

SALVADORAN LUTHERAN SYNOD

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF TROPICAL DEPRESSION 12E. EL SALVADOR. OCTOBER 31, 2011

INTRODUCTION: September 22 of this year, the Lutheran Synod received a donation of 1,260 boxes of dehydrated foods from Feed My Starving Children and St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, equivalent to 540 boxes of rice (200 hundredweight) with soy meat, and 720 boxes (300 hundredweight) of mashed potatoes for children between the ages of 1 and 12.



Some of the churches and communities that received these foods held community workdays to prepare the food from Feed My Starving Children, which on that date were delivered in their totality, and were a great help as a complement to other donations for the mitigation of hunger before, during, and after the emergency created by Tropical Depression 12E.



Pastors Matías Antonio Bonilla and José María Saravia unloading food for the Northern Microregion of San Salvador.

October 14, 17, and 18, Pastor Guadalupe Cortes, along with the emergency team for the West, answered the call from Pastor Jorge Henríquez of "La Bendición de Dios" (The Blessing of God) Lutheran Church of Cara Sucia. She led the first emergency visits to the San Francisco Menéndez zone to deliver 100 boxes (228 sacks) of rice and mashed potatoes from Feed My Starving Children, and provided diagnostics on damages and necessities.



Synod Emergency Team for Cara Sucia in conjunction with Civil Protection delivering sacks of food.

“Mi Buen Pastor” (My Good Shepherd) Lutheran Church of Usulután, at the beginning of the emergency, received a small but valuable gift of solidarity from its sister church, Grace Lutheran Church, with which it was possible to provide food to approximately 100 families from the communities damaged by the floods in the area around Puerto Parada.



Puerto Parada is a coastal geographical area in the eastern part of the country, which historically has been declared a disaster area as a result of the Rio Grande de San Miguel overflowing.



Puerto Parada, Archive Photo. PG. 2008

Puerto Parada is part of the Department of Usulután, and under the jurisdiction of the mayorality of the city of Usulután. The port communities reporting the greatest impact are: Botoncillo 1 and 2, El Icao, El Limón, La Cañada and Narvárez, 535 families in all.

80% of these families were totally flooded and lost crops, dwellings, barnyard animals, domestic appliances, clothes and food. Thanks be to God, and thanks to the organization and support of the Church and relief agencies like Comandos de Salvamento, there was no loss of human life to mourn.



October 15, the stewardship program in conjunction with the ministry team of the Eastern Microregion, monitored the delivery of 160 boxes of dehydrated foods from the Feed My Starving Children project, leaving one part at “El Buen Pastor” Lutheran Church in Usulután, and the other at “Paz y Amor” (Peace and Love) in Santa María. It was not possible to reach San Miguel, where food for La Unión would also have been dropped off, due to the overflowing of the Rio Grande and the height of the water gushing over the El Litoral highway.



The ministry teams led by pastors Monday, October 15 and the remaining days of the week of the emergency, continued delivering food from Feed My Starving Children to the affected families, as many Lutheran churches as communities that had been damaged by Tropical Depression 12E.



Pastor Conchi explains the nutritional content of the food from Feed My Starving Children.

Wednesday, October 19, Bishop Medardo called an emergency meeting and 3 emergency teams were defined; one for the west coordinated by Pastor Guadalupe Cortes, another for the south central and northern microregions coordinated by Pastor Francisco Aguilar, and the third for the eastern microregion coordinated by Pastor Santiago Rodríguez.



Emergency team for the east prays with the community of Lobato in Santa Ana.

On Friday, October 21, Bishop Medardo Gómez presided over a pastoral delegation to the eastern zone and made a visit to Puerto Parada, carrying an average of \$300 of food, which was able to help 45 families in the community of El Limón, in the La Cañada sector.



Bishop Medardo and emergency team prepared sacks of food in Usulután.



The community of El Limón, La Cañada has a population of 190 families; 4 homes were destroyed and 16 others damaged.



STRATEGIC COORDINATORS. At the municipal level, with the mayor of Usulután, Efraín Rivera, and with Puerto Parada alderperson Manuel Flores. At the village level with Freddy Santos, president of the community of El Limón, with responsibility for the community through Civil Protection and the Comandos de Salvamento base.



At a national level, through the Permanent Risk Management Bureau, MPGR and ACT Alliance-Lutheran World Federation (FLM). We coordinate with Walter Navarrete, assessor from the Ministry of Governance and the National Civil Protection Commission for Impact on Public Policy and Mechanisms of strengthening the organization and participation of the Municipal Commissions and Communities of Civil Protection and Risk Management.



MPGR meeting with Walter Navarrete, assessor of the Ministry of Governance.

SHORT-TERM PROJECTIONS

1. Hold meetings at a local level in which the mayor, Comandos de Salvamento, community directive of El Limón, La Cañada and the Lutheran Church participate to define the list of 50 families that would participate in the rehabilitation and reconstruction project with ACT Alliance.



2. Participate in calling the Ministry of Governance to provide space to the Departmental Commission of Civil Protection where we will present the revitalization proposal: a Permanent Risk Management Bureau in the micro basin of Puerto Parada.

3. Establish a coordination mechanism with OIKOS Solidarity, Comandos de Salvamento, the Inter-community of the Rio Grande of San Miguel, the Puerto Parada Coordinator, and other local actors to articulate the re-launching of the Permanent Risk Management Bureau of Puerto Parada.

4. Endeavor through our own identity as a church together with other actors, and principally with the surviving communities, both rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the construction of something new.