

ECUADOR: LANDSLIDES

18 April, 2000

Information Bulletin N° 01

The Disaster

Heavy and frequent rains over the last three months have saturated the ground in the Ecuadorian capital, Quito, and the surrounding areas and caused landslides. Quito, located in a valley surrounded by mountains and steep hills with no vegetation now has several very high risk zones. Even small amounts of precipitation can now trigger landslides. Rains are expected to last at least until the end of April and probably into the beginning of May.

Last week heavy rains caused simultaneous landslides in different parts of the city and surrounding areas. Fourteen persons were reported killed, 25 injured and 18 homes destroyed. A total of 180 persons have been evacuated and rehoused in shelters or with family and friends and are receiving direct assistance from the Red Cross.

The Government has declared an emergency and is evacuating families living in the high risk zones in order to prevent further loss of life and property.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Since 13 April, The Ecuadorian Red Cross has 120 paramedics and rescue volunteers working in shifts around the clock to assist with rescue and evacuations. They are providing help in the temporary shelters, where they have distributed mattresses, bedding, blankets, hygiene kits and kitchen sets. This is being done in co-ordination with the fire brigade, police and civil defence. They are also providing psychological counselling to victims.

Needs

If the rains continue and more landslides occur, outside assistance may be required. The Federation Secretariat is in regular contact with the National Society and will provide more information as it becomes available.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Santiago Gil
Director
Americas Department

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