ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication was produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC). This publication seeks to provide a comprehensive review of OCHA ROLAC’s actions in responding to the various humanitarian crises present in Latin America and the Caribbean during 2019, as well as actions undertaken with humanitarian partners to build a better-coordinated humanitarian community in the region.

The figures used throughout this publication are from public reports available at the time of publication. They are not conclusive and are meant to be indicative of the overall scope of the various humanitarian scenarios in Latin America and the Caribbean during 2019.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Front cover
Growing humanitarian needs across Venezuela, including vulnerable communities in Táchira, led to a scaled-up humanitarian response in 2019. OCHA ROLAC’s contributions to this scale-up effort were instrumental in building preparedness, establishing formal coordination structures and opening field coordination hubs and securing emergency humanitarian financing to facilitate coordinated assistance for vulnerable populations in Venezuela.

Photo: OCHA/Gema Cortés
FOREWORD

Taking stock of what 2019 meant for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) requires looking back at previous years and looking ahead to what the future may hold for our region.

Our presence and our work are a function of the region’s realities. Latin America and the Caribbean is the world’s second most disaster-prone region - recurring climate-related phenomena such as floods, droughts and hurricanes have long shaped regional preparedness, advocacy, policy and partnership priorities and efforts with Member States and international and national partners.

Latin America and the Caribbean is also home to more than eight million displaced people, people on the move within and across borders for different reasons and in different contexts.

Some of these scenarios, such as the displacement in Central America, have their roots in the longstanding deterioration of social and economic conditions and increasing chronic violence. Others, like the current flight of millions of Venezuelans to host countries in the region, are unfolding at an unprecedented scale.

Other situations are more protracted and require engaging in both collaborative response and prevention measures, such as food insecurity in the north of Central America exacerbated by inequality and chronic non-conventional violence.

The growing humanitarian challenges posed by these wide-ranging issues have prompted OCHA ROLAC to take on a more active role in multi-stakeholder processes that seek to address both the root causes and the consequences of humanitarian crises in our region.

Looking forward, we must recognize that the evolution of the humanitarian landscape is creating profound changes for humanitarian organizations, changes that are spurring critical reassessments of regional priorities, approaches, relationships and financing. Our ability to successfully meet these challenges goes only as far as our ability to adapt will take us.

Whether the situation is old, new, sudden or protracted, OCHA ROLAC can count on 16 years of hard-won experience and relationships to meet the coordination needs required to effectively take a response from planning into the field.

As one decade closes, we must draw on our ability to adapt and position ourselves to become even more agile and better prepared to provide core readiness and response support wherever and whenever it is needed in the decade to come. We are undertaking significant changes to our structure and footprint in the region to ensure this.

At the centre of these changes is OCHA ROLAC’s everlasting commitment to people in need of humanitarian assistance. Like us, the people of Latin America and the Caribbean also experienced rapidly shifting circumstances and conditions in 2019 - several countries saw people making their voices heard in pursuit of improved conditions, giving way to significant social changes and shifts in regional dynamics.

No matter what changes may take place, OCHA ROLAC will always work to provide timely and effective humanitarian coordination in response to crises in Latin America and the Caribbean. Working with national and international partners to strengthen operational readiness and response coordination is at the heart of what OCHA ROLAC does and what OCHA ROLAC is.

OCHA ROLAC’s continued work is made possible thanks to the support of our partners. Our appreciation for their ongoing commitment to help us improve through generous financial and material support, engaging in joint deployments and providing us with constructive feedback cannot be overstated.

As ever, we thank you for your continued support.

Rein A. Paulsen

Head of Office
Regional Office for Latin America & the Caribbean
Latin America & the Caribbean
OCHA Presence & Staffing in 2019

OCHA ROLAC, operating out of Panama City, Panama, has 32 staff located across eight countries to provide flexible and agile support and surge capacity across the region and mobilize staff as needed to support preparedness and response.

OCHA ROLAC covers 42 countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean and supports OCHA country offices in Colombia, Haiti and Venezuela. In addition to its presence in Panama, the OCHA regional team maintains an expert presence in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia via Humanitarian Advisory Teams (HATs) embedded in the UN Resident Coordinator’s Offices.

The HAT presence, typically comprised of National Disaster Response Advisors (NDRAs) and supported in some cases by co-located Information Assistants, allows for localized readiness, response capacity and maintenance of strategic operational partnerships at the country level.
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RESPONSE & SURGE

Regional Humanitarian Snapshot 2019

**4.4M*** PEOPLE REPORTED AFFECTED BY HAZARDS AND DISASTERS IN 2019

*Information sourced from reports available on ReliefWeb at the time of this publication. Comprehensive year-end disaster reports are published mid-year. The actual number will likely be higher upon official publication.

**3.7M** VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS & REFUGEES IN THE REGION BY DECEMBER 2019¹

Venezuelans on the move across Latin America and the Caribbean face numerous risks and discrimination and often rely on humanitarian aid for access to health services and other needs while on their journey or in host countries.

**$1.09B** IN HUMANITARIAN FINANCING REQUIRED FOR RESPONSE IN 2019²

With the growing scale and scope of crises in the region, humanitarian financing requirements nearly doubled in 2019 compared to the 2018 total requirements of $608 million requested, reflecting the escalating needs across the region.

- **ABACO, BAHAMAS**

  Hurricane Dorian caused mass destruction across Abaco in September 2019, leaving many in need of critical humanitarian assistance. Photo: OCHA/Christophe Illemassene

- **2M** Yearly average of people affected by recurring flooding
- **1.7M** Yearly average of people affected by storms/hurricanes
- **2.6M** Yearly average of people affected by recurring drought

*Scan QR code to access Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean 2000-2019*

Venezuela: Vulnerabilities and Response

- **7M** People in need across Venezuela
- **2.6M** People targeted by response plan
- **$223M** Funding requirement for response plan

*Scan QR code to access Venezuela Humanitarian Response Plan July 2019 – December 2019*

Bahamas: Hurricane Dorian

- **$2.5M** in damages across the Bahamas
- **4.8K** Evacuees registered after impact
- **9K** Homes damaged by Hurricane Dorian

*Scan QR code to access Hurricane Dorian: One Month After*

Central America: Complex Humanitarian Needs

- Undernourishment (millions of people)
  - El Salvador: 2010-2012: 0.8, 2013-2015: 0.7, 2016-2018: 0.6

- Homicide rate (per every 100,000 inhabitants)

- Deportations from United States and Mexico (in thousands)
OCHA ROLAC Response & Deployments in 2019

OCHA ROLAC can deploy immediately for surge support, both within and outside the region, as well as preparedness and technical support. In 2019, OCHA ROLAC carried out 15 more missions than in 2018, deploying for more than twice as many days as in 2018.

Days of deployment in 2019

- 1-50 days of deployment
- 51-100 days of deployment
- 101-200 days of deployment
- 500+ days of deployment

Deployment days by type:

- 1,173 TOTAL DAYS OF DEPLOYMENT
- 121 OCHA ROLAC MISSIONS
- 23 COUNTRIES DEPLOYED TO

Mission by type:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of missions &amp; type</th>
<th>Days deployed &amp; type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Venezuela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<td>Bahamas</td>
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<td>Mozambique</td>
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<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>Cuba</td>
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<td>Peru</td>
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<td>Costa Rica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
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<td>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</td>
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<td>Ecuador</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
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<td>Mexico</td>
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<td>Panama</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
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VENEZUELA
Scaling up response

**Overview**

Venezuela’s continued economic challenges, socio-political volatility and challenges in the delivery of basic services in 2019 contributed to a humanitarian situation that required a scaled-up humanitarian presence to meet growing needs.

