



# Central America

## Hurricanes Eta and Iota

### Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3



Reporting Period: 11 - 20 November 2020

## Highlights

- Two weeks after Hurricane Eta struck Central America, authorities continue assessing the damages and gathering information on the affected communities. Over 4.6 million people have been affected by Eta in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, among them approximately 1.8 million children.
- Only a few days away after Eta struck the region, Hurricane Iota appeared as a catastrophic category 5 hurricane on 16 November, with a similar path to Hurricane Eta.
- Iota has affected not only many of the communities already impacted by Eta, but many additional ones. According to initial reports, more than 38 people have died during floods and landslides caused by Iota, and nearly half million people – including 189,000 children - have been affected by this latest storm, only in Guatemala and Honduras.
- Based on estimations by UNICEF and other partners, among those affected by Eta, at least 3.4 million people need urgent assistance, including 1.3 million children, in the most affected communities in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. From this total, UNICEF plans to reach over 646,000 people, including 327,000 children. These targets are expected to increase taking into account Iota's impact.
- UNICEF Country Offices (COs) and partners continue scaling up efforts in response to the affected communities.
- In **Honduras**, UNICEF has delivered WASH humanitarian assistance to 5,104 affected people in shelters, including water supply support; over 10,000 children are benefiting from improved conditions in shelters, including through the provision of mental health support; 4,500 vulnerable families have received in-kind transfers. UNICEF-supported teams identified at least 112 cases of children with protection needs, including 106 children separated from their caretakers and six survivors of sexual abuse in shelters, which are already under protective custody.
- In **Guatemala**, authorities are distributing 1,900 personal hygiene kits provided by UNICEF to families affected by Eta and Iota.
- In **Nicaragua**, WASH supplies provided by UNICEF are being distributed by authorities, benefiting 15,000 families; UNICEF has commissioned PPE for 1,000 health workers and life-saving messages have reached over 38,000 people, including in local languages.
- In **Belize**, UNICEF is providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and other items for 3,000 women, children and healthcare staff, and 2,000 hygiene kits are being distributed for breastfeeding women.
- In **Costa Rica**, UNICEF will provide PPE items and hygiene kits for frontline workers and affected families, targeting 3,000 people.
- In **El Salvador**, UNICEF is distributing 210 PPE kits, 265 hygiene kits for children and 275 hygiene kits for families.
- In **Panama**, UNICEF is providing over 13 tonnes of supplies including tarpaulin, water containers, tents, blankets and mosquito nets for migrant families and for those affected by the impacts of Eta and Iota in vulnerable border communities.
- UNICEF is urgently appealing for US\$42.6 million for the next six months, to meet the most urgent humanitarian needs of children and families affected by Hurricane Eta in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. This funding requirement is provisional and subject to change. UNICEF is assessing the impacts of Hurricane Iota which will likely increase the humanitarian needs in these and other countries.

## Situation in Numbers



**4.6 million**  
People affected by Eta



**1.8 million**  
Children affected by Eta



**3.4 million**  
People in need (due to Eta)



**1.3 million**  
Children in need (due to Eta)

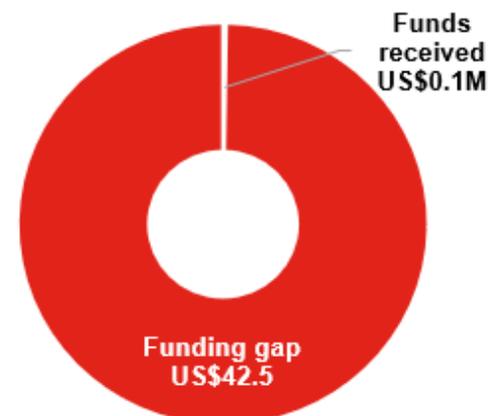


**646,943**  
People to be reached\*



**327,605**  
Children to be reached\*

**UNICEF estimated  
funding requirement\***  
**US\$ 42.6 million**



\* Preliminary targets and funding requirements, to be updated as damage and needs assessments are conducted in countries affected by Iota, and more information is available regarding the situation and needs of children and families.

'Funds received' includes only new funds received for the Eta/Iota response.

## Funding Overview and Partnerships

Under the regional humanitarian appeal,<sup>1</sup> UNICEF is urgently appealing for US\$42.6 million for the next six months, to address immediate humanitarian needs of children and families affected by Hurricane Eta in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. This funding requirement is provisional and subject to change, UNICEF is assessing the impacts of Hurricane Iota which will likely increase the humanitarian needs in these and other countries in the region.

UNICEF has received a first rapid contribution from USAID for US\$100,000. In addition, UNICEF Country Offices (COs) have repurposed existing funds in consultation with donors, in order to kick start the response. During the first days after the onset of the emergency, UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO) transferred US\$530,000 from Global Thematic Funds to support the initial response at country level and UNICEF HQ released US\$1.1 million from the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF), which is an internal loan to rapidly scale up the emergency response.

At country and regional level, UNICEF continues advocating and engaging with public and private donors to ensure that adequate funding is available to provide timely relief to the most vulnerable children, families and communities. The needs for water, sanitation and hygiene supplies and services, are particularly acute. An appeal document with additional details has been produced and will be updated in the coming days, as more information is available on the impact of Iota in the region.<sup>2</sup>

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Two weeks after Hurricane Eta struck Central America, authorities continue assessing the damages and gathering information on the affected communities. As of 18 November, the number of people affected by Eta in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, was 4.6 million people, among them approximately 1.8 million children (see table).

Further compounding the situation, Hurricane Iota appeared as a catastrophic category 5 hurricane on 16 November, with a similar path to Hurricane Eta. Colombia's Caribbean islands, San Andres and Providencia, were the first hit by Iota, leaving unprecedented destruction and damages in 98 per cent of the Providencia island's infrastructure.<sup>3</sup> On 17 November, Iota made landfall along the northeaster coast of Nicaragua as a category 4 Hurricane, with sustained winds of 250 km/h. Although Iota weakened as it moved inland, its wave has caused heavy rainfall, leading to life-threatening flash flooding and mudslides in parts of Colombia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panama. Iota has affected not only many of the communities and essential infrastructure already impacted by Eta, but many additional ones.

According to initial reports by governmental entities and media, at least 38 people have died in Nicaragua,<sup>4</sup> Honduras,<sup>5</sup> Guatemala<sup>6</sup> and El Salvador<sup>7</sup> during floods and landslides caused by Iota, and nearly half million people – including 189,000 children - have been affected by this latest storm, only in Guatemala and Honduras.<sup>8</sup> With increasing number of people in shelters, needs are more acute, particularly for COVID-19 prevention measures.

Based on estimations by UNICEF and other partners, among those affected by Eta, at least 3.4 million people need urgent support, including 1.3 million children in the most affected communities in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. From this total, UNICEF plans to reach over 646,000 people, including 327,000 children, with lifesaving and gender-sensitive supplies and services – including for COVID-19 prevention, in shelters and communities, in the most vulnerable areas. These estimations are expected to increase taking into account that Iota has affected not only many of the communities already impacted by Eta, but many additional ones. UNICEF and partners continue gathering information on the actual impact of Iota and will update this analysis in the coming days.

