

# Disasters 2018: Year in Review

Issue No. 54

CRED Crunch

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**315**  
Disaster Events  
348\*

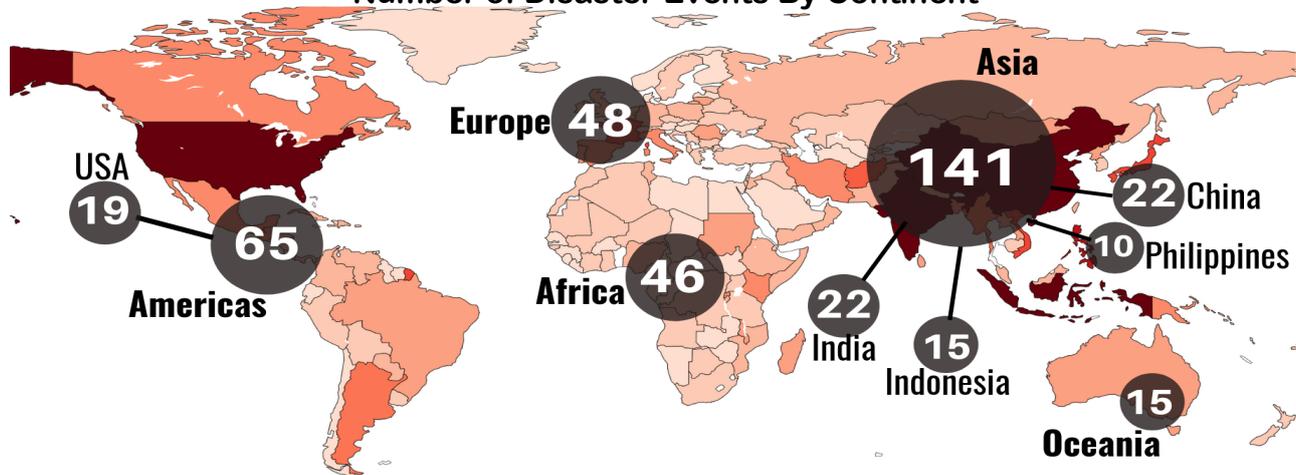
**11,804**  
Deaths  
67,572\*

**68.5 million**  
Total Affected  
198.8 million\*

**US\$ 131.7 Billion**  
Damages  
\$166.7 Billion\*

\*2008-2017 Yearly Average

## Number of Disaster Events By Continent



**Brussels 2019** - In 2018, there were 315 climate-related and geophysical disaster events recorded in the EM-DAT (International Disaster Database) with 11,804 deaths, and over 68 million people affected across the world. Globally, Indonesia recorded nearly half the total deaths from disasters, while India recorded the highest number of individuals affected.

### Floods (127 Events)

Overall, floods have affected more people than any other type of disaster in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including in 2018. In Somalia, which was already suffering from an ongoing conflict, over 700,000 people were affected by flooding, while in Nigeria, flooding cost 300 lives and impacted nearly two million people. In Japan, heavy rains triggered the deadliest floods since 1982, killing 230 people. The August flash flooding in India's Kerala state was by far the largest flood event of the year, with 504 dead, and two-thirds of the state's residents affected (over 23 million people). Additionally, the flash floods were the worst the region had experienced since the 1920's, and cost US\$2.85 Billion. The Kerala flash floods were covered in depth by CRED Crunch Issue No. 53, released in December 2018.

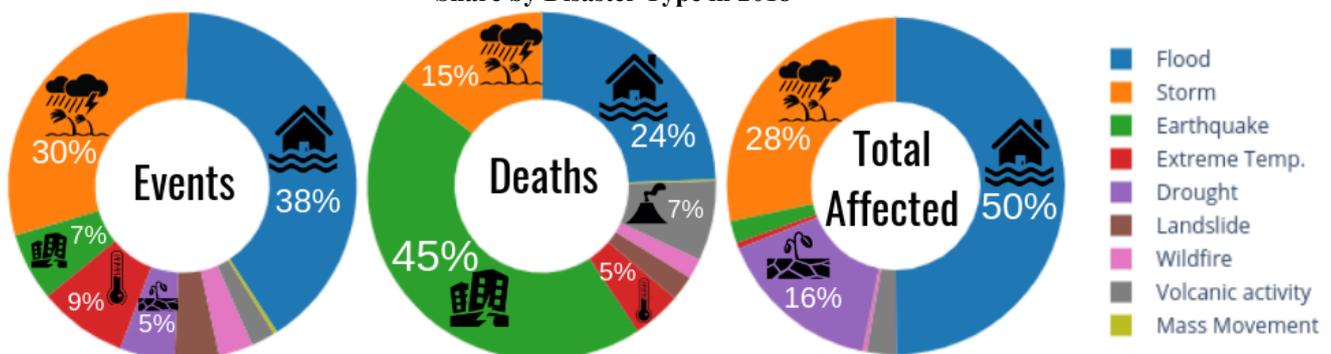
### Storms (95 Events)

Two major storms struck the United States, while in Asia, China, India, Japan, and the Philippines, faced extensive damage from multiple storms. As a result, storms were the most costly type of disaster in 2018, particularly due to hurricanes Florence (14 billion USD) and Michael (16 billion USD) and typhoon Jebi (12.5 billion USD). In terms of human impacts, the Philippines suffered from multiple deadly storms that took over 300 lives in total, and affected over 10 million people.

