A total of CHF 549,023 was allocated from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) for the implementation of this operation. By the end of the operation, total expenditures amounted to CHF 379,882. The unspent balance of CHF 169,141 will be returned to the DREF.

The variances identified in this report correspond to the fact that the financial information is based on an interim report, in which expenses recorded under the same accounting codes include both EAP activation costs and other expenditures incurred after the reporting period, including salaries. As an exception, additional costs recorded post-activation (March–September) correspond to financial expenses registered after the activation period, specifically related to the salary of the Cash Transfer Programme focal point.

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Reference



Click here for:

- [EAP summary](#)
- [EAP activation](#)