



REDLAC Weekly Note on Emergencies

Latin America & the Caribbean

This note is compiled for The Risk Emergency Disaster Working Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC) by the OCHA Regional Office through disaster monitoring and input from our Regional Humanitarian partners. This note does not intend to be an analytical tool, but a summary paper of key facts and actions reported by the sources indicated. Activities carried out in affected countries are not limited to the ones reported here. Please check with sources for further information. For input, feedback and suggestions send us an email to ocha-rolac@un.org



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HIGHLIGHTS:

- **CENTRAL AMERICA:** Approximately 4,300 people have been affected from rains in Honduras and Nicaragua.
- **BOLIVIA:** Wildfire threatens 1.5 million hectares of forest.
- **BOLIVIA:** Drought aggravates El Chaco food security situation.
- **PERU:** Three years after the earthquake in Pisco in August 2007: 53,000 families not been able to rebuild their homes.

HURRICANE SEASON 2010

Hurricane season has been slow so far. Right now, in the Pacific basin, tropical storm Frank moves parallel to the states of Oaxaca and Guerrero in Mexico. The storm was located around 185 kilometers southeast of the beaches of Puerto Escondido in Oaxaca and 355 kilometers southeast of Acapulco in Guerrero on 23 August. Although it is not expected to make landfall, Mexican authorities issued an alert given the risk of heavy rains.

In the Atlantic basin, Tropical Storm Danielle is expected to strengthen into a hurricane according to the National Hurricane Center (NHC), but the storm is still far from land.

Source: National Hurricane Center

FLOODS – HEAVY RAINS

Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua have been affected by floods as heavy rains continue to fall.

HONDURAS: Five people died in the eastern Honduran city due to the heavy rains that are affecting the country. Preliminary reports from local authorities say that 2,275 people have been affected, 726 persons were relocated in 26 emergency shelters.

Some 347 houses have been washed away and 130 have become inhabitable. There are also reports of damage in the agricultural sector; infrastructures including 17 roads, bridges, and electrical systems. The Permanent Contingency Commission (COPECO) remains the red alert for floods in Tegucigalpa.

Source: COPECO.



HONDURAS: Honduras has been hit by heavy rains. Image: EFE©

GUATEMALA: Heavy rains have affected at least 20,000 people along the country's Pacific coast. Some 3,360 people remain in 50 shelters as result of the recently passage of tropical storm Frank; after Alex and Agatha few weeks ago. The most affected departments include Escuintla, Santa Rosa, Alta and Baja Verapaz, Zacapa, Izabal and Guatemala.⁽¹⁾ CONRED has changed to yellow alert but there is still

concern because heavy rains could impact in the Pacific coast over the next days.

The Non-Governmental organization OXFAM has planned an exit strategy for early September and is donating water testing kits to municipalities where they have been carrying out projects, so they can continue with water quality controls. ⁽²⁾

So far, agricultural losses caused by the rains have tallied 28 millions quetzals (approximately US\$ 3.5 million), in addition to the 400 million quetzals (approximately US\$49 million) in damages caused by Tropical Storms Agatha, Alex and the eruption of the Pacaya volcano that impacted the country earlier this year. ⁽³⁾

Sources: *Prensa Libre*⁽¹⁾, *OXFAM*⁽²⁾, *Government of Guatemala*⁽³⁾.

NICARAGUA: Heavy rainfall has left at least 12 people dead. According to the Civil Protection authorities more than 2,000 people were affected and have received attention by local authorities.

Source: *Government of Nicaragua*.

EARTHQUAKE

PERU UPDATE: The earthquake of the 15 of August 2007 left 549 dead and 431,000 people affected. According to national media, after three years from the event, some 53,000 families have not been able to rebuild their homes. In the Cañete community (Lima region) updated numbers indicated that 9 percent of damaged houses have been rebuilt, while in Pisco 5 percent of damaged houses were rebuilt ⁽¹⁾. A World Bank study says that economics losses for water and sanitation systems were estimated at 83 million soles (approximately US\$29 Million) ⁽²⁾. The Group of Safe and Healthy Housing (GVSS), formed by NGOs and aid agencies have delivered approximately 3,800 homes for an amount of 81 million soles (approximately US\$ 28.4 Million) ⁽³⁾.

Sources: *El Comercio* ⁽¹⁾, *World Bank* ⁽²⁾, *GVSS* ⁽³⁾

WILD FIRE

BOLIVIA: Due to the general drought in the country, at least 12,000 fire spots have been reported by the Government in the departments of Beni, Pando, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba and northern La Paz, affecting 1.5 million hectares of forest and grazing land. Burnt houses have also been reported in the rural areas of Santa Cruz. Smoke has been affecting visibility in secondary airports of eastern Bolivia, at least 28 had to close operations. The Bolivian government has requested the support of Brazilian and Argentinean hydroplanes to put fire out. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Technical Team are assessing the impact of fires and the possible need of food and other humanitarian assistance

Source: *WFP*

DROUGHT

BOLIVIA: The World Food Programme visited the drought-affected region of El Chaco together with the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). Most of the families inhabiting the region have practically run out of food reserves, which increased food insecurity. The Government assessed some 19,500 families affected by the drought. WFP and different implementing partners in the region will encourage an integral approach to assist these families. It should include food for work activities, support for the most vulnerable groups such as pregnant and lactating women, children below 6 years and school age children. Recent food distributions have taken place in El Chaco region of the department of Chuquisaca, in the municipality of Huacaya, where 5,3 MT of food aid were distributed among 400 lactating and pregnant women and their children between 2 and 6 years of age. Next distribution is planned for the municipality of Villa Vaca Guzmán by which some 2,575 children will benefit from 18,5 MT of food.

Source: *WFP*.