

Two Hurricanes & COVID-19 Devastate Honduras

In the midst of a global pandemic that has overwhelmed Honduras, two category 4 hurricanes hit Honduras, affecting over 4.2 million people.¹

ASJ is responding by providing relief to vulnerable communities and advocating for transparent, effective government responses to these crises.



Image Source: [US News](#)



Image Source: [The Guardian](#)



COVID-19: Impact in Honduras

- Since March 2020, Honduras has struggled to address the pandemic and care for those most impacted.
- The Honduran Government enforced a strict lockdown to prevent spread of the disease. They implemented a curfew and closed schools, public transportation, and non-essential businesses. The government also uses a stay-at-home system that restricts movement to one day every two weeks (based on ID numbers).
- But beyond these measures, Honduras lacks a coherent and coordinated COVID-19 strategy, which has underscored the need for transparent, well-prepared public institutions that protect citizen life.

Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases

Shown is the rolling 7-day average. The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of actual cases; the main reason for that is limited testing.

Our World
in Data



Source: [Our World in Data](#)

**Impact of COVID-19
in Honduras**

as of November 24, 2020

104,915
confirmed cases²

2,859 deaths,²
including 49 doctors³

\$1 billion in
economic damage⁴

ASJ: Auditing the Government's COVID-19 Emergency Response

ASJ was invited to audit the government's COVID-19 purchases by INVEST-H (a government purchasing agency), which included \$80 million worth of medical equipment. Our investigations revealed that Honduras lacks a coherent and coordinated strategy to address the pandemic.

Our Findings

- Over 1,000 ventilators were purchased without a distribution plan.
- Over 276,000 test kits were purchased without the extraction kits or lab equipment necessary to actually use the tests.
- Seven field hospitals were overpriced by \$2 million each.
- Our investigations led to the arrest of the director of INVEST-H for alleged misuse of public funds.

[See all 7 of ASJ's reports on the government's COVID-19 purchasing.](#)

In light of these failings, ASJ has been calling for a team of national and international experts to design and implement a clear national strategy that carries Honduras through COVID-19 and recovery.



Image Source: ASJ



Image Source: BBC

Hurricane Eta & Hurricane Iota

In the midst of the devastating impact of COVID-19 in Honduras, the country was hit by two category 4 hurricanes within two weeks of each other.



Image Source: *Ultima Hora*

- Hurricane Eta hit Honduras on November 4, and Hurricane Iota hit on November 17. Hurricane Iota marks the 30th named storm in the Atlantic basin this year - the most in recorded history.⁵
- The storms affected over 4.2 million Hondurans.⁶ The storms are estimated to have caused \$5 billion in economic damages⁷ — about 20% of the nation's GDP.
- Hundreds of thousands of Hondurans have had to relocate to temporary shelters.⁶ Shelters have become a hotspot for COVID-19 with a positivity rate of 33%.⁸
- 2.5 million people have limited or no access to health services due to hurricane damage.⁹
- The storms are expected to be a driver of migration, as was the case after Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

**Collective Impact of
Hurricanes in Honduras**

Over 4.2 million
people affected⁶

189,462 evacuated
from their homes¹⁰

\$5 billion in
economic damage⁷

Hurricane Damage

The heavy rains from hurricanes Eta and Iota caused rivers to overflow, cut off roads, and created landslides throughout Honduras' mountainous terrain. It brought severe damage both to individual households and some of the country's most important infrastructure.



Image Source: [The Maritime Executive](#)



Image Source: [El Diario de Hoy](#)



Image Source: [Washington Post](#)

Top: San Pedro Sula airport completely flooded after Hurricane Iota.

Far Left: Aerial view of residents stranded on rooftops after Hurricane Eta.

Left: Rescuers navigate through a flooded road in La Lima, Honduras on November 18.

ASJ's Response to the Hurricanes

Supporting the Vulnerable

Since the beginning of the pandemic, ASJ has provided ongoing economic and psychological support to more than 500 of our beneficiaries facing increased vulnerability — many of whom are women and children.

Many of these same beneficiaries had their homes damaged by the hurricanes, including 50 families who completely lost their homes to flooding. ASJ is working with these families to ensure they have access to food, safe shelter, and the ability to rebuild their homes and their livelihoods.



Coordinating Humanitarian Aid and Auditing Government Purchasing

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the Honduran government's failings in developing a strategic crisis response. In response to the hurricanes, ASJ is working alongside the government and NGOs to coordinate the distribution of humanitarian aid.

Additionally, ASJ has been invited to monitor government purchasing (similar to our work for COVID-19 emergency purchasing). This will include auditing the government's plan for humanitarian aid and rebuilding infrastructure throughout the country.

