

Cooperative Housing Foundation
Quarterly Performance Report

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110368

Mitigation Initiative for Communities and Municipalities (MICAM)
El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras

Grantee: Cooperative Housing Foundation
Cooperative Agreement: AOT-G-00-01-00038-00
Reporting Period: April 1, 2001 through June 30, 2001
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1. Background

On February 20, 2001, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through their Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) awarded \$925,000 to the Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) through Cooperative Agreement No. AOT-G-00-01-00038-00 to coordinate the Mitigation Initiative for Communities and Municipalities (MICAM) in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The Program responds to the devastation inflicted upon thousands of communities throughout Central America by Hurricane Mitch.

The damage caused by Hurricane Mitch highlighted a wide range of vulnerabilities throughout Central America. An analysis of the mitigation needs of these countries by OFDA emphasizes the complexity of providing effective mitigation and highlights the key linkages between mitigation of hazards and effective overall development of the region. Four of the mitigation issues identified by OFDA were: 1) poor local first responder preparedness and capacity; 2) lack of local capacity to reduce vulnerability; 3) highly vulnerable areas and settlements; and 4) building private sector roles in mitigation.

During an 18-month program, MICAM will respond to the mitigation issues identified by OFDA with an initiative aimed at the following three objectives from the OFDA Central American Mitigation Initiative (CAMI): Strengthen key organizations involved in each country's national emergency system; facilitate and generate greater participation of national private sector and other donor interests in the development of disaster prevention and preparedness programs; and incorporate risk management concepts into local development programs. To meet these objectives, CHF will improve local risk management in vulnerable areas by extending its successful Mitch Integrated Reconstruction Activity (MIRA) community preparedness and mitigation training model from El Salvador, to Honduras and Guatemala; and increase private sector involvement in mitigation and risk management by accelerating the dialogue within the private sector and between the private sector and government.

2. Expected Results

The MICAM Program objectives are to:

A. Improve local risk management capacity for vulnerable areas.

This objective will address communities with a high percentage of low-income residents who have exceptional vulnerability to hazards due to their geographical location and the ability of their institutions and community to organize responses. CHF anticipates reducing vulnerability for at least 133,145 people.

Activities will help communities at risk to:

- Identify risks and vulnerabilities;
- Plan to address risks and prepare for more effective response to emergencies;
- Identify and acquire resources needed;
- Build the technical and organizational capacity of target families, communities, and governmental and non-governmental organizations and representatives;
- Begin a productive dialogue with municipal, district and national emergency management officials which will realistically integrate planning for response at these three levels, provide local level input in national mitigation processes and policies, and encourage national organizations to improve support of local responders;
- Assist rural areas and neglected poor urban settlements that are exceptionally vulnerable.

B. Increase private sector involvement in mitigation.

Activities will build on on-going CHF programs that have resulted in private leadership in public programs for mitigation and municipal development. This is a pilot project meant to identify and organize progressive leadership and take the first steps toward creating private sector mechanisms for reducing loss from disasters. Expected to first benefit the private sector as well as the general population, it will ultimately reduce vulnerability for all members of the society.

Activities will:

- Organize private sector constituencies for reduction of vulnerability to disastrous events;
- Identify areas where policy changes or other government action can encourage the private sector to improve mitigation for commercial organizations.

C. Assure coordination, prevent duplication, and improve networking for emergency management.

Consultation and Coordination: MICAM activities have already been discussed with the USAID missions, OFDA representatives, and with national and local emergency management organizations in each country. Further consultation will continue to take place with USAID/OFDA and with other donors to ensure that activities a) do not duplicate on-going or recent assistance; b) fit with national mitigation and response planning; and c) build on training and support previously provided or on-going. All activities will encourage national emergency planners to accelerate their understanding of local risk management needs and processes, and to focus on support for local first responders.

Improving Networking: These activities will promote the exchange of ideas on risk management and increased networks for municipalities. CHF will facilitate networking within and between El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras to disseminate innovative ideas, as well as to assist municipalities, communities, and private sector groups in articulating common concerns and presenting their most important policy development issues to lawmakers.