Inflation rate reached as high as 9,586 per cent in 2019, rendering many unable to purchase basic goods, food and medicine. The economic situation has led to mass population movements, both abroad and internally, especially to border areas with high protection risks. Additionally, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported an increase in the prevalence of undernourishment of 21.2 per cent, equivalent to 6.8 million undernourished people, more than twice as many as the 2.9 million undernourished people reported for 2013-2015. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) attributes the overall regional increase in malaria to a three-year climb in cases in Venezuela, whose 406,924 cases in 2018 accounted for more than half of the regional caseload.

Coupled with frequent interruptions to power and water supply, affected livelihoods and limited economic opportunities and the ongoing flight of millions of Venezuelans, including healthcare and education professionals, these conditions form a complex web of risks for vulnerable populations such as people with chronic health conditions, people with disabilities, at-risk children, pregnant and lactating women, displaced people and indigenous populations, among others.

**Key 2019 OCHA actions for Venezuela**

- **JANUARY**
  - UNDAC Workshop
  - IM and Coordination support mission to Ciudad Guayana, Bolivar state

- **FEBRUARY**
  - Establishment of Cooperation and Assistance Coordination Team
  - IM and Coordination support mission to Maracaibo, Zulia state

- **MARCH**
  - IM surge from New York and Panama and Coordination surge from Panama for Humanitarian Needs Overview
  - INSARAG and USAR Workshop

- **APRIL**
  - Humanitarian Needs Overview completed
  - Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs briefing on Venezuela at Security Council Meeting

- **MAY**
  - Designation of Humanitarian Coordinator and Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator
  - Activation of Humanitarian Clusters

- **JUNE**
  - Opening of Field Coordination Hubs in Bolivar state and Táchira state

- **JULY**
  - On-site Operations Coordination Centre training for Venezuelan Civil Protection

- **AUGUST**
  - Launch of Humanitarian Response Plan for $223 million targeting 2.6 million people

- **SEPTEMBER**
  - Civil-Military Coordination Workshop
  - Activation of the Humanitarian Communications Group

- **OCTOBER**
  - $10 million CERF allocation for Protection and Health
  - Opening of Field Coordination Hub in Zulia

- **NOVEMBER**
  - Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs mission to Venezuela
  - Activation of logistics cluster and PSEA network led by OCHA

- **DECEMBER**
  - Venezuela incorporated into OCHA’s 2020 Global Humanitarian Overview
  - Opening of Field Coordination Hub in Caracas
Response

OCHA ROLAC has progressively scaled up actions in Venezuela since 2017. Within the UN-led Scale Up Strategy, launched in November 2018, OCHA ROLAC supported the establishment of the Cooperation and Assistance Coordination Team (ECCA, per its Spanish acronym), headed by the UN Resident Coordinator to facilitate national-level humanitarian coordination. OCHA ROLAC then worked to implement a formal humanitarian coordination structure, working with partners to activate humanitarian clusters.

Building upon the Scale Up Strategy, OCHA ROLAC worked with partners to develop a Humanitarian Needs Overview and a subsequent Humanitarian Response Plan for US$223 million to target 2.6 million people in need. OCHA ROLAC supported the opening of field coordination hubs in Ciudad Guayana (Bolivar state), Maracaibo (Zulia state) and San Cristobal (Táchira state), in addition to the Caracas national coordination hub which also covers Venezuela’s central states.

OCHA ROLAC also facilitated a $10 million allocation from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to support child protection; health; nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); response to gender-based violence (GBV) and protection.

Throughout the year, OCHA ROLAC participated in various OCHA deployments to Venezuela to support coordination and information management efforts and lead workshops on Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) Training for Venezuelan Civil Protection and Civil-Military Coordination.

By the end of 2019, The Humanitarian Response Plan led to a significant scale-up in response reaching 2.4 million people despite limited funding and access constraints. OCHA ROLAC’s work culminated in establishing OCHA’s presence in Venezuela as an OCHA Country Office.

To learn more about response in Venezuela, please scan QR code to access OCHA Venezuela, or visit unocha.org/venezuela
Overview

The impact of Venezuela’s humanitarian challenges extend beyond its borders - according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are 4.5 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees across the world, with an estimated 3.7 million in Latin America and the Caribbean.12 Venezuelans on the move face protection risks such as trafficking, exploitation and abuse, especially in border areas where assistance is scarce. Upon arrival, many encounter social tensions and discrimination. Venezuelans in host countries still depend on emergency assistance to access basic services, shelter, food, health, non-food items and education, among others.

Many host governments have reformed legislation to facilitate assistance to Venezuelans, including ongoing registration and regularization processes. As of October 2019, governments in Latin America and the Caribbean have issued residencies to more than two million Venezuelan migrants and refugees.13 More than 630,000 have registered as asylum seekers or have been recognized as refugees.14 Despite these measures, the unprecedented growth of Venezuelan populations in host countries continues to strain government response capacities and host communities. Several countries enacted new entry requirements for Venezuelan migrants and refugees in 2019 to ease the burden on public services and defuse simmering social tensions. These requirements, in turn, have given way to a rise in irregular border crossings that expose people on the move to heightened protection risks and hamper host countries from seeing the full presence of Venezuelans arriving through their borders.
Response

The IOM and UNHCR-led R4V Response for Venezuelans Coordination Platform projects that there may be as many as 5.5 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees by the end of 202015, a growth that bring about more vulnerabilities and increasing humanitarian financing requirements.

The scale of needs brought on by this population movement presents challenges to traditional humanitarian approaches, both nationally and regionally. Partners are increasingly complementing immediate life-saving assistance with medium- and long-term socioeconomic integration efforts such as access to livelihoods and social and cultural integration.

OCHA ROLAC supports the R4V and the Refugee and Migrant Response Plan 2020 (RMRP) that seeks US$1.35 billion to help 2.47 million Venezuelans in host countries, 380,000 pendular migrants, 260,000 returnees and 880,000 people in host communities. As one of 137 RMRP partners, OCHA ROLAC engages with regional and national partners, especially in Ecuador and Peru, who host the fourth- and second-highest number of Venezuelans in the region with 385,000 and 863,000, respectively.

In 2019, OCHA ROLAC supported the implementation and monitoring of activities backed by October 2018 CERF allocations for Ecuador ($1.5 million) and Peru ($1.9 million) to support food assistance, health, WASH and protection in Ecuador, and WASH, health, protection and nutrition in Peru. OCHA ROLAC also participated in CERF follow-up missions to Ecuador’s northern border with Colombia and Peru’s northern border with Ecuador, working with local authorities and partners who are on the first line of response for arriving Venezuelans in need of support.

OCHA ROLAC in Ecuador and Peru also worked with their respective National Refugee and Migrants Working Groups (GTRM, per its Spanish acronym), the national R4V platform implementation, as well as with each GTRM’s Information Management sub-group.

