



BOLIVIA

National Programme for Disaster Prevention

Disaster Context

Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in South America, with 70 percent of its population living in poverty. The majority of the rural population lives in fragile and vulnerable conditions due to high levels of poverty and unemployment, low standards of living, lack of access to resources, unequal patterns of asset ownership and distribution, environmental degradation, and slow economic growth. The most common disasters that strike the country are floods, droughts, and bushfires.

In January 2001, the Bolivian Government declared a state of emergency in the country after two weeks of heavy rain killed two people and forced 13,500 families from their homes. The capital, La Paz, was the most affected area. One month later, another rainstorm hit La Paz, killing 50 people, injuring 150, and forcing greater than 300 families from their homes.

The institutional capacities to handle disasters as development issues in Bolivia are very limited. In the past, disaster management primarily focused on preparedness. Today, the emphasis is moving away from a traditional emergency response framework to a preventive approach that includes risk management.

Project Titles

- National Programme for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response
- Programme of Risk Reduction and Disaster Response for the Municipal Government of La Paz

Sectors

- Public awareness, training, and sensitisation
- Policy development
- Disaster prevention, preparedness, and mitigation
- Institutional strengthening

Funding

UNDP contributed \$50,000 from TRAC 1.1.1 funds, and the World Bank contributed cost-sharing funds of \$200,000.

Partners

- Ministry of Defence, Technical Support Unit for Institutional Strengthening
- Ministry of Defence, National Service for Risk Reduction
- National Service for Civil Defence
- Ministry of Sustainable Development
- Municipalities

Programme Activities

- Approval of the Law on Risk Prevention and Disaster Attention
- Preparation of a proposal for the regulatory framework of the Law on Risk Prevention and Disaster Attention
- Training of 127 government officials from ministries and municipalities in risk management
- Creation of a network with its own directory and a Web page to exchange ideas and information and to articulate activities, institutional roles, and responsibilities (www.renaprade.org)
- Adaptation of training material from the Latin American Network (La Red) into a Bolivian context; these materials, consisting of seven modules, were used in workshops to raise awareness and sensitise government officials to the new approaches to disaster management
- Training of trainers and disaster focal points in municipalities and departmental governments (prefectures)