LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN: COVID-19

KEY FIGURES

11.6M
CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES IN LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN AS OF 8 NOVEMBER

2.5M+
PEOPLE ACROSS CENTRAL AMERICA AFFECTED BY IMPACTS FROM ETA

1.8M
PEOPLE IN HONDURAS AFFECTED BY RAINS AND FLOODING BROUGHT ABOUT BY ETA

307K
PEOPLE IN GUATEMALA AFFECTED BY RAINS AND FLOODING BROUGHT ABOUT BY ETA

LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN: CENTRAL AMERICA - HURRICANE / TROPICAL STORM ETA

STORM

Eta entered over Nicaragua’s north-eastern shores as a Category 4 storm on 3 November, slowly moving across northern Nicaragua and into eastern Honduras in a north-west direction towards north-eastern Guatemala and then the Caribbean through 6 November. During its passage, Eta downgraded to a tropical storm and then tropical depression, decreasing rainfall that the United States’ National Hurricane Center (NHC) had marked at more than 600mm of rain at its peak, as well as maximum windspeeds as high as 235 km/h.

IMPACT

While exact numbers of people affected and their needs are still being determined, information rolling out of affected countries cite several thousands of affected people mainly in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala, with considerable impacts in parts of El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize and Mexico as well.

- Nicaragua: The National Disaster Prevention System (SINAPRED) reports at least 130,000 people affected across Nicaragua.
- Honduras: The Permanent Commission for Contingencies (COPECO) reports some 1.8 million people affected, with 38,000 in shelters and 38 deaths. Material damages include 2,700 affected homes. More than 740 communities across 155 of the country’s 298 municipalities report damages of varying degrees.
- Guatemala: The National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED) indicates that Eta has affected more than 307,000 people and led to 31 deaths, damaging more than 16,000 homes and prompting 78,500 people to seek shelter.
- El Salvador: The Government of El Salvador reports one death and more than 2,200 people across 56 shelters.
- Belize: The National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) reports flooding that may have potentially affected as many as 30,000 people.
- Mexico: Authorities in the southern state of Chiapas report 15 deaths and 1,600 damaged homes, while Tabasco reports more than 7,600 people in shelters.
- Costa Rica: The National Emergency Council (CNE) reports at least 325,000 people affected.
- Panama: The National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC) reports at least 3,300 people affected and 17 deaths.

Sources:
- NHC
- SINAPRED (Nicaragua)
- COPECO (Honduras)
- CONRED (Guatemala)
- Government of El Salvador
- NEMO (Belize)
- Civil Protection (Chiapas and Tabasco, Mexico)
- CNE (Costa Rica)
- SINAPROC (Panama)
ARGENTINA: FOOD INSECURITY

According to a recent FAO report, 12.9 per cent of the population in Argentina suffered from severe food insecurity between 2017 and 2019, a 7.1 per cent increase from the 5.8 per cent recorded between 2014 and 2016. South America saw severe food insecurity rise from 5.5 per cent to 7.7 per cent. Malnutrition rates between 2017 and 2019 remained at 3.8 per cent, faring better than South America’s overall rate of 5.5 per cent, itself a reduction from 7.6 per cent between 2004 and 2006.

Moderate food security nevertheless increased in Argentina, going from 19.2 per cent to 35.8 per cent between 2014-16 and 2017-2019 and indicating that the number of food insecure people in Argentina has risen from 2.5 million people to 5.7 million people. Additionally, 1.7 million people suffered from malnutrition in 2019. The combination of food insecurity and the ongoing COVID-19 crisis stands to increase the number of people that will require food assistance.

KEY FIGURES

7.1% INCREASE IN SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY IN ARGENTINA FROM 2014-2016 TO 2017-2019

Sources:
- FAO

ARGENTINA: FOOD INSECURITY

BRAZIL: WILDFIRES

Brazil’s INPE space research agency reports that there were 17,326 fires in Brazil’s Amazon for October 2020, more than double the October 2019 tally of 7,855 fires. INPE satellite data also shows record fires in the Pantanal wetlands in October, as the 2,856 fires in October are the biggest monthly figures since record keeping began more than 30 years ago.

Pantanal, the world’s largest wetlands, saw 28 per cent of its territory burned through October 2020, an area almost as large as Denmark. The increasing fires follow year-long trends in the Amazon, whose 93,485 fires are 25 per cent more than in the same period in 2019. Brazil’s Amazon accounts for 46 per cent of all fires so far.

The increase in fires is happening despite the four-month Government ban on lighting fires to clear land for agricultural activity.

KEY FIGURES

17.3K FIRES IN BRAZIL’S AMAZON IN OCTOBER 2020, MORE THAN DOUBLE FROM OCTOBER 2019

Sources:
- INPE (Brazil)

PERU: DIPHTHERIA

Peru is on epidemiological alert after their second recorded death from diphtheria in recent weeks. The Ministry of Health says they issued the nationwide alert after a second death from a disease that had not been recorded in Peru in 20 years. Health authorities are urging Peruvians to seek readily available vaccines for free at any health centre in the country, noting that initial childhood doses are only good for 10 years and require boosters. According to the National Center for Epidemiology, Prevention and Disease Control (CDC-Peru), there are another 37 possible cases, with five confirmed.

The alert comes as Peru grapples with one of the world’s worst COVID-19 outbreaks that has led to the world’s highest death rate per capita.

KEY FIGURES

37 POSSIBLE CASES OF DIPHTHERIA IN PERU 20 YEARS AFTER RECORDING LAST CASES

Sources:
- Ministry of Health (Peru)