



## **Humanitarian logistics used by the Red Cross in Hurricane Matthew, Haiti, 2016**

### **A logística humanitária utilizada pela Cruz Vermelha no Furacão Matthew, no Haiti, em 2016**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Haiti is a small country (27.750m<sup>2</sup> approximately the size of the Brazilian state of Alagoas) located in the Caribbean basin, it is to the north bathed by the Atlantic Ocean and to the south by the Caribbean Sea. It was the first black republic in history, its independence proclaimed in 1804 after a revolution that lasted 12 years. In 2004, after a severe political crisis, gangs of different factions took over the country, culminating in the need for international intervention, and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was established in the country. In addition to the political crisis, the territory has periodically suffered from natural disasters and constantly requires humanitarian aid. According to climate data from the Central Intelligence Agency, the country has a tropical climate and its territory is located in the Intertropical Convergence Zone, is in the middle of the hurricane belt subject to strong storms from June to October with occasional flooding, which provides the incidence of natural disasters, as was the case of Hurricane Matthew in 2016. According to Costa 2013, the impact of disasters is greater in developing countries, generating greater consequences for the poorest communities living in marginal areas, which is the case in Haiti. Hurricane Matthew in October (2016) was the strongest storm of the hurricane season in the Atlantic Ocean that year. According to a document from the International Federation of the Red Cross (Emergency Appeal Revision Haiti: Hurricane Matthew 2016) on October 1, it was predicted that it would pass through Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas, but it is on October 4 that it reaches Haiti with wind gusts of up to 230km / h, accompanied by torrential rains



and floods. The hurricane was classified as category 5, in an increasing classification from 1 to 5, generating one of the greatest calamities in the country since the earthquake in 2010 (Appeal Haiti Hurricane Matthew, 2016). The need for humanitarian aid was imminent, and the logistical challenges were significant, with some locations impossible to access in the first moments after the disaster. The Haitian government, even before declaring a state of emergency in the country, sent a red alert to the Haitian Red Cross Society (HRCS) which promptly mobilized to respond to the emergency. Humanitarian logistics is a key tool for the success of humanitarian actions.

## **2 OBJECTIVE**

This paper aims to present the humanitarian logistics used by the Red Cross in Hurricane Matthew in Haiti in 2016. Humanitarian logistics, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, diagnosis, preparation, consequences of the disaster and results arising from the application of humanitarian logistics actions in Haiti will be described.

## **3 METHODOLOGY**

The methodology employed is documentary and bibliographic: documentary because legal texts, normative acts of international scope will be used and bibliographic, because doctrines and academic texts of subjects related to the theme will be researched.

## **4 DEVELOPMENT**

In this study, the importance of human resource integration was observed to prepare volunteers for the different functionalities required by the humanitarian logistics operation. Natural disasters require quick responses to save lives, the integrated training and capacity building of volunteers reduced the time spent on specific trainings for each functionality. As a result we had the emergency needs for shelter and essentials met; the population was allocated to emergency shelters; the shelters were stable and durable and served at least 3,110 families.

## **5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Even with partnerships, quality strategic information for diagnosis and planning, and previous experience in disasters in the same location, it is still not possible to remedy and predict all the damage and reparatory actions and attend to all the direct and indirect victims of a disaster. However, the experience gained in constant humanitarian logistics actions of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its agencies provided a more accurate pre-training and anticipation of the



emergency demands of a natural disaster; its connections with other agencies present in Haiti enabled a more assertive logistics making the humanitarian action response more effective and efficient.

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