

**E-MAG**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
ISSUE #2 • 03/2026

SPECIAL FOCUS ON

# Hurricane Melissa

## Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

Disasters, Impacts  
and Response in  
OACPS Countries

Explore the E-Mag 

# E-MAG NEWSLETTER ISSUE #2 • 03/2026

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# TURNING DISASTER EXPERIENCE INTO RESILIENCE ACTION IN ACP COUNTRIES

Over the past decade, disasters have evolved from episodic crises into structural development challenges for OACPS countries. Across Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, climate-related hazards are increasing in frequency, intensity and complexity, testing not only infrastructure and public finances, but the very architecture of governance, coordination and recovery systems.

This second edition of our Newsletter focuses on one defining event: Hurricane Melissa in the Caribbean islands. Beyond its scale of destruction, Melissa offers a powerful lens through which to examine preparedness, risk financing, response coordination and the transition to resilient recovery. As illustrated in this issue, preparedness measures and pre-arranged financial instruments significantly reduced the time gap between impact and action. Yet the experience also revealed persistent challenges in institutional coordination, recovery monitoring and long-term resilience planning. Importantly, Melissa reaffirmed that recovery is not a short-term humanitarian phase but a development pathway, requiring integrated systems that combine risk assessment, financing, coordination and sustained monitoring.

The articles presented in this issue highlight a consistent set of lessons across regions. From the Caribbean experience of Hurricane Melissa to the broader evidence drawn from disaster trends in Small Island Developing States, recovery effectiveness depends on early data mobilisation, strong regional partnerships and the ability to translate scientific knowledge into operational decisions. They also underline the importance of linking emergency response mechanisms with long-term recovery frameworks, ensuring that financing, coordination and monitoring tools are aligned from the outset of a crisis.

The Intra-ACP DRR Programme contributes to this effort by supporting partner countries and regional institutions in strengthening coordination mechanisms, improving access to risk information and fostering collaboration between science, finance and policy actors. Across regions, the Programme seeks to move from fragmented responses to systemic approaches – ensuring that recovery efforts not only restore what was lost, but help societies adapt, transform and build forward with resilience.





CARIBBEAN SPECIAL FOCUS

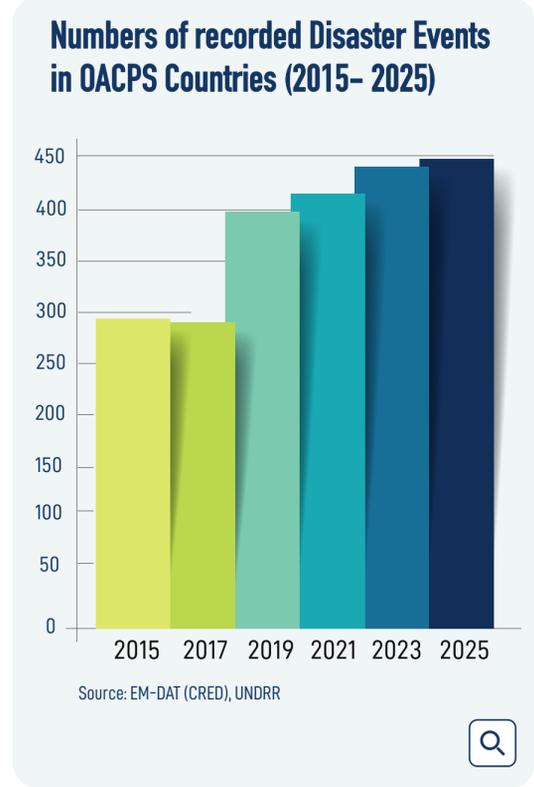
**Hurricane Melissa**  
Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

# State of Play – Disasters in OACPS Countries

Over the past decade, disasters have become a defining structural challenge for countries of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). Climate- and weather-related hazards are occurring with increasing frequency and intensity, generating cascading impacts on lives, infrastructure, public finances and development trajectories. Floods, cyclones and hurricanes, droughts and slow-onset events now dominate risk profiles across all three regions, with particularly severe consequences for Small Island Developing States and fragile contexts.

Recent data confirms a clear intensification of disaster trends. Between 2015 and 2025, OACPS countries experienced thousands of disaster events, affecting tens of millions of people and causing economic losses that, in several Small Island Developing States, could represent a significant share of national GDP, sometimes reaching several percentage points per event.. In Africa, floods and prolonged droughts account for nearly two-thirds of recorded disasters, with drought remaining the hazard affecting the highest number of people over time. In the Caribbean, tropical storms and hurricanes continue to be the most destructive hazards, with recent hurricane seasons ranking among the most active on record. In the Pacific, eight island countries consistently rank among the top 20 globally for annual disaster losses relative to GDP, reflecting the region’s acute exposure to climate and geophysical risks.

In the OACPS regions, despite these growing pressures, progress has been made in several areas of disaster risk management. Early warning systems have expanded in coverage, regional coordination mechanisms have strengthened preparedness and response, and emergency response capacities have improved with international support.



### Human and Economic Impact of Disasters in OACPS countries

- 20 - 40 Million people** affected every year in OACPS countries
- Average Economic losses per disaster in ACP countries: 1% - 10% of GDP**
- Hurricane Melissa** Damages estimated at \$ 8.8 billion, representing **41% of Jamaica's 2024 GDP**
- TOP 20 8 Pacific countries** in the global top 20 for disaster losses (% of GDP)

Source: EM-DAT (CRED), UNDRR; PreventionWeb UNDRR

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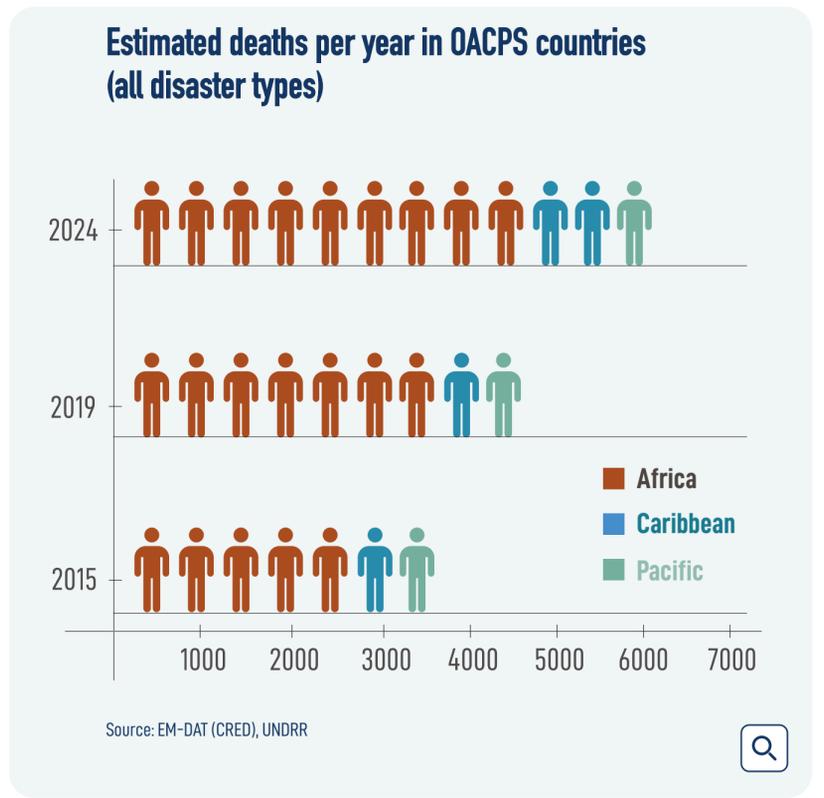
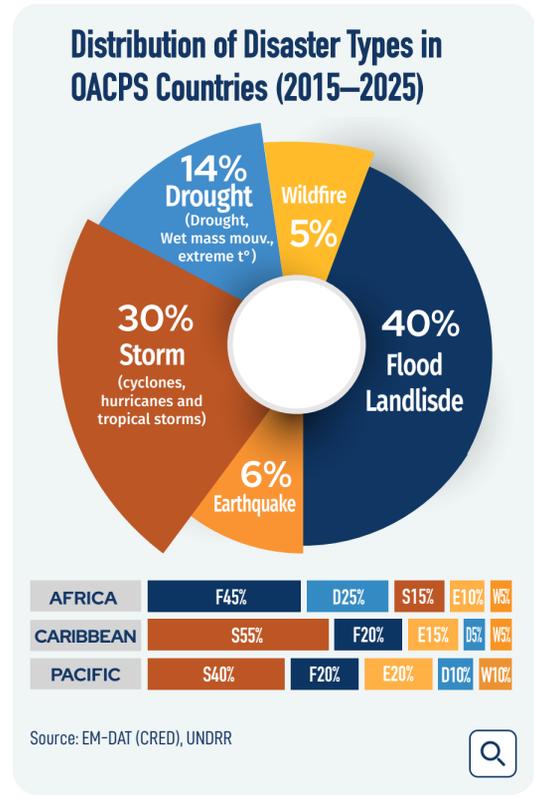
# Hurricane Melissa

Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

## State of Play – Disasters in OACPS Countries (followed)

However, these advances remain uneven and insufficient to offset accelerating risk. Investment in prevention and resilience remains limited, disaster risk financing instruments are not yet scaled to meet recovery needs, and post-disaster reconstruction often rebuilds pre-existing vulnerabilities rather than fully integrating 'Build Back Better' principles. Global evidence indicates that **every dollar invested in prevention can save four to seven dollars in response and recovery, yet prevention continues to receive a disproportionately small share of disaster-related financing.**

As a result, disasters in OACPS countries can no longer be understood as isolated shocks or exceptional crises. They are part of a permanent and evolving risk landscape that demands a complete disaster risk reduction ecosystem—combining governance, preparedness, early warning, risk financing, operational capacity and resilient recovery. Hurricane Melissa provides a concrete and timely illustration of this ecosystem in action. The event highlights how preparedness measures and pre-arranged financing mechanisms can significantly reduce response time and initial losses, while simultaneously exposing critical gaps in recovery financing, institutional coordination and long-term resilience. The following case study examines Hurricane Melissa in Jamaica to better understand how disaster impacts, response and early recovery interact in practice—and what lessons this holds for strengthening resilience across OACPS countries.





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## Hurricane Melissa Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

# Preparedness, Impact, Response and Early Recovery

Hurricane Melissa, which struck Jamaica on 28 October 2025, stands as one of the most extreme climate events ever recorded in the country. Making landfall as a Category 5 hurricane, with sustained winds reaching nearly 295 km/h and exceptionally intense rainfall, it caused widespread destruction across the island. More than half of Jamaica's population was affected, 45 fatalities were reported, and direct damages were estimated at USD 8.8 billion—equivalent to approximately 41 percent of the country's 2024 Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Beyond its human and material toll, Hurricane Melissa provides a valuable lens through which to examine how preparedness, disaster risk governance and ex-ante financing influence disaster outcomes. The case study is therefore organised around **four key phases** of the event – before the storm, the moment of impact, the immediate response, and early recovery – each presented as a dedicated section that can be explored separately. Together, these phases illustrate how preparedness can significantly alter consequences, while also revealing the persistent challenges of transitioning from response to lasting resilience.

- 01. BEFORE THE HURRICANE
**Preparedness and Risk Governance**
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- 02. WHEN MELISSA STRUCK
**Scale of the shock and Impacts**
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- 03. THE RESPONSE
**National, Regional and International Mechanisms in Action**
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**Progress achieved and remaining challenges**
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Photo | Matthias Delcroix AP



Photo | PNUD, Gillian Scott



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## Hurricane Melissa

Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

CASE STUDY

# Preparedness, Impact, Response and Early Recovery

01. BEFORE THE HURRICANE Preparedness and Risk Governance [← BACK](#)

Prior to Hurricane Melissa, Jamaica had already developed a relatively well-structured disaster risk management ecosystem compared to many small island states exposed to similar hazards. This system was built progressively over the past decade, combining institutional frameworks, operational tools and financial instruments.

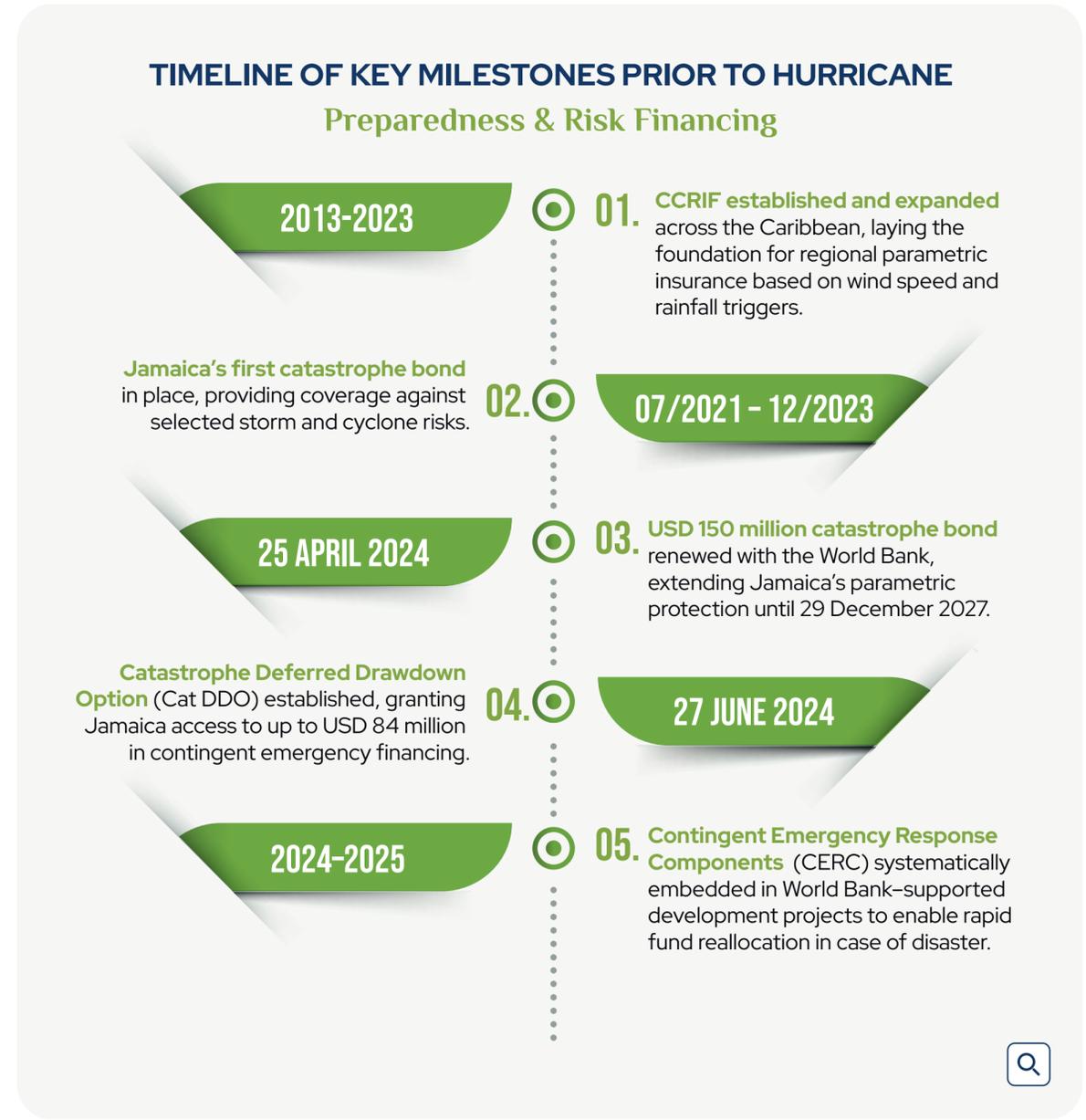
At the institutional level, clearly defined structures—including the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) and the National Disaster Committee (NDC) –were responsible for inter-institutional coordination, emergency preparedness and crisis management. Early warning systems, sectoral contingency plans and communication protocols were in place, allowing for a gradual escalation of preparedness measures and the rapid dissemination of alerts to local authorities and exposed communities.

