

Weekly Note On Emergencies Latin America & The Caribbean

This note is compiled by OCHA Regional Office from disaster monitoring and inputs from our Regional Humanitarian partners. For input, feedback and suggestions send us an email to ocha-rolac-web@un.org

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What's Inside:

- CHILE: The Volcanic Red Alert Remains in Chaiten.
- COLOMBIA: Since January, heavy rains in Colombia have affected more than 35,000 people.
- BRAZIL: The death toll from the dengue epidemic has reached 106 people.
- LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN: Hunger and malnutrition has affected close to 52.4 million people.

VOLCANIC ACTIVITY

CHILE: The Chaiten Volcano increased its activity on the morning of May 6th, with an intense emission of lava and ash. A Red Alert is still in effect. Some 7,000 people have been evacuated and 726 people are now in temporary shelters in Los Lagos and Aysen regions (596 people in Los Lagos and 130 in Aysen).



Los límites y nombres mostrados y las designaciones usadas en este mapa no implican aceptación o reconocimiento oficial por parte de las Naciones Unidas. Mapa creado el 8 de mayo de 2008 por OCHA Rolac con el apoyo del Equipo Redsum. <http://www.redsum.org>

Some 726 people remain in temporary shelters in Los Lagos and Aysen. ONEMI©

A rain of ashes from the Chaiten Volcano spread over the Argentinean ski resort of Bariloche, 230km northeast of the volcano, and the cities of Mar del Plata, 1,600km East of the volcano and Buenos Aires. Some 160 schools closed May 2nd, due to the ash and re-opened on May 8th.

Local authorities are monitoring 14 water channels in the area of Palena to analyze the presence of minerals. The Agricultural and livestock Service of Chile (SAG) tagged more than 3,000 animals, to be evacuated to safer areas in Argentina.

International assistance has not been requested.

(Source: ONEMI, SERNAGEOMIN, ANSA Latina)

HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODS

COLOMBIA: Since January, heavy rains in Colombia have been responsible for the deaths of 27 people and more than 35,000 others have been affected, according to the latest report by the Office for Disaster Prevention and Management on May 6th. The rainy season has affected 60 municipalities in 23 Departments. On May 4th, some 2,000 families were affected in the Departments of Choco, Valle (West), Quindio and Risaralda (Center).

(Source: El Pais, Caracol, AFP)

EPIDEMIC OUTBREAK

BRAZIL: The death toll from the dengue epidemic has reached 106 people. Since January 1st, the State of Rio de Janeiro has recorded 131,238 cases, of which 65,025 were reported in March.

Month	Cases Reported
January	17,507
February	23,698
March	65,025
April	24,862
May	146
Total	131,238

(Source: Cadena Global)

FOOD CRISIS

LATINAMERICA: The current global food crisis is having a major impact on Latin America, especially in the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Ecuador, Haiti and Nicaragua; the countries included in a list of 37 countries with the highest food deficit. Hunger and malnutrition affect close to 52.4 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean, equivalent to 10 percent of the region's population. The rise in Food prices particularly affects the poorest sector, which according to ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean) and FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organization), could cause more than 10 million Latin Americans to fall below the poverty line.

Heads of state from Central American and Caribbean countries, as well as from the Venezuelan-led alliance "Alternativa Bolivariana para las Américas" (Alba), met in Managua for a regional summit on May 7th, to outline a strategy to address the current food crisis. While participants agreed on key points - such as the responsibility of the United States and other developed countries for the crisis - ideological differences emerged over the offer of a US\$100m loan from Venezuela. The participants at the summit agreed to meet again in Mexico before the end of the

month to further discuss the issues.

(Source: OCHA Latin America Weekly Report, El Extra Newspaper)

ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

PANAMA: OCHA's Head of the Office met with the PAHO Regional Director on May 5th to discuss regional disaster response strategy and collaboration during preparedness phases.

On May 5th through May 9th, UN Agencies, local NGOs and other humanitarian partners held a WASH workshop in Panama city, Republic of Panama. The event presented strategies and action plans to be implemented in the water and sanitation sector during a response to an emergency.

The UNDAC Induction Training is taking place in Panama from May 12th-23rd, 2008. This workshop is gathering 34 participants, from 14 LEMAs (Local Emergency Management Authorities), 5 UN agencies, 2 NGOs and 1 donor organization. Targeted at training new UNDAC member, this 10 day programme will cover various aspects of the International Humanitarian Response System.

(Source: OCHA)