

USAID/OFDA SAFETY AND SECURITY SECTOR UPDATE – OCTOBER 2011

SAFETY AND SECURITY OVERVIEW

USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) staff and relief agency partners frequently operate in areas that present security challenges. As a result, USAID/OFDA works to enhance the safety and security of the humanitarian community through outreach and dialogue with implementing partners and the donor community. USAID/OFDA's Safety and Security Unit strengthens policies that affect safety and security, as well as directly supports USAID/OFDA staff in the field by providing real-time analysis and guidance on security matters. In addition, USAID/OFDA invests in research on innovative solutions to pervasive and long-standing humanitarian security challenges, including coordination and information exchange among relief agencies. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 and FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$920,000 for activities that improved operational security, facilitated coordination and information management, promoted best practices, and built a better understanding of the humanitarian security landscape. In addition, during FY 2010 and FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided approximately \$2 million to the U.N. Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) to support the organization's response to complex emergencies in Ethiopia, Libya, and Sudan.

DEVELOPING SECURITY MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

For many years, the acceptance approach to humanitarian security—which calls for building effective relationships and obtaining consent from beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance, local authorities, belligerents, and other stakeholders—has been the primary means of humanitarian security management. However, a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of the acceptance approach had not been undertaken prior to 2010. In FY 2010, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$380,000 to Save the Children (SC) to research how humanitarian organizations define and maintain acceptance in the field, identify circumstances in which the acceptance approach may be effective, and promote a better understanding of acceptance as a humanitarian security management approach. SC conducted interviews with security managers from international non-governmental organizations (NGO) and NGO staff working in several countries. Based on the results of the study, SC plans to develop a tool kit to guide managers in assessing and monitoring their humanitarian organizations' levels of acceptance in the field.

COLLECTING AND DISSEMINATING HUMANITARIAN SECURITY INCIDENT DATA

Prior to 2010, the humanitarian assistance community lacked a global platform for reporting, tracking, and analyzing attacks against relief workers, despite attention to the increasing levels of violence against humanitarian workers. In response, USAID/OFDA obligated approximately \$150,000 to Humanitarian Outcomes, an NGO, to help create and maintain the Aid Worker Security Database (www.aidworkersecurity.org), which records major incidents of violence against aid workers from 1997 through the present. The data are accessible to the humanitarian community.

CONTRIBUTING TO GLOBAL PARTNERS' ONGOING WORK

During the past two years, USAID/OFDA has continued to support safety and security research and training initiatives. Between FY 2010 and FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$180,000 to the European Interagency Security Forum (EISF), a group of security managers from 50 humanitarian agencies that seeks to improve the safety and security of relief agency staff and enable safe operations throughout the humanitarian community. USAID/OFDA funding includes support for EISF's daily operations, semi-annual forums, research, information management, and training.

In FY 2010, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$65,000 to support the revision of the *Good Practice Review on Operational Security Management*, published by the Overseas Development Institute. The revised edition includes emerging trends in threats to the humanitarian community and highlights the latest research on operational security strategies and risk management. USAID/OFDA safety and security officers contributed to the technical review of the new edition.

In addition, USAID/OFDA funds safety and security activities through InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based NGOs that focus on disaster relief and sustainable development. In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA contributed \$150,000 to InterAction's ongoing efforts to convene NGO security managers, as well as train and provide technical guidance on safety and security practices to NGO staff.

CONTINUED SUPPORT TO UNDSS

Ongoing complex emergencies in Ethiopia and Sudan and the complex emergency that began in Libya in 2011 present safety and security challenges to humanitarian workers. USAID/OFDA's overall response to the complex emergencies has included support to UNDSS to help ensure the well-being of U.N. and NGO humanitarian staff on the ground.

- USAID/OFDA funding in FY 2010 and FY 2011 of \$750,000 for UNDSS in Ethiopia enabled UNDSS to conduct security assessments, provide training and briefings to staff, and enhance collaboration with NGO partners.
- USAID/OFDA funding of \$350,000 in FY 2011 helped UNDSS establish a security risk management system, promoting effective and efficient U.N. activities in Tunisia and Libya.
- In FY 2011, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1 million to UNDSS for the deployment of security personnel to Darfur to support the delivery of humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected populations.

WORKSHOPS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

In July 2010 and July 2011, USAID/OFDA conducted the fifth and sixth annual Consultation on NGO Operational Security. These consultations provided an open forum for security staff from USAID/OFDA's NGO partners to discuss operational security concerns with USAID/OFDA's Safety and Security Unit. These events help USAID/OFDA assess the relevance and efficacy of ongoing efforts to address safety and security issues.

In November 2010, USAID/OFDA led the formation of a Safety and Security in Humanitarian Action working group within the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative. The working group attempts to raise awareness within the donor community concerning new developments and concerns in the security sector; improve consistency and coherence in donor policies and practices; and ensure that organizations implementing humanitarian programs have predictable access to funding for security.

In September 2011, USAID/OFDA's Safety and Security Unit held an inaugural consultation with EISF members regarding ways to better address ongoing security challenges facing the humanitarian community. In October 2011, members of USAID/OFDA's Safety and Security Unit participated in a panel discussion at the second Saving Lives Together Conference, which brought together representatives of the U.N. and international NGOs in an effort to improve collaboration on security in the field.

USAID/OFDA CONTACTS

Shawn Bardwell, Safety and Security Coordinator, (202) 712-4181, sbardwell@usaid.gov
Joshua Kearns, Safety and Security Specialist, (202) 712-1425, jkearns@usaid.gov