A central pillar of this preparedness was Jamaica’s disaster risk financing architecture. Through sustained investment in a diversified set of instruments, the country ranks among the most advanced in the region. Prior to Melissa, key mechanisms already in place included:

- **Parametric insurance coverage** through the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF);
- **A USD 150 million catastrophe bond**, structured with World Bank support and renewed in 2024;
- **A Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option** (Cat DDO), enabling rapid access to liquidity in emergency situations;
- **The systematic integration of Contingent Emergency Response Components** (CERC) within World Bank-supported investment projects.

These instruments were not designed to prevent disasters or to cover total losses, but rather to reduce financial response time immediately after impact.

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## Hurricane Melissa

Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

# Preparedness, Impact, Response and Early Recovery

02. WHEN MELISSA STRUCK Scale of the shock and Impacts [← BACK](#)

Hurricane Melissa made landfall in western Jamaica, between the parishes of St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland, as the most powerful hurricane ever recorded on Jamaican territory. Extreme winds, intense rainfall—locally exceeding 250 mm—and storm surges caused severe damage to housing, critical infrastructure and productive systems.

According to the GRADE consolidated post-disaster assessments:

- **Approximately 1.6 million people were affected**, representing more than half of the national population;
- **Over 30,000 people were displaced** in the days following landfall;
- **45 deaths were officially reported**, with several persons initially listed as missing;
- **More than 116,000 buildings were severely damaged** or lost their roofs;
- **water, electricity and telecommunications networks were heavily disrupted**, with up to 77 % of the country experiencing power outages immediately after the event.

The western and central territory—St. Elizabeth, St. James, Westmoreland, Manchester and Trelawny—accounted for nearly 90 percent of estimated damages, reflecting the high exposure of coastal and tourism-dependent areas. While Jamaica bore the brunt of the impacts, Melissa also caused severe damage and loss of life in other Caribbean countries, notably Haiti, confirming both the regional nature of the disaster and the systemic vulnerability of island territories to extreme cyclones. In this context, the speed and coordination of the initial response proved decisive.

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### TIMELINE OF KEY MILESTONES DURING MELISSA

#### From Preparedness to Decision-Making

- 21 OCTOBER 2025** 01. Tropical Storm Melissa forms in the Atlantic, initiating regional monitoring, forecasting and preparedness procedures.
- 27-28 OCTOBER 2025** 02. Hurricane Melissa rapidly intensifies to Category 5 and makes landfall in Jamaica, triggering national crisis governance, emergency protocols and immediate response coordination.
- 28-29 OCTOBER 2025** 03. Initial rapid impact screening conducted, focusing on affected population, critical infrastructure, power and water systems, and priority sectors.
- 29-31 OCTOBER 2025** 04. Preliminary damage and needs assessments initiated, combining national information and satellite-based analysis to estimate the scale and spatial distribution of impacts.



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## Hurricane Melissa Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

# Preparedness, Impact, Response and Early Recovery

03. THE RESPONSE National, regional and international mechanisms in action [BACK](#)

In the hours and days following landfall, pre-existing response mechanisms were activated at multiple levels. Nationally, Jamaican authorities—under the coordination of ODPEM and the NDC—led emergency operations, including search and rescue, rapid damage assessments and the prioritisation of interventions, in close collaboration with local authorities, security forces and regional partners.

From a financial perspective, Jamaica was able to mobilise exceptional resources within very short timeframes:

- **CCRIF confirmed a record payout of USD 70.8 million under its cyclone policy**, followed by an additional USD 21.1 million for extreme rainfall;
- **The activation of the catastrophe bond** resulted in the full disbursement of USD 150 million as of 1 December 2025;
- **The Cat DDO facility was drawn upon** to support emergency operations and the rapid restoration of essential services.

At the same time, international partners—including the **World Bank**, **UNDP**, **UNDRR**, the **Caribbean Development Bank**, humanitarian agencies and the **European Union**—supported rapid assessments, coordination efforts and early recovery planning.

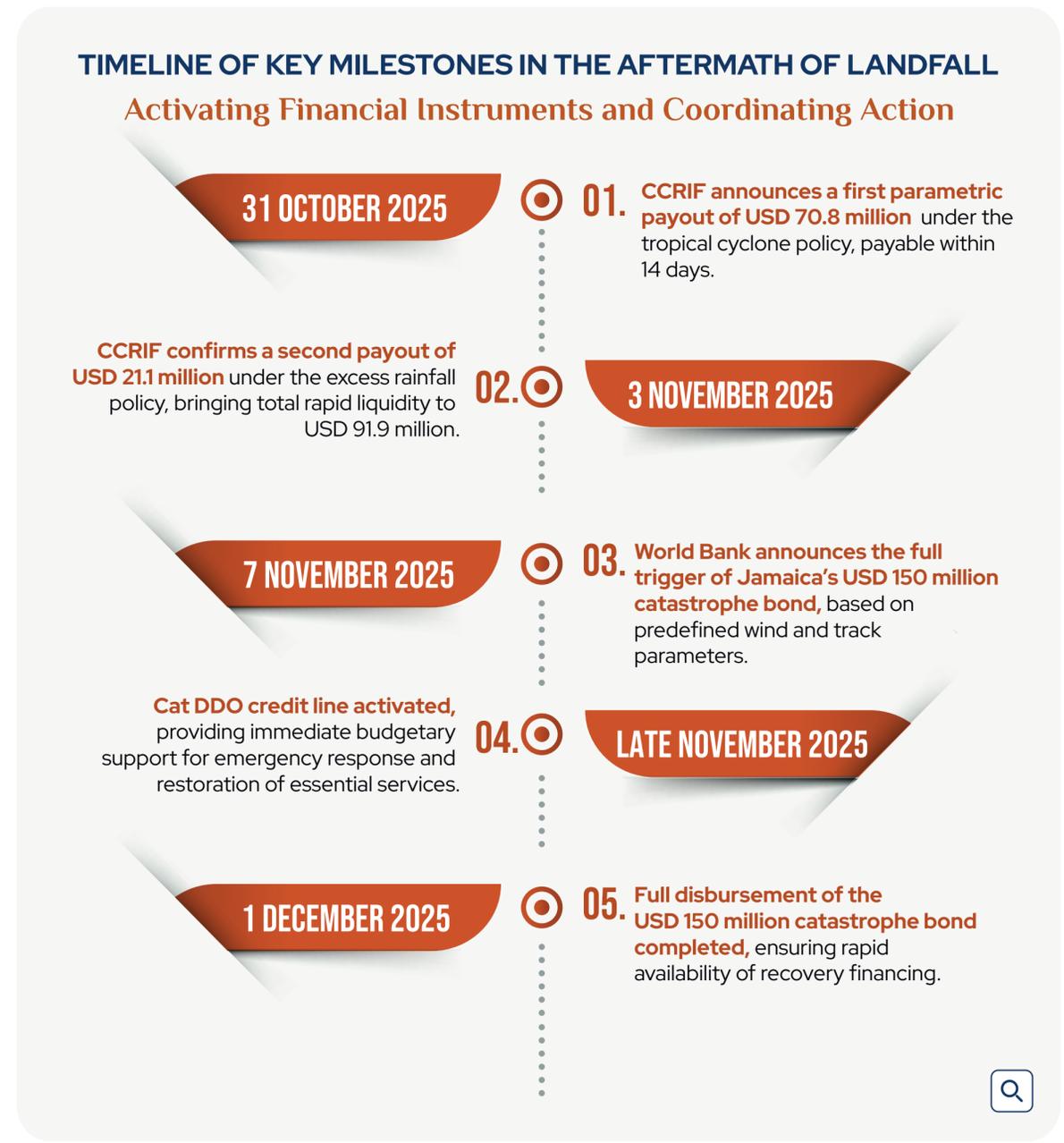
The rapid availability of liquidity significantly reduced the critical time gap between impact and action, helped maintain continuity of public services, and strengthened coordination with regional mechanisms and international partners, particularly in relation to technical assistance, recovery planning and needs assessment.

