The Quindio, Colombia Earthquake of January 25, 1999

On Monday, January 25, 1999, an $M_L = 5.9$ earthquake occurred in the Quindio Department of Colombia, the country’s coffee region. The epicenter was located 17 km south of Armenia, the capital city of Quindio, in the western part of Colombia. The earthquake was one of the most devastating events to have occurred in Colombia in recent history and its economic and social impacts will be felt for a long time in Armenia and other cities close to the epicenter. In Armenia, the hardest hit city, at least one thousand people were killed and over 50% of its 270,000 population were displaced. The approximate peak ground acceleration was 0.5-0.55 g in Armenia (recorded in soil). Poor soils and the prevalent unreinforced masonry infill wall construction were responsible for most of the casualties and damage.

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The Photographs were provided by Paul Flores, EQE International Inc.