OCHA ROLAC participated in Ecuador’s national working group on human mobility as well as in the Quito Process, the main technical intergovernmental forum in the region that the RMRP seeks complement, and is working with UNHCR, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) on Cash Transfer Programming (CTP) in support of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Ecuador.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region</th>
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<th>Projected increase (total &amp; percentage)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>1.6M - 2.4M</td>
<td>800k - +50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>836.6k - 978k</td>
<td>141.4k - +17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>385k - 659k</td>
<td>274k - +71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>371.2k - 472k</td>
<td>100.8k - +27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>224.1k - 361k</td>
<td>136.9k - +61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America &amp; Mexico*</td>
<td>195k - 283k</td>
<td>88k - +45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Southern Cone**</td>
<td>162.5k - 236k</td>
<td>73.5k - +45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Caribbean***</td>
<td>100k - 150k</td>
<td>50k - +50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mexico, Costa Rica and Panama  ** Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay  *** Aruba, Curacao, Dominican Republic and Guyana
BAHAMAS
Hurricane Dorian response

Overview

Hurricane Dorian made landfall over Bahamas as a category 5 storm in the Abacos (pop. 17,200) with wind speeds of 185mph, becoming the strongest hurricane on record for the Bahamas. Dorian then remained nearly stationary for 36 hours over Grand Bahama (pop. 51,000), before clearing out towards the south-eastern United States on 3 September.

Abaco, the most severely affected island, suffered thousands of flattened homes, downed power lines, damaged roads and water wells, and damage to health, communication and logistics infrastructure. Dorian all but destroyed two central Abaco settlements of mostly undocumented migrants, creating a particular set of vulnerabilities in those communities.

Grand Bahama suffered considerable damage as well, including the near-complete destruction of the High Rock community. Massive flooding left airports, bridges and roads underwater. Dorian also caused damage to oil refinery infrastructure that led to isolated oil spills inland.

Thousands evacuated from Abaco and Grand Bahama to the capital of Nassau on the island of New Providence. Evacuees in Nassau filled some 13 shelters to capacity\(^{16}\), a scenario that generated its own set of needs including health, psychosocial support, WASH, protection, information on available services and non-food items (NFIs).

According to damage and loss assessments from the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and PAHO, Dorian left US$2.5 billion in damage. Reconstruction efforts will likely last years and put Bahamas’ recovery capacities to the test for the foreseeable future.\(^{17}\)
Response

Prior to the storm making landfall, Bahamas requested the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to pre-deploy multi-agency Rapid Needs Assessment Teams (RNATs) to kickstart assessments and response immediately after the Government gave the all-clear.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and assessment teams quickly identified safe water, food, health care and shelter as priority needs. The Government-led response, supported by UN agencies, humanitarian organizations and military assets, initially dealt with several logistics and access constraints before reaching the affected islands to begin deploying resources and staff.

Between NGOs, bilateral support, the private sector, the Red Cross Movement and UN agencies, more than 40 organizations were in The Bahamas by 10 September, less than a week after Dorian finally cleared Grand Bahama.

OCHA and response partners

OCHA ROLAC pre-deployed two staff as part of the RNATs requested by the Government of Bahamas to CDEMA. OCHA followed up the pre-deployment with additional deployments from ROLAC in Panama, headquarters in Geneva and New York and other offices including the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) to support coordination, information management, Civil-Military coordination, public information and administration, totalling 14 people deployed and more than 200 days of deployment.

Members of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team and mission support partners such as MapAction and the Americas Support Team (AST) subsequently deployed across Bahamas to provide critical operational support to OCHA’s overall response. This added operational presence increased the deployed response team to 31 people over 438 total days of deployment between 30 August and 28 September.

OCHA and response partners were present in Nassau, Marsh Harbour (Abaco) and Freeport (Grand Bahama), supporting the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and local Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs), as well as supporting coordination between NEMA, CDEMA, UN agencies, NGOs and donors. OCHA ROLAC also deployed staff to Barbados to support CDEMA’s regional headquarters.

International military assets were among the first to respond, with France, Germany, Jamaica, the Netherlands, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom and the United States supporting Bahamas with security, engineering, medical assistance, evacuations, transport and aid delivery, among other activities.

One month into the response, more than 110 organizations and more than 340 humanitarian response staff registered with OCHA in Bahamas. Partners reported some 1,100 different response activities through OCHA activity tracking tools.
Hurricane Dorian caused mass destruction across Abaco in September 2019, prompting many to evacuate to makeshift shelters such as churches. Photo: UN/Mark Garten
OCHA and response partner deployment calendar by organization

- OCHA team member
- MapAction team member
- UNDAC team member
- Americas Support Team member

Humanitarian Financing

OCHA supported a CERF allocation for $1 million to allow the UN and partners to continue supporting the Government-led response. The allocation backed projects in Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Logistics and Protection for the following agencies:

- **IOM**: Life-saving Assistance to Persons Affected by Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas.
- **WFP**: Support to NEMA & CDEMA through common logistics services for Bahamas Dorian Response.
- **UNFPA**: Respond to life-saving needs of Hurricane Dorian-affected women and adolescent girls by preventing, mitigating and responding to Gender-based Violence.

Information & Advocacy Support

OCHA ROLAC supported response operations with information products for partners and stakeholders before, during and after Dorian’s impact. OCHA ROLAC published 45 products, including infographics and snapshots, flash updates and situation reports, pre-and-post impact reference maps and interactive dashboards.

**45** PRODUCTS PUBLISHED FROM 26 AUG TO 4 OCT

**23** INFOGRAPHICS & SNAPSHOTS

**7** INFORMATION TABLES

**7** FLASH UPDATES & SITUATION REPORTS

**6** PRE- AND POST-IMPACT MAPS

**2** INTERACTIVE POWER BI DASHBOARDS
CENTRAL AMERICA
Responding to complex needs

Overview

El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, known as the Northern Countries of Central America (NCCA), share similar humanitarian contexts driven by the convergence of high poverty rates, limited economic growth, environmental degradation and recurring climate shocks including drought and flooding that give way to high levels of food insecurity.

The scope and range of the challenges that the NCCA contend with depict a dire scenario. Around 77 per cent of Guatemala’s rural population lives below the poverty line, as does 82 per cent of the rural population in Honduras and 49 per cent in El Salvador.18 The Dry Corridor, still reeling from the 2014-2015 El Niño phenomenon that caused one of the strongest droughts in recent history, deals with the yearly effects that recurring drought and seasonal flooding have on agricultural production, leaving millions across the NCCA in a state of chronic undernourishment.19

This dynamic is further compounded by escalating violence that has forcibly displaced thousands, both within and across borders, and restricted access to basic services, leaving limiting food, water and healthcare. NCCA countries feature homicide rates (number of homicides per every 100,000 inhabitants) well above 10.0, the threshold for epidemic levels of violence, with El Salvador reaching as high as 60 in 201720 and Honduras reaching 41.2 in 201921, among the highest rates in the world.

The chronic insecurity, in turn, forces people to flee their homes. By mid-2019, there were 386,480 asylum seekers and refugees from the NCCA, according to UNHCR. UNHCR estimates that the number of people internally displaced due to violence reached 318,590 in 2019, as well.22

The Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) in each country keep engaged in multi-stakeholder efforts to address these concerns. At present, the HCTs estimate that the number of people in need across the NCCA stands at 5.2 million people. Compared to the figure of 3.5 million people in need taken from a 2016 Humanitarian Situation Analysis for Central America, the deepening crises in the NCCA have caused the number of people in need to rise dramatically in three years.
Response

OCHA ROLAC secured US$7 million in CERF allocations for projects to respond to drought and food insecurity in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Additionally, OCHA ROLAC supported national-level emergency response measures in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras to mitigate the impact of prolonged drought for more than 250,000 people who received direct assistance.

The structural issues underpinning the humanitarian crises in the NCCA require further exploration of humanitarian-development-peacebuilding collaboration. To that end, OCHA ROLAC supported the UN-led Joint Initiative process for reducing the impact of chronic violence in the NCCA during 2019, developing an extensive 4W information tool that allowed for better targeting of three Peacebuilding Funds (PBF) in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

OCHA ROLAC also monitored humanitarian needs and advocated assistance to respond to mass displacement events featuring more than 60,000 people from the NCCA heading toward the southern border of the United States.

