

## News note

### Earthquake in Peru leaves hundreds killed and thousands injured

**LIMA, 16 August 2007** - At 6:41 Wednesday night, an earthquake of a 8.0-magnitude on the Richterscale shook Peru, 60 kilometers from the city of Pisco, in the province of Ica. The region's capital, located 300 kilometers south of Lima, was the worst affected and was declared an emergency.

Road communication between Ica and the capital has partly collapsed, limiting access to the affected areas and preventing an exact estimate of the damage. According to early reports from the Civil Defense Institute, 336 people were killed in the province of Ica, but it is still unknown how many of them are children. In the evening hours, the possibility of a tsunami was overruled.

Classes were suspended for safety reasons. Public hospitals and health centres are offering medical attention, free of charge, to the injured.

UNICEF's Representative in Peru, Dr. Guido Comale, expressed concern at the increasing number of casualties, among whom there could be many children. "The United Nations' organizations in Peru are coordinating their response. UNICEF will be distributing water-purification tablets, water containers, oral rehydration salts and water tanks with a 10,000-liter capacity," he said.

Early data reveal that Cañete, Chincha and Pisco are the cities most damaged in the Ica province. However, the situation remains unknown in other parts of the province, like Nazca and Palpa, which have so far been inaccessible.

It is estimated that 200 people are trapped under the rubble of a church and, according to eye-witness reports, most of the houses in Pisco were destroyed, forcing families and their children to sleep in the streets, despite the cold weather of winter.

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#### **About UNICEF**

*UNICEF is on the ground in over 150 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.*

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