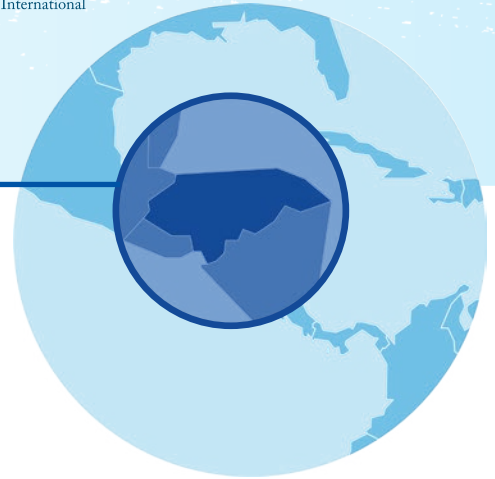


CASE STUDY

RED CROSS HONDURAS

Building a coalition for resilience advocacy



This case study shows how to create and build the capacity of a sub-national advocacy alliance in a relatively short-term program.

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The win

The Honduran Red Cross has been working in the Sula Valley to improve disaster risk management (DRM) in a way that is sustainable. The Honduran Red Cross:

- Established the “Flood Resilience Alliance in Northern Honduras” (the Advocacy Alliance) to advocate for long-term resilience and DRM priorities. The Advocacy Alliance is composed of

key local actors — public authorities, community leaders, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), etc. — involved in DRM and decision-making.

- Empowered the members of the Advocacy Alliance with evidence-based knowledge on the legal landscape for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and trained them on advocacy skills to ensure that they can navigate and advocate to strengthen disaster laws. To further ensure sustainability of the group, the Honduran Red Cross is working toward formal recognition of the Advocacy Alliance as a convening space for risk management dialogue and coordination.
- Influenced municipal strategic guidelines for flood risk reduction to account for the full DRM cycle — preparedness, risk reduction, response, and recovery.
- Are now influencing national DRM decision-making regarding the rebuilding plan for hurricanes Eta and Iota and emergency response mechanisms through membership in the International Disaster Response Law working group.

Key Alliance terminology

Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance (Alliance):

The Alliance is a multi-sector collaboration between the humanitarian sector, academia, and the private sector focusing on shifting from the traditional emphasis on post-event recovery to pre-event resilience. We are nine years into an eleven-year program that has been delivered in two Phases (Phase I from 2013-2018; Phase II from 2018-2024).



Advocacy training for communities © Honduran Red Cross

How the win was achieved

Building and empowering an advocacy alliance

In 2019, the Honduran Red Cross launched its Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance program with a focus on influencing DRR laws. Based on its extensive experience in risk management, humanitarian management, and community-based work, the Honduran Red Cross identified the need to create a space for DRM coordination, information, and advocacy training. It also had significant local- and national-level connections and credibility from its history of DRM work in Honduras.

As a result, the Honduran Red Cross created the Advocacy Alliance, consisting of key local actors in DRM in the Sula Valley: three municipalities that experience flood risk from the Chamelecón and Ulúa rivers (Choloma, Villanueva, and San Pedro Sula), a variety of municipal-level government departments and technical institutions involved in DRM, non-profit organizations, a legal organization, the 20 Municipal Emergency Committees of Valle de Sula, and the Honduran Red Cross.

In collaboration with the Advocacy Alliance, the Honduran Red Cross conducted a first-of-its-kind study on the strengths and weaknesses of the Honduran legal framework for DRR, titled “Study

of the Honduran Legal Framework Related to Flood Risk Reduction in Light of the IFRC DRR Checklist”. Advocacy Alliance members helped to shape the focus of the study, provided key data inputs, and held discussions to validate results and recommendations. The study provided the evidence base to develop an advocacy strategy focused on strengthening the policy- and law-making process for DRR in Honduras. Subsequently, the Honduran Red Cross conducted discussions on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and hurricanes Eta and Iota and integrated these lessons into the recommendations of the legal study. The Honduran Red Cross has also socialized and validated the study findings through workshops with NGOs and relevant national and municipal institutions.

The Honduran Red Cross provided Advocacy Alliance members, municipal officials, and community leaders from local emergency committees with trainings on advocacy and the Sendai framework and risk management to build awareness on international DRR best practices. It also held ‘legislative preparation workshops’ to build knowledge on advocacy and its process, and how to navigate the policy and advocacy environment; how to develop an advocacy strategy and messages; and how to maintain momentum on target advocacy issues. The combination of increasing knowledge of policy gaps has helped to empower the Advocacy Alliance to conduct

advocacy beyond the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance program period.