Humanitarian Needs Overview

To establish a coherent regional response to the multi-faceted humanitarian impact across the NCCA, OCHA ROLAC began leading the process to develop a regional Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) for Central America in 2019.

Through this HNO, the first of its kind in Latin America and the Caribbean, OCHA ROLAC and partners present in the NCCA are setting out to document the complex inter-related needs related to health, food security, nutrition, livelihoods, education, migration, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene.

Throughout 2019, HCT members in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, under the leadership of their UN Resident Coordinators, convened to gather, analyse and discuss relevant data to establish the baseline information for identifying needs, monitoring the crises and subsequent responses, and developing a shared understanding of the humanitarian scenario present in these countries.

OCHA ROLAC hosted HNO process workshops in each country to launch the process. Through these workshops with UN agencies such as WFP, UNICEF, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and with HCT member including Oxfam, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Red Cross National Societies, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, Plan International and Caritas, among others, OCHA ROLAC worked with partners to establish the informational and analytical groundwork for the final document.
CUBA
Tornado response

Overview

On 27 January, a tornado with wind speeds of up to 300 km/h cut a 400-600m wide path of destruction through the capital of Havana. The tornado swept through the municipalities of 10 de Octubre, Cerro, Guanabacoa, Habana del Este and Regla, home to some 668,800 people, leaving 190 people injured and causing six deaths. More than 7,000 families suffered damage to their homes. More than 9,000 people sought shelter, with more than 1,000 placed in Government shelter centres.

The tornado severely affected water and electric supply, telecommunications infrastructure, health services, educational activities, food storage and supply and economic activity, creating a host of needs in the affected municipalities. More than 200,000 m3 of debris required clearing to restore access. Damage to water systems cut off access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, increasing the risk of water and vector-borne diseases.

The tornado affected 19 health centres, leaving significant structural damages and losses in medical supplies and equipment. Nearly 18,000 students required relocation due to damages to 80 educational centres.

Response

National and local authorities, under the coordination of the Cuban Civil Defence System, worked to restore water, power and telecommunications services and distribute water and food to affected areas. Government officials led damage evaluations and needs assessments and arranged logistics infrastructure to receive in-kind donations to later distribute to affected communities.

The UN in Cuba provided support with pre-positioned supplies including tents, food, water storage tanks and school materials made available to authorities for distribution. WFP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF activated funding mechanisms for further support and access to supplies such as mattresses, water storage tanks, hygiene kits, roofs, tools, and medical equipment. PAHO/the World Health Organization (WHO), UN Habitat, IOM and the United Nations Industrial Development Organizations (UNIDO) also worked with authorities during the response.

OCHA ROLAC deployed staff to support the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). OCHA ROLAC also facilitated an Emergency Cash Grant (ECG) for US$100,000 and a CERF allocation of $1.9 million to back rapid response projects for Shelter and Non-Food items, WASH, Health, Education and Food Assistance.

The UN System launched a Plan of Action in February, detailing UN priorities in supporting Cuban response programs with immediate response and early recovery efforts.
LA PAZ, BOLIVIA
Wildfires raged through parts of Bolivia between July and October 2019, prompting NGOs, donors and the UN to support the Government-led response.

Photo: Government of Bolivia

Overview

High heat and winds, coupled with agricultural burning practices, led to fires across Bolivia in July 2019. By mid-August, authorities reported around 17,000 hot spots, with 11,000 in the eastern department of Santa Cruz. By late August, the fires ravaged more than 744,000 hectares across Santa Cruz, affecting thousands of families.

The resulting air pollution and water contamination interrupted normal activities in education, the agricultural industry and the tourism industry, among others. Indigenous communities who use the land for food supply and livelihoods were especially vulnerable.

Heavy rains in October allowed firefighters in Santa Cruz to extinguish the remaining fires. The wildfires burned 5.3 million hectares across Bolivia, with 3.9 million in Santa Cruz, affecting as many as 12,000 families and creating needs for water, food security, health and protection.

Response

Santa Cruz declared an emergency on 16 August, followed by the Government forming an Environmental Emergency Cabinet with representation from relevant line ministries. The national and departmental governments provided water for human and animal consumption and health care. Municipal authorities coordinated food, medicines and water delivery, as well.

Bolivia, who allocated US$24.5 million for response, announced that it would welcome international assistance to support firefighting activities. Support came in from the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), IDB, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), China, the Republic of Korea, UNDP and FAO among others. Contributions totalled some $2.45 million.

Bolivia also requested support from the HCT in needs assessments, humanitarian aid and recovery activities. OCHA ROLAC deployed Information Management support as part of this request.

By mid-October, 6,000 people from line ministries, State institutions, Armed Forces, firefighters, volunteers, NGOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, donors and UN agencies were involved in the Government-led response, under the coordination of the Vice-ministry of Civil Defence (VIDECI).

After the fires were extinguished, local and international partners continued to provide support with needs assessments and technical recommendations for medium- and long-term response and recovery.
OCHA COLOMBIA
Overview

Indigenous communities in the Córdoba department frequently experience forced displacement. According to Colombia’s Victims’ Response and Reparations Unit (Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Victimas), there are more than 8 million displaced people across Colombia, with at least 6.6 million yet to receive full reparations.

Overview

Colombia has a long and complex history of conflict, displacement and recurring natural disasters. Its recent history is marked by post-2016 peace agreement changes in power dynamics that have nevertheless led to continued displacement, confinement and anti-personnel mine victims, as well as escalating violence against social leaders and human rights defenders.

The mass arrival of Venezuelan migrants and refugees continues to compound collective needs. By the end of 2019, Colombia was home to some 1.6 million Venezuelans, the largest Venezuelan refugee and migrant population in the world.

The convergence of conflict, violence, displacement, disasters, a highly vulnerable migrant population, host communities and returnees create a unique humanitarian operating environment to respond to people affected by multiple needs.

Response

Following the closure of the Country Based Pooled Fund in Colombia in 2018, OCHA Colombia and its 18 staff remain active in working with Colombia’s nine Local Coordination Teams (LCTs).

The LCTs feature the participation of development and peacebuilding actors, allowing OCHA Colombia to promote humanitarian-development-peacebuilding collaboration to respond to the needs of 8.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

OCHA Colombia also supports the IOM- and UNHCR-led Inter-agency Group on Mixed Migration Flows (GIFMM, per its Spanish acronym), the national coordination mechanism for the regional R4V Response for Venezuelans Coordination Platform, coordinating with the national humanitarian architecture in a back-to-back system to avoid potential duplication of coordination efforts.

OCHA Colombia also facilitated a US$7.9 million CERF allocation in the Underfunded Emergencies window to address WASH, sexual and reproductive health, safe schools, health, protection, agricultural recovery and nutrition concerns in areas where conflict led to confinement or displacement.

During 2019, OCHA Colombia worked on the Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020, working with partners to define the various populations in need of humanitarian assistance and the severity of their needs.

OCHA Colombia also led workshops for the Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 that will feature strategic objective focused on reducing basic inter-sectoral needs and strengthening community and institutional resilience to meet the needs of people affected by armed conflict and natural disasters.
Overview

Haiti’s chronic vulnerabilities from recurring natural shocks and socio-political upheaval were compounded in 2019 by a struggling economy and social tensions that led to mass protests and violence that all but locked Haiti and further restricted access to basic services and aid.

