

EMERGENCY AND CALAMITY FROM THE RAINS

VIDA LUTERANA
SALVADOREÑA

CURRENT STATE

- National emergency and state of calamity
- 7 people dead
- 8,000 refugees
- 105 shelters in the departments of Sonsonate, Ahuachapán, La Paz, Usulután, San Vicente.
- 150,000 people at risk
- 3 missing
- 86 floods
- 380 landslides
- 5 gullies
- 6 collapses

Can you help me please...?

IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY AND CALAMITY

The rains that have hit the country since the first of the week have left at least 7 people dead, 4 missing, and approximately 8,000 refugees...



Highway to Garita Palmera, en the southern zone of Ahuachapán

The statistics change constantly because the rains haven't ceased to fall. Two systems of low pressure have united into the already rough Jova storm. The reports indicate that all weekend will be the same.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock estimated a 40 percent loss of crops, including beans, rice, corn, and coffee.

The President of the Republic, Mauricio Funes, decreed this Friday a state of national emergency. The Legislative Assembly



Crop zone, Bola de Monte, Ahuachapán

one day earlier had decreed a state of calamity in 3 departments: Ahuachapán, La Paz, and Usulután.

Additional statistics: The 4 largest dams in the country, El Guajoyo, the Cerrón Grande, 5 de Noviembre y 15 de Septiembre, maintain the system of water discharge affecting even more the communities located in the zone of Bajo Lempa, Jiquilisco, Usulután.

The Central American region reports at least 35 deaths: Guatemala 22 with 20 thousand victims, Nicaragua 6, and El Salvador 7.

One of the zones most affected is the Municipality of San Francisco Menéndez, located in the southern zone of the Department of Ahuachapán. There our Lutheran Church has permanent work...

LUTHERAN CHURCH ACCOMPANYING THE MOST AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Although the emergency is at a national level, and all the churches and communities are suffering the brunt of the rains, the decision has been to concentrate our efforts on 3 specific locations:

San Francisco Menéndez, La Paz, and Usulután.



Shelter in the southern zone of Ahuachapán

The 5 referenced micro-region coordinators met with leaders in their zones, but a multi-disciplined team from the church has been prominent in supporting the work performed by the church in the communities of Cara Sucia, the communities of La Paz, and the communities of Usulután.

The Lutheran Radio Station, Stereo South, in Cara Sucia, Ahuachapán, maintains an ongoing labor of providing guidance and information to people in the impacted area. The Center of Prevention has been assigned to coordinate with the Salvadoran Red Cross, FOSALUD, and the municipal offices of San Francisco Menéndez, although at any given time it could be occupied to provide shelter for the people.

On Thursday, delegates of the Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran Church made tours and visits to the shelters and we found the greatest needs to be: food; clothing for children, the elderly, and women; water; flashlights; and medicine, among others.

At this moment it is an emergency effort, so the needs are to cover this stage. "The people still don't have food, water, or provisions and are becoming desperate, and that's both dangerous and very sad," according to Pastor Jorge Henriquez, coordinator of the southwestern micro-region.

For his part, Pastor Julio Chávez, of the communities of Llano el Coyol, Puerto Parada and others in the lower zone of the Department of Usulután, has reported the urgent signal for help.

Pastor Ana Rosa, coordinator of the eastern micro-region, maintains constant communication and is in the location where the pastors assume the task of accompaniment.

Pastor Vilma López, coordinator of the central western micro-region, has reported problems in the churches and Lutheran communities of Santa Ana, Sonsonate, and the northern part of Ahuachapán.

In Santa Ana, Christ the King Lutheran Church has suffered damage as has the community of Lobato where Saint Paul's church is located.

Pastor José María Saravia, coordinator of the north central micro-region, turned in the order for assistance because his communities have been flooded in large part.

Pastor Francisco Aguilar, coordinator of the south central micro-region, also monitors constantly and reports that several churches of the 20 that make up the micro-region are in a state of emergency for damages.

Nevertheless, we reiterate that the ILS is going to concentrate on the 3 zones that we have already mentioned, without neglecting the rest who are clamoring for assistance as well.

EMERGENCY AND CALAMITY: REFLECTION OF NEGLECT

Although making a critical assessment in a stage of emergency and calamity doesn't reflect how everything is, it's necessary to express:

1. Congratulations to the leaders of all affected communities for their ability to organize, coordinate, and ensure comprehensive care for the people and their collective well-being, because it is work that transcends a personal love for life to a sacred community responsibility inasmuch as it expresses the greatest commandment ... and your neighbor as yourself.
2. Congratulations to all the relief agencies and security bodies that maintain a decent, fair, and capable job, because in the end, they are just men and women that, upon donning a logo or corporate uniform become references, and have surely left their family in the same conditions of vulnerability, in order to intern themselves to help others in a selfless and heroic way. The most beautiful thing is that they are often unsung heroes who fight great battles from the obscurity of their actions, and in the end are not those in the photos, but they know the taste of thanks and praise, they are blessed.
3. We are grateful to the communication media, who without eagerness to cash in on the politics, advertising or propaganda, inform, guide and generate the optimal view, real and transparent so that people who are in distress can better manage their decisions. These media need recognition, because there are many more who take advantage of the emergency and calamity to raise profits and focus on their greatness.
4. Congratulations to the churches, schools, and other institutions of public and private service fulfilling the precept ... that the right hand doesn't know what the left is doing, they have performed a heroic job and made resources, money and their energy available. This work is sacred because beyond the institutional agendas and operational plans, they perform acts of service to the most affected communities.

It is unfortunate that there are institutions that are first drawn to their own interests and benefit from the misfortune of the people.

We are sure to find in the context of an election campaign, that significant criticism of all involved will arise and specific institutional achievements will be highlighted.

As the government of Mauricio Funes has called it, the important thing is to rid ourselves of selfish interests and work for the collective work. For a moment forget the petty interests, logos, jealousy and capricious supporters, and address the sounds of the people crying for help.

Anyone who after the misfortune wants to take advantage of things in a harmful way, will only obtain the indignation of the people and God, because it is neither deserving nor just to take advantage of anyone's misfortune in order to make a profit. This moment is for us to focus as a country, as a people, to come out of the problem and do the lectures later. Why so much misfortune? What things must we improve so we're not so vulnerable?. It is urgent that we look further ahead and assume our responsibility.