Post-disaster damage estimation tools, including rapid analytical assessments, further contributed to providing robust, spatially detailed estimates of direct damages, informing reconstruction priorities and financing decisions.

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### TIMELINE OF KEY MILESTONES IN THE AFTERMATH OF LANDFALL

#### Activating Financial Instruments and Coordinating Action



- 31 OCTOBER 2025**  
CCRIF announces a first parametric payout of USD 70.8 million under the tropical cyclone policy, payable within 14 days.
- 3 NOVEMBER 2025**  
CCRIF confirms a second payout of USD 21.1 million under the excess rainfall policy, bringing total rapid liquidity to USD 91.9 million.
- 7 NOVEMBER 2025**  
World Bank announces the full trigger of Jamaica's USD 150 million catastrophe bond, based on predefined wind and track parameters.
- LATE NOVEMBER 2025**  
Cat DDO credit line activated, providing immediate budgetary support for emergency response and restoration of essential services.
- 1 DECEMBER 2025**  
Full disbursement of the USD 150 million catastrophe bond completed, ensuring rapid availability of recovery financing.



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## Hurricane Melissa

Turning Disaster Experience into Resilience Action

# Preparedness, Impact, Response and Early Recovery

04. EARLY RECOVERY Progress Achieved and Remaining Challenges BACK

In the weeks following Hurricane Melissa, Jamaica entered a phase of early recovery marked by the gradual restoration of essential services, rehabilitation of critical infrastructure and support to affected livelihoods. Previous investments in more resilient infrastructure—particularly in drainage systems, coastal protection and public facilities—proved effective in mitigating some impacts.

Nevertheless, despite the speed of financial and institutional response, several challenges persist:

- **Sustained pressure on institutional capacities**, particularly at the local level, requiring continuous coordination adjustments;
- **Ongoing logistical constraints** in the most severely affected areas;
- **The need for stronger community inclusion** in recovery processes;
- **Enhanced donor coordination** to avoid overlaps and maximise long-term impact.

A central challenge remains the transition from early recovery to genuinely resilient reconstruction. Mobilising longer-term financing, aligning partners' interventions and systematically applying "Build Back Better" principles are essential to avoid rebuilding pre-existing vulnerabilities and to strengthen resilience against future shocks.

Post-disaster damage estimation tools, including rapid analytical assessments, further contributed to providing robust, spatially detailed estimates of direct damages, informing reconstruction priorities and financing decisions.

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### TIMELINE OF KEY RECOVERY MILESTONES

#### From Emergency Response to Recovery Implementation

- NOVEMBER 2025**  
01. **Rapid post-disaster damage assessments are undertaken** (including GRADE-type rapid estimation) to inform early recovery priorities.
- DECEMBER 2025**  
02. **Early recovery planning is initiated**, with coordinated support from development and humanitarian partners (World Bank, UNDP, CDB, EU and others).
- 12/2025 – 01/2026**  
03. **Transition from emergency response to early recovery accelerates:** service restoration, consolidation of financing coordination, and preparation for resilient reconstruction.
- EARLY JANUARY 2026**  
04. **A Rapid Livelihoods Assessment is conducted (St Elizabeth Parish)**, helping inform recovery actions for affected households and local economic resilience.
- 15 JANUARY 2026**  
05. **The Government launches a Shelter Recovery Programme (SRP)** to support families whose homes were damaged—marking a shift from response to structured recovery delivery.





*By Beth Allen (UNDP), with contributions of Luis Gamarra & Eric Loubaud (UNDP)*

# Hurricane Melissa and the lessons for resilient recovery in the Caribbean

In a region frequently affected by hurricanes, recovery is not a short-term humanitarian phase but a long-term development process shaping economic stability, social protection and institutional systems. Hurricane Melissa tested the preparedness of governance systems across the Caribbean to manage large-scale disruption, revealing both progress and persistent gaps. This reinforced the need to treat recovery as a sustained development priority rather than a temporary post-disaster response.

Through the European Union (EU) funded Intra-ACP Disaster Risk Reduction Programme, UNDP supports governments across the Caribbean in strengthening recovery planning frameworks, stronger institutional coordination and technical capacities.

Hurricane Melissa brought these efforts into sharper focus, demonstrating how preparedness measures influence recovery outcomes in practice and where further strengthening is required to ensure that rebuilding contributes to safer and more resilient communities. This work is coordinated with the EU and aligned with related initiatives, including the EU Caribbean Resilience (EU-CA-RES) programme co-implemented by WFP, UNICEF, UNDRR and UNDP, with a focus on recovery preparedness.

## Laying the groundwork for recovery through Post-Disaster Needs Assessments

Effective recovery begins with a clear understanding of impact. Without a clear and coordinated assessment of damage, losses and needs, recovery efforts risk becoming fragmented or reactive. Across the Caribbean, UNDP has supported governments in conducting Post-Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNAs), including

recent work in Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. A PDNA is a critical step in the recovery and reconstruction process, helping governments understand the scale of resources required by assessing damage, losses, and recovery needs. It also supports the prioritisation and allocation of resources through coordinated, multi-sector recovery planning.

In the case of Hurricane Melissa, the assessment phase highlighted **the importance of selecting methodologies that capture not only physical damage and economic losses, but also human impacts and underlying risk drivers**. The Government of Jamaica selected the Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) methodology to which UNDP added strong elements of human impact assessment and risk analysis.



“Melissa reminded us how important human impact assessment and root causes analysis linked to damage and losses assessment are to ensure a clear understanding of the complex situation and guide solid and sustainable recovery actions that build resilience and reduce risks through a build back better and safer approach.”

Mr LUIS GAMARRA  
Regional Team Leader for DRR

After Hurricane Melissa hit, UNDP offices in Cuba and Jamaica activated their business continuity plans, maintaining contact with government institutions and making UNDP capacities available to start recovery processes quickly. | Photo credit: UNDP Cuba



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In Jamaica, UNDP is working closely with national authorities and CDEMA to strengthen recovery coordination and preparedness ensuring that assessment tools and institutional arrangements are already in place to support both current recovery processes and future events. This includes targeted technical assistance to guide risk-informed recovery investments in critical sectors identified through the assessment process.

### Keeping recovery on track

If assessments such as PDNAs and DaLA help define where recovery should go, sustained monitoring ensures it stays on course. Without structured follow-up, it becomes harder to assess whether recovery efforts are delivering lasting results. That is why UNDP is supporting countries to establish Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems for recovery.

The approach is structured in two phases: first, the development of a generic digital framework that can be deployed across contexts; second, support to governments to customise the system to national priorities and build the capacity required to manage it effectively. Customisation is set to begin in Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines early this year. ∙/.