With food prices rising by 34 per cent since the start of 2020, food is nearly unaffordable in a country where one in three people need food assistance. Aid-run health centres are struggling, as blockades have cut off critical supplies. School closures due to the crisis have affected 2 million children, increasing their exposure to violence. Although safe water remains a priority, the cholera outbreak abated greatly - by October, suspected cases fell 82 per cent compared to January.

The crisis’ effects are evident in outlooks for humanitarian action in 2020, by which time 4.6 million people (40 per cent of the population) will need assistance – a 79 per cent increase from 2019 (2.6 million).

Response

The near total paralysis crippled response, with persistent insecurity concerns leaving aid workers unable to reach the most vulnerable, an impasse that only worsened with the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) in October.

Bilateral aid and investment were suspended amid a plummeting economy, as well. The 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan for US$126 million to target 1.3 million people was funded by 29 per cent, well below the global average of 55 per cent. The 2020 funding requirements have doubled to $253 million to target 2.1 million people.

In its role as a leader in mobilizing assistance and resources, OCHA Haiti facilitated various CERF allocations throughout the year, including $5 million in the Underfunded Emergencies window to support cholera response, as well as $5 million to respond to food insecurity in August.

In working to overcome the crisis’ access obstacles, OCHA Haiti also facilitated a $1 million CERF allocation in November to support helicopter-based transport of humanitarian goods.

Despite a continuing scale-down in operations, OCHA Haiti continues to support the Directorate of Civil Protection in coordination. OCHA Haiti began establishing a network of humanitarian focal points among national and international field partners to support coordination in an increasingly challenging operating environment.

OCHA Haiti nevertheless continues to support coordination among Haiti’s nine active sectors, five working groups and the HCT.
HUMANITARIAN FINANCING
Mobilizing resources to meet needs

OCHA ROLAC engages all financing instruments, mechanisms and partners available to meet humanitarian needs in Latin America and the Caribbean. By making use of fast-acting emergency financing mechanisms such as ECGs and CERF allocations, OCHA ROLAC is able to support life-saving response actions.

To guarantee coherence and accountability, OCHA ROLAC works in all phases of financing support, from supporting partners to develop joint strategies as a coordinated group, to monitoring and follow-up of plan implementation. OCHA ROLAC works with the global donor community to channel their generous contributions towards replenishing CERF, as it is one of the OCHA-managed Humanitarian Pooled Funds, or in contributing to the various response plans and appeals for responding to regional crises.

Requested financing topped US$1 billion in 2019, an increase from the $608 million requested in 2018 that reflects escalating needs across the region. The 46 per cent coverage is below the global average of 55 per cent. The $45.1 million in CERF allocations in 2019 show a rising trend from the $39.9 million allocated in 2018 and the $18.4 million allocated in 2017. OCHA ROLAC also facilitated two $100,000 ECGs, one to support the January tornado response in Cuba and another for dengue response in Honduras.

### 2019 Humanitarian Financing Snapshot - Latin America & the Caribbean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan / Type</th>
<th>Contributions towards requested financing in 2019 - US$ (as of December 2019)</th>
<th>Coverage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela / Regional HRP</td>
<td>$383M $736M 52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela / HRP</td>
<td>$75.9M $222M 34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti / HRP</td>
<td>$45.1M $126M 36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba / Plan of Action</td>
<td>$3.2M $14M 23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IN FINANCING ALLOCATED BY CERF DURING 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Crisis / Plan</th>
<th>CERF Allocation - US$ (Rapid Response/Underfunded Emergencies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>HRP</td>
<td>$10M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Armed violence</td>
<td>$7.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>HRP</td>
<td>$6.1M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela (Regional)</td>
<td>HRP</td>
<td>$6M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>HRP</td>
<td>$5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Food Insecurity</td>
<td>$2.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Drought</td>
<td>$1.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>Tornado</td>
<td>$1.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Food Insecurity</td>
<td>$1.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>Hurricane</td>
<td>$1M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Venezuela (Rapid Response)**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $4.5M
  - $2.8M
  - $1.9M
  - $769K

**Haiti (Underfunded)**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $3.4M
  - $1.6M
  - $215K
  - $220K

**El Salvador**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $958K
  - $480K
  - $345K
  - $215K

**Guatemala**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - FAO

- **Disbursement**:
  - $711K
  - $604K
  - $370K
  - $300K

**Honduras**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - FAO
  - UNICEF

- **Disbursement**:
  - $1.8M
  - $749K
  - $440K

**Bahamas**

- **Agency**:
  - IOM
  - WFP
  - UNFPA

- **Disbursement**:
  - $1M
  - $400K
  - $202K

**Cuba**

- **Agency**:
  - UNDP
  - UNICEF
  - IOM
  - PAHO/WHO
  - WFP
  - UNFPA

- **Disbursement**:
  - $899K
  - $429K
  - $205K
  - $200K
  - $149K
  - $110K

**Venezuela - Regional**

- **Agency**:
  - IOM
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $3M
  - $3M

**Haiti (Rapid Response)**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - FAO
  - UNICEF

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $1.6M
  - $456K

**Colombia**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNOPS
  - FAO
  - WFP
  - UNHCR
  - UN WOMEN

- **Disbursement**:
  - $3.5M
  - $887K
  - $800K
  - $758K
  - $742K
  - $699K
  - $600K

**Food Assistance**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - FAO
  - UNICEF

- **Disbursement**:
  - $4M
  - $1.6M
  - $440K

**Health/Nutrition/Protection/WASH**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $10M
  - $6.1M
  - $5.0M
  - $1.9M

**Health/Protection/WASH**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Mine action**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $3.5M
  - $887K
  - $800K

**Food Assistance**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - FAO
  - UNICEF

- **Disbursement**:
  - $4M
  - $1.6M
  - $440K

**Nutrition/WASH**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Common Services & Coordination**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Protection**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**WASH**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Health**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Agriculture**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - FAO
  - UNICEF

- **Disbursement**:
  - $4M
  - $1.6M
  - $440K

**Common Services & Coordination**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Protection**

- **Agency**:
  - UNICEF
  - PAHO/WHO
  - UNFPA
  - UNHCR

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M

**Nutrition**

- **Agency**:
  - WFP
  - FAO
  - UNICEF

- **Disbursement**:
  - $7.9M
  - $7.9M
  - $6.0M
  - $2.9M
COORDINATION
Coordination structures in Latin America and the Caribbean

THE CARIBBEAN
(National coverage)

Country
Cuba
Haiti
Dominican Republic
Jamaica

CENTRAL AMERICA & MEXICO

Country
Mexico
Guatemala
Belize
El Salvador
Honduras
Nicaragua
Costa Rica
Panama

SOUTH AMERICA

Country
Colombia
Venezuela
Ecuador
Peru
Bolivia
Chile
Argentina
Paraguay

Coordination Structures
OCHA ROLAC (Regional Office + HATs)
OCHA Country Office
UN Emergency Technical Team (UNETT)
Humanitarian Country Team
* The Barbados UN Subregional Team (UNST) oversees coordination for Saint Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Anguilla, Montserrat and British Virgin Islands.
The Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC) is a dedicated regional forum for coordinating humanitarian action between more than 35 partners from UN agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, NGOs, donors and the private sector.

Since 2003, OCHA ROLAC supports REDLAC as the regional body for addressing Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) priorities. OCHA ROLAC chairs REDLAC as its secretariat, leading meetings with the aim of reaching the strategic objectives agreed upon by all REDLAC members.

REDLAC seeks to build capacity based on IASC standards, strengthen joint evidence-based analysis and advocate accountability and cross-cutting issues including gender, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), protection, resilience and the environment.

