Humanity through Numbers
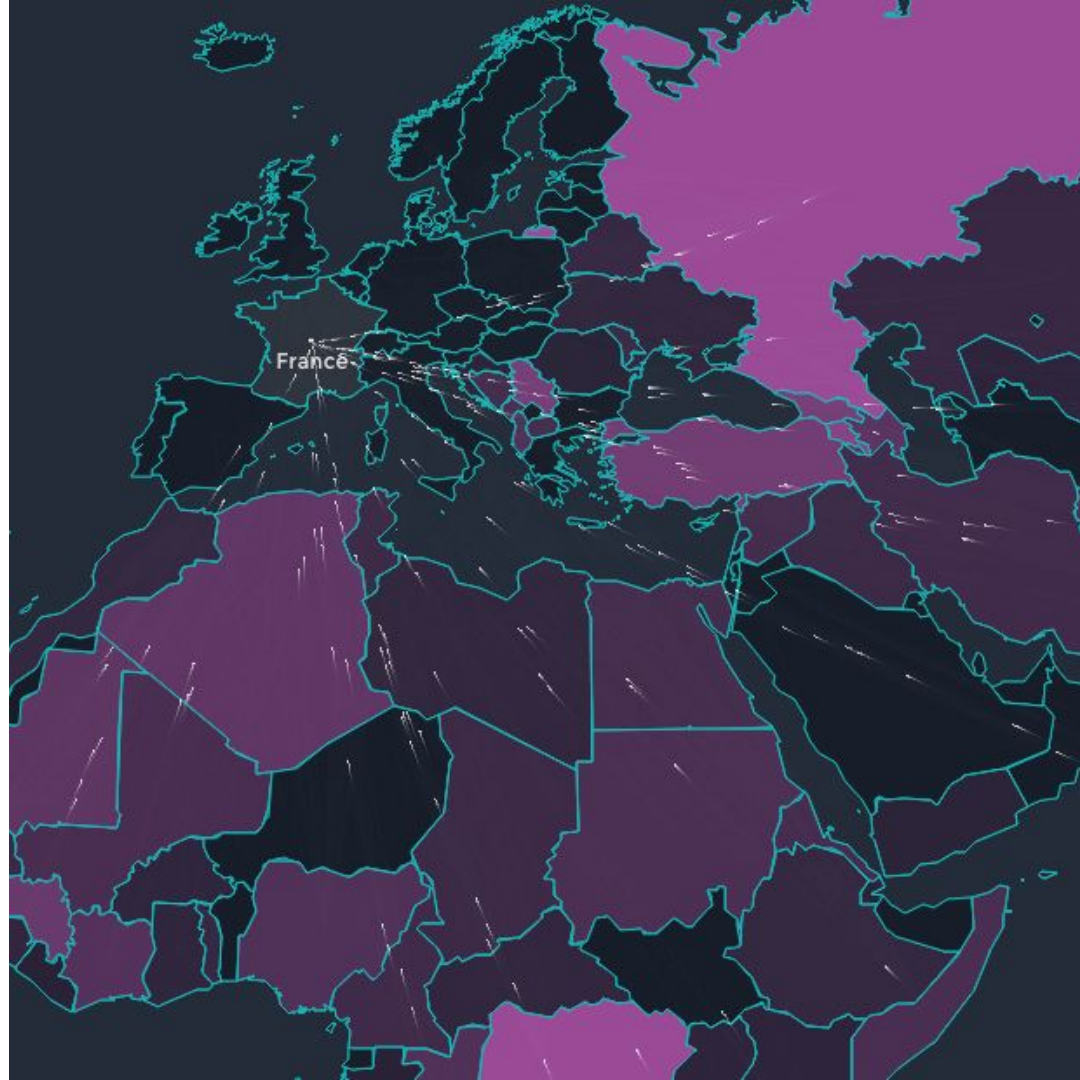
