REGIONAL

According to PAHO, the COVAX global COVID-19 vaccine sharing mechanism is set to deliver 35.3 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to 36 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean from mid-February through the end of June. Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador and Peru will also receive nearly 378,000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine starting in mid-February, as well. PAHO adds that the Americas region needs to immunize some 500 million people to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control.

MEXICO

Mexico closed out January, the pandemic’s worst month so far with more than 438,000 new cases and more than 32,700 deaths, administering as many as 670,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses. Per the Ministry of Health, 631,400 doses were administered as the first of two doses, while 41,800 doses were administered as the second dose, indicating that only 6.6 per cent of those who received the first dose have the full protection of both shots. Health officials acknowledge that Mexico will likely not be able to administer all of the required second shots within 21 days of the first shot.

PERU

Peru, currently dealing with a severe second wave of infections and deaths, closed out January 2021 with 3,346 COVID-19 deaths, the highest monthly death toll in four months. The January total yields a daily average of 108 deaths, nearly double the daily average reported in December 2020.

The rise in deaths follows a corresponding increase in positive testing rates, with January seeing Peru’s record high of 24 per cent positive testing during the week from 17 to 23 January. Official data also shows an average of 4,000 new cases in January. Intensive care unit (ICU) availability is almost at its limit; January saw 1,864 ICU beds used over COVID-19, 21 per cent more than the peak number of beds used during the first wave of infections. General hospital bed occupancy grew by 48 per cent as well.

BARBADOS

The Government announced that Barbados received a commitment from India for 100,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine. The first batch will target 50,000 frontline workers, including doctors, nurses, staff at medical facilities and other essential service staff such as police and hotel and supermarket workers. The targeted group would include the island’s elderly and most vulnerable populations, with authorities already tasking hospital and health officials to identify those with multiple co-morbidities. The Government’s COVID Communications Unit will support the vaccination process with public education and sensitization on vaccines in the coming weeks.
**KEY FIGURES**

145k

PEOPLE IN BOLIVIA AFFECTED BY RAINY SEASON

**SOUTH AMERICA: FLOODING**

**BOLIVIA**

Recent seasonal rains and flooding have affected 29,000 families, or roughly 145,000 people, across 66 municipalities in seven departments, per the Vice-Ministry of Civil Defence (VIDECI). Santa Cruz is the most affected department, where the Yapacani and Buena Vista municipalities, as well as five other municipalities in the country have declared themselves as disaster or emergency area.

VIDECI also reports damage to 1,478 homes and 28,500 hectares of farmland affected. Municipal officials in Yapacani, San Juan de Yapacani and Buena Vista are carrying out evacuations and working to establish land access to communities that have been trapped by standing water for more than five days with limited access to food or water.

**ECUADOR**

Heavy rainfall in the coastal province of Manabi has led to flooding and landslides in the cantons of Chone, Jipijapa, San Vicente, Tosagua, Bolivar, Portoviejo and Manta. Local disaster management authorities are working to clear the areas of mud and water and set up shelters. The ongoing rains are hindering the corresponding damage evaluations and needs analyses.

**CHILE**

Severe weather, including heavy rain, strong winds, and hailstorms in central-southern Chile (in particular Santiago Metropolitan, O'Higgins, Valparaiso, Maule, Araucania, and Bio Regions) triggered floods and landslides. The National Office of Emergency reports 521 people evacuated, 42 houses damaged, including 5 destroyed and 170,000 power outages. More than 1,350 people remain isolated in Alto Biobio Municipality (Bio Region).

**SOUTH AMERICA: MIGRANTS & REFUGEES**

Following a growth in irregular migration, mostly from Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and a corresponding increase in human trafficking operations, Ecuador deployed some 200 armed forces personnel to their southern border with Peru to scale up monitoring of irregular border crossings. The deployment follows a similar deployment from Peru’s armed forces the previous week.

Ecuador’s Foreign Ministry indicates they are setting up a local working group at the southern border that will incorporate relevant organizations to coordinate humanitarian action, adding that they are seeking to work with international NGOs and donors to support short- and medium-term solutions. Ecuadorian authorities are also working with their Colombian counterparts to coordinate joint patrols of their shared border in Ecuador’s north, where there are at least 30 irregular border crossing points.

Sources:
- Vice-Ministry of Civil Defence (Bolivia)
- National Disaster Risk Management Service (Ecuador)
- National Emergency Office (Chile)

Sources:
- Government of Ecuador