Through regular and ad hoc meetings, thematic working groups and workshops, REDLAC members continually exchange information and best practices and identify how to best collectively meet the needs in a changing regional dynamic. REDLAC is also a key mechanism for defining humanitarian action towards collective outcomes with development actors under the New Way of Working and towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Key 2019 activities include:

- Preparedness for the 2019 Atlantic hurricane season, including reviews of lessons learned from past seasons, coordination mechanisms, sector leadership, communications, gender approach and logistics.
- Monitoring and response coordination for the 2019 Venezuela crisis and subsequent scale-up of operations and formalization of a coordination architecture.
- Monitoring and response coordination for the Cuba tornado, response support for Bolivia wildfires and coordination of regional Hurricane Dorian response efforts in The Bahamas.
- Workshops on humanitarian financing and protection and human rights in emergencies.
- Monitoring and response coordination for ongoing mass migration from Central America.
- Advocacy, planning, and follow-up of the Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020 for Central America.
MIAH IX
2019 Meeting on International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance

Overview

Beginning in 2008 as an initiative from the Governments of Canada and Mexico to promote humanitarian cooperation between countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, OCHA ROLAC pioneered the Meeting on International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance (MIAH, per its Spanish acronym), a regional humanitarian forum to facilitate exchanges on strategic cooperation and alliances between Member States and humanitarian partners, foster understanding of international response systems and discuss common priorities in addressing the overall humanitarian scenario in the region.

The bi-annual meeting has evolved over the years to now feature the participation of more than 20 countries, regional and sub-regional organizations, UN organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, donors, NGOs, academia and the private sector. Through MIAH, OCHA ROLAC not only advocates improved regional emergency response, OCHA ROLAC shapes regional humanitarian policy and put global concerns such as mass migration and chronic violence on equal footing with Latin America and the Caribbean’s traditional response to hurricanes, floods and earthquakes.

2019

In 2019, the White Helmets Commission of Argentina hosted MIAH IX in the capital of Buenos Aires from 12 to 14 June 2019, gathering 24 Member States, sub-regional coordination mechanisms, UN and Red Cross Regional Offices, INGO Regional Offices and donors active in the region for two days of dialogue and technical meetings, followed by a high-level meeting with representatives from Foreign Ministries in the region.

The agenda for MIAH IX drew from agreements from MIAH VIII, held in Lima, Peru, in 2017, and regional priorities linked to processes promoted by the World Humanitarian Summit and the Agenda for Humanity, processes first brought to the forefront in the region at MIAH VII held in Guatemala in 2015.

Notable points on the agenda include:

• Comprehensive risk management approaches to climate change.
• The humanitarian impact of human mobility.
• International operational coordination and action frameworks including International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), UNDAC Teams and volunteer systems.

Results

MIAH IX resulted in OCHA ROLAC signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the White Helmets Commission to strengthen their operational partnership.

More broadly, MIAH IX resulted in the Buenos Aires Declaration, a collection of agreements reflective of the work and exchanges between participants that lays the groundwork for action ahead of MIAH X in 2021.

The Buenos Aires Declaration includes tangible commitments from participants such as:

• Systematizing experiences and lessons learned in managing and responding to mass migration and better understanding of the interrelation between migration driving forces.
• Strengthening interoperability and adoption of quality standards to better tailor response.
• Strengthening of public-private partnership and commitment in pursuing technological and institutional innovations to complement local means and resources in an inclusive manner.
OPERATIONAL READINESS

UNDAC teams can deploy anywhere in 12-48 hours to support UN agencies and governments during the initial response phase. As the UNDAC system is managed by OCHA’s Response Support Branch (RSB), OCHA ROLAC works with partners to strengthen understanding of internationally validated UNDAC procedures and mechanisms such as emergency coordination, coordination support structures and information management.

Through OCHA’s Emergency Services Section (ESS), RSB functions as the INSARAG secretariat, a network of Member States and USAR organizations that work to streamline international USAR team emergency activities. Regionally, OCHA facilitates the INSARAG Regional Group for the Americas.

2019

In 2019, OCHA’S UNDAC and INSARAG focal point for Latin America and the Caribbean began working out of OCHA ROLAC in Panama, allowing for closer engagement with regional stakeholders. OCHA ROLAC now hosts regional INSARAG secretariat functions, in coordination with ESS and RSB in Geneva, while also supporting and managing the regional UNDAC team, with ESS support.

OCHA ROLAC supported the INSARAG Regional Chairmanship Group chaired by Argentina and Vice-chaired by Colombia and the Dominican Republic, implementing the regional workplan and representing the region in the INSARAG Steering Group. In February OCHA supported Argentina in hosting and co-chairing an Ambassador-level meeting at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week in Geneva.

OCHA ROLAC facilitated an ad hoc INSARAG Regional Group meeting prior to MIAH IX to ensure INSARAG priorities formed part of MIAH discussions and were included in the Buenos Aires Declaration.

OCHA/INSARAG supported coordination and development of the September regional earthquake response exercise in Cuba, featuring 231 participants from 15 countries and nine agencies, designed to test coordination protocols between Cuba and the UN System and train participants on response.

OCHA ROLAC facilitated the joint INSARAG/UNDAC regional meeting in November, resulting in the agreed-upon integration of INSARAG and UNDAC components into one regional meeting to further promote coordination among governments, national response capacities and OCHA in the region.

Other key 2019 activities include:

- UNDAC participation in a Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) assessment mission in Bolivia in April.
- UNDAC member and response partner deployment to Bahamas in September in response to Hurricane Dorian.
- Formalized partnership with the Organization of American Firefighters (OBA, per its Spanish acronym) to promote INSARAG methodologies across the region.
- OCHA/INSARAG support for the USAR component of a regional field exercise hosted by Nicaragua and coordinated by the Central American Natural Disaster Prevention and Coordination Centre (CEPREDENAC, per its Spanish acronym).
- OCHA/INSARAG participation at regional civil-military coordination in USAR operations workshop hosted by Guatemala and supported by the United States Southern Command (Southcom) and the Chilean Ministry of Defence.

OCHA ROLAC works with Member States and national and international partners to strengthen and streamline the region’s collective ability to anticipate and respond to hazards and crises. Through targeted workshops and simulations, OCHA ROLAC worked with national and international coordination mechanisms and Member States throughout 2019, guiding contingency planning, developing operating procedures and promoting sector and cluster coordination.
CARIBBEAN

Strengthening regional coordination

Caribbean: Strengthening Regional Coordination & Interoperability

Following the devastating 2017 Atlantic hurricane season and the resulting lessons learned, OCHA ROLAC and Caribbean partners identified critical coordination priorities to address going forward.

OCHA ROLAC signed a formal agreement with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), allowing for joint work with partners to strengthen coordination between international actors and CDEMA.

In 2019, OCHA ROLAC and CDEMA worked with European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) through a Disaster Preparedness ECHO (DIPECHO) funded project to strengthen interoperability, building on lessons learned to define standard inter-agency procedures and improve linkages between national, regional and international actors in preparedness and response. The DIPECHO project featured work on:

Humanitarian Programme Cycle: OCHA ROLAC led Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) workshops with governments and UN coordination mechanisms to strengthen understanding of the HPC, existing coordination structures, roles and responsibilities and how to best use international response mechanisms.

These workshops also served to strengthen understanding of humanitarian financing mechanisms such as ECGs, CERF allocations and Flash Appeals.

Information Management: OCHA ROLAC led information and data management and assessments workshops that sought to build more efficient data and information exchanges and foster predictability in reporting and assessments ahead of the 2019 Atlantic hurricane season. OCHA ROLAC also worked with partners on best practices for data and information collection, management, visualization, analysis, distribution, as well for multi-sector, multi-actor and trans-thematic coordinated assessments.