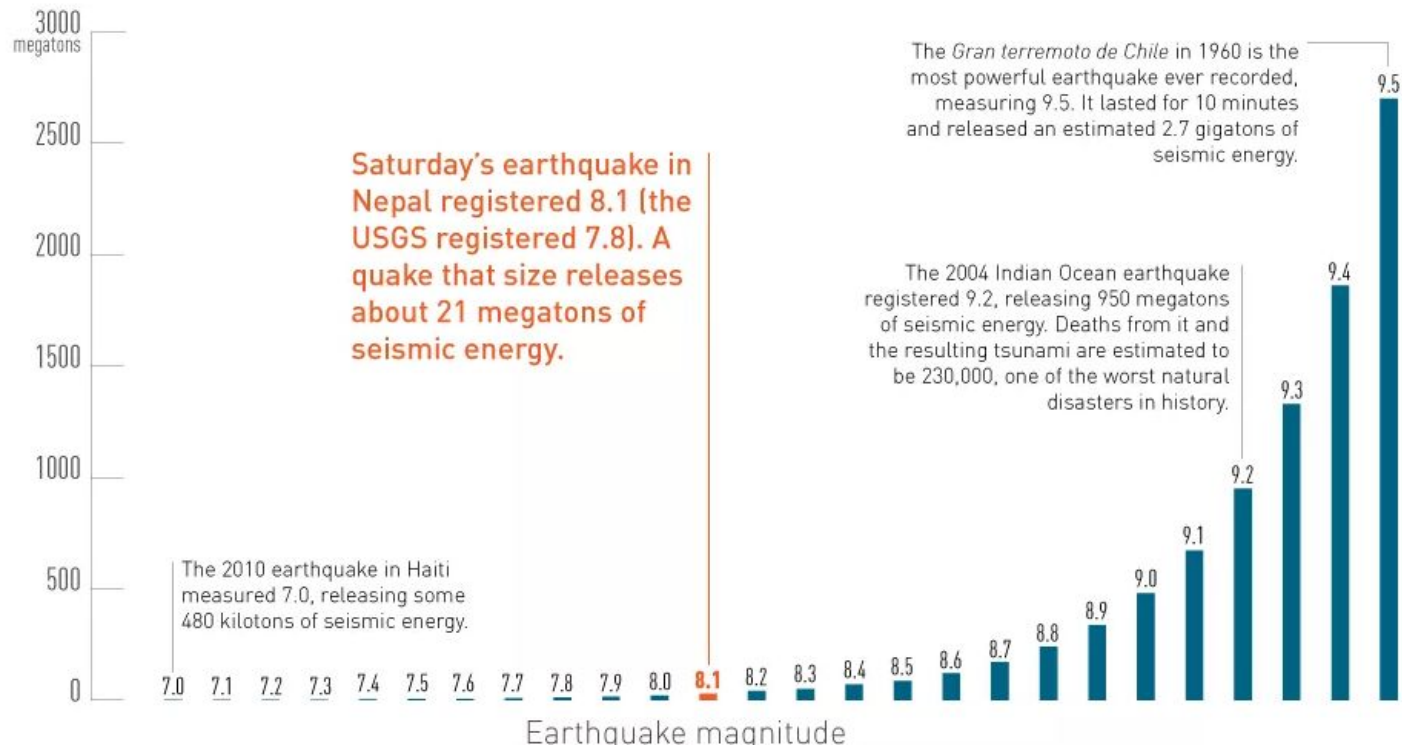@elizabeth_ shell
CCTV America

