



### HIGHLIGHTS

- 2016 closed with 10.7 million people affected, 10 per cent more than in 2015.
- Floods are the most frequent type of disaster in the region, although drought affected more people.
- The Atlantic hurricane season was more active than 2012 and more deadly than 2005.
- The United Nations requested funding for US\$339 million for emergencies in the region.
- 2016 marked the 25th anniversary of UN Resolution 46/182.

### PEOPLE AFFECTED

Drought	4,183,047
Tropical cyclones	2,738,013
Floods	1,825,634
Complex emergencies	886,501
Earthquakes	399,771
Other	624,288
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,657,254</b>

### FUNDING

**339 Million**

Requested, 42% covered (US\$)

Source: Compiled from reports issued by national authorities from emergencies monitored by OCHA ROLAC.

Note: The Figures are from official reports. However, this does not imply official approval by the UN or member states. Figures are solely for reference. Please contact national authorities if you require further information.



People affected by Hurricane Otto in Costa Rica. La Nación

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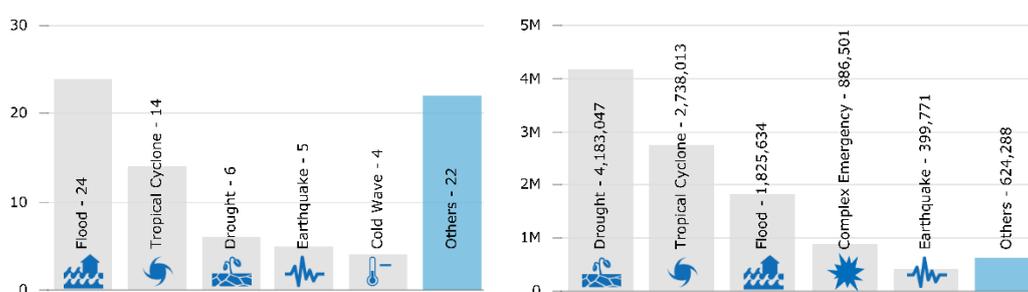
## More than 10 million people affected by disaster in 2016

**Drought, hurricanes, floods and earthquakes were the main disasters that affected people in 2016. Dengue, chikungunya and Zika affected another 3.7 million people.**

Preliminary data shows that disasters affected 10.7 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2016. Drought affected the largest number of people, followed by Hurricanes Matthew and Otto, floods and complex emergencies such as a lack of potable water in large cities in Bolivia, due to structural failures in the distribution systems.

Floods, earthquakes and the effects of violence and migration are some of the 75 events that also affected the region in 2016. There was an increase of more than 10 per cent in number of people affected compared with 2015 (1.4 million more people affected).

**Disasters in 2016 – Latin America and the Caribbean**  
Type of disaster and people affected



There were 75 disasters in the region in 2016. Floods continue to be the most frequent type of emergency. More than 4 million people were affected by drought with the accumulative effects of 2015 in Central America and 2016 drought situations in Bolivia, Brazil, Dominican Republic and Haiti in 2016.

### Zika, one of the major emergencies in 2016

Epidemics transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito affected 3.7 million people – some 2.5 million people fell ill with dengue, 700,000 from Zika and 495,000 from chikungunya. In November, the [World Health Organization](#) announced that Zika was no longer a sanitary emergency; however, it would continue to challenge public health systems. The virus reached a level of epidemic in 49 countries and territories in the region and was declared a global sanitary emergency due to the cases of babies born with microcephaly from infected mothers and cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome.

## Hurricane Season 2016

**The Atlantic Hurricane season was more active than 2012 and more deadly than 2005. La Niña contributed to the increased intensity, which caused an above-normal warming of the ocean's surface, favouring hurricane formation.**

The season officially ended on 30 November and affected 2.7 million people in 13 countries. The hurricane season formally begins on 1 June, however, five months before – in the middle of January – Hurricane Alex formed in the North Atlantic, an event that has not occurred since 1955. The strongest and most deadly hurricane was Matthew, followed by Otto. In the Pacific, the season was very active but did not because major damage as the majority of the systems did not make landfall.

### Otto put preparedness measures to the test in Central America

Otto was the seventh hurricane of the 2016 Atlantic Hurricane season. Northern Costa Rica received the worst impact. In Nicaragua, the hurricane made landfall as a category 2 with winds of up to 175 km/h, affecting the southern Caribbean area. Otto also caused damages in Panama.

The hurricane directly affected more than 10,000 people in Costa Rica, killed nine and caused US\$56 million in economic losses in agriculture. In Nicaragua, authorities evacuated 11,600 people to safe areas and official shelters, while in Panama more than 2,500 people were affected by the storm.

OCHA deployed a Humanitarian Affairs Officer to Costa Rica to bolster United Nations support to the Government response. OCHA also allocated US\$30,000 in emergency funds for immediate relief items.

In total, Hurricane Otto affected 24,940 people in three countries, causing 18 deaths, 16,000 people to seek shelter, 120 houses destroyed and 2,300 damaged. Although Costa Rica was hardest hit, authorities responded immediately. Humanitarian needs were relatively small due to Government's leadership in the response, bolstered by joint efforts.

