

A satellite image of Hurricane Gilbert, a powerful tropical storm, swirling over the Caribbean Sea. The hurricane's eye is visible in the center, surrounded by dense, white cloud bands. A white outline of the island of Jamaica is superimposed on the hurricane's path, showing its proximity to the land. The surrounding ocean is dark blue, and some landmasses are visible in the background.

Hurricane Gilbert: Impacts and Solutions

Country: **Jamaica**

Group 5

The Events and Impacts of Hurricane Gilbert

Hurricane Gilbert struck Jamaica on **September 12, 1988** as a **Category 3** hurricane with winds reaching up to **125 mph**. It was one of the most destructive hurricanes in the island's history causing widespread devastation. It resulted in **49** fatalities and left thousands homeless. The total damage was estimated at **\$800 million USD**. The damages incurred left the island in a state of emergency:

1. Flooding (coastal, riverine, etc.) and Landslides
2. Damage to Infrastructure - homes, businesses, road networks, properties, etc.
3. Loss of Livelihood - destruction and collapse of local businesses, etc.
4. Negative Impacts on Agricultural Sector - widespread loss of crops and livestock, etc.
5. Loss of Forestry - uprooted trees, mangroves, etc.
6. Reduced Food Security

Contributing Factors to Impacts of Hurricane Gilbert

1. Lack of Sensitisation / Lack of Public Awareness

- Inadequate disaster preparedness and response systems

1. Soil Erosion

- Deforestation and environmental degradation

1. Poor Infrastructure

- Poor zonation of existing buildings, improper building codes, poor land management, etc.

1. Poor Drainage

Mitigative Solutions for Future Implementation

1. Increase Efforts for Public Awareness & Sensitisation

- Climate change proactive grassroots approach
- Increase technical capacity of policymakers
- Enhancing disaster preparedness and early warning systems

1. Combating Soil Erosion

- Increase forest cover (reforestation) and environmental conservation programs
- Revision of the *Town and Country Planning Act (1958)*

1. Improvements to Infrastructure Development

- Revision of building codes to implement climate change resilient infrastructure - concrete roads, hurricane straps, building on stilts where possible, etc.
- Revamp the building manual for untrained persons for the wider populace
- Post 1988, older pipelines have been replaced by the NWA.
- Revision and enforcement of the *Town and Country Planning Act (1958)*