

**OFFICE OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

**EVALUATION OF IOM PROJECT FOR SHELTER  
CONSTRUCTION AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR  
VICTIMS OF 'MITCH'**

**July 2000**

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IOM International Organization for Migration

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In October 1998, Honduras was devastated by the force of Hurricane Mitch. Faced with this major disaster, the President launched an international appeal for urgent assistance to his country. IOM's Regional Office in Costa-Rica sent officials in order to assess what kind of contribution IOM could make.

To facilitate the discussions, nine project cards describing IOM potential fields of intervention were proposed to the Government and the different partners. Following the series of meetings held to prepare a response, IOM was tasked in January 1999 to conduct a census of the affected population through funds received from UNDP. The need to assist the most affected populations living in public buildings, churches or soccer camps was identified, but also the need to vacate those places in order to return to a more normal social life in Honduras. With that in mind, in agreement with the donor community, IOM started to build temporary shelters for the victims and to provide them with social assistance.

While the census continued, two project proposals prepared on the basis of the project cards previously presented were approved for funding; respectively by UNDP and OFDA/USAID, with additional contributions from UNICEF and PAHO/WHO. In February 1999, an additional project called the "Exit Program" was funded by OTI/USAID, and in August 1999 an extension of the OFDA/USAID contribution was approved by USAID. In May 2000, a project agreement was signed with the Canadian Red Cross, still in the framework of IOM response. The total of the financial contributions allocated to IOM amounts to USD 11.5 Million. Different partners, including Agencies of the UN System, NGOs or private entities also contributed to the projects with in-kind contributions.

In the face of such a complex intervention involving 11 governmental institutions, 9 municipalities and 20 international and national NGOs, the evaluation exercise was approached from a global perspective rather than concentrating on one single project. It is important to underline that IOM was in charge of coordinating the different interventions and contributions, and collaboration with all the partners was considered very positive.

Concerning the global administration of the entire intervention, the evaluation found that IOM worked in a very professional and efficient way. No complaints from the Government, donors or partners were found. Specific technical, administrative and financial reporting mechanisms were put in place, which also facilitated the overall management of the operations.

The evaluation also concluded that the intervention was in line with IOM's mandate. The projects not only covered a construction component but also a strong component of social assistance for the uprooted populations in order to help them to return to a more normal life. As for the relevance of the target group, it was found that the selection process was done with clear criteria based on the census previously conducted and analyzed. No major complaints arose at that level.

Concerning the effectiveness of IOM's intervention, the evaluation shows that IOM managed the construction component in a very effective way, especially taking into account the very difficult environment created by the Mitch disaster and the tight deadlines imposed by the situation. There was a need to return to a more normal life in Honduras by vacating the public buildings, especially the schools.

As for the organization of the social life in the temporary shelters, it was found that many important activities have been implemented in different sectors. Briefly, these were: communication and information; transportation; emergency kits; maintenance; education; vocational training; health; security; women and children's concerns. There is no doubt that the constructions alone would not have solved the many problems facing the victims. The social component of IOM intervention was also the key to the effective result of the overall response and the satisfaction of the victims.

At the efficiency level, no serious problems have been encountered. There was a real need to be flexible in the allocation of funds. However, flexibility did not mean lack of control and the report clearly shows that the flexibility in the use of the funds was well-justified and carefully monitored.

Finally, there is no doubt that the IOM intervention had a positive impact on:

- the affected population, who received the much-needed assistance;
- the Government of Honduras as well as the Honduras Red Cross who were faced with many serious problems all around the country and who welcomed IOM's assistance;
- IOM's image due to the success of its intervention and its capacity to bring all the different partners together.