Civil-Military Coordination: OCHA ROLAC participated in the Multi-national Caribbean Coordination Cell with CDEMA and foreign militaries who support hurricane response in the Caribbean, subsequently forming a dedicated Civil-Military Coordination sub-group and participating in DIPECHO Civil-Military training.

OCHA ROLAC supports UN Resident Coordinator Offices and national and regional coordination mechanisms with contingency plans, simulation exercises, compliance with minimum and advanced preparedness actions and information management processes such as 3Ws, contact lists and Common Operational Datasets (CODs).

OCHA ROLAC’s continued efforts with CDEMA and Caribbean partners proved essential in coordinating an effective mass inter-agency response to the effects of Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas in September 2019.
CENTRAL AMERICA
Preparedness in complex crises

El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras host a complex regional humanitarian dynamic driven by the interrelated impacts of recurring climate shocks, chronic violence, and deteriorating economic and social conditions.

With these conditions driving ongoing food insecurity, health and WASH concerns and mass migration and its protection concerns, OCHA ROLAC teams in the NCCA constantly engage with partners to strengthen preparedness and response.

In Guatemala, OCHA ROLAC works closely with Food Security authorities and partners in operational preparedness ahead of recurring drought and food insecurity scenarios. OCHA ROLAC also works with HCT partners to prepare a collective refugee and migrant response, as NCCA migrants seeking to cross Mexico to reach the United States must pass through Guatemala.

Additionally, with Guatemala now taking in United States asylum seekers from the NCCA under the terms of a 2019 bilateral agreement, OCHA ROLAC worked with HCT partners to prepare contingency plans.

In Honduras, OCHA ROLAC worked with the Protection Working Group as various migrant groups set out to leave Honduras during 2019 in so-called “migrant caravans”, designing risk scenarios and updating operational presence information to prepare response actions. OCHA ROLAC also works with HCT members to strengthen preparedness in working with CTP to respond to drought-affected families in the Dry Corridor of Honduras.

In El Salvador, OCHA ROLAC worked with the HCT in 2019 to identify opportunities and linkages with the National Civil Protection System’s emerging focus on capacity building and reducing vulnerability.

In addition to NCCA countries, OCHA ROLAC’s Regional Office in Panama supported inter-agency contingency planning for the ongoing migrant flow through the Darien jungle on the Panama-Colombia border. Nearly 24,000 migrants from countries such as Bangladesh, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia made the dangerous trek in 2019 to reach Panama and continue towards the rest of Central America, requiring water, sanitation, health, food and protection assistance. This migrant flow also requires inter-agency support to bolster Government preparedness for providing shelter, nutrition and psychosocial assistance.

HONDURAS
Armed forces guard a school in Honduras from the threat of persistent non-conventional violence that often interrupts access to education and prompts migration. Photo: ECHO/Antonio Aragón
OCHA ROLAC’s preparedness work in South America addresses the range of humanitarian concerns in the region, from natural disasters to the mass movement of Venezuelan migrants and refugees across South American countries.

In Peru, OCHA ROLAC worked in the north-western Piura department, where the 2017 El Niño floods affected more than 400,000 people40, to build preparedness for future crises, working with authorities, agencies and NGOs present in Piura to set up sector working groups and provide training on international humanitarian coordination.

OCHA ROLAC also supported PAHO/WHO contingency planning along the northern border with Ecuador where Venezuelan migrants and refugees enter Peru. OCHA ROLAC participated as an implementing partner in the DIPECHO Protection and Integration of Populations Vulnerable to Disaster Risk project. OCHA ROLAC represented the HCT in a national tsunami simulation chaired by the President of Peru that convened national authorities and humanitarian partners to test preparedness measures.

In Ecuador, OCHA ROLAC worked with HCT members to build CTP capacity, supporting the CTP pilot mission in Ecuador under the terms of the global inter-agency Common Cash System agreement. OCHA ROLAC also supported the Government in defining coordination mechanisms along the northern border with Colombia, host to a complex scenario involving the transit of Venezuelan migrants and refugees and the presence of non-State armed actors in Colombia, fostering preparedness between Government and international actors for humanitarian-development-peacebuilding collaboration.

OCHA ROLAC in Ecuador also participated in a national tsunami simulation as observers, providing the Government and local and national response actors with feedback on preparedness processes.

In Bolivia, OCHA ROLAC participated in Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) activities, supporting an inter-agency working group of national and international partners in developing national climate and disaster risk reduction capacities. Along with fulfilling OCHA’s role as technical partners in the global CADRI partnership, OCHA ROLAC supported the UNDAC component on response preparation in information management and sector coordination and local preparations based on risk information.

OCHA ROLAC worked with partners to ensure that coordination mechanisms remained prepared after OCHA’s exit from Bolivia in 2020, developing a long-term strategy for the sustainability of humanitarian coordination in the country.

OCHA ROLAC supported the update to the Andean Committee’s Guide for Humanitarian Assistance between the Andean Committee countries of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. OCHA ROLAC participated in the presentation of the guide in Bolivia, as well as a tabletop exercise and a workshop on displacement in disasters.
INFORMATION & ADVOCACY
Creating situational awareness

Strengthening Information Management in Latin America & the Caribbean

OCHA ROLAC works with Member States and humanitarian partners in Latin America and the Caribbean to build common evidence-based foundations for agile, timely and effective responses. Building these foundations requires gathering, sharing and using valuable data on people in need to inform decision-making and advocacy priorities, as well as promoting the understanding and implementation of global information management best practices and standards.

OCHA ROLAC’s information management services span the use of emerging technology and tools to support joint analysis and coordination to building national and regional partner information management capacity. OCHA ROLAC information management support in 2019 includes:

3W tools and contact lists: OCHA ROLAC supports partners in developing and creating information management resources. OCHA ROLAC created the Caribbean 3W and activity mapping in Power BI in 2019 and continues to develop different accessibility, input and sharing options for users such as the UN Resident Coordinator Offices in the anglophone Caribbean and other humanitarian partners.

OCHA ROLAC also worked with partners in Ecuador to develop a 3W tool to gather information on actors present along Ecuador’s northern border with Colombia to support coordinated humanitarian-development-peacebuilding collaboration.

In Guatemala, OCHA ROLAC supported 3W and contact list work for ongoing situations, developing relevant cluster contact list and monitoring for migrant groups and drought. OCHA ROLAC also developed a 3W in Power BI of HCT response actions to the ongoing dengue crisis in Honduras.

For El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, OCHA ROLAC developed a drought response activity tracking 3W during 2019 to easily reference activities by sector, type, location and implementing organization.

Workshops and trainings: OCHA ROLAC facilitates information management workshops to contribute to partner capacity building in information management.

In Honduras, OCHA ROLAC trained HCT members and the Permanent Commission for Contingencies (COPECOD, per its Spanish acronym) to build familiarity with information management concepts, visualizations and best practices and strengthen information flows during emergencies. OCHA ROLAC supported the Protection Working Group with recommendations to the Inter-institutional Protection Commission on validating information on forced displacement as well.

Platform promotion: OCHA ROLAC continues to promote other global humanitarian information tools and platforms such as Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX), Kobo and HumanitarianResponse.info.

Internally, OCHA ROLAC keeps refining its own Single Activity Reporting Application (SARA), which allows aligning activities to workplans, monitoring of Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs) and Advanced Preparedness Actions (APAs) by country and an online 3W platform function, among others.
Situational Awareness & Advocacy

OCHA ROLAC uses a tailored suite of products for humanitarian partners, donors, governments and the general public to stay informed before, during and after crisis situations.