For more information visit: [www.redhum.org/emergencia](http://www.redhum.org/emergencia)



COSTA RICA: The community of Batán in the Limon province was one of the communities evacuated during the emergency. Classes were suspended in affected areas. Image: ALBERT MARÍN/La Nación.

## Humanitarian Funding in 2016

**The United Nations requested US\$339 m in funding for emergencies**

The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated \$28.1 m in response to drought in Guatemala, the earthquake in Ecuador, Hurricane Matthew in Cuba and Haiti. Appeals were launched for the Ecuador earthquake (\$72.8 m requested - 37.2% funded) and for Haiti for Hurricane Matthew (\$139 m requested – 63.9% funded). A Response Plan was presented by Cuba for Hurricane Matthew (\$26.5 m requested – 35% funded). A Humanitarian Response Plan was launched for Guatemala (\$57 m requested - 28% funded) and Honduras (\$44 M requested – 12% covered) for drought. OCHA allocated Emergency Cash Grants for \$235,000 for Paraguay Belize, Cuba and Costa Rica.

For more information visit: [Financial Tracking Service](http://Financial Tracking Service)

*The Atlantic Hurricane season began on 1 June and ended on 30 November. The Pacific season began on 15 May. In 2016, the first storm formed in January.*

**US\$339 Million  
Requested**

**\$193**

**\$146**

■ Funded ■ To be covered

## 25 years of humanitarian coordination

### "Strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance in emergencies".



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF  
HUMANITARIAN  
COORDINATION

Assistance provided by the international humanitarian community during emergencies is guided by [UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182](#). This resolution established the framework for humanitarian assistance and guiding principles.

On 19 December 1991, the [General Assembly](#) adopted the resolution as a result of several global situations. During the Gulf War, the UN was criticized for its humanitarian assistance for people displaced by the conflict calling the efforts uncoordinated and duplicated.

This criticism helped to design an organization with a specific mandate to coordinate assistance to people affected by situations of emergency. Resolution 46/182 strengthened the position of Emergency Relief Coordinator with the responsibility of improving the coordination of humanitarian assistance, facilitating access to conflict areas, needs assessments, consolidated appeals, and funding.

Resolution 46/182 also created the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\)](#) and the [Central Emergency Response Fund \(CERF\)](#).

Effective humanitarian action complies with humanitarian principles and is a shared responsibility. OCHA's objective is to support Member States, national and international humanitarian organizations to ensure effective emergency preparedness and coordinated and timely response.

For more information visit: <http://www.unocha.org/>

## InfoRM better risk analysis

### The impact of disasters erodes the resilience of affected communities and increases the vulnerability of populations living in already fragile conditions.

Latin America and the Caribbean is the second most disaster-prone region in the world ([World Bank](#)). Despite increasing prosperity, the region has some of the highest levels of inequality and countries struggle with poverty, social unrest, conflicts and violence. Recurring disasters undermine progress in development and contribute to persistent poverty among the most vulnerable populations.

Understanding the dimension of the crisis and disaster risk – the probability of the occurrence of an emergency and its possible impact - is a fundamental step in risk management and saving lives.

The [Index for Risk Management \(InfoRM\)](#) is a preliminary tool to analyse, understand and measure risk in humanitarian crises and disasters and their effects on sustainable development.

In 2015, [OCHA](#) and [UNICEF](#) began adapting the global [InfoRM](#) model to the region, with pilot national adaptations in Guatemala, Honduras and Colombia.

The index helps Governments and staff working in disaster risk reduction, development, and humanitarian affairs to make objective decisions regarding risk to help prevent, prepare and respond to crises and strengthen resilience.

For more information visit: <http://www.inform-index.org/>

*InfoRM is a collective index that aims to identify countries or areas of countries at risk of humanitarian emergencies that could surpass the national response capacity and require international assistance.*

**INFORM**  
INDEX FOR RISK MANAGEMENT

## Caitlin: mother, wife, and migrant

### “We did not have work in Brazil and life was very difficult”

With these words, Caitlin, a Haitian migrant, begins the story of her dangerous crossing through several countries to reach the United States from Brazil. She is travelling with her husband and six-month son, Ricky.

We spoke to Caitlin in a temporary shelter in the Panamanian province of Darien on the border with Colombia. Tired, scared and unwilling to let us photograph her face, she did share her story with us. “One of the worst experiences was watching the river take seven of my companions and we were unable to help them. I have been walking for weeks through the Colombian jungle with my baby on my back. I am very tired.”

Faced with many difficulties and distress, she is questioning their decision to leave Brazil. “Ricky has had diarrhoea for several days and I don’t have enough food for him”. Fortunately, Caitlin can continue to breast feed, however she does not receive enough nutrients and worries for her son’s health. “Some of my companions are pregnant and also need more food”, she adds.