It's a unicorn
life ;)

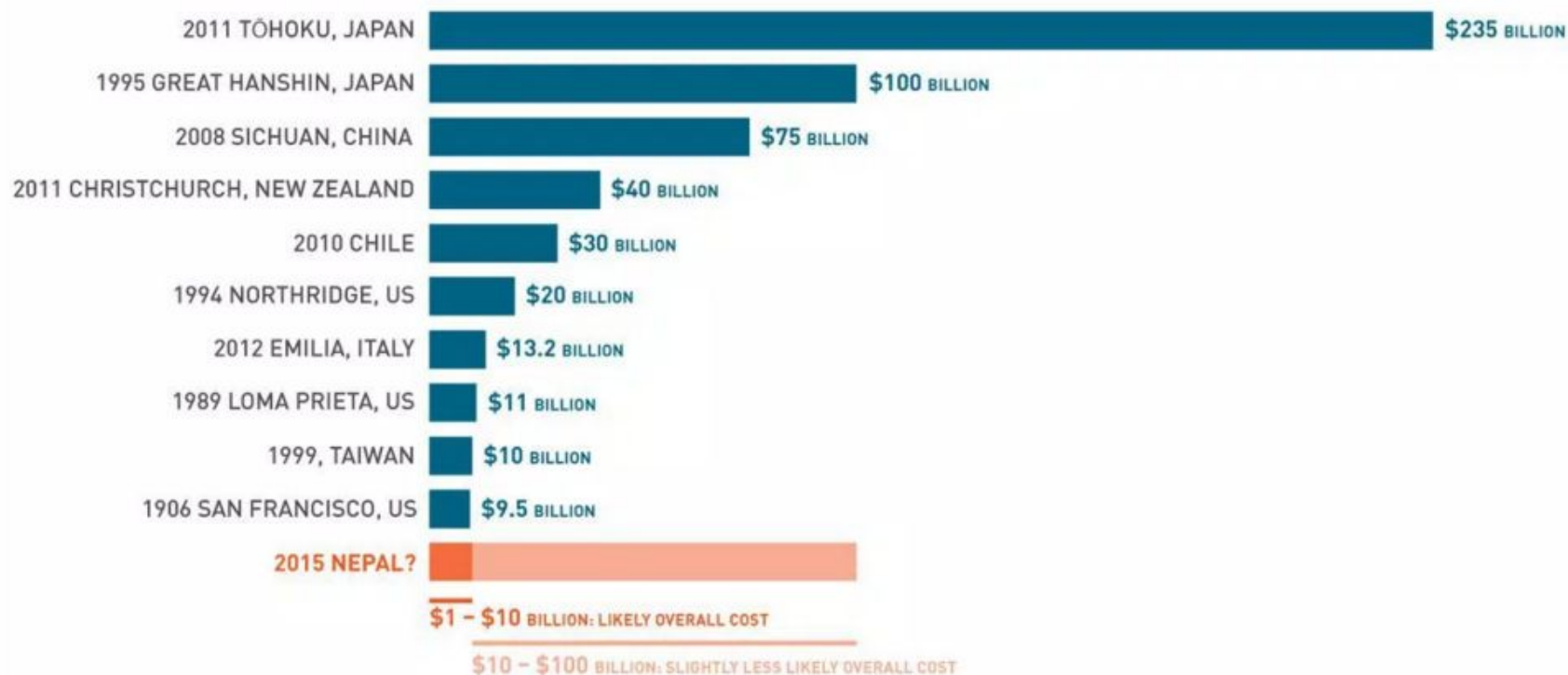We're talking about people. We can't get lost in the numbers.

I'm not saying charts are inherently bad. Plus, sometimes that's what editors want.

Scientists estimate one of the largest magnitude events to happen on earth was an asteroid crashing into the Yucatan peninsula 65 million years ago, effectively wiping out the dinosaurs. That impact would have registered 13.0 on the Richter scale, releasing 100 teratons of seismic energy.
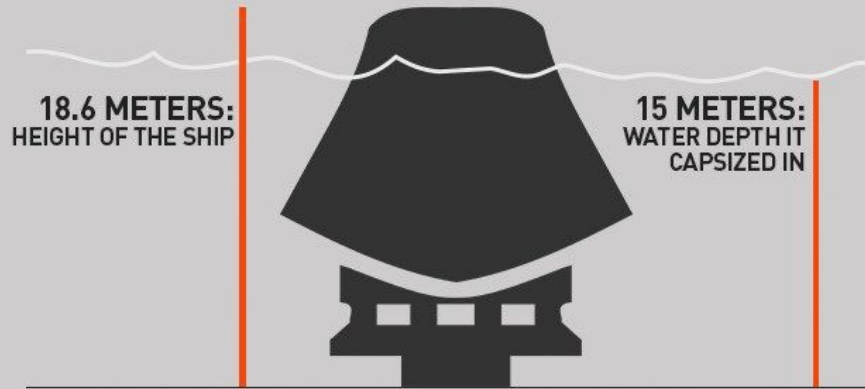
The *Gran terremoto de Chile* in 1960 is the most powerful earthquake ever recorded, measuring 9.5. It lasted for 10 minutes and released an estimated 2.7 gigatons of seismic energy.

Saturday's earthquake in Nepal registered 8.1 (the USGS registered 7.8). A quake that size releases about 21 megatons of seismic energy.

The 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake registered 9.2, releasing 950 megatons of seismic energy. Deaths from it and the resulting tsunami are estimated to be 230,000, one of the worst natural disasters in history.

The 2010 earthquake in Haiti measured 7.0, releasing some 480 kilotons of seismic energy.

3000 megatons
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0

7.0 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5 7.6 7.7 7.8 7.9 8.0 **8.1** 8.2 8.3 8.4 8.5 8.6 8.7 8.8 8.9 9.0 9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5

Earthquake magnitude

WHERE THE NEPAL QUAKE COULD FALL AGAINST THE 10 COSTLIEST

2011 TŌHOKU, JAPAN	$235 BILLION
1995 GREAT HANSHIN, JAPAN	$100 BILLION
2008 SICHUAN, CHINA	$75 BILLION
2011 CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND	$40 BILLION
2010 CHILE	$30 BILLION
1994 NORTHRIDGE, US	$20 BILLION
2012 EMILIA, ITALY	$13.2 BILLION
1989 LOMA PRIETA, US	$11 BILLION
1999, TAIWAN	$10 BILLION
1906 SAN FRANCISCO, US	$9.5 BILLION
2015 NEPAL?	

