**THE danish emergency relief fund**

**Alert note**

**Section A: Basic information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Organisation: | Fundación para la Conservación del Bosque Chiquitano (FCBC) and Aktion Amazonas in partnership |
| Title of alert: | Food and water shortages due to prolonged drought in eastern Bolivia |
| Type of crisis: | * *slow onset humanitarian crisis (please fill out section C)* |

**Section C: Slow onset humanitarian crisis**

|  |
| --- |
| c.1 Where is the crisis?  Bolivia is hit by drought and the country's eastern region, Santa Cruz, is among the departments worst hit. More than half of the department’s municipalities are affected by climate change from lack of drinking water to food shortages due to failed harvests and loss of livestock.  c.2 What is the nature of the crisis?  The families in the Santa Cruz department are affected by climate change, suffering from higher temperatures, lack of rains and longer periods of drought. The departmental council of Santa Cruz has declared a state of emergency in 23 municipalities, where 618 villages and 27,000 families are affected by the drought. That is more than a third of the department's 56 registered communities! As in the rest of the Chiquitano region, up to 80% of the rural population subsists on small-scale agriculture and forest resources from the Chiquitano Dry Forest (CDR), constituting an important basis of life and food for the rural families and an important supplement to agriculture and other earnings as employees in the informal sector. The situation is further complicated by the region's geographical conditions, with an underground that consists of bedrock up to 200 meters deep, which makes well drilling both expensive and the investments uncertain, as the few pockets of water in the bedrock often are undrinkable due to naturally occurring salts and minerals.  c.3 What information do you have about the situation? What is the source of that information?  Bolivia’s central government launched in December 2022 the distribution of water and basic food cf. the relief plan 'Plurinational Plan for Immediate Response to the Drought' implemented through the Vice Ministry of Civil Defense, within the framework of Law 602 on Risk Management followed by a state of emergency declared by the departmental council of Santa Cruz. The regional government of Santa Cruz initiated last year the distribution of 81 tons of food to some of the affected families and has donated nine mobile water trucks for the distribution of drinking water, but the need for access to food and safe water remains enormous in the entire region. There is first and foremost a need for basic food supplies, distribution of clean drinking water as well as seeds and water tanks and the excavation of water reservoirs, to enable local population to sow new crops when the rainy season hopefully sets in later in the year and collect rainwater in water tanks, to build greater resilience before the next drought begins.The distances in the Santa Cruz department are enormous and the infrastructure minimal, but it is still possible to get water and food to the affected communities in cars and trucks.  [*https://reliefweb.int/report/bolivia-plurinational-state/natural-hazards-monitoring-15-december-2022*](https://reliefweb.int/report/bolivia-plurinational-state/natural-hazards-monitoring-15-december-2022)  <https://www.mmaya.gob.bo/2022/11/plan-plurinacional-de-respuesta-inmediata-a-la-sequia/>  c.3.1 Provide as strong as possible evidence of why there is a change in the current slow onset crisis. Describe also when the change occurred (m*ention specific dates if possible).*  The drought situation is serious for the third year in a row and in 2022 there has been no rain at all. The first rain is not expected to fall until March 2023, according to Bolivia's Meteorological Institute (Servicio Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología). Normally, the rainy season begins in October and lasts until March, after which the six-month dry season sets in. The lack of rain has thus created a national humanitarian disaster. According to several experts, the increasingly longer periods of drought have led to the drought in the Chiquitano region moving from being a meteorological drought, i.e., absence of precipitation to a situation where there is now also a deficit of moisture in the soil. If the rains continue to fail in 2023, Bolivia's Metrological Institute estimates that the region will reach the highest possible level of drought, which is the hydrological droughts i.e., significant loss of natural surface water. The increasingly longer and hotter droughts pose a latent threat to the local population throughout the Chiquitano region, leaving the rural population with no real chance of sustaining a livelihood. The Santa Cruz region is an ecologically naturally dry area and few fluctuations in climate have noticeable consequences for the local population's livelihood, food security and access to drinking water.  *c.3.2. How could DERF grants make a difference for the crisis affected population?*  A DERF grant will enable a rapid disbursement, of basic food, chickens, and clean drinking water for distribution in water trucks, besides purchasing and distribution of 5000 L. water tanks and gutters, seeds (primarily maize) and funding for the excavation of community water reservoirs*.*  *c.4 Are you already responding to this emergency? In which locations/sectors? For which target group? Through which forms of local presence? What is the outcome of your latest assessment and what have you done since then?*  N/A |