The Advocacy Alliance and its potential has generated significant excitement in the Sula Valley. Municipalities in the western part of the country, specifically those with links to the Chamelecón and Ulúa rivers, are interested in joining. Terms of reference are being defined for the Advocacy Alliance and will be adopted as operating regulations; this will help the Advocacy Alliance to achieve formal recognition as a platform for DRM and coordination, which in turn will allow it to access new advocacy opportunities.

Accessing new advocacy opportunities through partnerships

The Advocacy Alliance helped to establish DRM partnerships through providing a convening space for national government actors, municipal authorities, and private enterprises. These partnerships have motivated actors to work together as a network and have provided them with access to decision-making processes.

At the local level, for example, the Honduran Red Cross was invited by the three municipalities — Choloma, Villanueva, and San Pedro Sula — involved in the Advocacy Alliance to develop municipal strategic guidelines for DRR that support disaster risk reduction, preparedness, mitigation, and recovery. It worked with the municipalities to prioritize structural and non-structural measures for DRR that reflect the technical and financial capacities of the municipalities, local development

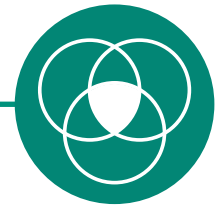
needs, and the National Risk Management Policy. These plans were shared with public and private entities to support improved DRM. Municipal leaders found the information on short, medium, and long-term interventions particularly useful for shaping their advocacy to the national government for additional resources and complementary legal provisions to support local change.

At the national level, the Honduran Red Cross has been able to leverage the recovery phase of the 2020 hurricanes Iota and Eta to influence policy change. It built credibility by ensuring that the final version of the legal study reflected on the experience of the storms and developed recommendations targeted at policy dialogues around recovery and relevant national institutions. It convened dialogues between national and municipal institutions where municipal government departments were able to share flood risk concerns, their successes and challenges in managing hurricanes Eta and Iota and the initial recovery, the risks and drawbacks of depending on response compared to taking action before disasters strike, and their ongoing capacity and technical constraints given the level of action needed to effectively manage risk. As a result of these efforts, the Honduran Red Cross was invited by the national government to work alongside municipalities, the private sector, and other civil society organizations to shape the national reconstruction plan. The draft plan reflects the priorities identified in the municipal strategic guidelines of Choloma, Villanueva, and San Pedro Sula municipalities.

Additional resources

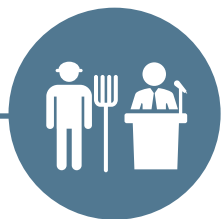
- Estudio del marco jurídico hondureño relativo a la reducción de riesgo a inundaciones a la luz de la lista de verificación RRD de la FICR.
- Strengthening community-level legislative advocacy in Honduras.
- Flood Resilience Alliance: Honduras Informe Nacional
- Flood Resilience Alliance: Honduras Country Briefing

Why Alliance advocacy was successful



ESTABLISHED RELEVANCE

- Built a shared understanding of DRR policy strengths and weaknesses by creating a space and structure (i.e., the Advocacy Alliance) for national government, local government, and civil society to convene and co-generate a baseline study.
- Based its advocacy goals and strategy on an understanding of DRM governance gaps gained by conducting baseline research and talking with key DRR actors.
- Ensured relevance of its advocacy recommendations by updating its baseline study based on lessons learned from COVID-19 and hurricanes Iota and Eta.



BUILT RELATIONSHIPS

- Accessed relevant policy processes to improve local and national DRR policy by leveraging strategic partnerships and credibility built through the Advocacy Alliance.
- Convened a cross-sectoral coalition of regional actors involved in DRM by using the Honduran Red Cross' knowledge, connections, and overall credibility from prior work in DRM in Honduras.



PROVIDED EVIDENCE-BASED KNOWLEDGE

- Empowered an advocacy coalition to conduct sustained advocacy by co-generating both a study on strengths and weaknesses in the DRR policy landscape and advocacy strategy, and by building capacity to conduct advocacy.
- Established the Honduran Red Cross as an expert on the DRR policy landscape by disseminating credible and timely evidence-based recommendations needed by decision-makers.