3. Current Core Activities

This report covers the initial start-up activities of the MICAM Program in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras during the third quarter of FY01. Though the contract was signed between CHF and OFDA in February, the official Program start date was delayed until May 1, 2001, due to the devastating earthquakes in El Salvador in January and February. Thereby, this report only documents activities in the months of May and June.

EL SALVADOR

In El Salvador, the Program has four programmatic components:

1. An urban program which contains two sub-components:
 - a) Mitigation in high-risk neighborhoods.
 - b) Disaster Preparedness.
2. A rural program that contains activities for planning, disaster preparedness and mitigation, training and community development grants to 30 communities.
3. Schools. This component refers to support for schools in El Salvador by strengthening their capacity for disaster preparedness and administration of the mitigation process.
4. Private Sector. In this component CHF, will seek to stimulate dialogue between private and public actors for the identification of improved means by which to increase the participation of the private sector in the activities of risk mitigation at the level of communities and municipalities.

This first report contains the principal implementation activities of the Program related to the organization of the team, strategic planning, coordination with the authorities of the Comité Nacional de Emergencia (COEN) and other important local actors. In addition, the report makes reference to the training of team members and unification of work methodologies at the regional level. The report contains a summary of the principal activities realized, other relevant points, projected activities and limitations encountered.

A. Organization of the Program Team

1. In the first week of May, the coordination, promotion and implementation team for the Program was defined. Also, we completed the recruitment and selection process for a specialist in disaster preparedness, who will support the local activities (and regional if necessary) on a part time basis.
2. Participation in CHF's MICAM Program regional training workshop regarding risk intervention and disaster preparedness which took place in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on May 24th and 25th. This first regional workshop was important in order to analyze the scope of the Program, delegate work assignments, conceptualize risk interventions and realize practical exercises for intervening in high-risk communities.

B. Strategic and Operations Plan for the Program

1. Wrote the strategic plan for the life of the Program. Included a proposal of indicators and desired degrees of completion in the period.
2. Operations plan and resource plan under development. Designed the technical tools of diagnostic evaluation in communities, work plan per community, matrix of information of threats, vulnerabilities and resources and in general, the work methodology per community.

C. Coordination with National Authorities

Coordination and exchange of expectations regarding goals and scope of the Program with the Director of COEN. Agreed to sign a partnership agreement with COHEN that also includes the mayors of high-risk communities.

The Director of COEN proposed that the Program cover five municipalities at greatest risk located in the greater metropolitan area of San Salvador: 10-12 communities in San Salvador; five communities in Ciudad Delgado; five communities in Mejicanos; five communities in Ayutuxtepeque; and five communities in Cuscatancingo. We have asked COEN to make their request in writing with the respective justification. CHF will be in direct contact with the five municipal councils and will request a proposal from each of them. One argument suggested was that greater San Salvador, in spite of having the most serious threats and vulnerabilities in the informal/spontaneous settlements, does not receive sufficient support in strengthening its capabilities in identification of threats, prioritization and planning of risk mitigation, and disaster preparedness.

CHF considers it important to transfer part of the resources designated to the activities of disaster mitigation and preparedness in rural communities to urban areas in response to the request by COEN. On the other hand, it is strategic for CHF to maintain resources for rural communities in order to complement and integrate interventions with financing from other programs. The quantity of resources designated to urban and rural areas will be determined in relation to the demand of the mayors and other complementing factors coherent with the mission of the Program.

D. Regional Training Workshop and Unification of Local Intervention Methodologies

This workshop took place on June 19th and 20th in San Salvador. The importance of the workshop was that it developed the strategic plan for the Program at the regional level and strengthened the intervention methodology with the contribution of all the participants. This event was planned and facilitated by the regional coordination of MICAM.

E. Contacts with Municipalities

In the first 15 days of June, we collected information regarding high-risk communities in the jurisdiction of the municipality of San Salvador and Ciudad Delgado. The management of the districts of San Salvador supplied a list of 90 communities at high risk. The Mayor of Ciudad Delgado provided a list of 10 communities at high risk.

