



# DISASTER RISK REDUCTION – EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND CENTRAL ASIA

## OVERVIEW

Natural hazards such as droughts, earthquakes, floods, and wildfires affect a range of countries in Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia (EMCA). In addition, rapid urban growth and environmental degradation in some countries have led to overcrowding and settlement in hazard-prone areas. Moreover, protracted conflict and limited governmental disaster management capacity in many EMCA countries compound the risks associated with natural disasters.

Recognizing the vulnerabilities present throughout the EMCA region, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) supports disaster risk reduction (DRR) projects to save lives, alleviate suffering, and reduce the economic and social impact of disasters. Programs measure and analyze disaster risks to identify and then implement risk-reduction solutions. USAID/OFDA provides technical assistance and technology transfer to build communities’ and local governments’ capacity. USAID/OFDA also supports project-level activities such as seismic-resistant shelter construction, hazard mapping, and pre-positioning of emergency relief commodities. In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$20.4 million for DRR projects throughout the EMCA region, including programs that integrate DRR with disaster response.

EMCA DRR FUNDING IN FY 2011 <sup>1</sup>	
Stand-alone DRR Programs in EMCA <i>(see pages 1-3)</i>	\$3,201,200
Programs that Integrate DRR with Disaster Response <sup>2</sup> <i>(see pages 3-4)</i>	\$17,213,889
<b>TOTAL DRR Funding in EMCA</b>	<b>\$20,415,089</b>

## STAND-ALONE DRR PROGRAMS IN EMCA

In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA’s EMCA team provided more than \$3 million for stand-alone DRR initiatives that advance a goal of improving preparedness and mitigating and preventing the worst impacts of disasters. USAID/OFDA provided additional funding for regional and global stand-alone programs that include activities in EMCA to strengthen disaster preparedness and response. At the regional and country levels, USAID/OFDA and implementing partners engaged communities, national and local governments, international and regional organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop effective strategies—tailored to the needs of at-risk populations—to reduce the risk of disasters. These programs all reflected USAID/OFDA’s commitment to support capacity development; strengthen linkages between risk identification, monitoring, early warning, and early action; and expand partnerships and joint programming. Analysis of existing capacities and social, economic, and environmental trends guided programs. When possible, USAID/OFDA programs addressed underlying causes of recurrent disasters, including environmental degradation, rapid urban growth, and climate change.

## Global and Regional Programs Active in EMCA<sup>3</sup>

- Global Flash Flood Guidance System: With \$175,000 in assistance to the U.N. World Meteorological Organization (WMO), USAID/OFDA continues to work on a global flash flood guidance and early warning system with regional implementation for the Middle East and Black Sea region. USAID/OFDA supports rapid assessments of flash floods that increase the lead time for early warning and allow for rapid mobilization of response activities. The WMO program emphasizes strengthening the capacity of national meteorological and hydrological services through cross training of hydrologists and meteorologists. In addition, the program encourages cross-border cooperation in monitoring flash floods, preparing flood warnings, and devising flood response strategies.

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the Fiscal Year of obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

<sup>2</sup> The figure reported represents the integrated DRR–response portion of larger disaster response programs.

<sup>3</sup> Funding figures for global and regional initiatives represent program totals, including USAID/OFDA funding for activities implemented both within and outside of EMCA.

- Views from the Frontline: To increase the ability of global civil society groups to collaborate on strategic DRR policy and practices, in FY 2011, USAID/OFDA supported the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction's "Views from the Frontline" (VFL) project through approximately \$760,000 in assistance to Tearfund. A participatory action research project designed to bring the voices and concerns of vulnerable people into DRR policy and practice, VFL strengthens links between local, national, regional, and international civil society organizations. In FY 2011, VFL extended its geographical coverage to 70 countries, including Middle Eastern and Central Asian nations.

## **Europe**

### *Balkans*

- Flash Flood Guidance System for Southeastern Europe: Through the Global Flash Flood Guidance System, USAID/OFDA is developing a flash flood guidance system for southeastern Europe and building government capacity in flash flood monitoring and warning systems. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$500,000 in FY 2011 to WMO to facilitate regional applications of technology and build capacity to lessen the impacts of flash floods. The guidance system will enable national authorities to assess flash flood potential and improve lead time for early warning.
- Seismic Hazard Mapping: USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$200,000 to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to conduct seismic hazard mapping in the Balkans in FY 2011. USGS technical assistance to seismologists in the Balkans will improve local understanding of seismic hazards in the region by creating new seismic hazard maps. The hazard maps are constructed using proven scientific methodologies and contain the most current available regional information regarding active faults, geology, and historic seismicity.

## **Central Asia**

### *Regional*

- Earthquake Risk Reduction: In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$230,000 to USGS for earthquake risk reduction activities in Central Asia. The activities aim to minimize the loss of life and property from earthquakes, protect quality of life, and contribute to economic and physical development in the region.
- Strengthening Regional DRR Coordination: Through the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), USAID/OFDA provided more than \$210,000 to the U.N. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) to strengthen regional DRR coordination in Central Asia, with a focus on Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The program promotes and facilitates regional and national capacity development, including through regional conferences. In late 2011, USAID/OFDA supported a regional conference on seismic risk reduction for Central Asia and the Caucasus held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The conference provided a forum for technical experts and the humanitarian community to discuss earthquake preparedness and mitigation. With USAID/OFDA support, UNISDR is providing technical assistance to the Central Asia Center for Disaster Response and Risk Reduction in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which will serve as the coordination hub for information sharing between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan on transboundary hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities.

## **Country-Specific DRR Programs**

### *Afghanistan*

- Quality Potato Seed through Improved Production and Storage Practices: The majority of households in central Afghanistan's Ghor Province depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, with potatoes a key crop for both cash and subsistence. In response to Ghor's poor spring 2011 food security outlook, USAID/OFDA, through Catholic Relief Services (CRS), is implementing a DRR program aimed at reducing post-harvest seed loss. In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided \$250,000 to CRS to facilitate training and technology demonstrations related to potato seed production and storage, benefiting as many as 6,000 individuals.
- Community-Based Seismic Awareness, Preparedness, and Mitigation Project for Kabul Municipality: USAID/OFDA partner Shelter for Life, with funding prior to FY 2011, continued to support a hillside risk assessment in Kabul Municipality. Shelter for Life's program aimed to increase awareness at the grassroots level

about seismic activity and the risks caused by earthquakes, provide seismic hazard reduction training, and engage with relevant government and academic institutions to promote improved housing construction practices.

- Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Phase II in Badakhshan and Baghlan Provinces: With funding from USAID/OFDA prior to FY 2011, the Aga Khan Foundation worked to enable communities and local authorities in Badakhshan and Baghlan provinces in northeastern Afghanistan to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from shocks caused by natural disasters. The project integrated disaster preparedness at the grassroots level by partnering with community development committees to conduct awareness-raising activities and to provide trainings on disaster assessment and response. The program also helped local authorities collect and collate information from government agencies and NGOs regarding disaster risks across the provinces, map disaster-prone areas, improve disaster risk and emergency information management systems, and strengthen existing disaster response structures.
- Capacity-Building for Internally Displaced Persons and Vulnerable Groups: Through June 2011, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with funding from USAID/OFDA prior to FY 2011, continued to enhance coordination and build local governments' emergency response capacity throughout Afghanistan through technical and material assistance. In addition, IOM continued to utilize rapid procurement and warehousing mechanisms for pre-positioning and delivery of emergency relief commodities countrywide.

#### *Kyrgyzstan*

- Reducing the Vulnerability of Children in Kyrgyzstan: Large-scale natural disasters, such as earthquakes, can result in the collapse of school facilities, injuring or killing children and teachers. Smaller-scale, recurrent disasters, such as floods, can undermine the integrity of school infrastructure. With approximately \$1 million from USAID/OFDA, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) is assessing the physical safety of nearly 1,000 preschools and more than 2,000 school facilities in Kyrgyzstan to determine vulnerability to local hazards, with an emphasis on seismic risk. The results and recommendations of the assessment will contribute to the development of a national program for school and preschool rehabilitation, strengthening, and construction.

#### *Iraq*

- Enhancing Capacity of Duty Bearers to Respond to Emergencies: In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA, through the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), enhanced the capacity of Iraqi governorate authorities to prevent, respond to, and manage emergencies through the expansion and strengthening of the existing national Governorate Emergency Cell (GEC) network currently operating in 11 of Iraq's 18 governorates. With \$1 million in assistance from USAID/OFDA, DRC designed and implemented technical workshops on the response and management of emergencies and assisted the GECs in establishing proper preparedness mechanisms, including contingency plans.
- Iraq Knowledge Network: With funding from USAID/OFDA prior to FY 2011, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) continued to support the Iraq Knowledge Network (IKN) survey of 18 governorates and 30,000 households. This project concluded in December 2010. The IKN established critical baseline indicators in the sectors of agriculture and food insecurity, economic recovery and market systems (ERMS), protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) to inform disaster relief and rehabilitation activities in Iraq. The IKN directly supported disaster relief and preparedness and contingency planning within Iraq by helping relief agencies and the Government of Iraq (GoI) prepare for and mitigate the impact of disasters. Additionally, IKN supported technical assistance and training for the GoI, allowing Iraqi government personnel to take over environmental hazard mapping activities.

### **PROGRAMS THAT INTEGRATE DRR WITH DISASTER RESPONSE**

In addition to stand-alone DRR programs implemented to prevent or mitigate the effects of hazards in the region, USAID/OFDA integrated preparedness and mitigation into disaster response, early recovery, and transition programs. These initiatives, which were in accordance with regional DRR strategies, incorporated risk reduction objectives into a broad range of sectoral interventions to increase the resilience of communities to future shocks. In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$17 million in programs that integrated DRR with disaster response to benefit populations affected by the complex emergency in Afghanistan.