Population affected by the impacts of Hurricane/Storm Eta in Central America (as of 18 November)								
Impact	Belize	Costa Rica	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Nicaragua	Panama	TOTAL
No. of people affected*	60,000	325,000		1,198,117	3,022,464	NA	5,000	<b>4,610,581</b>
No. of children affected**	21,120	87,100		539,153	1,148,536	NA	2,200	<b>1,798,109</b>
No. of deaths*		2	2	53	77	NA	20	<b>154</b>
No. of missing persons*		-		96	8	NA	11	<b>115</b>
No. of people in shelters*	158	88	408	17,324	56,986	47,297***	2,508	<b>124,769</b>
No. of children in shelters**	45	24	120	6,583	21,655	18,919	1,063	<b>48,408</b>

\*According to official sources by the time of drafting this report, see information below for details.

\*\*Estimated by UNICEF, according to population distribution in country.

\*\*\*Total number of people in shelters in Nicaragua since the beginning of the emergency. The current number is to be confirmed as families have started to return home.

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, Latin America and the Caribbean Region Appeal – Humanitarian Action for Children 2020', December 2019, <<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/lac#download>>.

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, 'Urgent appeal for children and families affected by Hurricanes Eta and Iota in Central America', 18 November 2020, <<https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/reports/urgent-appeal-for-children-and-families-affected-hurricanes-by-eta-and-iota>>

<sup>3</sup> El Tiempo, 'Devastadoras imágenes de Providencia tras paso de Iota', 17 November 2020, <<https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/vea-las-primeras-imagenes-de-providencia-tras-paso-de-huracan-iota-549485>>.

<sup>4</sup> El Comercio, 'Nuevo alud mata a tres hermanos en Nicaragua, que registra 21 decesos por huracán Iota', 19 November 2020, <<https://www.elcomercio.com/actualidad/alud-mata-hermanos-nicaragua-iota.html>>

<sup>5</sup> COPECO, 'Huracán Iota – Infografía No. 10, 19/11/2020 04:00', 19 November 2020.

<sup>6</sup> CONRED, 'Informe de situación, 19/11/2020, 07:00', 19 November 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Press Conference by national authorities, 19 November 2020, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhJdXyKzj0U>>.

<sup>8</sup> According to reports by COPECO Honduras (366,123 affected) and CONRED Guatemala (132,826 affected).

## BELIZE

Assessments and relief operations continued, as the flood waters receded in the Cayo, Belize and Stann Creek districts. Iota hurricane started impacting Belize on 16 November. A flood warning remains in effect for the Belize district, and a flood watch is in effect for the Toledo, Stann Creek and Cayo districts. Heavy rainfalls are expected to continue across the country, rainfall amounts of 10 to 20 inches are possible, especially over southern Belize. This may result in new flooding with possible landslides, especially over mountainous areas of the country.

## COSTA RICA

On 10 November, Costa Rica declared a state of national emergency for 18 municipalities, to facilitate response, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, in response to the effects of Hurricane Eta. The indirect consequences of Eta in Costa Rica have left widespread floods and damages across most of the country. At least 496 communities (23 of which have been left completely isolated during the peak of the emergency), have been affected by Eta, with localized floods, landslides and critical damage to roads, bridges and water infrastructure, mostly in the southern, central and northern pacific areas. As of 11 November, authorities estimated that 325,000 people have been affected (approximately 87,100 children) either directly or indirectly. Two people have died, 133 people have been rescued, 247 people had to be relocated to safer grounds and a total of 185 adults and 84 children have received outpatient treatment. As of 17 November, the National Emergency Commission (CNE) reported more than 14 flood events, as a result of the indirect impact of Hurricane Iota. Communities in the southern Pacific area are at particular risk due to waterlogged soils and the continuation of rains.

Authorities, UN and other international organizations continue monitoring the situation closely and organizing response actions based on identified gaps (with focus on the most vulnerable populations) and requests from the government.

## EL SALVADOR

In El Salvador, a yellow alert is now in place for most of the country, a red alert remains in place in the municipality of Nejapa, and an orange alert is active in three municipalities of Chalatenango and two in Santa Ana. The government mandated preventive evacuations in high-risk areas for flooding and/or landslides. As of 20 November, 408 people had been evacuated to shelters and two casualties were reported due to the latest events related with Eta and Iota.<sup>9</sup> Hurricane Iota brought rainfalls, particularly on the northern strip of the country and surroundings of the volcanic mountain range. The risk of landslides and rockfall persists. Prior the arrival of Iota, 399 people remained preventively in 13 shelters activated by the Government of El Salvador.

## GUATEMALA

Heavy rains intensified due to Iota, affecting communities already struck by Eta. The Government of Guatemala maintains a state of calamity for 10 departments of the country: Izabal, Petén, Alta Verapaz, El Quiché, Chiquimula, El Progreso, Santa Rosa, Jutiapa, Zacapa and Huehuetenango. As of 19 November, authorities report that 132,826 people have been affected by events related with Iota (approx. 50,400 children),<sup>10</sup> most of them in areas already impacted by Eta. This brings the total of people affected up to 1.3 million. Around 24,000 people are still in official shelters across eight departments, mainly in Alta Verapaz and Izabal, and close to 180,000 people have sought shelter with family or friends. Two casualties have been reported and 1,381 houses have resulted damaged in Iota-related events. The government, with support from the private sector and international cooperation, continues mobilizing supplies to the most affected areas.

## HONDURAS

In Honduras, the country-wide state of red alert continues in place. As assessments move forward and authorities and partners have been able to reach some of the most affected communities, the number of people affected by the passage of Eta and the subsequent heavy rains, exceeded three million, including approximately 1.1 million children.<sup>11</sup> Prior to the wave of Iota reached Honduras, at least 55,000 people remained in 527 shelters, among them around 20,000 children. Damages in infrastructure included more than 28,000 homes affected, 32 bridges destroyed, 45 bridges damaged, and 173 roads affected. Due to access constraints, over 105,000 people remained isolated in 69 communities. Four departments: Atlántida, Cortés, Santa Bárbara and Yoro, concentrated nearly 70 per cent of all the affected population.

Among other impacts of Eta, according to agriculture authorities, over 216,000 hectares of crops have been lost due to Eta, impacting small and mid-scale farmers. At least 8,994 families have lost their crops,<sup>12</sup> affecting their access to income, goods and services. Recent assessments have identified around 3,000 homeless people (including some 1,000 children and adolescents) who have set up informal shelters along the highway between San Pedro Sula and the city of La Lima, these families are in urgent need for shelter and protection.<sup>13</sup>

With Iota reaching Honduran territory with extreme winds and life-threatening storm surge, at least 14 additional people have died, and 366,123 people are estimated to be affected by Iota-related events,<sup>14</sup> many of them have been affected by both Eta and Iota. Through local authorities and partners, UNICEF field staff from five regions has gathered preliminary information on the impact of Iota in 30 municipalities.<sup>15</sup> As of 18 November, most of these municipalities remained with total or partial disruptions in electricity and telecommunication services. Water supply systems have also been affected, mainly due to power outages or damages in infrastructure. Access and mobility are limited due to destruction of bridges, fallen trees and debris in roads. Additional shelters have been activated, but some of them have already surpassed their capacity. Many families have

<sup>9</sup> Press Conference by national authorities, 19 November 2020, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhJdXyKzj0U>>.

<sup>10</sup> CONRED, 'Informe de situación, 19/11/2020, 07:00', 19 November 2020.

<sup>11</sup> COPECO, 'Infografía No. 50, 15/11/20 19:00h', 15 November 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Naciones Unidas Honduras, 'Tormenta Tropical Eta, Informe de Situación No. 03', 14 November 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Mission report, Resident Coordinator visit in the affected area.

<sup>14</sup> COPECO, 'Huracán Iota – Infografía No. 10, 19/11/2020 04:00', 19 November 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Copán (6 municipalities); Norte (10 municipalities); Intibuca (9 municipalities), Santa Bárbara (5 municipalities), Lempira (8 municipalities).

opted for staying with family and friends. In La Lima municipality (Cortés), 80 families were awaiting evacuation. Some cases of looting have been reported in these communities.

On 19 November, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) issued a Flash Appeal for US\$69.2 million in response to the impact of Eta in Honduras.<sup>16</sup> The appeal considers that 2.3 million people need humanitarian assistance, being the most vulnerable those in extreme poverty, indigenous populations, Afro-Honduran ethnic groups, migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), pregnant adolescents aged 11 to 19, single female heads of households, children under five, undernourished children, people with disabilities and the elderly. The HCT aims at reaching 450,000 people with focus on food security, WASH, protection, shelter, health and education; along with COVID-19 prevention measures both outside and within shelters.

## NICARAGUA

Category 4 hurricane Iota made landfall in Nicaragua as a major Hurricane on the night between 16 November and 17 November, affecting some of the areas already impacted by Eta. Authorities reported that at least 63,000 people were evacuated,<sup>17</sup> mostly from rural communities sitting along the great rivers and on the coast (marine littoral) in Waspan, Puerto Cabezas and Prinzapolka. Those people have been relocated to safer places, such as the main cities in the three departments: Waspan, Bilwi and Alamikamba. Churches, schools, and other facilities are being used as shelters. Initial reports account for 21 people dead, in Iota-related floods and landslides.<sup>18</sup> Reports inform of serious damages to infrastructures, including to the local hospital in Bilwi, where patients have been quickly transferred to more secure premises. Electricity is off since 16 November, also in the town of Bilwi. Although Iota weakened to a category 1 Hurricane, heavy rainfall continues with risk of flash flooding and landslides due to waterlogged soils.

While the number of people affected by the latest events is yet to be confirmed, estimation of ADAM-WFP projected that more than 400,000 people could have been exposed to the impact of Iota. With increasing numbers of people in official and informal shelters, ensuring food assistance, access to safe water and WASH services, health care and psychosocial support, particularly for children, are among the most critical needs.

## PANAMA

The Joint National Task Force designated by the Panamanian Government to respond to Eta continues search and rescue operations, delivering humanitarian aid, and gathering information on the affected communities. The eastern provinces of Chiriquí, Bocas del Toro and the Indigenous territory of Ngäbe-Buglé have been affected by flooding and landslides brought on by Eta. The Joint National Task Force reports an increase in the number of persons affected to 5,000, of whom 2,200 are estimated to be children (there is limited disaggregated information available on the impact on children), and 2,527 people in temporary shelters. Preliminary information states that 20 people are dead (4 children), 11 people are missing, and 918 people have been rescued.

Severe damage to housing and infrastructure, such as roads and bridges continue to be reported. The ministry of social development and the national child protection authority continue gathering information on the situation of children and implementing psychosocial support for the children affected. Recent government information indicates there is a need for protection actions and psychosocial support for the children and families affected.

On 15 November, due to hurricane Iota, the National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC) issued a red alert for Chiriquí, Bocas del Toro Ngäbe-Buglé, and the Province of Darien, bordering Colombia. The passing of Iota caused heavy flooding in several communities in the Darien affecting approximately 475 families (1,400 people) and 396 houses.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

### BELIZE

#### Health

UNICEF is providing the ministry of health (MoH) with technical and logistical support, including provision of personal protective equipment (PPE), raincoats, rubber boots, bedsheets and blankets to assist 3,000 women, children and healthcare professionals in the flooded districts of Cayo, Belize, Stann Creek, as well as in shelters. Aiming at contributing to disease prevention efforts, UNICEF is providing technical guidance through online trainings, phone calls and messages to 177 Community Health Workers (CHWs) and health professionals on the prevention of the spread of communicable diseases, and on management and referral of cases.

Prior to Eta, UNICEF had successfully implemented Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) programmes on COVID-19 prevention, reaching some 200,000 people countrywide, including in the Eta affected communities, and carried out Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) trainings for 550 health professionals, including CHW, who are currently responding to the emergency in the flooded districts.

#### WASH

In partnership with the National Committee for Families and Children (NCFC), UNICEF is distributing 120 family hygiene/nutrition kits (including fortified food), benefitting over 240 children in three underserved communities affected by flooding due to hurricane Eta, including Sarawee, Gales Point and Duck Run, located in the Stann Creek, Belize and Cayo

<sup>16</sup> Honduras Humanitarian Country Team, OCHA, 'FLASH APPEAL HONDURAS - TROPICAL STORM ETA', November 2020, <<https://reliefweb.int/report/honduras/honduras-flash-appeal-tropical-storm-eta-november-2020>>.

<sup>17</sup> La Prensa, 'Seis muertos y 63 mil evacuados en Nicaragua', 17 November 2020, <<https://www.laprensa.com.ni/2020/11/17/nacionales/2748939-iota-reporta-sus-primeras-victimas-dos-ninos-mueren-ahogados-en-carazo#:~:text=La%20primera%20dama%20y%20vicepresidenta,que%20hay%20en%20el%20pa%C3%ADs>>.

<sup>18</sup> El Comercio, 'Nuevo alud mata a tres hermanos en Nicaragua, que registra 21 decesos por huracán Iota', 19 November 2020, <<https://www.elcomercio.com/actualidad/alud-mata-hermanos-nicaragua-iota.html>>.

districts respectively. These kits will also include 120 reusable pads for girls and [information](#) on WASH (including on menstrual hygiene management), healthy eating, COVID-19 prevention and child protection.

UNICEF is scaling up its partnership with the Belize Red Cross, aiming at increasing the outreach of the emergency response in place. Under this partnership, the Belize Red Cross is procuring additional 230 family hygiene/nutrition kits to be delivered to over 460 children in rural communities affected by Hurricane Eta in the Belize and Cayo Districts.

The WASH cluster, supported by UNICEF, and chaired by the ministry of health, remains active.

