

Regional Snapshot

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA | FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2014



REGIONAL SUMMARY¹

USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) is responding to humanitarian needs in countries in East and Central Africa (ECA)² that are experiencing complex emergencies characterized by widespread violence and internal displacement, as well as helping countries to address chronic or recurrent challenges, including acute food insecurity, cyclical drought, floods, disease outbreaks, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, and limited government capacity.

RECENT HUMANITARIAN EVENTS IN THE REGION

- Since large-scale fighting erupted in South Sudan in mid-December 2013, violence and food insecurity have displaced more than 1.8 million people, including more than 1.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). South Sudan faces the worst food insecurity crisis in the world, with more than 7.3 million food-insecure people.
- In CAR, conflict between militants associated with the former Séléka alliance and anti-Balaka groups escalated in December 2013, exacerbating a volatile situation initiated a year earlier when the Séléka alliance commenced a campaign to oust then-President François Bozizé. Fighting among armed groups and attacks against civilians persist, resulting in an estimated 500,000 IDPs in CAR and more than 415,000 Central African refugees displaced to neighboring countries.
- Persistent violence, restricted humanitarian access, poor infrastructure, forced recruitment into armed groups, and reduced access to agricultural land and traditional markets have contributed to the deterioration of humanitarian conditions in DRC, where approximately 2.6 million individuals are displaced.
- In Kenya, drought conditions have resulted in deteriorating food security and nutritional status in northern counties and in the capital city of Nairobi. The number of people in need of food assistance increased by 15 percent between January and August 2014, from nearly 1.3 million to at least 1.5 million people.
- Below-average rainfall and resulting water shortages in eastern Ethiopia are contributing to a deteriorating food security and nutrition situation; approximately 2.7 million people in Ethiopia require food assistance in 2014.
- In Somalia, negative effects of persistent conflict, consistently impeded humanitarian access, and below-average main *gu* harvest will likely increase the number of people experiencing Crisis—IPC 3—levels of food insecurity from 857,000 people to more than 1 million by the end of 2014.³
- Violence and shrinking humanitarian space have resulted in increased humanitarian needs in Sudan, where approximately 6.9 million people require relief assistance. Both 2013 and 2014 saw an increasing and alarming trend of new conflict displacements—primarily in the Darfur region and Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states—from inter-communal clashes and conflict between rebel groups and the Sudanese Armed Forces and/or government-supported militias.

USAID/OFDA PRIORITIES FOR 2015

- USAID/OFDA will continue assisting populations in need throughout the Horn of Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, CAR, and the DRC, as well as respond to humanitarian needs stemming from Lord's Resistance Army-related violence and displacement. In

¹ For additional information on the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan, please see USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) fact sheets, available at <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis/where-we-work>.

² The ECA region encompasses the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, including Burundi, CAR, DRC, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda, as well as South Sudan and Sudan.

³ The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a standardized tool that aims to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5.

addition, USAID/OFDA will respond to new onset emergencies, such as landslides and flooding, where required. Across the region, USAID/OFDA maintains rapid response capacities, including through pre-positioned supplies, in order to provide timely and appropriate assistance for identified humanitarian needs.

- USAID/OFDA will continue to employ targeted disaster risk reduction strategies to strengthen household resilience to shocks that negatively affect food security, to improve the disaster response capacities of national and local government agencies, or build capacity of local relief organizations for future crises. ECA programs strive to enhance the resilience of affected households and communities and to lay the groundwork for more robust development programs where feasible and appropriate.
- In South Sudan, USAID/OFDA will continue to support robust response operations that mitigate the worst effects of the humanitarian crisis. Assistance will be focused on the most food-insecure populations, particularly in the conflict-affected states of Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile. USAID/OFDA will also maintain support for conflict-affected IDPs in accessible areas of South Sudan, including protection of civilian sites in U.N. Mission in the Republic of South Sudan compounds.
- In CAR, USAID/OFDA will continue to address urgent humanitarian needs resulting from conflict, bolster humanitarian infrastructure for effective countrywide operations, and support early recovery activities where conditions allow.
- In the Horn of Africa, including Somalia and Ethiopia, USAID/OFDA will continue to respond to emergency needs by strengthening families' ability to purchase food available in local markets and implementing multi-sector health, nutrition, and water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions. Concurrently, USAID/OFDA will contribute to larger USAID investments that help increase the resilience of households and communities to future shocks and address the underlying causes of chronic vulnerability and recurrent crisis.
- USAID/OFDA will continue to support flexible programs in the DRC that enable humanitarian agencies to reach displaced individuals quickly with targeted assistance. In the limited areas with improved security, USAID/OFDA will facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced people and help them return to pre-conflict levels of food security.
- In Sudan, USAID/OFDA will focus support on addressing acute needs as a result of violence and displacement in Darfur, particularly assistance for vulnerable IDPs in camps.

CHALLENGES

- Insecurity, access restrictions, and attacks targeting humanitarian workers and assets continue to impede the delivery of assistance to vulnerable populations in ECA.
- The persistent nature of many chronic challenges will continue to overwhelm many vulnerable populations, who will require humanitarian assistance for their basic needs.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED IN 2014

- In 2014, two of the world's four U.N.-declared Level 3 emergencies were in ECA. The international community struggled to meet the immense needs in CAR and South Sudan in a manner that would not significantly impair ongoing relief operations in other countries. Sustained funding for crises in ECA is critical to avert deterioration in acute emergencies and mitigate loss of gains achieved in building resiliency in more stable areas.
- Flexible, rapid, and targeted response capacity helps address urgent humanitarian needs and saves lives. USAID/OFDA-funded rapid response programs were able to provide critical capacity in several ECA countries, including in South Sudan, CAR, and DRC, where timely responses to sudden population movements and spikes in acute needs proved crucial to saving lives.
- Working with key stakeholders, including U.S. Government interagency partners and other donors, is critical to optimizing resources and ensuring sustainability of programs. Efforts to support holistic programming that address a range of needs—conducted in collaboration with USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), USAID missions, and USAID's Bureau for Africa—have proven both cost- and program-effective in countries throughout ECA. For example, in Ethiopia, USAID/OFDA continues to work with USAID/Ethiopia to sequence, layer, and integrate humanitarian assistance with development work to increase community resilience to climate-related shocks and disasters while improving long-term climate-change adaptive capacities in drought-prone areas.
- Market-based approaches can help reduce the international humanitarian footprint while meeting beneficiary needs in insecure environments. In Somalia, USAID/OFDA supported market-based interventions and developed innovative, flexible approaches to ensure that vulnerable households in insecure, access-restricted areas had access to food. Informed by market and food security data, these activities helped reinforce local markets and restore the dignity of vulnerable individuals by empowering them to purchase food and other items based on their needs and preferences.