

HURRICANES ETA AND IOTA

Our Support in Honduras as shared by Richard Hayes, President of the Board

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The largest city in northern Honduras is La Ceiba, founded 143 years ago between two rivers, the Danto to the west and the Cangrejal to the east. La Ceiba was originally a banana port in the early days of the banana republics. Currently, approximately 20,000 people live in this valley. Most inhabitants are subsistence farmers and ranchers living relatively isolated lives.

There is only one road in and out of the valley.

In November 2020, both rivers flooded with the arrival Hurricane Eta followed by Hurricane Iota two weeks later. Hurricane Eta flooded the area destroying a main bridge and Hurricane Iota's winds exacerbated the flooding damage by knocking down a large quantity of trees. The resulting devastation was tragic.

The sole road was washed out.

These two hurricanes inflicted a combined national damage estimated at \$15 billion or 60% of Honduras GDP. In response, we made contact with our local partners, primarily along the northern coast and Cangrejal River with a goal to support economic recovery consistent with our mission:

Assist smaller dollar projects that directly benefit communities.

[Denver Cherry Creek Rotary Club](#) members who visited with us in 2017 ([read more](#)) immediately asked if they could partner to help the Cangrejal River valley schools. The seemingly simple request was for school supplies, but as there is no easy supply source in Honduras, supplies were purchased in the United States and shipped to La Ceiba.

School supplies arrived in mid-December, just after the road was open for limited use.

The residents of La Ceiba were incredibly inventive as they formed a chain using a combination of trucks, motorcycles, burros and manpower to transport the goods to their destination. With [Cuero y Salado](#), a local Honduran NGO, we have sent grants to help with future infrastructure projects, including repairs to the water delivery system and replacement of the pedestrian suspension bridge that was washed up near the river headwaters.



This very special region in Honduras has been a part of Dick Hayes's life for over two decades and we are grateful to share his recent story of community support. For more about our other outreach, please visit www.thehayesfamilyfoundation.org.