#### **Nutrition / Communication for Development (C4D)**

A total of 2,000 hygiene kits are being distributed for breastfeeding women affected by Eta. In partnership with MoH, C4D messages to protect and promote breastfeeding are being developed in English and Spanish. The messages are focused on promotion of breastfeeding in the context of COVID-19, and on the importance and need to avoid the distribution of breastmilk substitutes to prevent disease, undernutrition and possibly death.

#### **Child Protection**

UNICEF will distribute PPE to support 75 child protection workers responding to communities in the flooded districts of Cayo, Belize, Stann Creek, as well as in shelters. UNICEF and the National Committee for Families and Children are conducting a rapid mapping exercise on Child Protection and gender-based violence (GBV) services available in 21 affected communities. Following the mapping, UNICEF will disseminate Child Protection and GBV prevention messages in affected communities.

### **COSTA RICA**

#### **WASH**

UNICEF will support 16 shelters providing PPE items and hygiene kits for frontline workers and affected families. In addition, families will receive water purification items, and will be reached with RCCE activities to promote good hygiene practices and COVID-19 prevention measures. UNICEF aims at reaching around 3,000 people, including 840 children.

#### **Child protection**

UNICEF will support capacity building of 150 staff from Municipal Emergency Committees, COVID-19 Civic Attention Centres, shelters and CNE. Activities will focus on enhancing capacities and knowledge on GBV, violence against children (VAC), referencing and reporting of child abuse cases and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), in coordination with local child protection systems.

### **EL SALVADOR**

#### **WASH**

With partners (PROVIDA, ACUA and CORDES), UNICEF is distributing WASH supplies for families and children, including 210 PPE kits, 265 hygiene kits for children and 575 hygiene kits for families in shelters and affected communities. UNICEF has also provided 3,300 litres of drinking water for shelters. The WASH cluster, led by UNICEF, remains active.

#### **Child protection**

A total of 51 affected people, including 17 children, have received psychosocial support, through activities in partnership with Red Cross, ACISAM and the Servicio Social Pasionista. UNICEF has distributed 100 recreational kits to the national council for children and adolescents (CONNA) for recreational and psychosocial support activities for children in shelters and affected communities. Together with WFP, UNICEF continued distributing information to affected populations in shelters, on helpline phone numbers for psychosocial support (PSS) providers, which are supported by UNICEF. The Red Cross, with UNICEF's support, will train 120 MoH staff of on psychological first aid and emergency response.

The child protection sub-cluster remains activate under UNICEF leadership.

#### **Communication for Development (C4D)**

C4D material has been distributed in shelters, with information on hygiene practices, COVID-19 and arboviruses prevention, through implementing partner PROVIDA. Additional materials have been produced on nutrition, prevention of violence and GBV, promotion of hygiene, and psychosocial support. UNICEF continues disseminating preparedness messages, and promoting helplines for psychosocial and psychological support, through social networks and websites.

### **GUATEMALA**

#### **Health**

UNICEF-supported teams from the MoH continue in the field, assessing the situation of health services in Alta Verapaz, Izabal, Huehuetenango, Petén and Quiché. Findings of these teams will be available after 20 November.

#### **WASH**

UNICEF delivered 1,900 personal hygiene kits to authorities, through the national disaster reduction entity – CORNED - which are being distributed to families affected by Eta and Iota, starting on 19 November with shipments to Alta Verapaz department.

UNICEF, as WASH sector lead, was part of a multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA), in coordination with OCHA, UN Women and UNDSS, in Izabal, Petén and Alta Verapaz. While results are being consolidated, preliminary findings include at least 4,000 waterlogged wells and up to 30 small water systems affected.

The MoH, responsible for water and sanitation in the country, with the logistical support of UNICEF, has deployed two evaluation teams to the department of El Petén to support the assessment of damages and needs at the departmental, municipal and community levels.

### **Nutrition**

UNICEF, as nutrition cluster lead, supported the Government of Guatemala in developing nutrition-related communication materials, including recommendations for adequate infant and young child feeding practices in the context of COVID-19, as well as guidance on food contributions by the private sector and general population. Despite these efforts, there is evidence that breastmilk substitutes and processed foods have been distributed to vulnerable populations currently living in shelters. This could lead to a rapid deterioration of the already poor nutrition status of children and other populations at higher risk of disease. At community level, many families are not able to access nutritious foods and need food and kitchen supplies.

UNICEF, in collaboration with government and other partners within the nutrition cluster, has identified critical nutrition interventions that will be implemented if funding is available:

- Timely identification and treatment of children under five with acute malnutrition.
- Provision of powder multiple micronutrients and vaccines to children under five.
- Monitoring of food contributions, including breastmilk substitutes.
- Provision of breastfeeding and maternal nutrition counseling to pregnant and lactating women, through health services, shelters and community-led radios.

### **Protection**

UNICEF is leading the group for psychosocial attention to children and families affected by the emergency. The group is developing a plan to provide psychosocial support to children in shelters. UNICEF is coordinating, with child protection offices at municipal and central level, the protection of children in shelters, and is supporting the monitoring of the situation of children in shelters with the Human Rights Office. UNICEF and its partners are disseminating messages to protect children during the emergency, via social media and community radios.

UNICEF and partners have identified critical child protection priority interventions: brigades for psychosocial support at shelters and communities affected; and support to child protection authorities' capacities to prevent violence against children and to detect and attend cases.

### **Communication for Development (C4D)**

In coordination with a network of community radio stations in Alta Verapaz, Izabal, Baja Verapaz, Quiché and Huehuetenango, UNICEF supports the dissemination of [messages](#) on preparation and response, produced by CONRED (available in Spanish, Mam and Q'eqchi' indigenous languages), through the networks of the Academy of Mayan Languages of Guatemala (ALMG). With the Nutrition Cluster, UNICEF is preparing messages to support breastfeeding in emergencies and promote the donation of adequate food, through posters and posts on social media. In addition, violence prevention messages have been disseminated in shelters. Guidance on the use of community video to identify damages to community water systems and to promote safe water consumption, have been prepared in collaboration with the MoH.

## **HONDURAS**

### **Health**

Availability of health services and PPE, for frontline workers and affected population, along with risk communication activities, are key to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in shelters and communities. In addition, stakeholders have flagged that there is lack of sufficient COVID-19 tests for population in shelters.<sup>19</sup>

An exploratory mission on the health situation and triggering factors of infectious diseases, conducted by Médicos del Mundo in 12 shelters (in four municipalities in Cortés department), evidenced a concerning absence of protocols and biosafety supplies for COVID-19 prevention, which could trigger an increased incidence of COVID-19 cases in these shelters. According to the MoH, as of 10 November, 33 per cent of COVID-19 test performed in shelters have resulted positive.<sup>20</sup>

The overall health response capacities have been diminished. According to the ministry of health, about 2.5 million people currently have limited or no access to health services, due to damages in the health services network. Some 37 health facilities have been damaged, 27 health facilities are out of service; and at least 10 health centres report losses in the cold chain, equipment, supplies and vaccines, this impacts around 114,236 children who will miss out on vaccination, in the most affected regions.

Among the main needs identified in the health sector are:

- Restoring the capacity to provide medical care and access to health services in the most affected areas, including mental health care, sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health, as well as the restoration of cold chain networks and reactivation of vaccination services in the affected areas.

<sup>19</sup> Naciones Unidas Honduras, 'Tormenta Tropical Eta, Informe de Situación No. 03', 14 November 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Hola News, 'La tasa de positividad por covid-19 en albergues de Honduras se sitúa en un 33 %', 11 November 2020.

- Acquisition of equipment and cold chain items (freezers, voltage regulators, air conditioners, spare parts and accessories, etc.)
- Increase epidemiological surveillance to support early detection and timely management of disease outbreaks, including COVID-19 and other endemic diseases with the potential to generate epidemics.

UNICEF has prioritized providing support to authorities in ensuring completion of the vaccination schedule of all children in the affected areas, including an Emergency Response Plan to support the restoration of the cold chain network of the Ministry of Health.

## **Nutrition**

In shelters, at least 5,000 children under five years of age have been identified as in need of adequate and age-appropriate feeding and nutritional support. There is evidence of distribution of powdered milk and infant formula in shelters, which is a threat to breastfeeding and a risk of disease, undernutrition and possibly death in non-breastfed children, if these do not receive qualified support. Some gaps have been reported regarding the quality of the food distributed in shelters, which generally include foods rich in fat and starch, but poor in micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). In this context, there is a high risk of deterioration of the nutritional status of groups at risk, mainly infants, young children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW).

Some of the main gaps identified and suggested actions in the nutrition sector include:

- Avoid the distribution of breast milk substitutes, including infant formulas, follow-up formulas, and powdered milk.
- Ensure availability of safe spaces and qualified personnel to provide young and infant child feeding support and counselling for mothers and caregivers.
- Distribute micronutrients to children under five years of age and PLW.

Depending on the available funding, UNICEF response priorities include: nutritional screening for children under 5 and referral of cases of acute malnutrition to health services for adequate care, distribution of micronutrients to children under 5 and PLW, infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling and promotion of breastfeeding.

## **WASH**

UNICEF has delivered WASH humanitarian assistance to 5,104 affected people in shelters, through its implementing partners, ensuring access to at least 7 litres of water per day/person, and access to sanitation and hygiene items and services.

With partners and volunteers in the field, UNICEF collected preliminary information in 12 municipalities, with 43 shelters hosting approximately 813 people (including 443 children). Evidence from the field identified urgent needs of families in shelters: around 66 per cent of people in shelters have less than seven litres of water available per day / person, well below the minimum standard; and around 37 per cent of people lack hygiene supplies.

Key priorities in the WASH sector, which inform UNICEF's and partners response, include monitoring and provision of safe water (ensuring quantity, quality and continuity) for consumption and for personal hygiene in shelters and in affected communities, as well as access to hygiene and sanitation services in homes and in shelters. Special attention is given to vulnerable areas where services have been interrupted, to mitigate the risk of waterborne diseases. COVID-19 prevention, through implementation of appropriate biosafety measures should be mainstreamed across interventions. UNICEF and partners will thus ensure availability of safe water in shelters and affected communities, installation of adapted and gender-separated toilets and showers in shelters, along with handwashing stations, and promotion of safe hygiene behaviours (including for COVID-19 prevention). Moreover, within a comprehensive strategy linking humanitarian and development actions, UNICEF response will consider both the provision of WASH items, and the restoration of WASH services in affected communities, with a "building disaster resilience" approach, which will require considerable resources. Some families are reluctant to stay in shelters due to fear of COVID-19 contagion, hence the restoration of WASH services in the communities is of paramount importance.

The WASH Cluster remains active under UNICEF leadership, with coordination and information management roles. The Cluster partners have reached around 21,900 people, including 3,381 children, with WASH supplies and services, including 14,286 hygiene kits and 40,000 litres of water.

## **Child protection**

In partnership with the Government of Canada and local authorities, UNICEF is supporting the deployment of psychologists to provide mental health services in communities and shelters, reaching over 10,000 girls, boys and their caretakers. Activities include working with young and adolescents' groups to conduct recreational activities.

UNICEF is supporting the deployment of multidisciplinary child protection teams from the national protection authority (DINAF), to monitor protection needs in shelters in San Pedro Sula and La Lima. These teams have identified at least 112 cases, including 106 children separated from their caretakers and six survivors of sexual abuse in shelters, which are already under DINAF protective custody.

UNICEF is working with community-based organizations, through implementing partner Plan International, to promote self-care measures and routes for reporting cases of violence against children (VAC) / gender-based violence (GBV), reaching 1,764 families in 21 shelters, in three municipalities.

With the Honduras Red Cross, mental health first aid and PSS are being provided in three shelters in Tegucigalpa, the country's capital. At least 539 children have been reached and actions will be expanded to the most affected municipalities in the northern coast.

UNICEF will scale up an integrated WASH and child protection response, through Save the Children, in marginalized communities in Rivera Hernandez, sector Planeta (San Pedro Sula) and Chamelecón (Choloma). With UNICEF support, volunteer violence interrupters and community leaders in these areas helped distributing emergency protective equipment to around 2,100 people during the past two weeks, in an effort to stem the contagion of COVID-19 under cramped shelter conditions, in addition to water, food, clothes and basic necessities such as hygiene kits and undergarments, and menstrual pads for girls and women. These community partners have been monitoring the situation in shelters to prevent and interrupt abuse of girls, boys, women. They are working with communities and shelter managers to fundraise for food, medical, clothing, mats and other basic needs, support efforts to reduce violence and gender-based violence, and communicate key information on how to seek help, including linking up with municipal and national child protective services.

Given the impact of the hurricanes on children's mental health and wellbeing, among the main needs in the child protection sector, and UNICEF's priorities, are: ensuring monitoring and identification of protection needs of children, women and families, both in shelters and affected communities; strengthening capacities of authorities and local partners in terms of shelter management, with a child protection lens; and ensuring continuity of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services. The adoption of negative coping mechanisms, including sexual exploitation and survival sex, must be considered into the response.

Ensuring that shelters are equipped and adapted to protect women and children is critical. According to preliminary information from UNICEF's data collection exercise in shelters,<sup>21</sup> on average, only 36 percent of women in shelters have access to gender-separated toilets, and only six per cent of sanitary facilities intended for the use of women / girls are illuminated and have locks. Gaps in access to essential child protection services have been identified in densely populated and highly affected urban slums in San Pedro Sula, La Lima and Choloma.

With 13 organizations, including DINAF, the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) is active with UNICEF leadership. The AoR focus is on the provision of protection services and emergency psychosocial support in shelters and communities, and capacity building of shelters' coordinators. UNICEF is also part of the GBV subgroup, which has prioritized the continuation of services for GBV survivors in shelters and communities. The AoR partners have reached over 36,172 people across the country. The CP AoR group estimates that around US\$ 5 million would be required to reach an additional 140,000 girls, boys and their caretakers, including indigenous, Garifuna and afro-Honduran communities severely impacted along the northern coast of Honduras.

