



Anticipatory Action Activation

Honduras



Anticipatory action to mitigate the impact of Tropical Storm Sara in Honduras

In November 2024, the World Food Programme (WFP), together with the Government of Honduras and partners, implemented an Anticipatory Action (AA) activation in the coastal zones of Cortés and Choluteca. This activation aimed to mitigate the impacts of the predicted flooding caused by Tropical Storm Sara on the lives, livelihoods and food security of the most vulnerable people.

Since the start of the hurricane season in June 2024, WFP and the National Meteorological Agency of Honduras (CENAOS) have closely monitored forecasts. The flood trigger, aligned with the Red Cross's trigger mechanism, was activated based on wind velocity and rainfall forecasts from CENAOS and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). These forecasts, cross-verified with WFP's alert system, predicted a 60% likelihood that a tropical storm (34 knots or higher) would trigger the red alert zone and cause flooding within three days.

On November 14, WFP started implementing anticipatory actions (AAs) in the Choluteca and Cortés departments, selected based on vulnerability analyses. The targeted communities were identified as both being at high or recurrent risk of flooding and experiencing crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above).

In line with the Anticipatory Action Plan (AAP), WFP worked in close coordination with government partners, including the Permanent Commission on Contingencies (COPECO), and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in preparation for Tropical Storm Sara. Additionally, local partners, such as World Vision Honduras and Sur en Acción, collaborated with WFP to identify and pre-register beneficiaries and ensure logistical readiness for the activation. This effective coordination, WFP's strong logistical capabilities and extensive network of local suppliers facilitated the timely delivery of anticipatory life-saving support to the most vulnerable communities.

Key facts

Location: Cortés and Choluteca departments	
Number of people supported with value vouchers	2,000
Number of people supported with food assistance through commodity vouchers	3,000

As part of this collaborative effort, WFP implemented the following anticipatory actions:

- 1) Distribution of value vouchers:** WFP distributed anticipatory value vouchers worth USD 150 to 2,000 individuals in Cortés. These unconditional cash transfers were provided to pre-identified and pre-registered households meeting vulnerability-based targeting criteria in at-risk communities. The vouchers enabled at-risk individuals to meet their immediate needs before and after the floods, helping them avoid negative coping strategies.
- 2) Distribution of food assistance through commodity vouchers:** 3,000 vulnerable individuals in Choluteca and Cortés received commodity vouchers to stock food ahead of the floods. This assistance was designed to prevent food-insecure households from resorting to harmful coping mechanisms, such as reducing meal consumption, selling productive assets, or displacement to provisional shelters or urban centres.

The choice of assistance modality depended on the affected population's location because, while at-risk individuals in urban/peri-urban areas have relative access to markets, people living in rural areas do not have access to markets in times of crisis. For instance, in the communities in Choluteca and some in Cortés, the distribution of food assistance through commodity vouchers was considered a better option because there are no formal markets close to those communities.

Storm Sara brought severe flooding and mudslides and according to COPECO, the storm affected some 251,000 people. Estimates from the Ministry of Agriculture indicate that 80% of the corn and bean crops in their second (*postrera*) harvest were affected by the floods caused by the storm. WFP and partners could only partially meet and mitigate the humanitarian needs through anticipatory action. Working in partnership on a scale-up plan and supporting the institutionalization of AA will be a priority for 2025.

As part of a larger contribution from the Government of Sweden, USD 150,000 were provided for AA, enabling timely prepositioning for a scale-up of operations. In addition, funding from the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) laid the foundations for developing the AA programme in Honduras.

