

PfR Guatemala country factsheet

Country: Guatemala

Project Area: Izabal

Organization(s): Netherlands Red Cross, Wetlands International

Key data about the project area (area of the beneficiaries):

Population: 403,256

Geography: at shore of Izabal lake, within tropical rain forests

Main livelihood sectors: agriculture, cultivation staple crops

Beneficiaries #:

Beneficiary groups: Q'eqchi people

What types of hazards occur in project site?

tropical storms, hurricanes.

El Estor faces the effects of tropical storms and hurricanes, which lead to floods and mudslides in vulnerable communities. As these phenomena are becoming extreme and more frequent, communities require more preparedness and means to respond to emergencies. Besides disasters, the zone which is one of the biodiversity reserves of Guatemala is highly vulnerable to the effects of mining and deforestation that endanger the livelihood of communities.

How are these hazards exacerbated?

By human activity? (ecosystems degradation)

mining activities, deforestation

(?) Politics?

This discontent is still maintained in the Municipality of Estor, department of Izabal (NLRC), because they do not accept the change of government. Furthermore, the change of government brings changes in the officials in the territories and of state institutions. Therefore, in the framework of the project it was decided to postpone the start-up of activities after the change of authorities.

Because of national elections and the transition of the new government in the last quarter of 2011, we expect substantial changes in the key positions of both the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) and the National Commission on Protected Areas (CONAP).

Drug-related violence has increased and is more visible. The clear examples are the declaration of state in Coban and Peten (first part of 2011) after violent actions related to drug trafficking. Some working areas are affected by the infiltration of drug trafficking (Izabal, Zacapa and Chiquimula).

(?) Economics?

Climate change?

Projected changes for Central America show that unusually warm days and nights are likely to increase while unusually cold days and nights are likely to decrease. Heat waves and heat spells are also likely to be more frequent and longer in most of the region.

Models predict a median annual average temperature increase of 3.2°C for Central America, with a range of 1.8 to 5°C possible by 2080-2090 (A1B scenario). Rainfall is predicted to decrease at an annual median average of 9% with a range of -48% to +9% possible by 2080-2090 (A1B scenario). Extreme rainfall events have also become more frequent in recent years and tropical cyclones' intensity is expected to increase.

IPCC global projections also predict an increase of 0.18 to 0.59m in sea-level rise by 2200 but several other sources indicate that it could rise by as much as 1 meter.

How are people's livelihoods affected?

Human

Social
Physical
financial
Natural

What are the solutions offered by the alliance?

Preparedness
Early warning
Mitigation
development