F. Liability Insurance

A factor of vulnerability for low-income families affected by the recent earthquakes in El Salvador, is the lack of access to liability insurance for their homes. The lack of a culture of prevention, and the lack of access to protective services when a destructive event occurs is part of a harmful circle of poverty that is deepened and negatively transferred horizontally and vertically among families which continue in the loss of trust in the future and generally, in the underdevelopment of the country. In order to help reverse this harmful cycle of poverty, CHF has realized an approach of private sector insurance for victims of the previous earthquakes who are potential beneficiaries of the USAID-funded Permanent Housing Program that CHF is implementing, which will benefit 715 families. To date, CHF has obtained two liability insurance policies for housing for the low-income sector (from two national private businesses). This model of individual policy does not have a precedent in El Salvador and CHF is being a pioneer in promoting the access to a universal alternative of risk mitigation for low-income families.

G. Principal Activities Projected

1. Sign partnership agreements with COEN and with municipalities participating in the Program.

2. Coordinate with leaders from at least 10 high-risk communities, to establish diagnostics of risks, vulnerabilities and resources, prioritize the threats and initiate the process of planning for risk mitigation. Identify at least two risk mitigation projects that would be able to receive financing from distinct local actors including the Private Sector.
3. Continue with technical assistance for the identification of local alliances with private sector entities.
4. Elaborate an informative brochure for the MICAM Program.

H. Limitations Encountered

The resignation of Dalia Castañeda from Partners of the Americas (POA), who was the person originally appointed by POA to be in charge of MICAM's schools component in El Salvador, has hindered the program start-up of that component. By the close of the quarter, POA had not yet identified a replacement.

With relation to COEN, in the spirit of coordination with the principal entity for disaster management in El Salvador, CHF is waiting for a written proposal listing communities classified as priorities in the greater metropolitan area of San Salvador. Once we have COEN's proposal, CHF can analyze and decide upon the quantity of resources that will be designated to the rural vs. urban communities.

GUATEMALA

MICAM start-up activities in Guatemala began with the hiring of MICAM staff, beginning with the MICAM Country Coordinator, Julio Urías. Later in the month, the team was consolidated with the addition of Cristian Barrientos and Ivonne Rivera as the MICAM Trainers. Whereas Ivonne is a new CHF employee, Cristian has been working with the organization since 1998 in the implementation of infrastructure projects under the CIT and Mitch cooperative agreements.

Since their incorporation in to the MICAM team, the Country Coordinator began an induction process with the Trainers to orient them in the area of disaster mitigation. This process has been ongoing since June and involves the concepts of disaster/risk reduction, the analysis of different forms of intervention and inter-institutional coordination techniques.

Specific activities for the quarter included:

A. Regional MICAM Training in Honduras

On May 23 through 25, MICAM staff attended the first regional MICAM workshop hosted by CHF Honduras. The objectives of the workshop consisted of the preparation of participants in the ability to clearly explain the goals and objectives of MICAM; successfully manage the concepts of the disaster cycle; identify, organize, and train community leaders in the ability to locate resources and plan project activities; foster strategic alliances with both the private and public sectors to participate in mitigation and preparation initiatives; and produce a local emergency plan

B. Visit to the Ixcán Program Area

From May 26 through 29, the MICAM team visited a sample of communities in the Ixcán Municipality. The purpose of the visit was to obtain information regarding the communities that will be included in

MICAM and to discuss the projects with Agroforestry Promoters who will be trained to support project efforts in the Ixcán area.

C. MICAM/Guatemala Planning

Based on an analysis, taking into consideration internal as well as external factors, from June 4 to 7, the MICAM team worked on the development of a plan of activities to be implemented. This planning establishes objectives, deliverables, indicators and timetables through to the end of the project. This plan of action was presented to the Regional MICAM Technical Advisor and discussed among the other CHF offices implementing MICAM.

D. Coordination with the National Commission for the Reduction of Disasters (CONRED)

Beginning in June, the MICAM team began holding formal coordination meetings with CONRED, the Guatemalan Governmental Organization that oversees all disaster activities and has direct intervention in squatter communities in the urban and peri-urban areas of Guatemala City.