$1 – $10 BILLION: LIKELY OVERALL COST

$10 – $100 BILLION: SLIGHTLY LESS LIKELY OVERALL COST

Data: World Bank, USGS, Bloomberg. Figures adjusted for inflation.

Look for other questions around the story to visualize too.

18.6 METERS:
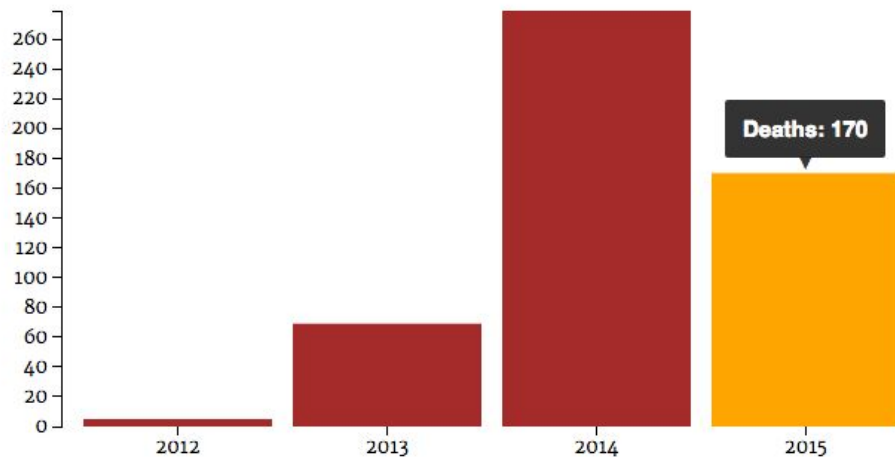HEIGHT OF THE SHIP

15 METERS:
WATER DEPTH IT CAPSIZED IN

Rather than just showing the numbers, allow your readers to get into the story.

Just because you *can* use something
awesome like D3 to make a chart. . .