#### *Afghanistan*

- Integrating DRR into Complex Emergency Response: In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided the International Rescue Committee (IRC) with more than \$8.5 million for DRR activities in ERMS, logistics and relief supplies, natural and technological risks, shelter and settlements, and WASH. To address the economic impact of floods on local economies and livelihoods, IRC provided temporary employment for the replanting of crops and repair of infrastructure. In addition, IRC strengthened the ability of four local NGOs to respond to humanitarian needs in six disaster-prone Afghan provinces by embedding local NGO staff in IRC emergency response teams. This activity provided the local organizations with hands-on experience in emergency supply distribution and other response activities.
- While mitigation and preparedness activities help lessen the impact of disasters, the probability of large-scale events in Afghanistan, such as floods and earthquakes, remains high. As a result, with USAID/OFDA funding, IOM has established warehouses throughout the country containing large quantities of relief commodities, which can be rapidly mobilized in the event of increased humanitarian needs, whether resulting from natural disasters or conflict. With nearly \$5 million from USAID/OFDA, IOM pre-positioned emergency materials, such as tarpaulins and rope, in the warehouses throughout the country prior to the onset of winter to facilitate rapid response efforts.
- USAID/OFDA provided more than \$2 million to Save the Children/U.S. (SC/US) to support DRR activities in logistics and relief commodities, natural and technological risks, and protection. SC/US engaged local residents to identify the various hazards that have affected their home areas, as well as information on the location of vulnerable populations, natural resources, and social service facilities. The resulting community hazard maps established potential disasters' nature, scope, and likely impact on residents' property and livelihoods. The maps are also used to inform local emergency-preparedness plans, including safe evacuation routes and gathering points. In addition, SC/US replenished pre-positioned emergency relief commodity stocks in warehouses in six provinces.
- Rapid-onset disasters pose a continuous threat to communities throughout the eastern highlands of Afghanistan, while local individuals often lack the skills and resources needed to prepare for such disasters. Accordingly, USAID/OFDA is increasing the capacity of local communities and organizations to prepare for and respond to rapid-onset disasters and other acute humanitarian needs in high-risk and insecure regions of eastern Afghanistan through \$1.5 million in assistance to the International Medical Corps (IMC). Capacity-building activities include development of hazard reduction plans and training in rapid needs assessments and disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response.
- Effective disaster management coordination is still hindered in Afghanistan by a lack of information and appropriate data available to responders. USAID/OFDA provided the Aga Khan Foundation with more than \$150,000 for activities to enhance coordination and information sharing to improve DRR programming and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Activities also aimed to improve the effectiveness of response to emergencies by establishing stockpiles of essential emergency relief supplies in highly hazard prone areas.
- Through June 2011, IOM, with funding from USAID/OFDA provided prior to FY 2011, continued to enhance coordination and build local governments' emergency response capacity throughout Afghanistan through technical and material assistance. In addition, IOM provided immediate winterization assistance to individuals internally displaced or otherwise affected by natural disasters, including children and the elderly, through the provision of emergency supplies, including tarpaulins, sandbags, soap, plastic buckets, cooking utensils, winter clothing, basic construction tools, and seeds.

**USAID/OFDA DRR FUNDING IN EMCA IN FY 2011<sup>1</sup>**

<b>USAID/OFDA STAND-ALONE DRR FUNDING IN EMCA</b>					
<b>Country /Region</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Total</b>
Balkans	Seismic Hazard Mapping	Natural and Technological Risks	USGS	\$198,770	\$700,000
	Flash Flood Guidance System	Natural and Technological Risks	WMO	\$501,230	
Central Asia	Reducing the Vulnerability of Children	Natural and Technological Risks	UNICEF	\$1,059,251	\$1,501,200
	Earthquake Risk Reduction	Natural and Technological Risks	USGS	\$227,370	
	Strengthening Regional DRR Coordination	Natural and Technological Risks	OCHA	\$214,579	
Iraq	Enhancing Capacity of Duty Bearers to Respond to Emergencies	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	DRC	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA STAND-ALONE DRR FUNDING IN EMCA</b>					<b>\$3,201,200</b>
<b>USAID/OFDA PROGRAMS THAT INTEGRATE DRR WITH DISASTER RESPONSE IN EMCA<sup>2</sup></b>					
<b>Country</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Total</b>
Afghanistan	Complex Emergency Response	Natural and Technological Risks	IMC	\$1,500,000	\$17,213,889
		Logistics and Relief Supplies	IOM	\$4,999,733	
		ERMS, Logistics and Relief Supplies, Natural and Technological Risks, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	IRC	\$8,572,948	
		Logistics and Relief Supplies, Natural and Technological Risks, Protection	SC/US	\$2,141,208	
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA INTEGRATED FUNDING IN EMCA</b>					<b>\$17,213,889</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA DRR FUNDING IN EMCA IN FY 2011</b>					<b>\$20,415,089</b>

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