The principal activities carried out with CONRED were:

- a. Enrollment in CONRED's Cooperating NGO Registry;
- b. The presentation of a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between CHF and CONRED;
- c. In coordination with CONRED, the visit to seven settlements in the municipalities of Guatemala, Villa Nueva and Chinautla in the Department of Guatemala. The visits served the purpose of pre-selection of communities where the MICAM team will focus its efforts. Of the seven communities visited, four were pre-selected based on community organization and having the greatest possibilities for potential impact. Final selection is scheduled for the upcoming quarter.
- d. On June 22, the MICAM team participated in a training activity organized by CONRED involving all of the organizations (national, international and governmental) that will be implementing disaster mitigation activities in the peri-urban areas of Guatemala.

E. Regional Meeting in El Salvador

The entire MICAM team participated in the regional training activity of MICAM in El Salvador. During the event, the team presented the MICAM-Guatemala Work Plan where it was discussed and feedback provided. The team participated in the development of general guidelines to be applied in all MICAM countries.

#	Principal Results	Achievements
1	Improve local capacity to manage risk in vulnerable areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Communities identified <input type="checkbox"/> Seven peri-urban settlements and initial contact with community leaders made.
2	Increase the participation of the Private Sector in Disaster Mitigation	<input type="checkbox"/> These activities will begin as of FY02
3	Coordination and Networking in the	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance of peri-urban settlements and sample communities in the Ixcán made.

Management and Mitigation of Emergencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular contact and coordination with CONRED. <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation proposed to CONRED.
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HONDURAS

CHF/Honduras began its MICAM activities by visiting the participating municipalities in order to start the process of an on-the-ground situational assessment. Meetings were held with the mayors and their council members to further gain their support for the initiative and begin the process to determine the communities that are most vulnerable to the risks that occur from natural disasters.

MICAM covers 51 communities in eight (8) municipalities located in six (6) of the political departments of Honduras. These six (6) departments including the southern, the central and the northern represent the three major populated regions in Honduras. Of the eight (8) municipalities, seven (7) are located in the rural regions of Honduras; however, MICAM also includes two (2) marginal neighborhoods of Tegucigalpa. All of these municipalities have communities that face risks from natural disasters. Several face risks from flooding, others from landslides, while others are located in seismic zones prone to earthquake activity (in the case of Alianza, Valle for example.)

The current staff complement for the MICAM team in Honduras includes Country Coordinator, Angelina Reyes with experience in municipal planning and project facilitation, Project Advisor, Miguel Vasquez, an agronomist who possesses experience in municipal planning and soil analysis, Trainer/Planner, Julio Pineda with a background in disaster and land use planning, Trainer/Planner, Hector Rene Hernández located in San Francisco, Atlántida Trainer/Planner, and Sergio Mejía located in Villa de San Antonio, Comayagua. These latter two team members represent local municipal hires. Both of them participated in a former CHF project funded by the Ford Foundation that focused on municipal participatory planning, and they also received a weeklong training in the methodology qualifying them as facilitators for the project.

Specific activities for the quarter included:

A. MICAM Training Workshop in Honduras

CHF Honduras hosted the first regional MICAM workshop held at the Central American Technological University (UNITEC), Tegucigalpa, on May 24-25, 2001. The objectives of the workshop consisted of the preparation of participants in the ability to clearly explain the goals and objectives of MICAM, successfully manage the concepts of the disaster cycle, identify, organize, and train community leaders in the ability to locate resources and plan project activities, foster strategic alliances with both the private and public sectors to participate in mitigation and preparation initiatives, and produce a local emergency plan. Two expert facilitators with experience and knowledge in the area of risk mitigation and disaster prevention ran the workshop. The team was comprised of Andres Aguiriano who had worked 15 years for COPECO and Ellen Izaguirre who functions as an independent consultant and has worked many years with the U.S. Peace Corps in Honduras including recent training projects for the Crisis Corp.

B. Municipal Coordination

CHF/Honduras has conducted six (6) Municipal meetings to exchange ideas and provide information pertaining to risk mitigation and disaster prevention. In addition, CHF discussed the goals and objectives for MICAM at these meetings and began to lay the groundwork for the operational framework for Program implementation. CHF staff has convened meetings in the following municipalities to date: Morecelf, Villa de San Antonio, San Juan de Flores, Alianza, Villa de San Francisco and Pimienta.

