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Information Bulletin Ecuador: Earthquake

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), is determining whether external assistance will be needed and the best manner in which to coordinate the assistance.

The situation

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck northern Ecuador at 6:58 pm local time on 16 April 2016. According to the latest report from Ecuador's National Secretariat for Risk Management (SNDGR), there have been 233 deaths, 1,577 injuries, 25 people have sought shelter in emergency collective centres, 269 buildings have been destroyed, and 89 others have been affected; no official information has been provided on the number of affected people. Ecuadorian Red Cross estimates that the numbers of affected people could reach up to 70,000 and 100,000 and with 3,000 to 5,000 needing emergency shelter. Some cities lost their electricity, but it is in the process of being restored.



Collapsed road in an affected area. Source: Ecuadorian Red Cross

Action by the authorities

A national state of emergency was declared. The entire national emergency operations centre (EOC) has been activated, in addition to the Ministry of Transportation and Public Works, the military and the national police (3,000 personnel). The ECU 911 Emergency System has been activated to assist with the emergency operations in the capital of Quito and the provinces of Manabí, Esmeraldas, Santa Elena, Guayas, Santo Domingo and Los Ríos.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Ecuadorian Red Cross headquarters and branches are already active in the field, particularly with medical volunteers in the first line of action. ERC pre-positioned stock will be used to assist 1,000 affected families. Search and rescue teams from the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) will be deployed today, and the search and rescue teams from the Mexican and Costa Rican National Societies are on standby and ready to be deployed. CRCS will send a medical team (two doctors, nurses and medical equipment). The American Red Cross has technical staff ready to be deployed, particularly in IT and its shelter specialist in the region who is coordinating with the secretariat. The Canadian Red Cross Society has also offered to provide a health Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and Norwegian Red Cross has offered to support with water and sanitation issues. The IFRC disaster

management coordinator for South America has been deployed to the affected areas in Ecuador to assist in the initial damage and needs assessments. Additionally, a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) alert was issued, and the Americas regional office is coordinating with Geneva regarding this emergency, which also has personnel on standby if needed. Moreover, the IFRC activated an existing agreement with Airbus for the provision of helicopters to conduct assessments in communities that cannot be accessed by land or to transport equipment. Lastly, ten regional National Societies, including the Haiti Red Cross Society and the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Society, have offered their assistance. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is in coordination with the IFRC to provide its technical support according to its mandate.

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For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.