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Disaster Management Alliance Update

Thursday, February 19, 2009

During October and November of last year, Honduras was hit by Tropical Depression No. 16 and a cold front simultaneously as well as the tail end of Tropical Storm Paloma. The natural disasters left 49 dead and over 300,000 people affected. Honduras faced the largest crisis the country had experienced since Hurricane Mitch, 10 years ago. Homes, crops and 50% of roads and bridges were devastated leaving thousands stranded without shelter.

Thanks to the Disaster Management and Business Continuity Committee of The American Chamber of Commerce in Honduras in collaboration with the Permanent Contingency Commission (COPECO) many of those affected were able to receive urgently needed aid. They distributed in-kind donations of food, clothes, medicine, mattresses, and other materials valued at \$13,000 USD which were donated by UPS, Rio Garment, Cargill, Chevron Corporation, Seaboard Marine, and others. Additionally the companies provided volunteers to assist in the contribution. The contribution benefitted over 460 families in northern Honduras.

In the city of El Progreso, COPECO and AmCham Honduras provided assistance to over 800 families. Members of the community received mattresses, hygiene kits, water, and other necessary items through a donation from Chevron coordinated by AmCham Honduras and the Pan American Development Foundation. Chevron also mobilized its employees and partner network to enable the coordination of this donation.



"Chevron is proud to be able to contribute its time and money to these emergency relief efforts for Honduras," said Ana Belinda Martinez, the District Sales Manager for Chevron in Honduras, "Together we can do all that is possible to make sure that these disasters do not become tragedies." Chevron is a key collaborator of PADF's Disaster Management

and Emergency Response Program (DMERP) which facilitates corporate collaboration throughout the hemisphere.

In August, a donation to Honduras of 13 containers of humanitarian assistance items worth US\$500,000 for COPECO had remained in port by mistake. Once the AmCham Honduras Disaster Management Committee heard of the situation, it mobilized contacts at the port to reduce the fees which had risen to almost US\$48,000. It also enlisted the collaboration of the UPS Foundation to pay the remaining charges of \$14,228. The only condition was that the items benefit the communities throughout northern Honduras. This all happened just in time to help those affected by the flooding.

We would like to congratulate AmCham Honduras and our corporate partners for their outstanding efforts to improve disaster risk reduction, management, and response.

The Disaster Management Alliance

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