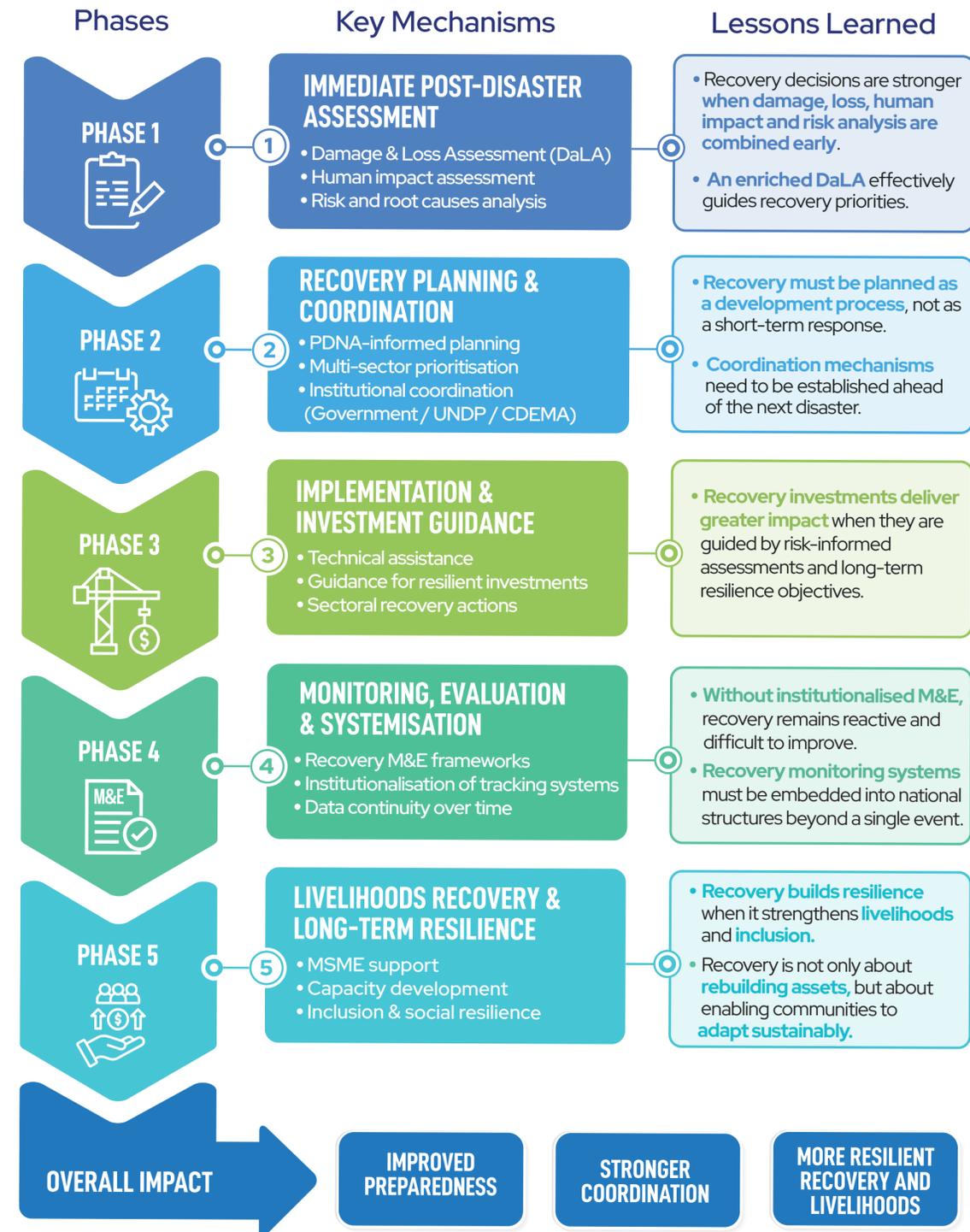


Hurricane Melissa brought intense winds and flooding that caused extensive damage across the Caribbean.

| Photo credit: UNDP Jamaica/Gillian Scott

*The facing page presents the recovery pathway, highlighting what Hurricane Melissa revealed in practice and the potential impacts to be targeted across preparedness, coordination and resilience.*

## THE RECOVERY PATHWAY



*Hurricane Melissa confirmed that resilient recovery depends on integrated systems, not isolated actions.*

Growing interest in the approach – including engagement with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) – reflects a shared recognition that monitoring must be institutionalised to ensure recovery systems endure beyond a Hurricane Melissa. By embedding recovery tracking within national systems, Caribbean nations will be better positioned to strengthen coordination, improve implementation and sustain recovery progress over the short, medium and long term.

### Strengthening livelihoods as a foundation for recovery

Ultimately, however, recovery systems are only as strong as the outcomes they deliver for people and communities.

Recovery efforts are most effective when they translate into stronger livelihoods, local stability and inclusive economic opportunities. The resilience of small businesses often signals how quickly communities can regain stability. When they struggle to reopen, the effects ripple through households, supply chains, and local economies. Based on previous in-country and other experiences in the Caribbean region, livelihoods reactivation activities have been immediately carried out in Jamaica.

Since 2023, in the Dominican Republic, UNDP supported 155 micro, small and medium enterprises, 60% of them led by women, in La Altagracia province as part of broader resilient recovery efforts. Many were women-led businesses central to household income and community livelihoods. Through more than 1,800 hours of training and technical assistance delivered under UNDP’s *‘En Marcha and Ponte’* en Marcha approach, enterprises strengthened financial management, refreshed their commercial identity, and improved planning. Practical support – including signs, uniforms, first aid kits, fire extinguishers and solar batteries – improved both their visibility in the market and their resilience in emergencies.

Businesses reported increases in sales and profitability, demonstrating that recovery can be an opportunity not only to reopen, but to reposition and stabilise businesses for the long term. **Social inclusion** was also central. Women’s leadership was strongly represented, and enterprises adopted explicit measures addressing violence against women.

The broader lesson is clear: when recovery combines immediate support with structured capacity development, it becomes a pathway to “build back better” – using the recovery phase as an opportunity to learn from disruption and strengthen resilience.

### From Crisis to Resilient Recovery

Recent hurricane events across the Caribbean have tested recovery systems, partnerships and preparedness mechanisms, highlighting both progress made and remaining gaps. Across the Caribbean, these experiences underscore a consistent message: recovery preparedness must be treated as a core development priority, from assessment and monitoring systems to livelihoods recovery and long-term resilience.



Woman and young child stand beside the remains of a collapsed wooden structure after a hurricane. Debris, household items, and uprooted trees surround them, with extensive vegetation damage visible in the background. UNDP is strengthening government capacity in Central America and the Caribbean to more effectively manage disaster recovery.

| Photo credit: UNDP Jamaica



  
**LESSONS  
LEARNED**



| Photo REUTERS/Norllys Perez

## When Regional Partnerships Turn Science into Action

**Hurricane Melissa, which swept across the Caribbean in October 2025, underscored the growing intensity of climate-related hazards and the decisive role of regional cooperation in responding to them. Beyond its immediate impacts, the event demonstrated how scientific knowledge, operational climate services, and development finance can combine to support faster, more informed responses. This article explores how the partnership among CDB, UWI, and CIMH helps translate risk information into action and strengthens long-term resilience across the region.**

Hurricane Melissa did more than disrupt infrastructure, essential services, and vulnerable communities in the Caribbean. Its impacts revealed how increasingly complex and interconnected climate hazards have become. In many territories, 48-hour rainfall totals exceeded historical October averages, triggering flooding, landslides, and coastal inundation where storm surge coincided with peak runoff. Damage to transport networks, water systems, and other infrastructure showed how one event can produce cascading disruptions. At the same time, Melissa revealed a critical dimension of regional resilience: the ability of institutions to work together to turn scientific information into timely operational decisions.

As climate-related hazards intensify, resilience can no longer be understood solely in terms of physical infrastructure. It increasingly depends on how effectively countries generate, interpret, and use risk information. Melissa showed that this capacity is

largely built through strong regional partnerships linking research, climate services, and development finance.

### A strategic partnership at the core of regional resilience

Three regional institutions play complementary and interconnected roles in this resilience architecture.