## **Education**

The ministry of education (MoE) response plan comprises three action lines: psychosocial support, biosafety measures and pedagogical support. With UNICEF support, key personnel of most affected departments have been trained as trainers to promote the "Return to happiness" and "Return to calm" strategies in shelters. The MoE is coordinating these activities with the Psychosocial workgroup created to respond to COVID-19 emergency. Biosafety measures are being promoted by the Environmental Education and Communication and Health of the MoE, in coordination with the Biosafety workgroup. The MoE is collecting information to organize educative levelling and tutoring groups, according to the students' level of progress. UNICEF will continue supporting all three priority workstreams of the MoE.

## **Early Childhood Development (ECD)**

To date, early childhood development (ECD) remains a major gap, for there are no shelters with spaces or actions promoting ECD. However, in some shelters, ECD activities are being implemented for children over six only. Counselling and supplies are needed to help parents of young children carry out age-appropriate stimulation activities with their children, in order to help reduce post-traumatic stress and facilitate conditions that contribute to children's development. UNICEF plans to support authorities' efforts on this front, including through the provision of PPE.

## **Social Protection**

With pre-existing funds,<sup>22</sup> UNICEF is supporting an in-kind social transfers programme<sup>23</sup> through municipal governments, targeting over 18,000 families, 4,500 families have been reached. In addition, UNICEF is supporting child feeding centres in Puerto Cortés, these centres provide prepared food for 26 shelters, reaching 2,563 people (625 families), among them 1,166 children and adolescents.

From over 580,000 families affected in 105 municipalities, UNICEF estimates that 163,000 would be in need of social protection humanitarian support. The damage caused by the rain, accounts for the loss or serious deterioration of the situation of families, as well as from the interruption of income for consumption with multiple purposes (food, hygiene, etc.). The recovery activities that families have to attend are preventing them from returning to their economic activities, which have also been impacted. This comes after the socio-economic effects that COVID-19 had already generated, further deteriorating household income and increasing the risks and vulnerability faced by families in the affected areas.

Recently gathered information shows that despite efforts by local governments to set up shelters, their capacities to address the needs of affected people are being exceeded (loss of income, food and nutrition needs, consumption of water, clothing and others). Preliminary information collected in 12 municipalities, indicates that from a total of 813 people in the shelters assessed, for 443 people (54 per cent) food needs are not fully covered by the shelters' current capacities.

UNICEF estimates that at least US\$ 700,000 will be needed to provide social transfers to the most vulnerable among the affected families.

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<sup>21</sup> From a preliminary exercise in 23 shelters in six municipalities (as of 10 November).

<sup>22</sup> Reprogramming of funds approved by the donor, the Government of Canada.

<sup>23</sup> Including mainly food and, in some cases, non-food items such as masks or mats.

## NICARAGUA

### Health

According to PAHO, the overcrowding and restriction of mobility in shelters could lead to the appearance of new cases of COVID-19. The situation could be further aggravated by the lack of handwashing stations, water, soap and alcohol-based solutions. As a COVID-19 prevention measure, UNICEF has commissioned PPE for 1,000 health workers.

Nicaragua is facing multiple diseases that are threatening girls, boys and pregnant and lactating women, especially in shelters. One of the major health concerns is malaria: according to epidemiological surveillance reports, an increase of more than 200 per cent has been registered. Only in shelters, 228 cases of malaria have been diagnosed to date. In addition, leptospirosis represents another threat. According to media reports, the ministry of health has prophylactically medicated 107,144 people from 218 towns in Bilwi. As a preventive measure, the MoH has prioritized the deworming of 1,550 girls and boys from 4 to 12 years old in six towns in Puerto Cabezas.

Although the country has maintained an active surveillance of cases, the epidemiological surveillance report of suspected measles cases has been reduced by more than 100 per cent. Prinzapolka is the municipality with the lowest immunization coverage in the country (less than 70 per cent).

Overcrowding in shelters can further increase other health problems, such as HIV and tuberculosis. According to administrative data, the HIV incidence rate in the municipality of Waspam is three times higher than the national average. The mother-child transmission rate of HIV in the municipality of Waspam is 20 per cent while the national rate is 3.5 per cent. Similarly, the incidence rate of Tuberculosis in all forms is 112.8 per cent in Waspam and 34.4 per cent at the national level.

### Nutrition

The communities living on the banks of the Coco River suffer from food insecurity and malnutrition. In these communities, food consists mostly of rice and banana, harvested in the communities themselves. After Eta, all crops have been lost. The National System for the Prevention, Mitigation and Attention of Disasters (SINAPRED) reports that 20 tons of food, donated by the church "Amigos de Cristo", are being delivered to affected families.

The CO response plan prioritizes the distribution of supply kits for undernourished pregnant women. In addition, UNICEF will implement counselling sessions for caregivers and targeted communication strategies to promote IYCF practices (including breastfeeding), and to ensure safe food preparation procedures. The material will be in line with emergency preparedness and response standards.

### Early Childhood Development (ECD)

More than 500 girls and boys who were attending child development centres (CDI) prior Eta/Iota, are at risk of being left behind since six CDI infrastructures have been damaged.

As part of its humanitarian response plan, UNICEF will provide psychosocial support to 120 children and their caregivers, as well as counselling for prevention of COVID 19, including IPC. In 2019, UNICEF had trained staff from the ministry of family (MIFAN) and MoH on ECD and emergencies management. The trained staff are supporting the current response.

### WASH

On 11 November, UNICEF, in collaboration with World Vision, delivered WASH supplies that are being distributed by SINAPRED, benefiting 15,000 families.

The actual scale of the emergency, considering now the double impact of Eta and Iota, is still unclear, as there are difficulties in mapping the needs and key partners. UNICEF is coordinating actions with partners from the network of water and sanitation organizations and entities (RASNIC) and Accion Medica Cristiana, for situation monitoring and to identify potential complementary actions on the ground.

Due to overcrowding, lack of use of PPE, insufficient WASH services and electricity supply, families in shelter are extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. The situation in communities is also concerning. As of 14 November, there were at least 14 contaminated wells, 68 destroyed latrines and flooded houses in 14 communities on the banks of the Coco Abajo River. Damages are expected to be greater after Iota's impact. The water treatment plant in Bilwi has been damaged and the Waspán plant is out of order.

The MoH has delivered 63,773 kilos of granulated chlorine and 9,084 litres of chlorine to the communities most at risk, to ensure availability of safe water for human consumption and food preparation. In addition, 15,124 house-to-house visits have been conducted in the municipalities of Puerto Cabezas, Waspán and Prinzapolka, sharing RCCE messages to almost 12,000 people and eliminating more than 20,000 mosquito breeding sites.

The Nuevo Amanecer hospital in Bilwi has been severely damaged and patients were evacuated to other facilities. On 16 November, the hospital was once again evacuated to the Regional Government Building. Damages have been also reported in 16 health facilities.

