



c e d e p c a

CEDEPCA RESPONSE TO TROPICAL STORM AGATHA IN GUATEMALA

In response to Tropical Storm Agatha, which caused flooding and landslides that affected 400,000 people in Guatemala, Cedepca intends to provide psychosocial service to strengthen the resilience of those affected emotionally, and provide cleaning kits in affected communities. The budget to attend 1000 people with psychosocial attention and provide 500 cleaning kits and 10 mini-warehouses of tools for community use is \$37,000.

Emergency Situation

Tropical Storm Agatha, the first pacific storm during the 2010 hurricane season, touched Guatemala on May 29th. Because of the precarious situation in which most Guatemalans live and because of a lack of urban planning, a fairly minor tropical storm can be devastating for families and for the national infrastructure. Agatha brought fewer days of rain than Hurricane Stan but it rained harder, leaving 12 inches of rain in 30 hours in some parts, and more than four inches of rain in 12 hours in Guatemala City. The storm had even more impact because two days earlier the Pacaya Volcano had erupted, leaving 2,000 people evacuated, Guatemala City covered in 1-3 inches of volcanic ash and sand, and the international airport closed for a week.



Effects in Amatitlan after Agatha
AP Photo/Moises Castillo

All 22 departments of Guatemala reported emergency situations, although the highest percentage of the population was affected in the south coast, the Atlantic, Sololá, and the capital. According to the most recent updates, Agatha left more than 170 people dead, 400,000 affected, more than 24,000 houses damaged, and another 7,000 houses at high risk. 24 bridges had severe damage and another 100 bridges need repair. The Pan American Health Organization warns of risks of diarrhea, cholera and respiratory problems as a consequence of the standing water. Continued landslides and flooding are likely because the rainy season is only beginning.

You can help!

- One cleaning kit: \$40
- Post-disaster psychological care for 10 people: \$130
- One mini-warehouse of tools for the community: \$400

Situation in the Area of Response



A neighbor shows the waterline in her house in Quetzaltenango photo: Dana Olson

Cedepca is beginning its response in Zone 2 of Quetzaltenango where families suffered severe flooding which left the area devastated. These floods are a consequence of lack of planning decades ago when a former lake area was filled in and became Zone 2. 530 families (more than 2,000 people) in this area had their homes damaged by the floods.

We hope to expand the response to the departments of Chimaltenango and Amatitlan where there are also families affected by landslides and floods.

Proposed Response

Psychosocial Service

- Strengthen the population's resilience in the crisis, overcoming stresses and training to better face future risks.

“Sometimes I find myself trembling when I think of how the water pulled me.” “What am I going to do now that my house is destroyed and I don't have anywhere to go?” These are frequent comments in Guatemala now as a product of the powerful emotions produced by Agatha. Cedepca has strong skills in psychosocial topics and although lots of groups are responding to the disaster, we don't know of other groups focusing on psychosocial topics to help affected people overcome the trauma with resilience and heal by telling their story to others.

We will work with churches and organizations in the affected areas with relationships with Cedepca in order to send teams of three to four psychologists or pastors who have received training in community activities to strengthen resilience. These people will not provide individual psychological attention, but will work with groups of children, groups of women, groups of men, and groups of youth to give a space for community sharing and support. They'll also provide training to help people in the community make decisions to prepare for future risks.



The task of cleaning up in Quetzaltenango photo: Dana Olson

Support with Basic Needs

- Support families and communities with equipment for cleaning and other basic needs

In the communities where we intend to work (in Quetzaltenango, Chimaltenango and Amatitlan), the most urgent needs now is cleaning equipment to remove mud from the houses and clean the remaining dirt and mold. Together with partner churches or organizations in the affected area we will provide mini-warehouses with tools to use in this emergency and to remain with the organization or church for use in future emergencies.

BUDGET:

To provide psychosocial support to 1000 people during two months: \$13,000

To distribute 500 cleaning kits and other basic needs: \$20,000

To distribute 10 mini-warehouses with tools in the communities: \$4,000

TOTAL: \$37,000

How to Contribute to Cedepca:

Option 1: Cedepca, an ecumenical institution, is accredited as a validated mission partner of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Individuals can send tax-deductible contributions to:

PC(USA) Individual Remittance Processing
PO Box 6437000
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Contributions from PCUSA churches, Presbyteries and Synods:

Churches

PC(USA) Church Remittance Processing
PO Box 643678
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3678

Presbyteries and synods:

PC(USA) Presbytery/Synod Remittance Processing
PO Box 643751
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3751

Please clearly mark on your check to designate your contributions as follows:

Cedepca General Fund (ECO 864600)

Please advise Cedepca General Coordinator, Judith Castañeda, of all contributions so she can acknowledge your gift. jcastaneda@cedepca.org or 011-502-22541093

- **Option 2: To make tax-deductible donations on-line, please visit www.cedepca.us**
- **Option 3: Direct contributions can be send to our USA bank account:**

Cedepca - Account #2000025119521
Wachovia Bank
Regional Service Center VA 7300
Post Office Box 40031
Roanoke, VA. 24022-0031 USA
Phone: 001-540-375-7185

For wire transfers in the US, the ABA number is 051400549
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