**The Caribbean Development Bank** provides the bridge between knowledge and investment. By mobilising finance, supporting risk-informed policies, and preparing resilient projects, the Bank helps translate analysis into concrete action. Through the CARE Programme, it supports stronger early warning systems, climate-resilient water planning, and the integration of risk considerations into national and sectoral strategies. CDB supported Saint Lucia's Climate-Resilient Water Master Plan and strengthened Belize's National Meteorological Service forecasting capacity. The CARE portfolio now includes 10 projects, with US\$9.6 million from CDB and US\$6 million leveraged from partners.

**The University of the West Indies**, through its Climate Studies Group Mona, provides the scientific backbone. Its research on hurricane dynamics, extreme rainfall, and climate change impacts informs infrastructure standards, adaptation strategies, and national planning. UWI-CSGM's rapid attribution research after Melissa, done in partnership with regional and international colleagues, found that anthropogenic warming likely increased rainfall intensity by roughly 16%, strengthened maximum wind speeds by around 7%, and made the atmospheric conditions that fuelled the storm several times more likely. Through the CARE-funded Climate STRIDES, UWI is updating high-resolution regional climate projections and the State of the Caribbean Climate assessment. Through SWARM-CR project, it is enhancing flood modelling and integrating hydrological data with web-based early-warning tools to improve watershed-level risk management.

**The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology** ensures the operational translation of this knowledge. Through near real-time and climate observation networks, regional modelling platforms, and early warning services, the CIMH converts weather, water and climate data into actionable information. The growing use of impact-based forecasting allows authorities to anticipate not only the

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hydro-meteorological event but also its consequences for communities, infrastructure, and sectors. The CIMH is using CARE Programme resources to establish a low-cost buoy network that enhances near-coast marine monitoring to improve early warnings and advance ocean governance.

### Melissa as a demonstration of cooperation in practice

Melissa illustrated the value of this institutional cooperation in real time. Exchanges among CDB, UWI, the CIMH, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, and national and regional agencies and international development partners, supported more precise risk interpretation and more coordinated responses.

This collaboration improved warning dissemination, informed evacuation decisions, and facilitated early post-disaster assessments needed for financing mobilisation and recovery planning. It showed that reliable data, regional analytical capacity, financing mechanisms and international partnerships together can significantly reduce uncertainty in decision-making.

### From emergency response to long-term resilience

Beyond the immediate response, Melissa confirms that regional partnerships are central to building lasting resilience. Scientific research enables forward-looking risk assessment, operational services integrate these insights into decision processes, and development finance translates them into investments and policies.

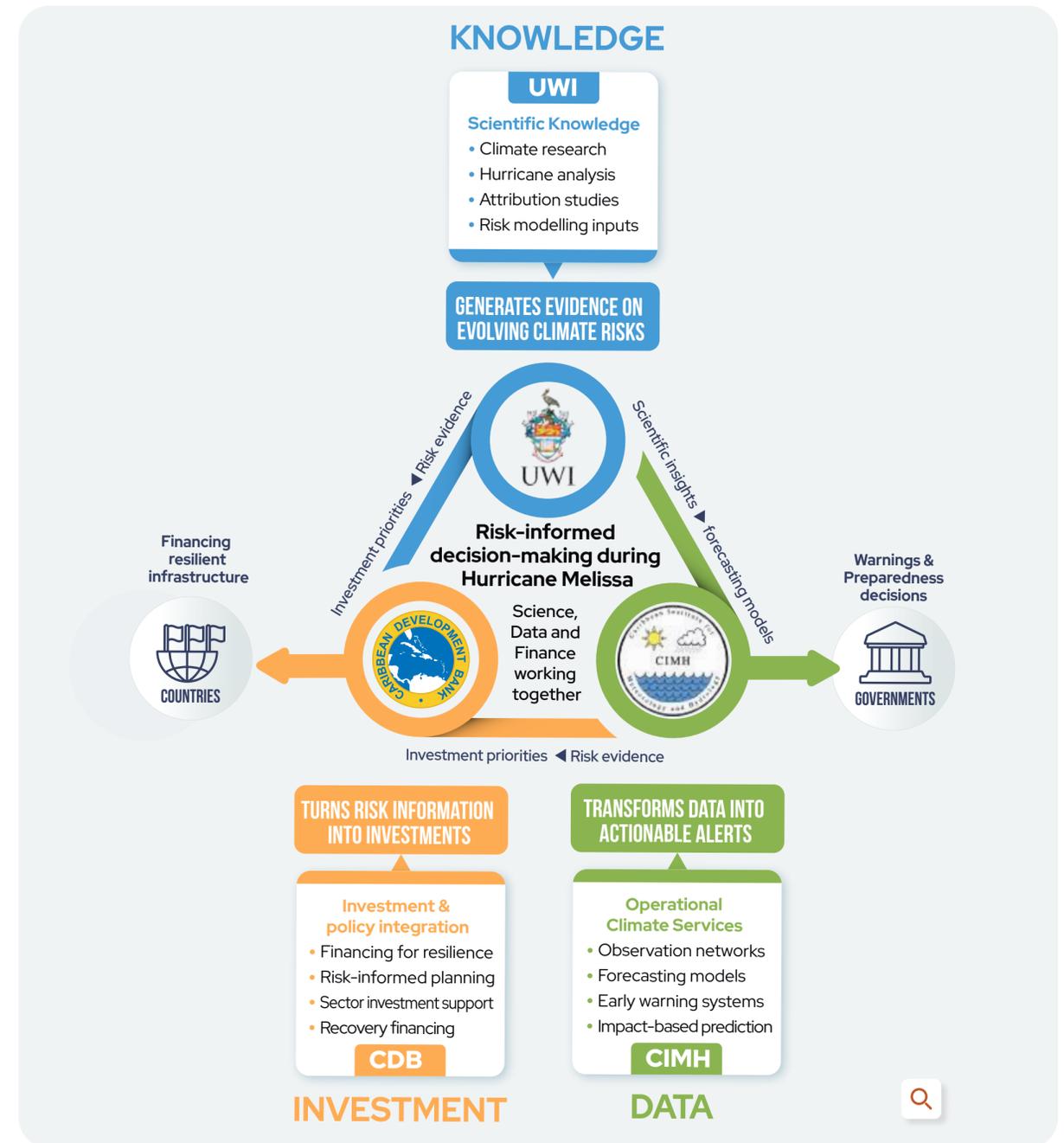
This link between science, operations, and finance allows countries to move from reactive response toward anticipatory risk management. It supports the integration of climate considerations into infrastructure planning, natural resource management, and social protection systems.

### A partnership model for the future

As extreme weather events grow more frequent and complex, strengthening these partnerships will be increasingly important.

Melissa demonstrates that investments in climate science, early warning systems, and institutional cooperation are already delivering tangible benefits for preparedness, safety, and development across the Caribbean.

At the same time, the event highlights the need to further embed climate information into sectoral decision-making, strengthen national capacities, and expand data-driven planning tools. Regional partnerships are therefore not only mechanisms for response – they are key drivers of long-term resilience and sustainable development in a changing climate.



