

# Bamboo for Post-Earthquake Reconstruction in Ecuador



On April 16th 2016 Ecuador was hit by a massive earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale. Directly impacting 6 provinces located on the northern coastal area this disaster was responsible for claiming the lives of 660 people. Forcing 7,600 families or around 30,000 people into temporary shelters the earthquake also had a devastating effect on more than 560 schools and 7,000 other buildings. Destroying many roads, it led to the isolation of rural communities from aid.

Utilising its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) located in Ecuador, INBAR swung into action.

## Bamboo as a potential rebuilding material after the earthquake - INBAR Actions in ECUADOR -

Preliminary reports suggest that most buildings using bamboo have either been able to withstand the impact or have only been partially damaged. International and local media outlets including New York Times, BBC, CNN, ABC, El Tiempo, El Comercio, El Universo, El Expreso, and El Telegrafo show the relative performance and strength of Bamboo.

### **INBAR Actions:**

#### **1. Assessment and Reporting**

With the support of local, regional and international partners INBAR is coordinating a technical evaluation of the impact the earthquake had on existing bamboo structures and resources. The report aims to inform authorities on appropriate usage of bamboo in reconstruction.

#### **2. Bamboo Reconstruction Workshops**

INBAR successfully organized workshops on bamboo reconstruction and regulations for safe homes in Quito and Manta with the help of its partners. Experts shared their experiences in bamboo usage for alleviating relief efforts in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.



The event held on the 12th of May at Quito was attended by 70 people and organized with the support of Mesa Sectorial Bambu Ecuador and the Association of Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE). The attendees included representatives from the Ecuadorian Ministries of Housing, Industry and Productivity, and Agriculture, provincial governments, universities, and volunteer organizations.

On the 13th of May, another event was organised in Manta supported by the University Laica Eloy Alfaro of Manabi and was attended by 300 people. The attendees included municipal and provincial government officials from Manta and Manabi responsible for reconstruction after the earthquake.

**OUTCOME:** The attendees of both the events acknowledged the need for Ecuador's national building code to reinstate bamboo and allow earthquake reconstruction subsidies for bamboo houses. The participants were determined to promote the usage of local materials and techniques for reconstruction using bamboo and bahareque walling systems.

### **3. Virtual Bamboo Desk and Information Sharing**

An email address [consultoriodebambu@gmail.com](mailto:consultoriodebambu@gmail.com) was created by INBAR to assist users in answering technical questions about bamboo. So far, INBAR has answered more than 250 emails.

Information Sharing: INBAR has shared manuals and technical notes on bamboo with over 600 different groups via emails, print copies and social media.

### **4. National Coordination and National Roundtable**

Collaborating with a number of national platforms INBAR is working with the Ecuadorian Ministries of Housing, Industry and Productivity, Foreign Affairs, Environment, and Agriculture along with local government authorities to coordinate the reconstruction work.

National Roundtable - INBAR has participated in several coordination meetings organized by the National Bamboo Roundtable (platform that comprises 70 public and private organizations interested in bamboo in Ecuador). A formal resolution related to bamboo reconstruction was signed by 28 stakeholders in the month of April.

### **5. INBAR's Planned Future Projects**

- Updated Bamboo Construction Code for Ecuador and Harvesting Regulations
- Pilot Projects with Demonstrative Bamboo Homes and Public Infrastructure (Schools/ Public Offices)
- Training Processes with Local Government/Producer Technicians
- Vocational Centre to Train Young People in Bamboo-related Employment Opportunities in Housing, Furniture, etc.

