



**USAID**  
DEL PUEBLO DE LOS ESTADOS  
UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA

EMPLEANDO  
**FUTUROS**

# VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT IN TIMES OF CRISIS

During November 2020, Honduras faced the twin threats of the COVID-19 pandemic and the storm damage wrought by Hurricanes Eta and Iota. According to the Pan American Health Organization, more than 6.5 million people were directly affected by the hurricanes.

Striking within two weeks of each other, Hurricanes Eta and Iota caused massive damage, particularly in the north of Honduras. Flooding and high winds caused loss of life and forced businesses to shut down, leading to high unemployment. Despite this bleak outlook, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Empleando Futuros project volunteers from the area stepped up and demonstrated their willingness to help others. In December, Empleando Futuros organized several volunteer activities at the Honduran National Food Bank and the Cortés Chamber of Commerce (CCIC). Project youth volunteered their time to assist in distributing food parcels to persons displaced by the hurricanes. Nine volunteers donated their time and service to the food bank and a total of 38 project youth took part in the CCIC's distribution effort.

One of these volunteers was Mario Dubón Hernández, a 30-year old resident of San Pedro Sula. Unfortunately, Mario suffered extensive losses in the hurricane, as did his relatives. Despite this crisis, Mario demonstrated resiliency and solidarity by donating his time to help others affected by the storm. Some of the volunteer tasks he carried out included packing and distributing bags of clothes, hygiene kits and food parcels; sorting donations; and loading and unloading trucks. At the same time, Mario was also helping his family clean mud out of his own home. Despite sleeping on the floor with his family for several weeks, Mario donated his time during the day to helping

*"I would like to thank USAID and Empleando Futuros for all of the training I received and for giving me the opportunity to learn and implement resiliency in difficult processes. I am hopeful that I will be able to return to my job soon. I am also grateful for being able to volunteer to help others."*-Mario Dubón

Another beneficiary who assisted in volunteer efforts and demonstrated resiliency is Paola Reyes. Residing in Colonia Planeta, La Lima, Paola and her family were seriously affected by the flooding.

*"I am happy when I help others affected by the storm, even though I find myself in the same situation. I feel useful to the community when I volunteer."* -Paola Reyes

Through their volunteer efforts, project beneficiaries from Empleando Futuros have demonstrated resiliency, strength, and empathy. The values they have demonstrated in their volunteer efforts will assist them in finding jobs in the future.



Mario Volunteering at CCIC