**LESSONS LEARNED**

# Insights from the Pacific region

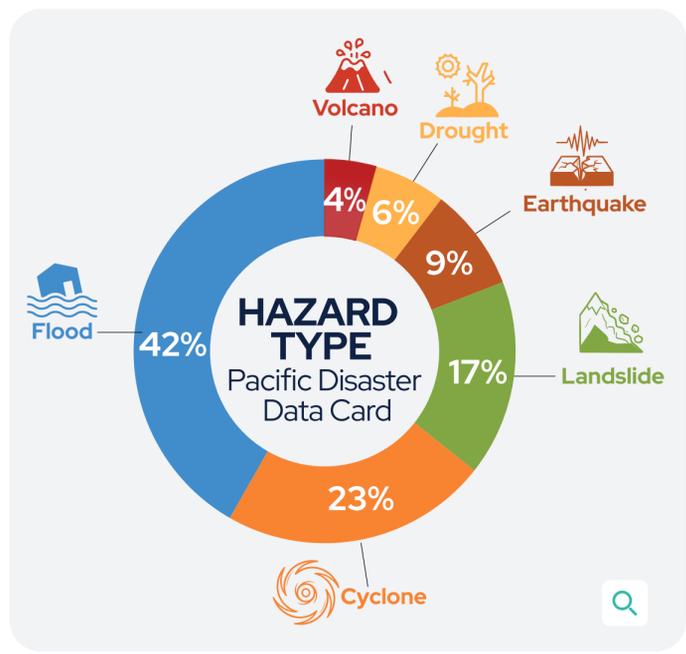
## What a study of 165 disasters reveals about recovery systems in SIDS

Between 2020 and 2025, the Pacific region recorded 165 hazardous events, of which 115 escalated into disasters that directly affected people and damaged assets across 18 countries. Over this five-year period, disasters affected an estimated 1.7 million people and resulted in approximately 891 fatalities, underscoring the scale and persistence of disaster impacts in Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Beyond the shocks of hazards, this accumulation of disasters offers a unique lens to assess how recovery systems perform over time in island contexts characterised by high exposure, limited buffers and cumulative impacts.

Rather than focusing on a single event, the Landscape Study on Hazardous Events and their Impacts in the Pacific provides a systemic reading of repeated shocks. By aggregating five years of disaster data, it reveals structural patterns and constraints that shape recovery outcomes across SIDS.

### Frequent hazards, cumulative impacts in the Pacific SIDS

The study confirms that hydrometeorological hazards dominate the Pacific risk landscape, accounting for 88 per cent of recorded events.



Devastating impacts of Tropical Cyclone Harold (2020), which swept across the Pacific, severely affecting the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga.

Photo credit: UNICEF Pacific/2020/Shing

Floods, cyclones and Landslides recur across countries and years, often at local or sub-national levels.

While major disasters tend to trigger formal assessments and recovery frameworks, frequent lower-intensity events remain under-documented, despite their cumulative socio-economic impacts. Over time, these recurrent shocks erode livelihoods, strain public services and slow development gains.

**Key lesson for SIDS:** recovery systems are still largely calibrated for exceptional events, while it is the repetition of smaller and medium-scale disasters that generates long-term development setbacks.

### The data gap: loss, damage and recovery evidence

A central finding of the report concerns persistent gaps in post-disaster data. Despite the high number of events recorded, only a limited share is accompanied by comprehensive loss and damage assessments. Post-Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNAs) are triggered mainly for major disasters, leaving many events without a structured recovery evidence base.

In the absence of sustained monitoring, recovery remains largely reactive. Countries and partners struggle to determine what worked, what did not, and whether reconstruction efforts are reducing future risk – a recurring structural challenge for SIDS facing repeated disasters.

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## Insights from the Pacific region

# What a study of 165 disasters reveals about recovery systems in SIDS

### Why recovery data matters for investing in resilience

The report also makes a strong case for linking disaster data to investment decisions. Between 2020 and 2025, **the Pacific region recorded an estimated USD 4.3 billion in losses and damages, with disaster costs in some countries exceeding the volume of official development assistance received over the same period.**

Yet historical disaster and recovery data are not consistently used to inform investment planning. For SIDS, this represents a critical bottleneck:

**Key lesson for SIDS:** without robust and comparable data, it becomes difficult to direct resources towards risk-informed infrastructure and long-term resilience.

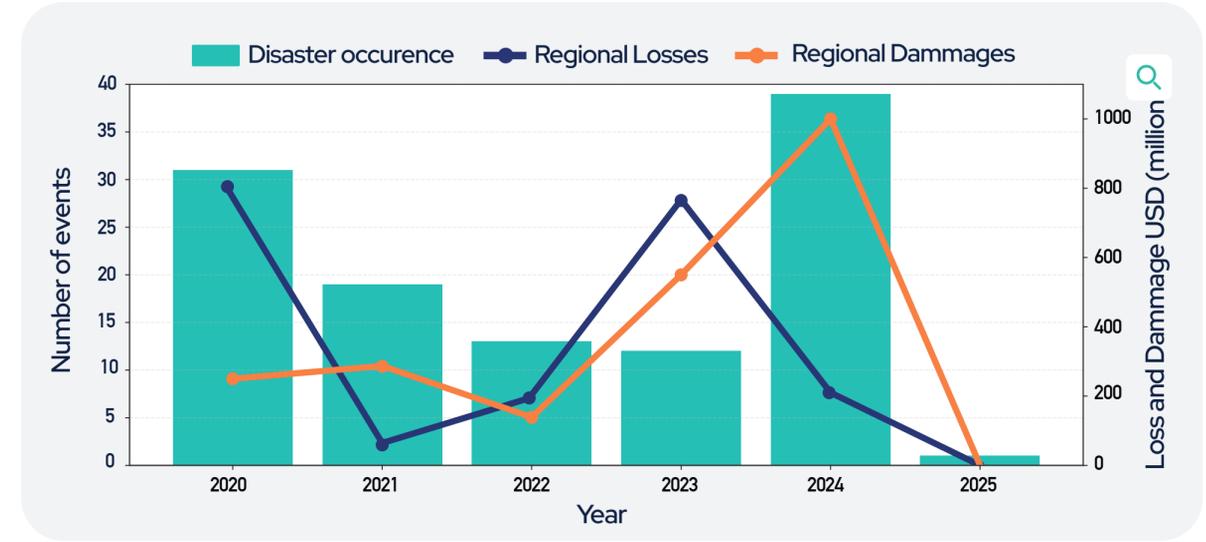
### From the Pacific to shared SIDS lessons

Taken together, the Pacific experience shows that when disasters repeat, structural weaknesses in recovery systems become visible. Gaps in data, loss and damage assessments, monitoring and long-term recovery planning are not region-specific, but shared challenges across SIDS.

These findings resonate strongly with what Hurricane Melissa revealed in the Caribbean. While contexts differ, both experiences point to the same imperative: **moving beyond emergency-driven approaches towards institutionalised, data-informed and long-term recovery systems.**

The full report, *Landscape Study on Hazardous Events and their Impacts in the Pacific (2020–2025)*, is available here: [DRAFT\\_Landscape Study Hazardous events and their impacts \(Pacific 2020–2025\).pdf](#).

## Tracking Disasters in the Pacific: Regional Loss and Damage and Occurrence Trends (2020–2025)



## What Disasters Reveal About Recovery Systems in SIDS

### What Hurricane Melissa Revealed (Caribbean)

- Incomplete or delayed **post-disaster data**.
- **Recovery monitoring** weakly institutionalised.
- Difficulty measuring **long-term impacts**.
- Recovery treated as a **short-term phase**.
- Strong focus on **immediate response**.
- Limited visibility on **concrete post-crisis changes**.

### What SPC/UNDP Confirms (Pacific & SIDS Study)

- Lack of **robust methodologies** to document **loss and damage**, particularly non-economic losses.
- Few countries only have **durable post-impact monitoring** and **tracking** systems over time.
- **Data discontinuities** and limited tracking capacities (DesInventar, PDNA, national databases).
- Recovery recognised as a structural issue, but insufficiently embedded in **national frameworks**.
- Excessive focus on **major shocks**, at the expense of cumulative and **slow-onset impacts**.
- Challenges translating findings into operational and **financed reforms**.