### More female migrants

The [International Organization for Migrations \(IOM\)](#) reports that women represent approximately 53 per cent of region’s migrant population. Migrant women’s stories reveal that during the migration process, they face distinct form of gender-based violence. Women feel most at risk when they are in transit. Violence, people trafficking and lack of information are the main risk factors in this transitory stage.

The Government of Panama is assisting migrants in shelters and temporary humanitarian aid stations in the Darien. However, authorities highlight that the response action should be regional and from all countries involved - origin, transit and destination countries as well as those involved in the return of migrants. The United Nations and humanitarian partners are supporting national authorities.

### OCHA and IOM working together with migrants

Caitlin received clothes and toys for Ricky from IOM and OCHA during a recent field mission. In a show of gratitude, Ricky smiles at the visitors. In a few days, he and his family will continue their journey with the hope of arriving at their final destination.

The causes of migration in Latin America and the Caribbean are linked to high levels of poverty and inequality, social conflicts, trafficking and violence. The political situation in some countries also forces many people to migrate. [OCHA](#) works with humanitarian actors to monitor the situation and to provide assistance to vulnerable migrants.

For more life stories visit <http://www.unocha.org/>



PANAMA: Caitlin, with her baby in her arms, during her stay in the temporary shelter administrated by Panamanian authorities in the Darien jungle. Image: ALópez/OCHA.

*“After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, we went to Brazil for work. I took care of the children and my husband worked in construction. It has been awhile now that we have not been able to get work and life was becoming impossible. That is when we decided to travel to the United States as my husband has family there.”*

## Ecuador: assistance continues in Atacames

On the morning of 19 December 2016, a 5.7 magnitude earthquake occurred in Atacames (province of Esmeraldas), already affected by the 16 April earthquake. The earthquake killed three and affected 4,005 people. Some 1,200 buildings were affected, 324 people sought refuge in state run temporary camps and 1,300 people fled to spontaneous shelter sites.

International humanitarian partners are supporting local and national response coordinated by the emergency operations centers.

Rhut is a field staff member with the [United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA](#). She describes the emotional state of people who have suffered severe damages to their home or businesses.

“Houses in the community of Tonsupa that were not affected by the April earthquake were damaged by the December earthquake. People’s optimism and spirits that were returning also took a downturn, as well as the tourism industry, which is the region’s main activity”.

Added to this situation, the rainy season has begun and is deteriorating living conditions. People living in temporary camps or tents and plastic sheeting outside of their damaged homes now face an increased risk of flooding and diseases.

Despite the adversity, Rhut is confident that the people will continue to work with the authorities to reconstruct and recover infrastructure and material damage caused by the earthquake. She highlights that it is equally important to “return to tranquility, happiness and motivating people”.

At the end of 2016, Ecuador experienced heavy rains and floods that affected more than 60,000 people, many of them in the same areas affected by the April earthquake. National authorities have responded but with many challenges and limitations given the double disaster.

For more information visit: [www.redhum.org/emergencia](http://www.redhum.org/emergencia)



ECUADOR: People in the canton of Atacames Ecuador struggle to return their lives to normal after the April earthquake. Constant aftershocks and a strong earthquake in December further complicated physical and emotional recovery efforts. Image: UNFPA.

*OCHA provided response coordination after the April 2016 earthquake. After the December earthquake shook Atacames, UNFPA prevented gender based violence and supported access to sexual and reproductive health services.*

## In 2025: One billion people around the world will be more resilient

**The One Billion Coalition is global initiative convened by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.**

The project originated at the [IFRC Global Forum on Community Resilience](#) held in Colombia in November 2014. This forum ended with an appeal to individuals, households, communities, government agencies, civil society, international organizations and businesses, as well as the Red Cross and Red Crescent network to form and be part of the “One Billion Coalition for Resilience”.

The objective is to reach at least one person in every home around the world – in high, middle and low-income countries – to take action for individual and community resilience. This will be done through financing, education and training, environmental protection, access to services and infrastructure, increased social capital (such as volunteer networks) or adaptation of International Disaster Response Laws and human rights in disasters.



The Coalition complements ongoing resilience initiatives by offering a mechanism for developing community-led resilience activities. Image: IFRC.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent global network of 17 million volunteers and more than 60,000 affiliates contribute to community resilience through a wide range of services aimed at meeting local needs such as first aid, training in disaster preparedness, water and sanitation, providing for refugees, strengthening early warning, community health, social inclusion, violence prevention and a culture of peace, road safety and environmental protection. They have also developed community capacity to map risks, analyze vulnerabilities and find local solutions within the communities.

Local level alliances are needed to expand the reach and sustainability in communities and global alliances are needed to provide support.

“The Coalition for Resilience is a transformative initiative that will save and sustain the lives of vulnerable people around the world. The Coalition will enable all participants to demonstrate leadership, and facilitate the commitments set out in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals”, said Walter Cotte, Americas Regional Director for the [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#).

For more information visit: <http://media.ifrc.org/1bc/>

*The One Billion Coalition provides a common entry point to involve community groups, civil society organizations, local and national governments, international organizations, including UNISDR and the World Bank, the private sector and academic institutions.*

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