



Earthquakes, drought, floods and dengue plagued the Latin American and Caribbean Region in the first quarter of 2010.

EARTHQUAKES

HAITI

The first trimester of 2010 has been dominated by two major earthquakes with devastating impacts in Haiti and Chile. On 12 January, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.0 on the Richter scale severely hit Haiti and its capital, affecting around 3 million people – one in every three Haitians. Over 220,000 people were killed and an estimated 300,000 people injured. Some 1.5 million people were left homeless.



Haiti: Street in Port-au-Prince after the earthquake

A massive international humanitarian response was organized in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake in view of the huge humanitarian challenges ahead and the fact that Government institutions and locally based UN and NGOs had been

incapacitated while essential infrastructure had been seriously damaged or destroyed. The UN and humanitarian partners responded with their full capacity. Twelve clusters were activated, and hundreds of NGOs set up base in the country. Haiti also saw the biggest Search and Rescue operation ever as well as a large-scale use of and coordination with military assets. In addition, humanitarian staffs were deployed to the Dominican Republic which served as a logistic hub for the humanitarian operation in Haiti.



Haiti: OSOCC coordination centre.

As a result of this collective effort and the generous support of donors, by the end of March, most of the immediate humanitarian needs had been met, and 80 percent of the 1.5 million homeless had been supplied with emergency shelter materials.



Haiti: Lining up for water.

A Post Disaster Needs Assessment estimated the total value of damage and losses caused by the earthquake US\$7.8 billion, equivalent to more than 120 percent of the 2009 Gross Domestic Product. Following an initial Flash Appeal on 15 January for US\$575 million, a Revised Humanitarian Appeal for US\$1.5 billion was launched on 18 February. This Revised Humanitarian Appeal is now 50 percent funded. In addition, a Donor Conference in New York on 31 March raised nearly US\$10 billion, of which half pledged, for rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts over the next few years.



Haiti

CHILE

On 27 February, a massive earthquake of 8.8 on the Richter scale followed by a tsunami struck the regions of Maule, Biobio, Araucania, Libertador, Metropolitana and Valparaiso in central Chile, affecting over 1.8 million people. More than 500 people were killed or went missing. Nearly 81,500 houses were destroyed and an additional 109,000 suffered major damages. The education sector, health and water and sanitation services were also particularly affected.



Chile

Total damage and economic losses caused by the earthquake and tsunami are estimated by the Government at US\$30 billion. These include:

- Housing: US\$4 billion, given that at least 160,000 houses are damaged beyond repair.
- Education: US\$3 billion, with 4,013 schools damaged to various degree.
- Health: US\$2.8 billion, with 79 hospitals damaged and some of them not yet operational.
- Agriculture and fisheries: US\$80 million for economic loss; 26,923 small-scale fishermen suffered material losses and more than 4,200 boats were destroyed.

While the Government of Chile took the lead in the emergency response, international donors committed US\$120 million in aid, including a US\$10 million grant from the Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF). The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) appealed for US\$9.4 million which so far has been funded for approximately US\$3 million.



Chile: inter-agency assessment

Although response to these two major disasters is still ongoing, it is possible to formulate a few general lessons learned:

- The importance of disaster preparedness, including availability of trained cluster coordinators and of regional logistics capacity;
- The need for risk reduction management, including earthquake-resistant constructions;
- The value of cluster activation for sector coordination;
- The value of coordination with military assets and government institutions;
- The importance of good information management

and availability of functioning communication systems.

DROUGHT

As a result of the El Niño cyclical phenomenon, a prolonged drought hit parts of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Ecuador and Bolivia, affecting millions of people. In Guatemala and Honduras, where 75 and 69 percent of the respective rural populations live under the poverty line, the drought had a particularly severe impact. Rising prices of basic food commodities over the past couple of years had further undermined the coping mechanisms of the most vulnerable people.

Guatemala

Food Insecurity & Acute Malnutrition Appeal



March 2010



In January, the UN granted a US\$1.5 million CERF to assist 7,000 vulnerable families in Honduras and on 5 March, the UN launched an appeal for US\$34 million to benefit approximately 680,000 people in Guatemala. Response has been slow so far, with only 11.5 percent of the appeal funded.

FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES

Major floods were registered in Mexico, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay during the first quarter of 2010, affecting half a million people. Bolivia and Peru were the countries that endured the most.

In Peru, torrential rains and landslides killed at least 33 people and affected 190,000 persons. Of these, some 45,000 people have lost their houses and means of survival. Over 21,700 hectares of cultivated land were lost and 54,000 hectares affected in the departments of Cusco, Puno, Apurímac, Huancavelica, Ayacucho and Junín.

In Bolivia, as of 31 March, 29 people were killed and 46,200 families affected nationwide. Approximately 13,700 hectares of cultivated land were destroyed and 30,600 affected. In March, a CERF of US\$2.5 million was granted to assist 15,300 families in Bolivia.

When writing this report, heavy floods severely affected the state of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil in the first half of April, killing at least 246 people. Officials estimate the damage caused by the disaster to be at least US\$113.6 million



Bolivia

DENGUE

During the first three months of the year, local authorities in the region registered over 251,000 cases of dengue, of which 97 have been fatal. This time last year, there were some 79,000 cases of dengue reported, with 26 deaths. Health authorities already have declared epidemics in some Central American and Caribbean countries, and say the spread of the disease has been aided by climate changes.

Americas Sub-Region	Dengue*	Incidence rate	DHF**	Deaths	Lethality Rate	Population X 1000
Central America & Mexico	23,520	16.0	1,199	6	0.50	146,951
Andean	63,345	61.8	5,350	46	0.86	102,438
Southern Cone	158,951	65.6	218	27	12.39	242,487
Hispanic Caribbean	3,774	15.9	274	18	6.57	23,701
Caribbean	1,695	21.3	0	0	0	7,943
TOTAL	251,285	48.0	7,041	97	1.38	523,520

*Sum of DF + DHF, DSS and/or dengue severe

**Includes DHF, DSS and/or dengue severe

LAC: Number of reported cases of dengue as of 8 April.

LATIN AMERICA and THE CARIBBEAN

in Numbers (estimated)

For the Period of January – March 2010