### Child Protection

A radio campaign, in collaboration with the judicial branch is ongoing with key messages on prevention of sexual violence and referral to services. Messages are disseminated in local languages: Miskito, Mayagna and Creol.

Child Friendly spaces will be installed in shelters and affected communities, in collaboration with Plan International, Save The Children and BICU University. In shelters, messages will be distributed on prevention of all forms of violence and protection of children, parenting, as well as on guidelines for cohabitation in shelters.

UNICEF and organizations part of the Global Movement of Children are joining efforts to map psychosocial support and legal services for girls, boys, and adolescents' victims of violence, including survivors of GBV, available in affected communities. These efforts will be complemented with training sessions for professionals of the field. Furthermore, UNICEF will conduct an analysis of the situation of children and child protection needs, including GBV, prevention of violence, linked to alternative care and the right to live with family, in the territories affected by Eta and Iota, including an analysis of the local road map for access to justice and local protection for girls, boys and adolescents that need special protection

UNICEF is in coordination with the ministry of family, and will present a comprehensive report on child protection needs in shelters, detailing number of shelters, number of families, number of children, and main needs in shelters.

### **Education**

Schools remain closed in most of the affected municipalities, and those schools that have not been damaged (some 31 schools in the municipalities of Waspam, Puerto Cabezas and Prinzapolka) are being used as shelters. Damages to public and private schools all over the affected region have been registered. In the area of the "Mine Triangle" (Bonanza, Siuna and Rosita), teachers are being deployed to support the management and assistance of families in shelters. In this context, there are approximately 40,000 school aged children out of school, either at home or in shelters.

UNICEF intervention will focus in providing psychosocial support and supporting temporary learning spaces. For this, UNICEF is working together with the national and regional education authorities, as well as with international organizations with presence in the affected areas, such as Plan International and Save the Children. The 2020 school year will conclude by the end of November, and children would have a school break during the months of December and January. During this time, friendly spaces and temporary learning places will be opened to provide children with a sense of normality, increase their resilience, and catch up in their studies. By doing so, by the beginning of the new school year in February 2021, they will be ready to continue their formal education. UNICEF is currently procuring tents for child-friendly and temporary learning spaces, and is also in the process of acquiring didactic and recreational kits locally.

### **Communication for Development (C4D)**

Since the onset of the emergency, the CO has disseminated messages focused on encouraging families to implement the protection measures as indicated by the official institutions, reaching over 38,000 people. New communication messages on WASH, health, child protection and education are being developed. These will be disseminated through radio and other traditional media, to reach the most affected communities, including in shelters.

UNICEF is preparing communication material for the prevention of COVID-19 and elimination of vector breeding sites (for malaria), including in Miskito language. The CO has designed a C4D plan to respond to the information needs of affected populations and has developed a media plan to position UNICEF's response to the hurricane, at national and international level, and to keep the media permanently informed through press releases and digital content.

## **PANAMA**

### **Child Protection**

UNICEF is providing technical assistance to the government on the implementation of a child protection plan for the children affected. As part of the plan, UNICEF will be providing training to local government staff on the delivery of psychosocial support, as well as providing ECD and recreation kits. UNICEF is coordinating these actions with the ministry of social development, the MoE, the national child protection authority, and the MoH. UNICEF, together with its implementing partner HIAS, will also be delivering psychosocial support to children through the implementation of Child Friendly Spaces.

### **Nutrition**

UNICEF is providing technical guidance to the MoH and the ministry of social development on breastfeeding and nutrition in emergencies.

### **WASH/Non-food items**

UNICEF has provided 13 tonnes of humanitarian aid that include 5,940 thermal blankets, tarpaulin (200), three water tanks with capacity for 10,000 litres each, two tents (41 m<sup>2</sup>), 1,000 mosquito nets, and 100 measuring tape for Middle Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) nutritional screening. These items will benefit migrant families and communities affected by the impacts of Eta and Iota in vulnerable border communities in the provinces of Chiriqui, Bocas del Toro, the indigenous territory of Ngäbe-Buglé and the Darien province. Additional items are being procured to reach other areas of the country affected by the hurricanes, including recreational and ECD kits, and tents for child friendly spaces.

## **Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy**

UNICEF COs across the sub-region are monitoring the situation, in coordination with authorities and partners. Governments are leading evacuations, rescue operations and response to localized emergencies, through national disaster response agencies. Given the current COVID-19 context and the latent risks in shelters and vulnerable communities, across its response actions, UNICEF will ensure the implementation of biosafety protocols and the availability of personal protective equipment for affected people and frontline workers.

In **Belize**, the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) has been active in putting in place preparedness measures, based on the measures implemented earlier this year during other tropical storm threats. The UNETT has been activated and meeting regularly.

In **Costa Rica**, the UNCT and the UNETE are monitoring the situation and organizing its response in close coordination and communication with national authorities, now with the added onslaught of Hurricane IOTA. On 11 Nov the RC received a

formal request for humanitarian support for all UN agencies from the National Emergency Commission. Based on the request, UNICEF has developed a proposed response plan, with focus on WASH and GBV/Protection.

The government of **El Salvador** has discontinued the red alert, most of the country is in yellow alert, only the municipality of Nejapa remains in red alert. The Civil Protection System is activated, along with Technical Sectorial Commissions, including the Technical Health Commission. UNETE and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) are activated and monitoring the situation. The government of El Salvador is providing assistance to the government of Guatemala and Honduras to respond to the crisis. National authorities are participating in HCT. WASH, Protection, Food Security and Nutrition, and Health sectors are activated to respond to the emergency, led / co-led by UNICEF. National sectoral authorities and NGOs also participate in these clusters. UNICEF is coordinating efforts with line ministries, local governments, and NGOs through the cluster system, to strengthen coordination, avoid duplication and identification of synergies. UNICEF participated in a joint UN mission coordinated with the national authorities to visit the shelters, UNICEF provided technical advice on WASH.

In **Guatemala**, CONRED leads the governmental preparedness and response efforts. The HCT is active and monitoring the situation, with participation of national authorities. Five clusters have been activated by the Resident Coordinator: WASH, Health, Food Security, Shelter and Protection. UNICEF is coordinating and co-leading WASH, Education and Nutrition Clusters, and the Child Protection AoR. UNICEF CO participates in UNETE and the HCT and maintain coordination with CONRED.

In **Honduras**, response efforts are coordinated by the National Contingency Coordination Agency (COPECO). The government, UN and organizations comprising the humanitarian network are supporting COPECO in conducting a multisectoral assessment of damages and needs, which results are expected by mid-November. The WASH Cluster and Child Protection AoR, with UNICEF coordination support are active. UNICEF has also activated the Early Childhood AoR and is ready to activate the Education Cluster, if required. UNICEF also participates in the Health Cluster, and in the recently activated Shelter Cluster, coordinated by OIM, and is supporting efforts for mapping shelter's needs, in collaboration with the Association of Municipalities of Honduras (AMHON), a strategic partner of UNICEF. In this Cluster, IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR are coordinating technical support to AMHON to gather information on the priority needs in shelters, reported by local governments of the most affected municipalities and thus complement the information provided by COPECO. The Humanitarian Country Team has issued a Flash Appeal for the Eta response. In addition, cluster have prepared initial concept notes for CERF allocations. UNICEF, as WASH leader, presented a sectoral proposal for WASH immediate support, and a Child Protection component under the Protection Cluster umbrella.

