

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2018

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AND RELIEF COMMODITIES SECTOR UPDATE



With USAID/OFDA funding, UNICEF transported nearly 7.5 million OFDA-procured water treatment tablets to support conflict-affected populations in Yemen. Photo courtesy of AL-BASHA/AFP.

Delivering Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in Yemen

In 2018, ongoing conflict between Al Houthi forces and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia-led Coalition, coupled with deteriorating economic conditions and high food and fuel prices, continued to exacerbate humanitarian needs across Yemen. As the conflict enters its fourth year, more than 22 million people—approximately 75 percent of the country’s population—require humanitarian assistance, including an estimated 8.4 million people in need of emergency food assistance. In addition, a resurgent cholera epidemic resulted in nearly 79,500 suspected cholera cases between July 15 and September 22 and an increased need for health, nutrition, and water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance. In April, due to sustained acute humanitarian need, UN Secretary-General António Guterres declared Yemen the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

In response, USAID/OFDA supports humanitarian partners to identify needs and assist conflict-affected populations in Yemen. In FY 2018, USAID/OFDA provided NGO and UN partners with nearly \$4.7 million to procure, pre-position, and distribute relief commodities and provide humanitarian logistics support in the country. Logistics in Yemen are especially challenging due to complex geographic, political, and security conditions.

The majority of Yemen’s commerce and relief commodities enter the country through Al Hudaydah Port, which was severely damaged by airstrikes in 2015.

USAID/OFDA Logistics Support

FY 2018 FUNDING

Standalone Global and Regional Logistics Support Programs	\$3,641,242
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Logistics Support Interventions Worldwide	\$92,728,283
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\$96,369,525¹

Sector Overview

As part of its effort to ensure rapid responses to humanitarian emergencies around the world, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) stores emergency relief supplies, such as blankets, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, plastic sheeting, and water containers, at warehouses in Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Miami, United States; Pisa, Italy; and Subang, Malaysia.

In addition, USAID/OFDA deploys logistics personnel to assist with U.S. Government responses when a disaster strikes. With support from colleagues in Washington, D.C., deployed logistics staff manage the transport and consignment of relief commodities to USAID/OFDA partners operating in disaster-affected areas. USAID/OFDA’s Logistics Unit also provides technical assistance to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies, and host government counterparts in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and supports disaster risk reduction efforts to mitigate the impact of future disasters.

¹ USAID/OFDA FY 2018 logistics funding supported activities in more than 25 countries, including activities in the Central African Republic, Iraq, and South Sudan.

Temporary port closures and restrictions beginning in November 2017 compounded the humanitarian impact of ongoing conflict by limiting humanitarian access to the port, further straining the country's economy, worsening food security conditions, and creating additional reliance on humanitarian assistance. In January, staff from the USAID/OFDA Logistics Unit supported the transport of four mobile cranes on a UN World Food Program-chartered vessel to bolster the port's capacity and increase the flow of life-saving commodities to conflict-affected populations. The USAID-funded cranes can increase processing capacity of the port by nearly 160,000 metric tons (MT) per month—representing a nearly 50 percent increase in the port's capacity following the 2015 airstrikes—and decrease unloading time for commodities from seven to three days.

USAID/OFDA also delivered life-saving assistance to individuals affected by Yemen's resurgent cholera epidemic—the largest cholera epidemic ever documented. In response to the outbreak, the USAID/OFDA Logistics Unit designed a supply chain to address a severe shortage of cholera treatment supplies within Yemen. USAID/OFDA partners transported nearly 7.5 million water treatment tablets and more than 1,720 MT of medical commodities, including intravenous fluids and oral rehydration salt packets to support more than 1.6 million cases, via overland routes from the USAID/OFDA warehouse in Dubai to USAID/OFDA partners the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Organization for Migration in Yemen. Despite bureaucratic and operational challenges, the USAID/OFDA-designed supply chain helped partners deliver life-saving assistance by incorporating measures to minimize port clearance delays and safeguard supplies. For example, the medical commodities required storage at particular temperatures, necessitating the use of temperature controlled trucks to transport the commodities.

Stockpiling Personal Protective Equipment to Improve Partner Readiness for Health Emergencies

The high level of human-to-human disease transmission during the 2014 West Africa Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak, which resulted in nearly 29,000 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases and more than 11,300 related deaths, highlighted the need to improve prevention and control measures, including for health care staff providing life-saving assistance during pandemic health emergencies. To further this goal, the USAID/OFDA Logistics Unit is leading efforts to procure and stockpile Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that can slow or prevent the transmission of EVD and other infectious diseases. In FY 2018, USAID/OFDA procured and pre-positioned more than 31 categories of essential PPE items at the USAID/OFDA warehouse in Dubai, including 900,000 examination gloves, 240,000 protective face masks, 90,000 boot covers, 60,000 coveralls, and 6,300 disinfectant sprayers. Pre-positioning PPE supplies will enable USAID/OFDA to efficiently transport the equipment to partners during future infectious disease outbreaks to prevent and control transmission in affected areas.

Developing Vehicle Fleet Management Capacity in Disaster-Prone Countries

In FY 2018, USAID/OFDA provided Fleet Forum—an association of more than 40 academic institutions, corporate partners, donors, NGOs, international organizations, and UN agencies—with more than \$360,000 to conduct trainings for staff responsible for overseeing vehicle fleet operations in disaster-prone countries. Fleet Forum works with disaster response organizations to educate and train staff on fleet management operations in emergency situations. With the USAID/OFDA funding, Fleet Forum conducted trainings for more than 100 USAID/OFDA partner staff working in nearly 20 disaster-prone countries throughout the world. In addition to increasing the fleet management operation capacity for participating staff, Fleet Forum certified three USAID/OFDA partner staff members in East Africa and the Middle East to conduct fleet management trainings.

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