USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2018

PROTECTION SECTOR UPDATE

A woman takes part in the integrated humanitarian assistance project facilitated by USAID/OFDA partner FHI 360. Photo courtesy of FHI 360.

Supporting Child and Adolescent Survivors of GBV

Humanitarian emergencies can weaken or disrupt protective systems—such as community structures and social networks—amplifying risks and vulnerabilities and exacerbating the occurrence of gender-based violence (GBV), particularly for women, adolescent girls, and children. To improve the quality of, and access to, life-saving services for child and adolescent survivors of sexual abuse in emergencies, and to better coordinate response mechanisms to provide timely, effective, and critical interventions, USAID/OFDA is supporting the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) to pilot the Child Survivor Initiative in Burma, Iraq, Niger, and Sudan. With technical support from UNICEF and the global Child Protection and GBV Areas of Responsibility, key service providers are working together to document gaps, identify response best practices, and provide feedback on global minimum protection standards. UNICEF and its partners are also facilitating a global child protection and GBV community of practice to promote knowledge sharing and improve country-level service delivery and coordination for child and adolescent survivors of sexual abuse. Ultimately, UNICEF aims to enhance practitioners' knowledge of how to respond to child and adolescent survivors of sexual abuse; refine and operationalize guidelines and resources for country- and global-level coordination; and hold protection actors to a higher standard of quality and access to services for child and adolescent GBV survivors.

USAID/OFDA Protection Activities
FY 2018 FUNDING

Standalone Global and Regional Protection Programs	$8,434,373
Protection Interventions Worldwide	$148,957,129

$157,391,502[1]

Sector Overview

Natural disasters and conflict often exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals. People must cope with threats such as sexual violence, violence in the home, separation of families, exploitative labor, and exclusion from life-saving humanitarian assistance. USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) is at the forefront of the humanitarian community's efforts to protect and support conflict- and disaster-affected communities and mitigate these potential threats. While working to minimize and respond to specific risks, USAID/OFDA requires partners to demonstrate their commitment to ensuring the safety of those receiving emergency assistance across all sectors of a response and in all relief programs.

[1] All USAID/OFDA programs include protection mainstreaming components. USAID/OFDA funding supported humanitarian protection activities in 25 countries in FY 2018, including Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen.

Engaging Local Women's Groups in Humanitarian Protection Programming

Women and girls face a wide range of protection risks in humanitarian emergencies, yet what protection means to them, as beneficiaries and local service providers, is frequently overlooked. Supported by USAID/OFDA, non-governmental organization (NGO) CARE is conducting a study to learn how local and national women's actors are involved in humanitarian protection activities and identify best practices on localized approaches to protection programming. A deeper understanding of how local and national women's actors are engaging in protection activities will provide more nuanced, context-specific information on the particular risks faced by women, leading to better quality, inclusive responses, led and driven by women as agents of change. CARE is consulting with protection actors in Malawi and Vanuatu to gather recommendations to improve protection programming and to develop a practical guide for the humanitarian community to more effectively engage local women in protection programming.

Advancing Collective Humanitarian Action for Adolescent Girls

Displaced adolescent girls face unique and often daunting risks. With limited assets and mobility, many girls cannot access life-saving information or resources, challenges that are compounded by a humanitarian model that does not always consider the unique circumstances and vulnerabilities of older children. To better address the needs of adolescent girls, USAID/OFDA supported the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) to develop the *I'm Here* resource package, which enables NGOs and UN program staff to identify and map services for hard-to-reach adolescent girls and simultaneously assess their access to services; identify protection risks; and adjust programs to improve girls' access to humanitarian assistance and services. With additional USAID/OFDA support, WRC is operationalizing *I'm Here* by developing innovative real-time monitoring tools that will track and document girls' attendance and satisfaction with standalone protection programming; girls' access to and use of services delivered by other humanitarian sectors; and how the programming changes girls' protective assets. In addition to generating a visual map of existing services, the data will inform an interactive online dashboard that provides the humanitarian community with the ability to rapidly collate adolescent-specific information critical for referrals and program design and quickly produce outputs for context-specific, results-based decision making.

Assisting Adolescents in Emergencies to Cope With Distress

Experiencing humanitarian emergencies can significantly affect the psychological and social well-being and development of children. To address these needs, USAID/OFDA supported the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to develop a toolkit to bolster humanitarian capacity to provide children with psychosocial support and improve their ability to cope with and heal from distress and exposure to violence. USAID/OFDA is now supporting the IRC to develop a complementary resource package, Supporting Adolescents and Their Families in Emergencies (SAFE), to help protection actors better equip adolescents in emergencies with positive coping strategies that are targeted to meet their developmental, educational, health, and livelihood needs. Through SAFE, the IRC is developing a set of evidence-based life skills to increase adolescents' health and safety and strengthen the capacity of humanitarian organizations to target adolescents in emergencies with family- and community-based mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS). The resource package identifies creative modalities and practical entry points for protection actors to provide MHPSS and strengthen life skills—including building positive relationships; coping with emotions and stress; and health and hygiene promotion—in adolescents during the initial phase of an emergency response. Through a responsive and adolescent-led approach to program design, this package will equip emergency responders to identify and mitigate adolescents' specific vulnerabilities while also enhancing their unique strengths and the protective factors in their environment. The IRC has commenced field testing the SAFE approach in Central African Republic and Nigeria, and is utilizing lessons learned to drive further resource development.

Improving Accountability to Affected Populations During Humanitarian Responses

The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit highlighted the critical need to include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives. As part of its commitment to this work, USAID/OFDA is supporting UNICEF—in partnership with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the International Federation Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Communicating With Disaster-Affected Communities Network—to lead the Communication and Community Engagement Initiative (CCEI) and ensure that accountability to affected populations is more systematically and sustainably integrated into humanitarian clusters and coordination mechanisms. Working on the international and national levels, the CCEI is improving affected communities' access to information and providing equitable opportunities for input and participation in decision-making processes. The initiative recently developed and tested a training package on accountability to affected populations to help humanitarian clusters integrate the mechanisms into the humanitarian programming cycle, and also sponsored a regional learning workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 2018.