

A Month After the Earthquake in Ecuador



Informal shelter en Bahía de Caráquez

Today is exactly one month since the 7.8 magnitude earthquake occurred in Ecuador, on 16 April 2016, which left devastation, sadness and grief after learning of the death of 660 people, 13 people missing, 4,605 injured and 28,911 who are in shelters because of the destruction of 7,000 buildings. Some 560 schools have been affected and 720,000 people have been affected by the earthquake in 6 provinces declared to be in a state of emergency: Manabí, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Los Ríos, Santa Elena y Santo Domingo. (*Informe No.63 y 64 - Secretaria de Gestión de Riesgos de fecha: 10 y 11 /05/2016*).

Our operations:
Peace and Hope Foundation, in response to the emergency, has travelled around the areas of Manta, Montecristi, Portoviejo, Bahía de Caráquez, San Vicente, Canoa,





Jama y Pedernales, (provincia de Manabí) as well as Chamanga in the province of Esmeraldas, with the aim of identifying and assessing the level of those affected in each of these locations in order to determine what action to take in support of the injured population. We were able to achieve this

thanks to the support of government officials, councils, professionals located in the zone, community leaders and churches, amongst others. Our initial travels were directed at bringing humanitarian assistance: water, food kits, hygiene kits, water filters, clothes, etc., to immediately identify and sustain strategic alliances with various churches and Christian ministries with an understanding and community outreach focus on establishing soup kitchens/canteens to help respond to this urgent and pressing need. Another focus is on the design and development of psychosocial programmes/support and the prevention of child sexual abuse post-earthquake, targeting those affected found primarily living in shelters, formal (Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion) and informal (churches, parks, etc.). In short, our support in this first month was specifically as follows: Donations of 760 water filters (1 filter per family consisting of 5 members), 400 food kits (1 per family), 2,500 hygiene kits distributed to 900 men, 900 women, 700 children. We also supplied 13,400 food rations and psychosocial/spiritual support to 150 people of which 80 were children.



Workshops on the use of water filters in zones affected by the earthquake

Testimonials: *"Every day is a miracle from God and today Peace and Hope were able to come and help us with the soup kitchen so that we could reach more people, they strengthened us spiritually and emotionally; and now with psychological support at this hostel,"* said a moved Washington Reyes, coordinator of Grupo Universitario UNIDOS, and Iglesia Centro Cristiano de Milagro who, together with his team, moved to Canoa. They initially provided food and then got together with several families and formed a Family Shelter that currently provides various services and serves 100 people who have lost everything: homes and businesses. 80% of Canoa relied on tourism for work, meaning that this percentage of people have become unemployed. The remaining 20% was devoted to fishing and intend to return to their work but do so with much fear of aftershocks.



Delivery of food and higiene kits, and pastoral support, in the shelter "Refugio Familiar" in Canoa, directed by Washington Reyes

"Humanitarian aid in terms of food, health, hygiene, water, housing, economic recovery, and mental health assistance, is still needed and must be developed over a long period of time. MIES authorities are giving permission for churches to take on this responsibility in the many existing shelters. Emotional health professionals are required," said Tania Rada, Psychologist at Peace and Hope Foundation.



Tania Rada in a workshop on the prevention of infant sexual abuse post-earthquake

The actions being undertaken by Peace and Hope are being done by coordinating efforts with institutional groups which they are part of, such as: The Inter Diaconal Evangelical Network - REDI, and the Christian Emergency Committee - CCE, in order to respond to the needs of the victims of the earthquake in terms of their material, spiritual and emotional needs.

Prayer points:

1. Families/relatives of the 660 people who lost their lives – for God to strengthen them, comfort them and rekindle their desire to continue living despite such irreparable losses.
2. The wounded – for people to make a full recovery, and for restoration so they can resume their daily activities.
3. Families in shelters – that they may be relocated to their own, decent, housing in the shortest time possible.
4. Economic recovery – for sources of work, including micro family projects, to those who were engaged in fishing, tourism, trade and lost everything.
5. Public and private psychosocial support programmes – to allow victims to overcome the post-traumatic process caused by the earthquake.
6. Churches – that they can be established in houses of refuge for the displaced, support the fallen, support the helpless, extend an arm for the needy and be bearers of hope and good news for the victims.

16/05/16

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