In **Nicaragua**, the governmental response is coordinated by the National System for the Prevention, Mitigation and Attention of Disasters (SINAPRED). The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and the United Nations Emergency Team (UNETE) are monitoring the situation and coordinating support with local and national authorities.

The government of **Panama** activated the National Task Force to lead the governmental responds efforts. The UNCT has activated the UNETE team to monitor the impact of the emergency and is in close communication and coordination with national authorities. The UN is providing support, primarily with NFIs and technical assistance, as requested by the national government.

**UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO)** provides technical support to COs' teams, and monitors closely the situation in communication with COs and partners. 'Virtual teams' have been activated in LACRO to provide remote on-hands support to COs. Sectoral coordination mechanisms have been also activated at regional level.

The **Regional WASH LAC Group**, co-led by UNICEF and PAHO, continues providing tools for national groups along with remote support to the national WASH coordination platforms.

The **Regional Education Working Group (REWG)** leads are gathering information from all partners about their immediate response activities in order to map the education response in the affected countries.

The **Regional Health** team has supported COs to assess the need for health interventions in the response plans, and costing and estimating medical supply needs for people in need in the affected countries, in close coordination with HQ.

The **Regional Nutrition** team, after receiving evidence from breast milk substitutes donations in shelters, prepared and issued a statement to call all humanitarian partners working in the response not to request donations of breast milk substitutes, including infant formulas, follow-up formulas, and powdered milk, and not to distribute these products in the affected population to avoid diseases, malnutrition and deaths. A special communication was made to the shelter sector aiming at entities responsible for the shelter sector in the affected countries. The Regional team also issued a call to distribute healthy food options, in accordance with the WHO Recommendations for a healthy diet.

The **Regional** sub-group on Child Protection in Emergencies, co-lead by UNICEF and WV is providing technical support to national groups on VAC, GBV and psychosocial support in shelters and communities are the key sector's priorities.

The **Social Protection** team has provided guidance on the assessment of social protection readiness, toolbox for cash transfer in emergencies and lessons learned from recent cash transfer programmes experiences in Guatemala and El Salvador, among other resources. A mechanism for supporting the design of cash-based interventions has been established, involving technical advice from the Regional Offices and HQ.

The **C4D LACRO** team led the collection Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) resources for Emergencies, with the collaboration of the Country Offices and the Risk Emergency Disaster Working Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC). As a result, C4D LACRO launched an internal web site with RCCE resources for Emergencies. It includes guidance, multimedia materials, good practices, and references on protection, violence, migration, and nutrition in emergency contexts. These resources are distributed through a weekly newsletter reaching UNICEF COs, HQ, EMOPS, and external networks such as the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN).

The **Gender Team** continues supporting COs, guided by the Gender Equality CCCs. Gender and GBV assessment tools and technical assistance has been provided to assess the need for Gender and GBV interventions and key priorities to include in response plans. There is an increasing concern on how the needs of women and girls and protection risks, as GBV, are increasing in temporary shelters and communities affected.

The **Regional Communication team** is providing support to COs to produce press releases, human interest stories and multimedia materials from countries most affected in order to generate public awareness and media attention on this crisis. A mechanism has been set up to photos, videos and stories are collected in three countries through AFP services with the aim to respond to fundraising needs as quickly as possible.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

On 18 November, LACRO issued a [press release](#) along with the launch of the regional Eta/Iota funding appeal for Central America, aiming at supporting fundraising efforts. On 11 November, the Regional Office in coordination with the affected COs issued a [press release](#) on the number of affected children across Central America. The press release had high visibility and was featured by national and international media, highlighting the most urgent needs of children affected by Eta ([CNN](#), [Le Monde](#), [EFE](#)). Previous press releases focused on the potential number of children at risk in Honduras and Nicaragua. RO coordinated several interviews with key media as [CNN](#) or [BBC](#). A compelling [human interest story](#) of an affected children from Nicaragua was released and shared globally. On social media, regional channels have been proactive in disseminating preventive and post-emergency lifesaving messages. Regional channels have also been active in the amplification of life stories and press releases, and the creation of Twitter Moments with clear and valuable information to face the emergency. High-quality photos and videos from Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and other affected countries have been updated, collected, and shared with media, partners, donors and NatComs in support of fundraising efforts via [weshare](#). The delivery of supplies in Nicaragua was covered by national and international media, generating more than 30 stories.

### Materials produced and UNICEF mentions at country level:

#### Belize

- [\[Press release\] UNICEF statement on Belize flooding in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Eta.](#)

#### Guatemala

- [\[Media\] UNICEF DONA MIL 900 KIT'S DE HIGIENE FAMILIAR](#)

#### Honduras

- [\[Media\] Miles de niños y adolescentes aún se encuentran en albergues por ETA](#)
- [\[Media\] In Central America, a devastating storm and an uncertain future](#)
- [\[Media\] Niñez y juventud de Honduras sin educación, con violencia y viviendo en las calles](#)
- [\[Social media\] What to do during and after a Tropical Storm or Hurricane - UNICEF shares some important recommendations](#)
- [\[Social media\] "The bed, my dad's phone, our clothes, the stove, the fan, everything. Before we knew it, our house was flooded." Human interest story on Rufino](#)

#### Nicaragua

- [\[Press release\] 15.000 familias nicaragüenses afectadas por el huracán Eta serán beneficiadas por kits de higiene y equipos para purificación de agua, saneamiento e higiene entregados al SINAPRED](#)
- [\[Social media\] Video Haulover community](#)

#### Panama

- [\[Social media\] UNICEF delivers supplies for Eta / Iota response](#)
- [\[Press Release\] UNICEF y agencias de la ONU en Panamá apoyan los esfuerzos de respuesta del Gobierno ante la emergencia por ETA e IOTA](#)

#### El Salvador

- [\[Social media\] <https://twitter.com/UnicefSV/status/1322370720605888512>](#)

## Annex A

### Funding status\*

Sector	Requirements	Humanitarian resources received (US\$)**	Funding gap	
			US\$	%
Nutrition	2,711,209		2,711,209	100
Health	1,388,523		1,388,523	100
WASH	30,854,673	100,000	30,754,673	99.7
Education / Early Childhood Development	2,296,800		2,296,800	100
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	3,572,200		3,572,200	100
Social protection and cash transfers	1,263,000		1,263,000	100
Regional office technical capacity	500,000		500,000	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,586,405</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>42,486,405</b>	<b>99.8</b>

\* As defined in Humanitarian Appeal of 18 November 2020 for a period of six months.

\*\* Includes only new funds received for the Eta/Iota response.

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