Sources of this table: *DRAFT\_Landscape Study Hazardous events and their impacts (Pacific 2020–2025).pdf* - *Undp-snapshot-of-loss-and-damage-in-sids-under-the-climate-promise (1).pdf*



LESSONS  
LEARNED

# Lessons in Summary

## 1. SCALE OF THE SHOCK

### A Category 5 Hurricane

Highest intensity ever recorded in Jamaica

**\$ 8.8**<sup>1</sup> Estimated total damages



**LESSON:** Exposure is structural. Housing and critical infrastructure remain the primary vulnerability multipliers.

## 2. RAPID LIQUIDITY IN ACTION

**\$ 70,8m**<sup>2</sup>  
CCRIF cyclone payout

**\$ +21.1m**<sup>2</sup>  
Excess rainfall payout

**\$ 150m**<sup>1</sup>  
Catastrophe bond – 100% triggered

**\$ +84m**<sup>1</sup>  
Cat DDO contingent credit

**LESSON:** Pre-arranged financial instruments reduce the time gap between impact and action.

## 3. DATA DRIVES DECISIONS

**1.6 million people affected**

**116,000+ buildings**

Severely damaged or roof loss

**77% Power outage**

immediately after landfall

**LESSON:** Rapid damage assessment tools (GRADE, DaLA, PDNA) are essential to prioritise recovery

## 4. REGIONAL COORDINATION

- CDEMA activation
- Multi-partner rapid assessments
- WB-UNDP-CDB technical coordination

**LESSON:** Resilient recovery depends on integrated systems – not isolated actors.

<sup>1</sup>World Bank, IDB - <sup>2</sup>CCRIF -



# World Bank Report Advances Risk-Informed Urban Resilience in the Pacific

**Urbanisation across Pacific Small Island Developing States, including Timor-Leste, is accelerating. By 2050, urban populations are projected to more than double compared to 2010 levels, potentially reaching close to half of the region’s total population. Rapid urban growth, often occurring in coastal and hazard-prone areas, is increasing exposure to earthquakes, cyclones and floods.**

The World Bank’s recent report, *Livable Pacific Cities and Towns: Urbanization Strategies for Resilience, Sustainability and Inclusion*, provides a comprehensive regional assessment of urban growth and disaster risk across Pacific SIDS. The report was prepared by the World Bank and benefitted from partner review, including that of UNDRR.

Supported through the ACP–EU Disaster Risk Management Programme, the report highlights the scale of risk facing Pacific urban centres. It estimates that exposure to earthquake and cyclone hazards alone could amount to approximately **US\$58.4 billion in potential losses**, with additional significant exposure related to flood risks (about US\$8.2 billion for pluvial and fluvial flooding and US\$1.8 billion for coastal flooding). As urban populations continue to expand, by 2050 the number of people exposed to earthquake and cyclone hazards is projected to more than double, from about 1.0 million to 2.4 million.

Drawing on the assessment of 38 Pacific urban areas, the report outlines **four interlinked non-sequential and context-adapted priority** areas for action, as presented in its Executive Summary:

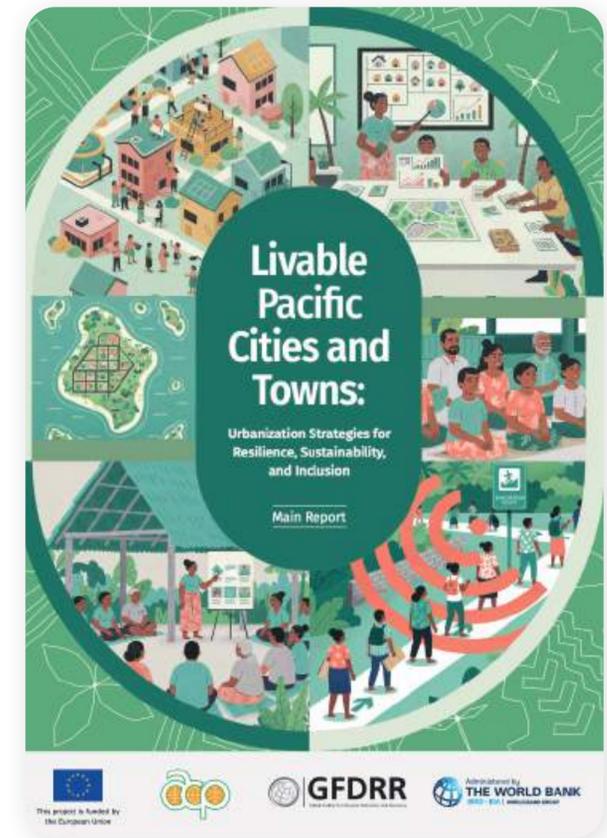
- 1. Strengthen Risk-Informed Urban Management Systems.** Integrating hazard data, land-use planning and institutional coordination into urban governance frameworks to reduce future exposure.
- 2. Invest in Resilient Infrastructure and Housing.** Prioritising infrastructure systems and housing solutions designed to withstand earthquakes, cyclones and flooding.
- 3. Enhance Preparedness for Shocks.** Improving early warning systems, emergency planning and financial preparedness mechanisms to reduce the time gap between impact and response.
- 4. Prioritize Social Inclusion and Communities.** Ensuring that resilience strategies address informal settlements, vulnerable populations and community-level capacities.

These pillars are mutually reinforcing and must be adapted to national and local contexts. Together, they provide a strategic framework for translating risk information into long-term urban resilience outcomes.

Published in December 2025, the report will now be widely disseminated by the regional WB/UNDRR team, with a virtual event anticipated in March, followed by an official launch in Washington, DC in April — further amplifying its policy impact.

More information on this report will be featured in the next edition of the Intra-ACP DRRP Newsletter.

The full report, *Livable Pacific Cities and Towns: Urbanization Strategies for Resilience, Sustainability and Inclusion*, is available for download [here](#).





EVENTS

# Highlights for the First Semester of 2026

2026



26/02

**3rd Intra-ACP DRR Caribbean Regional Programme Steering Committee**

bringing together implementing partners and key regional stakeholders to review progress and strengthen coordination across the Caribbean. The meeting served as a strategic checkpoint to evaluate implementation progress under the 11th European Development Fund and to ensure delivery within the remaining timeframe. **Hybrid format.**



24/03

**3rd Intra-ACP DRR African Regional Programme Steering Committee**

held back to back with the 24th Session of the African Working Group on DRR. **Hybrid format.**



25 – 28/03

**Twenty-Fourth Session of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (AWGDRR)**

**Location:** Bujumbura, Burundi (ECCAS). **Theme:** "Accelerating action on the Windhoek Declaration and the Africa Common Position to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025 commitments." **Organisers:** The African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Office for Africa (UNDRR-ROA), in collaboration with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) linked to climate resilience and Sendai Framework priorities.



[Read more](#)



1st week of June

**Intra-ACP Disaster Risk Reduction Programme 2nd Global Programme Steering Committee**

**Location:** To be defined. held back to back with the 6th **Global Coordination Meeting** and the first **Technical Working Group Finance for Resilience session.**



8 – 18 /06

**The 64th sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SB 64)**

**Location:** Bonn  
The SBSTA 64 meetings, alongside the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 64), serve as the primary technical forum for 195 countries to advance climate action before the annual Conference of the Parties. **Key Focus Areas:** technical negotiations regarding adaptation, mitigation, climate finance, and technology to prepare decisions for the annual COP. Key topics include the Global Goal on Adaptation, Article 6, and agriculture.



[Read more](#)



# Extending Knowledge Through Partner Networks



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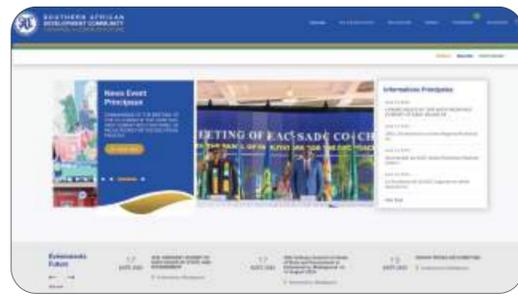
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