

CDF asks Canadians to help co-operatives hit by Hurricane Agatha

Ottawa, June 11, 2010

The Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF) is reaching out to co-operatives and credit unions across Canada for financial support to aid member families affected by Hurricane Agatha, a recent tropical storm that has thrashed the countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.

Co-operative members of at least three of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA)'s agricultural partners in the region are among those affected. Cuatro Piños in Guatemala, and the Sociedad Cooperativa Productores de Marañón and Acodasjar in El Salvador report mudslides and damaged homes. El Porvenir Plantain Producer's Co-operative, a co-operative located in northern Honduras, has lost 80 acres of cultivated land.

Tulio Garcia, general manager of Cuatro Piños, expressed his concern for the co-operative and its 400 members. "Storm Agatha caused huge destruction all over the country. Many roads have been closed because of mud slides due to excessive rain, and more than 100 bridges have collapsed. The main concern is the destruction of houses and infrastructure that will cost the country years to recover."



Flooded maize plantation, El Salvador

CDF President Wayne McLeod and the CDF Board ask Canadians to support those who have lost so much. "The people of these regions already have challenging lives; it is hard to imagine how this devastation will affect their way of life."

According to reports, the death toll in Central America from landslides and flooding triggered by the year's first major tropical storm has reached almost 100 as local authorities attempt to clear roads of debris and help cut-off communities. More than 100,000 people in Guatemala have been evacuated, many to shelters. Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras have all declared a state of emergency. CCA will be responding immediately by sending funds to rebuild partner co-operatives and members' homes.

Donations to the **CDF Hurricane Agatha Relief Fund** may be made online at www.cdfcanada.coop or by mail to the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada, 275 Bank Street, Suite 400, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 2L6. Please indicate that your donation is designated for the Hurricane Agatha Relief Fund.

For more information, please email CDF Fundraising Officer Sarah Richardson (sarah.richardson@coopscanada.coop) or phone (613) 238-6711 ext.217.

The Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF) is the charity of choice for Canadian co-operatives and credit unions. CDF raises money to help credit unions and co-operatives in Africa, Asia, and the Americas empower their communities. It does this through the international program of the Canadian Co-operative Association, a national association representing co-operatives and credit unions in Canada.