C. CODEM Workshop

A workshop was conducted in San Francisco, Atlántida to update and prepare the Municipal Emergency Committee (CODEM) in the field of risk management and the installation of an early warning system for small watersheds funded by the Organization of American States (OAS).

D. OAS Project Coordination

CHF/Honduras was awarded an US\$18,000 contract by the OAS to implement an early warning disaster preparedness system in two watersheds located in MICAM municipalities. CHF will implement this project in coordination with MICAM in the municipalities of San Francisco, Atlántida in communities located along the Santiago River watershed and in Villa de San Antonio along the San Jose River watershed. A study and diagnosis of the need and feasibility for the systems has been conducted and 11 community meetings were held in the Municipality of San Francisco to determine the level of interest and assess the situation in terms of their risk and vulnerability.

E. MICAM Regional conference in El Salvador

CHF/Honduras MICAM representatives also attended a regional conference in El Salvador the 20th and 21st of June to formulate strategic and operational plans on both a national and regional level. This forum provided the opportunity for the important sharing of experiences between the three participating countries pertaining to the MICAM initiative.

Operational Indicators

#	Indicator	Achievements
9	Visits / meetings with 7 municipalities and 2 marginal neighborhoods of Tegucigalpa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced the global concepts covered by MICAM to the mayors and their council members, in addition to members of the local development organization (patronatos) of the two marginal neighborhoods of Tegucigalpa.<input type="checkbox"/> Approval and acceptance of the MICAM proposal was obtained in all cases on behalf of the municipal authorities.<input type="checkbox"/> Conducted municipal meetings for exchange with community leaders in the field of risk management.
6	Meetings of exchange were conducted with the municipalities pertaining to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Project MICAM presented and explained to community leaders and representatives of the various community sectors in each municipality.<input type="checkbox"/> CHF heightened awareness among municipal and community participants regarding the risk situation from natural disasters in the country.

	risk management in: Morecelí, Villa de San Antonio, San Juan de Flores, Alianza, Villa de San Francisco and Pimienta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Basic concepts of risk management analyzed and discussed within a local context. <input type="checkbox"/> The principle municipal organizational structures identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The need to strengthen the CODEM and CODEL and reactivate the responsible organizations for emergency management identified. <input type="checkbox"/> Identified briefly the situation of vulnerability and risk in each of the municipalities (see charts in annex). <input type="checkbox"/> Community and municipal leaders identified.
10	Visits to communities with a history of flooding in the municipality of San Francisco.	<p>A rapid assessment study conducted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance mission of the situation relative to flooding potential from rivers and ravines through local leader interviews. <input type="checkbox"/> The principle waterways, their flooding history and damage caused and future risk potential identified. <input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders identified in each community to support MICAM activities.

CHF/Honduras has swiftly moved its MICAM initiative from the planning to its implementation stage. To date, all of the eight (8) municipalities have been directly contacted and visited and six (6) meetings of exchange have been held with members of the municipal council, the mayors, and leaders from the various sectors and communities from six (6) of the municipalities. In addition, work has begun on the diagnosis, mapping and facilitation for the implementation of early warning systems in two (2) watersheds located in two (2) municipalities participating in the MICAM Program. The OAS funds these systems.

Despite the setback of a six-week disability for Trainer/Planner Julio Pineda, CHF/Honduras has managed to accomplish its early objectives for the successful implementation of MICAM. A training session will be held with the Trainers/Planners from the municipalities on the 13th of July which will help to fortify their efforts in the field. Their efforts will multiply as they travel out to vulnerable communities and create heightened awareness and facilitate the community's involvement in the identification and prioritization of ways they can participate on the local level in the reduction of the risk from natural disasters.

4. Current Buy-Ins

None.

5. Current Sub-Contracting Activities

On June 16, 2001, CHF signed a sub-award agreement with Partners of the Americas (POA) to implement the Community Response and Mitigation Planning component through schools component of the MICAM Program in El Salvador.

6. Statement of Work

No change.