



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:

- **HAITI:** United Nations requests US\$168 million for the fight against cholera
- **COLOMBIA:** 1.1 million people affected by the rainy season
- **NICARAGUA:** Containing the leptospirosis outbreak

EPIDEMIC

HAITI: The United Nations is requesting US\$164 million from international donors to support the Haitian government in the struggle to control the cholera epidemic that has a toll of more than 14,500 cases and 900 deaths. The World Health Organization (WHO) voiced concerns that more than 200,000 people could contract the disease in the next six months. Health experts claim that the floods and mudslides caused by Hurricane Tomas on top of the already precarious sanitary conditions have accelerated the spread of the disease, and increased the urgency of mobilizing resources to attend to the affected and to halt its spread.

Source: United Nations.

NICARAGUA: Health authorities in Nicaragua are controlling the leptospirosis outbreak and continue to provide the population with preventative medicine. To date, more than 5 million Nicaraguans (96% of the population) have received the first doses. The leptospirosis outbreak was detected at the end of September, when 16 people died in the first stage, at the



The Artibonite River, which was the source of the cholera contamination, has caused 900 deaths in Haiti. B. Garlaschi/Spanish Red Cross©.

same time that the country was suffering from floods brought on by the rainy season.

Source: Government of Nicaragua.

FLOODS – STONG RAINS

COLOMBIA: More than 1.1 million have been affected by rains from the heavy rainy season in 550 municipalities of 28 departments, including the country's capital Bogotá. The most affected departments are Bolívar, Magdalena, Sucre,

Córdoba and Chocó. Needs have been identified in the sectors of food aid, water and sanitation, protection, shelter, education in emergency, and health.

Source: OCHA.

PANAMA: More than 150 families in the province of Colon (North Centre) were affected by floods caused by 24 hours of continual heavy rains. Approximately 150 houses and 8 communities were completely flooded due to the overflowing of creeks and high tides ⁽¹⁾. The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) allocated US\$82,608 in emergency funds for the Panamanian Red Cross to support 645 families affected by rains that began on 4 November ⁽²⁾.

Source: National Civil Protection System ⁽¹⁾. Red Cross ⁽²⁾.

SAINT LUCIA - HURRICANE TOMAS: Losses in Saint Lucia from Hurricane Tomas are estimated at US\$500 million, as well as a death toll of 14. The most urgent need is potable water, as 100 percent of the water distributions system has collapsed. Damages to agriculture and infrastructure were severe, especially in the south and west parts of the country. Governments from neighboring countries have sent humanitarian aid to collaborate with the reconstruction of the island.

Source: Prensa Latina.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - HURRICANE TOMAS: Hurricane Tomas's path near the southern coast of the country caused heavy rains and forced the evacuation of 13,230 people. At the weekend, 44 communities were

still isolated; the system damaged more than 2,640 houses.

Source: Emergency Operations Centre.

DROUGHT AND FOOD INSECURITY

GUATEMALA: During November and December, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided food assistance for approximately 320,000 people affected by drought, the eruption of the Pacaya Volcano in May, tropical storms, and an intense rainy season. It has also assisted more than 14,000 families with children that are suffering from acute malnutrition. Apart from the food aid for emergencies, WFP is supporting the production of local grains, such as corn and bean, through its purchase from a Guatemalan association of small-scale producers made up of 7,700 families for its food distribution programs.

Source: World Food Programme.

COLD WAVE

GUATEMALA: Some 325 people are currently housed in 4 temporary shelters due to low temperatures, seven days after the beginning of the cold season that will last until the start of 2011. The National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED, for its acronym in Spanish) activated its response plan for low temperatures and authorities are monitoring climactic conditions.

Source: The National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction.