

Double Disaster

Guatemala is once again dealing with disaster. On Thursday May 27 Volcano Pacaya erupted spewing ash and rock across a wide area of the country, and closing the airport for 1 week. The eruption was followed by tropical storm Agatha that hit the Pacific coast on May 29. The effects of this tropical storm are said to be greater than hurricane Stan. Some areas of the country received 1 m of rain within 24 hours. According to CONRED the government of Guatemala's disaster relief agency, 140 000 people were left homeless by the storm.

The Guatemala Stove Project has been in touch with our partners on the ground to gauge the effects on the people we work with, as well as how we can assist. According to one of our partners, CEDEC (Centro de Estudios Para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación) there is extensive damage to crops, homes, and roads. The Guatemala Stove Project has already sent down \$15 000 in emergency relief. This money has allowed our partners to purchase the most basic items such as; blankets, roofing steel, nails, plastic sheeting, boots, flashlights and batteries, cooking oil, corn, beans, rice, and pasta. We continue to be in touch with our partners to monitor the situation, but the appeal for help still stands.

The government is overwhelmed with rebuilding the infrastructure in the more populated areas. Thirty-eight bridges need rebuilding, and 30% of the roads are destroyed. The government assistance available to the rural populations is not forthcoming, and the Guatemalan government has already made an appeal to NGOs (non-governmental organizations) for emergency relief supplies and money.

Unfortunately this story is no longer deemed news worthy by major media, so the story is not getting out (except for the sinkhole in Guatemala city), and Guatemala has dropped off the radar once again.

We would ask for monetary donation you can give, no amount is too little. The Guatemala Stove Project is a registered Canadian charity, and donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax receipt. For more information and to find out how to donate, please visit the website <http://www.guatemalastoveproject.org>