### Droughts & Extreme Temperatures (41 Events)

In 2018, three million people were affected by an ongoing drought in Kenya, while Afghanistan suffered a major drought that impacted 2.2 million people, causing the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands. In Central America droughts affected over 2.5 million people in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, which coincided with international migration patterns. Across the world numerous drought events affected agricultural industries costing billions of dollars in damages, while in South Asia, East Asia, Europe, and North America, heatwaves cost hundreds of lives overall.

## Share by Disaster Type in 2018



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All figures presented in the CRED CRUNCH from  
"EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database"  
Analysis & Writing by Nima Yaghmaei

## Top 10 Countries by Total Disaster Death Toll in 2018

	Country	Total Death Toll
1.	 Indonesia	5,510
2.	 India	1,396
3.	 Japan	438
4.	 Guatemala	427
5.	 China	354
6.	 USA	317
7.	 Philippines	313
8.	 Nigeria	300
9.	 Pakistan	240
10.	 D.P.R. Korea	232

## Top 10 Deadliest Disaster Events in 2018

	Event	Country	Death Toll
1.	Earthquake/Tsunami, September	 Indonesia	4,340
2.	Earthquake, August	 Indonesia	564
3.	Flood, August	 India	504
4.	Volcanic Activity/Tsunami, December	 Indonesia	453
5.	Volcanic Activity, June	 Guatemala	425
6.	Flood, June	 Japan	246
7.	Flood, September	 Nigeria	199
8.	Storm, December	 Philippines	182
9.	Heatwave, May	 Pakistan	180
10.	Flood, August	 Korea DPR	146

## Top 10 Countries by Number of People Affected in 2018

	Country	# of People Affected
1.	 India	23,910,348
2.	 Philippines	11,203,565
3.	 China	8,338,124
4.	 Afghanistan	3,606,750
5.	 Guatemala	3,291,359
6.	 Kenya	3,211,188
7.	 Nigeria	1,938,204
8.	 USA	1,763,777
9.	 Japan	1,599,497
10.	 Madagascar	1,472,190

## Top 10 Countries by Number of People Affected per 100,000 Inhabitants in 2018

	Country	# Affected per 100,000 Inhabitants
1.	 Tonga	80,541
2.	 Fiji	19,790
3.	 Guatemala	19,460
4.	 Trinidad & Tobago	10,956
5.	 Lao P.D.R.	10,910
6.	 Philippines	10,678
7.	 Afghanistan	10,151
8.	 Mongolia	8,853
9.	 Mauritania	7,932
10.	 Papua New Guinea	6,606

Data on the human impact of drought and extreme temperatures are difficult to capture, and thus are likely to be underestimates. The Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) suggests an increase of droughts and heatwaves in certain regions as a result of global warming in the coming years. Therefore, it is critical to improve the reporting of these events, particularly in low and lower-middle income countries where the effects will be the most impactful.

### Earthquakes & Tsunamis (20 Events)

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, earthquakes and subsequent tsunamis have been the deadliest type of disasters, and this trend continued in 2018. The concentration of the damage was in South-East Asia and Melanesia, specifically in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea respectively. Early in the year, a string of earthquakes in Papua New Guinea left 181 dead, and affected over half a million people, many of whom lived in remote highlands which were difficult to reach by aid and rescue operations. In Indonesia, multiple earthquakes caused extensive damage and loss of life. The island of Lombok suffered multiple earthquakes, the deadliest being on August 5<sup>th</sup>, which killed 564 people. Further north, on the island of Sulawesi, an earthquake on September 28<sup>th</sup> triggered mudflows and a tsunami killing 4,340 people, making it the deadliest disaster worldwide since 2015.

### Volcanic Activity (7 Events)

Volcanic activity rarely makes headlines, and has had minimal impacts since the turn of the century; however, in 2018 volcanic activity resulted in more deaths than have occurred in the previous 18 years combined. In June, the Volcán de Fuego Eruption in Guatemala killed over 400 people and affected over 1.7 million, while in December, the eruption of Anak Krakatau in Indonesia triggered a tsunami that killed over 400 people on the islands of Sumatra and Java.

### Wildfires (10 Events)

Across the world, the trend of devastating wildfires continued from 2017 into 2018. In 2018, the Attica Fires in Greece, killed an estimated 100 people, making it the deadliest wildfire recorded in Europe within EM-DAT records, which began in the year 1900. In the United States, the California wildfire season was the deadliest and costliest on record, with Camp Fire killing 88 people, the highest wildfire death toll in the country since the 1940s, and causing an estimated 16.5 billion USD in damage, the costliest wildfire event on record.

### Conclusion

Notable features of the year were: intense seismic activity in Indonesia; a string of disasters in Japan; floods in India; and a very eventful year in volcanic activity and wildfires. These events occupied headlines throughout the year, despite an ongoing trend of lower death tolls from previous years continuing into 2018, potentially demonstrating the efficacy of improved standards of living and disaster management. However, it is critical to avoid complacency towards major gaps in data collection and reporting, and in resilience, particularly for weather-related disasters considering the anticipated impacts of climate change.

## CRED News

•CRED will host the summer course Assessing Public Health in Emergency Situations (APHES) from July 1-12, 2019 in Brussels, Belgium. More information can be found at [www.aphes.be](http://www.aphes.be) / [contact@aphes.be](mailto:contact@aphes.be)

•Recent Publication: Beltrán Guzmán I, Gil Cuesta J, Trelles M, Jaweed O, Cherestal S, van Loenhout JAF, & Guha-Sapir D. (2019) Delays in arrival and treatment in emergency departments: Women, children and non-trauma consultations the most at risk in humanitarian settings. PLoS ONE 14(3): e0213362. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0213362>

•Data are subject to change, for enquires: [contact@emdat.be](mailto:contact@emdat.be)



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