Using an array of maps, infographics and data visualizations, situation reports, 3/4Ws, social media, technical documents and interactive dashboards, OCHA ROLAC strives to create situational awareness in both protracted and sudden-onset emergencies with timely products published through wide-ranging distribution platforms to support joint analysis and decision-making processes.

OCHA ROLAC also embraces its unique advocacy role and responsibilities to draw global attention on the various humanitarian issues happening across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Whether directing attention of the regional and global humanitarian community or that of a broader public of diverse stakeholders, OCHA ROLAC uses its publishing output, as well as campaigns, private advocacy and quiet diplomacy, to make sure the right audiences receive the right messages at the right time.

To stay up to date on OCHA ROLAC products, please scan QR code to sign up to OCHA ROLAC's product mailing list.
Amid ever-changing humanitarian contexts and dynamics in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Guide for Governments: International Humanitarian Action is a resource for governments, civil society and humanitarian actors, both national and international, to reference international humanitarian mechanisms and build preparedness ahead of future shocks, disasters and crises.
GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENTS
International Humanitarian Action

The Guide for Governments: International Humanitarian Action, originally published by OCHA ROLAC in 2011 in cooperation with REDLAC, is a valuable tool for promoting knowledge and understanding of the international humanitarian system in the region.

The reference guide allows government employees, civil society actors, international partners, intergovernmental organizations and the general public to understand the mechanisms for rapid mobilization of assistance and the international resources available to governments to respond to emergencies.

Recognizing the rapid evolution and growing complexity of humanitarian crises and operational dynamics in Latin America and the Caribbean, OCHA ROLAC and partners have revised and updated the guide over the years, with the last update taking place in 2017.

The 2019 revision places renewed emphasis on bringing together local and global actors and systems to bridge critical local level disaster response with the global humanitarian system and support growing national growing national-level response capacities across the region. The guide consists of six main sections:

- Humanitarian action and its normative frameworks
- Coordination of humanitarian action
- Technical expertise
- Humanitarian financing
- Humanitarian resources and tools
- Operational readiness

The Guide details core aspects of global humanitarian assistance, including humanitarian principles, Sphere Project Core Humanitarian Standards, global, regional and national coordination mechanisms, sector/cluster approaches, UNDAC and INSARRAG, ECs and CERF funding, the HPC and IASC Emergency Response Preparedness, among others.

To learn more about the Guide for Governments, please scan QR code to access Guide for Governments: International Humanitarian Action
GENDER
Humanitarian Action & Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

OCHA ROLAC understands that crises create different needs for women, girls, boys and men of different ages and abilities. As such, OCHA ROLAC pursues gender equality and the full participation of women and girls as a fundamental element of its responsibilities towards Latin America and the Caribbean, working to ensure that action throughout the HPC maintains a consistent and high-quality gender approach.

OCHA ROLAC seeks to integrate gender into all facets of humanitarian action, whether capacity building with partners or working in the field with affected communities. In the more than 50 workshops led by OCHA ROLAC in 2019 for more than 500 participants, OCHA ROLAC featured a gender component within the thematic focus for each workshop, which have ranged from data collection to HPC refresher courses.

Additionally, OCHA ROLAC facilitated CERF financing in late 2018 for GBV projects for Venezuelan migrant populations in Ecuador, projects carried out by UN Women and UNFPA in 2019.

Recognizing the gaps in collecting consistent sex-and-age-disaggregated data (SADD) in various processes, OCHA ROLAC continues to advocate the need for SADD to more clearly define the analytical bases required for best decision-making processes.

Moreover, OCHA ROLAC adheres to the IASC’s Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and strives to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse.

As a standard for conduct, OCHA ROLAC has a zero-tolerance policy towards the impunity and complacency toward sexual exploitation and abuse and has worked to establish structure and procedures for ensuring compliance.

All OCHA ROLAC staff are accountable for putting in place the necessary actions to protect women, girls, boys and men from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, in line with the UN Secretary-General’s Bulletin on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

At the field level, OCHA ROLAC supports Humanitarian Coordinators in Latin America and the Caribbean in ensuring that effective systems are in place for preventing and responding to acts of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Starting in 2019, OCHA ROLAC added PSEA to the agendas of all its activities in the region. OCHA ROLAC is also supporting an IOM database on PSEA by collecting and submitting inputs.

ZULIA, VENEZUELA
Humanitarian partners in Zulia work with local women and youth networks on community health in emergencies. Photo: OCHA/Gema Cortés
On 19 August 2003, an attack on the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, Iraq, killed 22 humanitarian workers. One of the workers slain in the attack was UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello. In 2008, the General Assembly designated 19 August as World Humanitarian Day (WHD).

Since that fateful day, more than 4,000 humanitarians have been killed, injured, detained, kidnapped or otherwise prevented from carrying out their duties. This comes out to 300 annual cases, nearly one case a day.

Each year, WHD pays tribute to aid workers risking their lives in humanitarian service across the world, while also shining a light on the people most affected by crises and their survival, well-being and dignity.

The 2019 campaign, #WomenHumanitarians, honoured the steadfast work of women in crises, from those working within their communities in times of great distress to women aid workers supporting all lines of response to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

OCHA's global awareness campaign centred on 24 stories, one for each hour of the day, from 24 remarkable women humanitarians, to explore a day in the life of a woman humanitarian and what it takes to make a difference and make the world a better and safer place.

OCHA ROLAC created awareness for WHD throughout the region with high-level events at the country level, gathering with humanitarian partners to celebrate the occasion.

In Panama, OCHA ROLAC held a forum with regional women humanitarians from UNICEF, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), IOM and Save the Children, each of whom shared their experiences and insights on what being a woman humanitarian means for humanitarian action in Latin America and the Caribbean. OCHA ROLAC also participated in the institutional celebration held by Panama's Regional Humanitarian Assistance Logistics Centre (CLRAH, per its Spanish acronym), delivering welcoming remarks to national humanitarian actors.
Our mission is to coordinate the global emergency response to save lives and protect people in humanitarian crises. We advocate for effective and principled humanitarian action by all, for all.

**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

The UN and other humanitarian actors continued scaling up response to humanitarian needs in Venezuela during 2019, delivering life-saving aid to vulnerable populations in places such as Puerto Ordaz in the eastern state of Bolívar. Photo: OCHA/Gema Cortés

OCHA RECEIVES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING DONORS:

- Australia
- Belgium
- Canada
- Estonia
- Finland
- Germany
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Japan
- Korea, Republic of
- Luxembourg
- Monaco
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Qatar
- Russian Federation
- Saudi Arabia
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- United States
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>APA</td>
<td>Advanced Preparedness Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td>Americas Support Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>CADRI</td>
<td>Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative</td>
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<td>CAF</td>
<td>Development Bank of Latin America</td>
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<td>CCECM</td>
<td>Camp Coordination and Camp Management</td>
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<td>CDEMA</td>
<td>Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency</td>
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<td>CEPREDENAC</td>
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<td>CODs</td>
<td>Common Operational Dataset</td>
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<td>COPECOS</td>
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<td>CTP</td>
<td>Cash Transfer Programming</td>
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<td>Disaster Preparedness - European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</td>
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<td>ECCA</td>
<td>Cooperation and Assistance Coordination Team</td>
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<td>ERP</td>
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<td>Group on Mixed Migration Flows</td>
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<td>GTRM</td>
<td>National Refugee and Migrants Working Group</td>
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<td>Humanitarian Advisory Team</td>
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<td>Humanitarian Needs Overview</td>
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<td>MIAH</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
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