Deaths associated with MERS globally
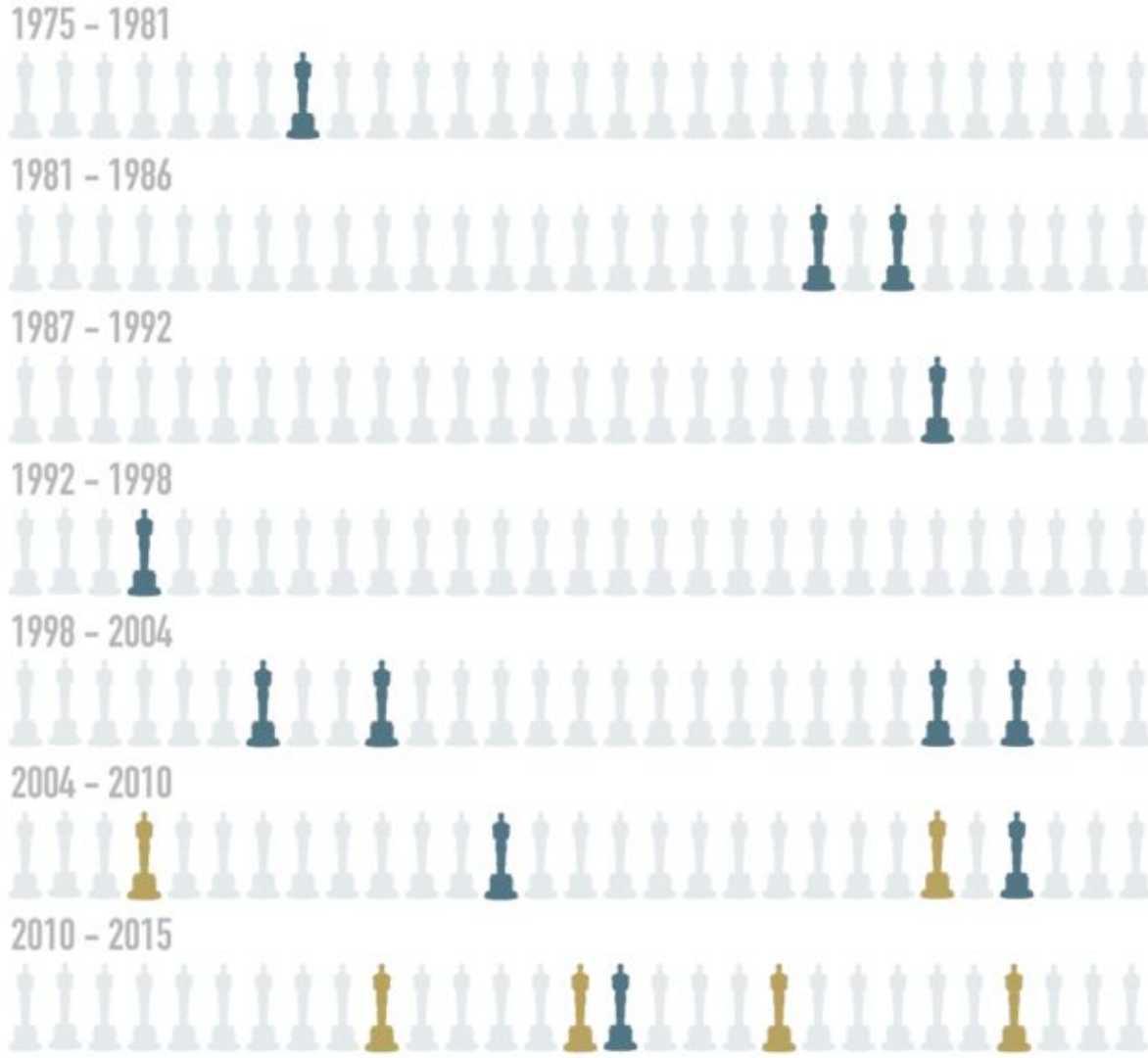

Data as of June 11, 2015. Source: WHO

How do we represent people?

#OscarsSoWhite

1975 – 1981

1981 – 1986

1987 – 1992

1992 – 1998

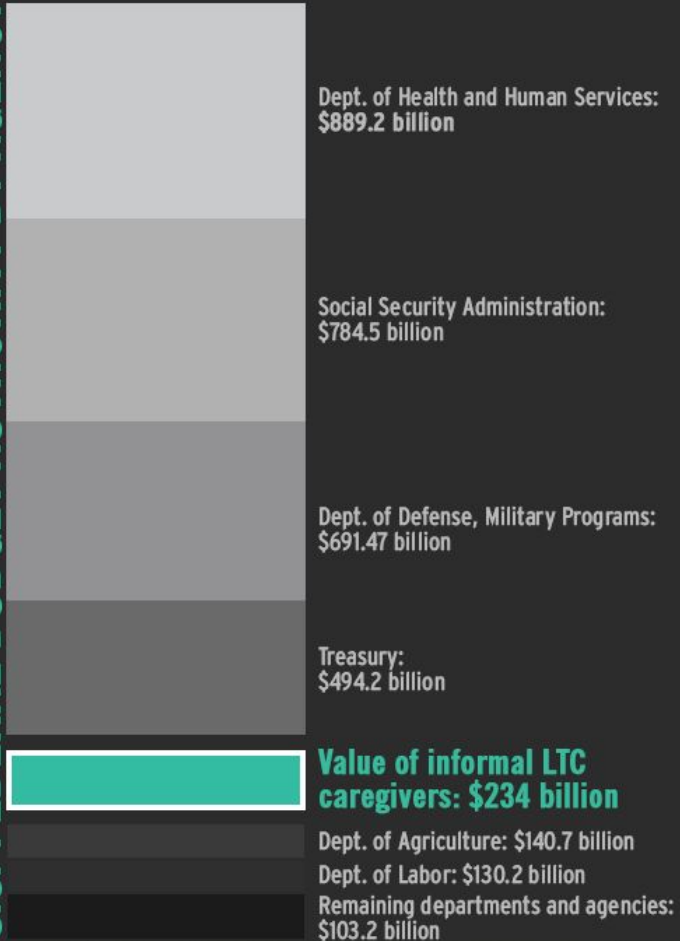1998 – 2004

2004 – 2010

2010 – 2015

Find the people first. Learn about them. These are their numbers — not yours.

If informal care-giving for LTC were a federal agency, it would rank the fifth largest in terms of the 2011 budget.

U.S. FEDERAL BUDGET AUTHORITY BY AGENCY

Dept. of Health and Human Services: $889.2 billion

Social Security Administration: $784.5 billion

Dept. of Defense, Military Programs: $691.47 billion

Treasury: $494.2 billion

Value of informal LTC caregivers: $234 billion

Dept. of Agriculture: $140.7 billion

Dept. of Labor: $130.2 billion

Remaining departments and agencies: $103.2 billion

Often, you're fighting between a looming deadline and having the time to integrate empathy into your story.
There's not always going to be time to do both.

But it's something we need to really think about.

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