

Agriculture and Food Security Sector Update

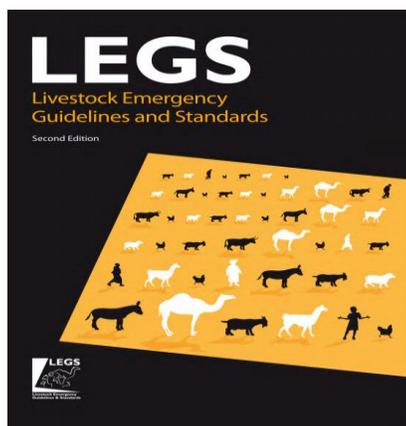
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SECTOR OVERVIEW

Drought, floods, insect infestations, and other natural disasters can destroy crops and kill livestock, while conflict often prevents farmers from planting and harvesting crops and tending to animals, impacting the food security and livelihoods of affected populations. USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) supports agriculture and food security interventions that address the immediate needs of disaster-affected populations unable to meet their basic food requirements or carry out livelihood activities. USAID/OFDA also works to strengthen local disaster response capacity and increase community resilience to shocks that could negatively affect agricultural activities and food security.

In the aftermath of disasters, USAID/OFDA projects assist farmers in rehabilitating agricultural infrastructure and facilitate economic recovery by supporting agriculture-based livelihood activities. USAID/OFDA-funded programs also benefit livestock and fisheries, implement pest control initiatives, support animal health endeavors, and supply agricultural inputs to vulnerable households. In FY 2015, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$81.3 million to UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to support agriculture and food security activities in 27 countries, as well as regional programs throughout Africa and South America.

SAFEGUARDING LIVESTOCK AND LIVELIHOODS THROUGH BEST-PRACTICES



In FY 2015, USAID/OFDA supported a livestock event focused on the launch of the second edition of the LEGS handbook.

Natural and manmade disasters can disrupt and devastate businesses and households that rely on livestock as a means of income and sustenance. Sharing best practices based on evidence can enhance responses to such events and lay the groundwork for longer-term development. In FY 2015, USAID/OFDA supported the second edition of the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) handbook and multiple events that promoted the handbook's launch. The events also included information on livestock rearing and brought together participants from around the world, including UN and government officials and partner NGOs.

The LEGS handbook provides international guidelines and standards for designing, implementing, and evaluating livestock interventions to help people affected by humanitarian crises. Specifically, the handbook helps identify the most appropriate livestock interventions during emergencies and provides standards, key actions, and guidance for these interventions based on best-practice. The second edition of the handbook incorporates worldwide best practices in livestock interventions utilizing

participatory, evidence-based approaches, including updated information on animal welfare, gender, climate change, and cash transfer and voucher usage.

The second edition of the LEGS handbook is available in Arabic, English, and French and can be accessed online by visiting <http://agrilinks.org/events/safeguarding-livestock-and-livelihoods>.

IMPROVING SEED-BASED INTERVENTIONS THROUGH DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

In the wake of disasters that impact agriculture, the provision of agricultural inputs, particularly seeds, are the most common intervention organizations implement. Given the importance of seed-based programs, USAID/OFDA continued to support Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in FY 2015 to evaluate current seed-based practices in the field, alleviate recurring technical challenges to those practices, and improve the design and management of seed-based interventions. In particular, the program encouraged more rigorous analysis of seed-based interventions and disseminated the findings for improved seed security response options, targeting farmers in emergency, chronic stress, and development contexts.

The program also developed a decision-tree guide to assist practitioners to link a seed security problem with the best response given the context. CRS also disseminated practical advice on evolving seed response options through webinars and held a global meeting on decentralized seed systems. In particular, the meeting included discussions on community-based seed production, farmer cooperatives, and women's agro-enterprise groups and identified the sustainability, profitability, and scalability of each option.

PROTECTING FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS THROUGH ARMYWORM MONITORING



Farmer forecasters in Tanzania explain the benefits of the CBAMFEW project to their communities and the usefulness of the pheromone traps and rain gauges in monitoring and forecasting AAW. Photo by Yeneneh Belayneh/USAID.

Armyworms feed on a variety of plants, particularly maize, sorghum, *teff*, barley, rice, wheat, millet, sugarcane, and pasture and can threaten food security and livelihoods of vulnerable populations due to reduced crop yields and incomes. In FY 2015, USAID/OFDA continued supporting the community-based armyworm monitoring, forecasting, and early warning (CBAMFEW) project, which improved farmers' knowledge and ability to identify, monitor, and report the pest in rural Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania.

Throughout some 300 armyworm monitoring sites where the USAID/OFDA-funded project installed pheromone traps and rain gauges, farmers were able to collect and share information on armyworm and rainfall with fellow farmers, local communities, and national authorities to help plan and implement preventive control interventions. USAID/OFDA-supported innovative mobile phone-based data collection and management technology significantly improved collection,

management, and dissemination of armyworm information. USAID/OFDA also supported multiple trainings, meetings, and workshops at the village, district, and national levels on CBAMFEW.

Based on the information received through the CABMFEW project, USAID/OFDA staff developed a multi-layered data map for all three countries that participated in the project. The maps are dynamic, web-based, and printable and include monitoring sites, cropping patterns, and information on local population, rainfall, and infrastructure. USAID/OFDA is continuously improving the maps with additional data layers. To view the map visit <http://bit.ly/1C782Mk>.

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USAID/OFDA information products are available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis>