

# *Heavy Flooding in Bolivia Kills 15, Leaves 10,000 Families Affected*

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La Paz, January 19 (RHC-EFE) -- At least 15 people died and some 10,400 families have suffered property damage as a result of the intense rains and flooding affecting Bolivia, especially six of the country's nine regions, a government official said Sunday.

The deputy minister for civil defense, Oscar Cabrera, said in an interview with state-run radio that seven people had died in the central region of Cochabamba, another five in Potosi, two in Chuquisaca and one in Santa Cruz.

He added that the areas that have been "seriously affected," and where the risk of further property damage or worse continues, are the northern part of La Paz and the Potosi municipality of Cotagaita.

In northern La Paz, more than 500 families have suffered property damage and 19 homes have collapsed this past week in flooding caused by the overflowing of rivers in the towns of Guanay and Tipuani.

A stretch of highway connecting the capital with several northern towns in that same-named province was washed away on Saturday, the state-run highway administration authority said in a statement, adding that

the intense rains had activated a "geological fault" that caused a landslide near the town of Caranavi.

The 2014 rainy season, which in Bolivia lasts from October to March, was one of the most devastating in recent decades, with 60 people losing their lives and some 60,000 families affected, along with millions of dollars in losses in the agricultural sector.

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