Cyclical drought, food insecurity, cyclones, floods, disease outbreaks, and complex emergencies present significant challenges to vulnerable populations throughout the Southern Africa region. Between FY 2006 and FY 2015, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) provided humanitarian assistance in response to a diverse range of natural and manmade disasters, including floods, droughts, and food insecurity throughout Southern Africa; cyclones in Madagascar and Mozambique; complex emergencies in Comoros, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe; disease outbreaks in Angola, Botswana, and Zimbabwe; locust outbreaks in Madagascar; refugee returns in Angola; and earthquakes in Comoros and Malawi.

Between FY 2006 and FY 2015, USAID provided nearly $1.1 billion to assist disaster-affected populations in Southern Africa. The total comprises more than $938 million from USAID/FFP for food assistance in the form of U.S.-purchased food, locally and/or regionally purchased food, cash transfers for food, food vouchers, and related activities, as well as nearly $138 million from USAID/OFDA for interventions in agriculture and food security, economic recovery and market systems (ERMS), health, humanitarian coordination and information management, logistics support and relief commodities, nutrition, protection, shelter and settlements, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH).
In the last decade, USAID deployed multiple humanitarian assessment and response teams to the region, including a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) for the 2008/2009 cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe.

In Southern Africa, USAID/OFDA disaster response activities frequently focus on providing emergency relief supplies, such as plastic sheeting and water containers; supporting agriculture and food security activities, such as distribution of seeds and other farming inputs; and implementing WASH interventions, including hygiene awareness campaigns. USAID/FFP emergency assistance aims to reduce food and nutrition insecurity. During the past 10 years, USAID/FFP response activities have included in-kind food and cash-based assistance to increase household purchasing power, improve dietary diversity, and bolster local markets for drought- and flood-affected communities in Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.

USAID/OFDA has employed a Southern Africa regional disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy since FY 2009 to promote activities that help reduce the vulnerability of at-risk populations to climate-induced disasters and increase their resilience to future shocks. USAID/OFDA-supported DRR activities include supporting early warning systems, strengthening agricultural livelihoods, training search-and-rescue teams, promoting DRR within education and research programs, and addressing sanitation conditions and other environmental health concerns.

USAID/FFP also provides development food assistance to address the underlying causes of food insecurity. In countries vulnerable to crises—such as the 2003–2007 successive droughts in the region that reduced families’ ability to cope with shocks due to crop failure—USAID/FFP seeks to build resilience by reducing chronic malnutrition among children younger than five years of age and pregnant and lactating women, improving agricultural productivity, and expanding and diversifying household income and assets.

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1 FY 2015 figures represent committed or obligated amounts as of September 30, 2015. FY 2015 figures are subject to fluctuation due to end-of-fiscal-year financial review and reconciliation activities. Figures do not include USAID/OFDA disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance provided outside of declared disaster responses or USAID/FFP development assistance.

2 Countries categorized as “Other” have each received less than $2 million cumulatively from USAID/OFDA over the past 10 years and include Botswana, Comoros, South Africa, and Swaziland.

3 Between 2003 and 2007, USAID/FFP provided in-kind food assistance to Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe as part of the response to the Southern Africa Food Insecurity Crisis.

4 Chart does not include disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance, administrative support costs, or funding that cannot be categorized by sector due to changes to the USAID/OFDA accounting system that occurred during the decade covered by this document.