

Impact of natural disasters

The water and sanitation systems of Latin America and the Caribbean have frequently been severely affected by various types of natural disasters, sometimes rolling back by years the advances made in the coverage and quality of these services

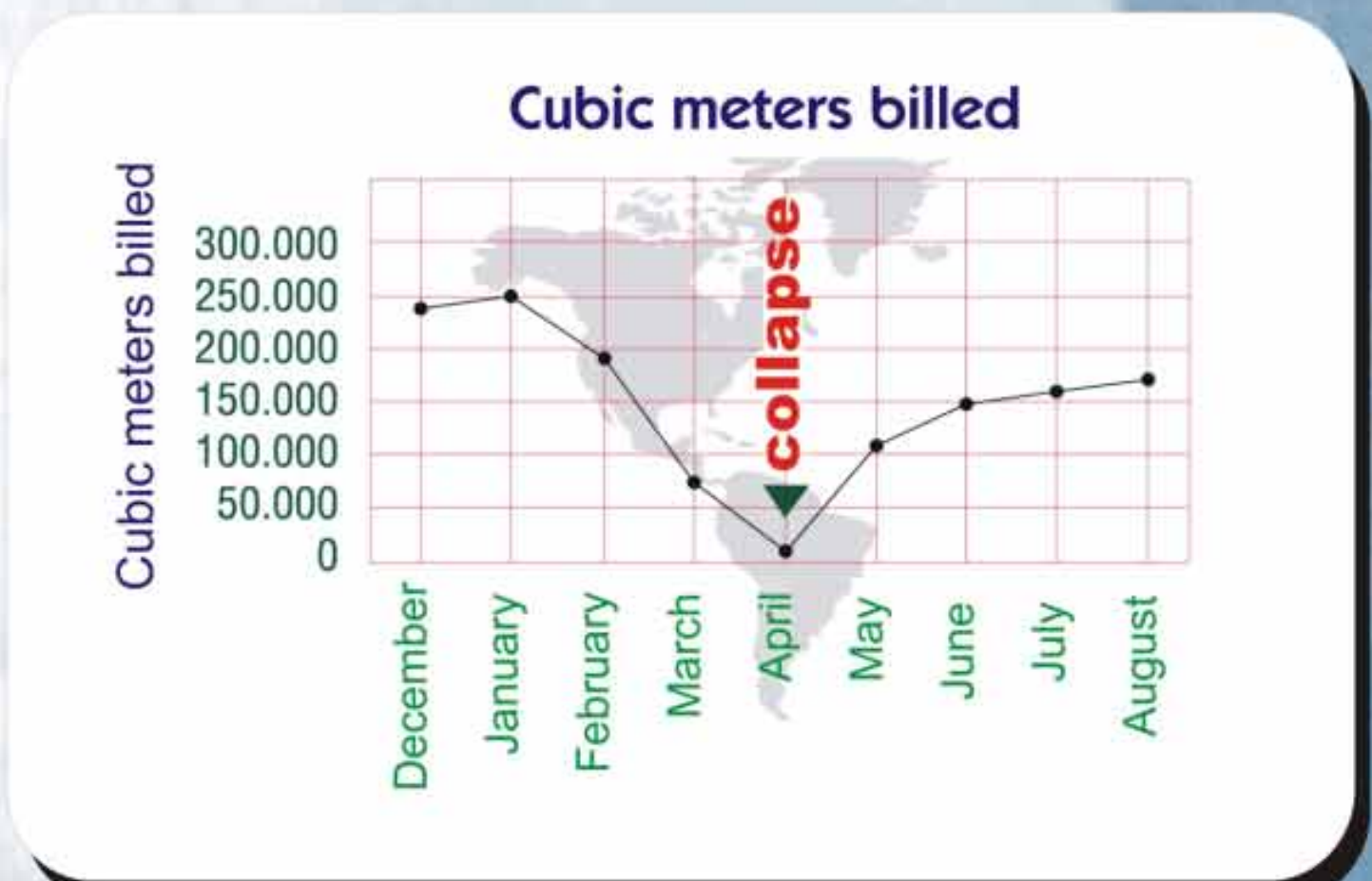
The impact of natural disasters on sanitation systems cause direct and indirect damage to water companies:

Direct damage:

- ▶ Impact on physical infrastructure
- ▶ Cost of rehabilitation and reconstruction
- ▶ Degradation of the quality and quantity of the service

Indirect damage:

- ▶ Loss of revenue due to interruption of services
- ▶ Impact on public health
- ▶ Degradation of the company's institutional image and lost of prestige



The economic impact on the country was negative

- **Cost due to loss of revenue**
- US\$ 619,000
- **Cost of repairs**
(Pipes and accessories, hiring of machinery, hiring of staff and repair of equipment)
- US\$ 700,000
- **Total cost of the damage**
- US\$ 1,319,000

Damage caused by hurricanes Georges and Mitch to the water and sanitation sector

	Nicaragua	Honduras	Guatemala	Dominican Republic
Water and Sanitation Sector	14.7	57.9	16.1	16.4

Source: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Assessment of the damage caused by Hurricanes Georges and Mitch, 1998 (Figures in millions of U.S. dollars)
Only in Honduras, 85,000 latrines and 1,683 rural water systems were lost, causing 75% of the population to lose access to drinking water (4.5 million people)

