



USAID'S BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

RESPONDING TO CRISES

Helping people affected by disasters and other humanitarian emergencies is at the core of what USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) does every day, all over the world. It reflects our values as Americans, demonstrates our global leadership, and makes the world a safer place.

BHA leads and coordinates the U.S. Government's disaster assistance efforts overseas. The Bureau responds to an average of 75 disasters in more than 70 countries every year, ensuring that aid reaches people affected by natural disasters, including hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanoes, as well as protracted crises, such as drought and conflict. We also support food insecure refugees fleeing war, violence, or persecution.

BHA has several hundred staff working from its Washington, D.C., headquarters and in more than 45 countries around the world. Its team of humanitarian professionals, policy advisors, and technical experts—including infectious disease specialists, nutritionists, logisticians, and hydrometeorological advisors—identify the most urgent humanitarian needs and work alongside local governments to assist tens of millions of people and save countless lives.

BHA's strategically located warehouses in the U.S.—in Miami and Houston—and overseas in Djibouti, Italy, Malaysia, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates are stocked with food and essential relief supplies, such as emergency shelter materials, warm blankets, water treatment systems, and hygiene kits. BHA also has the ability to charter trucks, boats, or aircraft to deliver these critical commodities rapidly to disaster-affected areas around the globe.

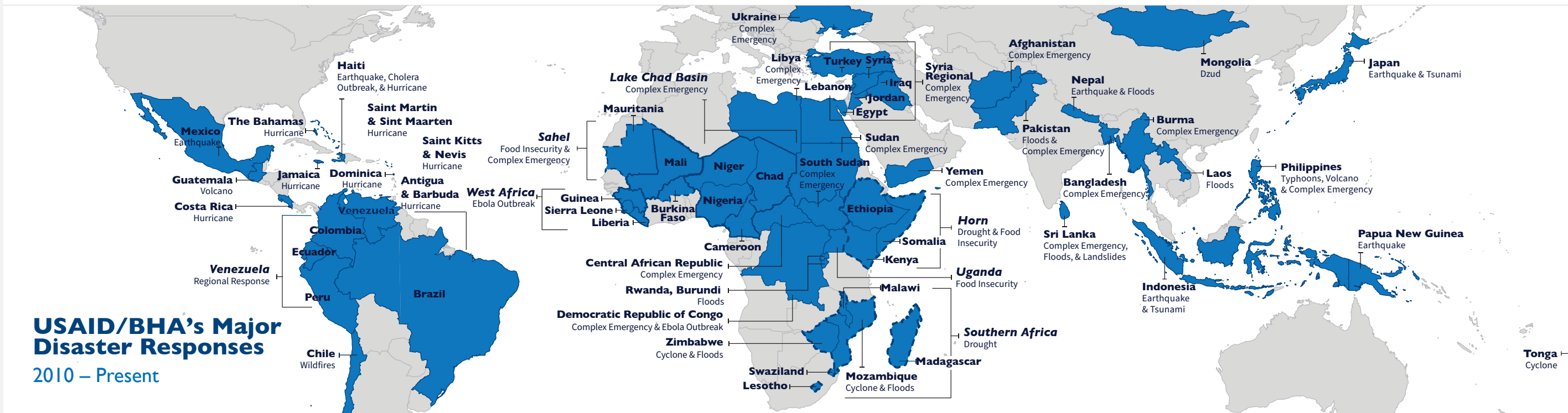
LONGER-TERM RECOVERY EFFORTS

BHA does more than respond to disasters. We help crisis-affected communities by building on our humanitarian responses and supporting **early recovery** efforts that restore and protect basic systems and services. We invest in **risk reduction** programs that prevent or reduce risks associated with chronic and recurrent hazards. We build the **resilience** of people, communities, countries, and systems by helping them mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a way that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE RESPONSE TEAMS

When the size or scope of a disaster requires it, BHA sends a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to crisis-affected areas. Deployable within hours of an emergency, this elite team of humanitarian experts and technical advisors is on the ground to assess the situation firsthand, identify the most urgent needs, and pull in other federal agencies if needed—all to coordinate an effective U.S. Government response. In addition, BHA has partnerships with internationally certified U.S.-based urban search and rescue teams, allowing for their swift deployment anywhere in the world.





USAID/BHA's Major Disaster Responses 2010 – Present

CRISIS RESPONSE AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

BHA is staffed by humanitarian and disaster response experts with vast regional and technical knowledge who continually monitor global hazards, provide guidance, and prioritize programs for support in a number of sectors, including:



Agriculture

The Bureau provides seeds, tools, livestock, and agriculture/livestock training to strengthen local agricultural activities and livelihoods. BHA also supports the implementation of pest management programs, the provision of veterinary medicine and supplies, and improved agriculture production and irrigation to assist farmers.



Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS)

Following a disaster, BHA economic recovery programs help in the longer-term rehabilitation of communities. They restore livelihoods, provide assets to support small businesses, create short-term employment opportunities, and provide cash or vouchers to enable families to buy food and household items—supporting local businesses.



Food Assistance

BHA works to alleviate hunger by providing in-kind food, food vouchers, and cash assistance that ensures households, including refugees, have adequate access to a sufficient quantity and quality of food without being forced to resort to negative coping strategies.



Health

BHA addresses major causes of illness and death by supporting primary care and mobile health facilities, providing pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, funding disease prevention and treatment activities, and supporting mental services as part of primary care.



Humanitarian Coordination, Info Mgmt, Assessments

BHA supports activities that enhance international and local coordination mechanisms and strengthen needs assessments and information management to ensure the timely and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.



Humanitarian Policy, Studies, Analysis, or Applications

BHA supports partners to improve the humanitarian community's collective understanding and acceptance of the norms and standards that guide effective, efficient, well-coordinated and accountable global humanitarian action.



Logistics

BHA responds quickly to disasters by coordinating the distribution of emergency food assistance and critical relief supplies, including plastic sheeting for emergency shelters, family hygiene kits, blankets, kitchen sets, and water purification equipment and containers.



Monitoring and Evaluation

BHA supports robust monitoring and evaluation of its programs and responses to ensure that assistance is reaching the most vulnerable efficiently and effectively. BHA integrates monitoring, evaluation, and learning into emergency response and disaster risk reduction programs to improve program quality and enhance accountability.



Natural and Technological Hazards

BHA works to strengthen the capacities of governments, as well as scientific and technical entities to help them prepare for, mitigate, and respond to natural disasters and technological hazards with the ultimate goal of saving lives.



Nutrition

We also prevent and treat acute malnutrition by providing nutritional supplements for children and mothers and by supporting infant/child feeding programs, nutrition education, and research to inform better emergency nutrition responses.



Protection

BHA prioritizes protection as a vital component of humanitarian assistance to mitigate threats faced by vulnerable populations such as gender-based violence, child and family separation, psychosocial distress, exploitation and abuse, and exclusion from life-saving aid.



Shelter and Settlements

BHA supports programs that provide safer, disaster-resistant living spaces and settlements where households can resume critical social and livelihoods activities following a disaster. These programs promote risk reduction activities to make shelter and settlements more resilient.

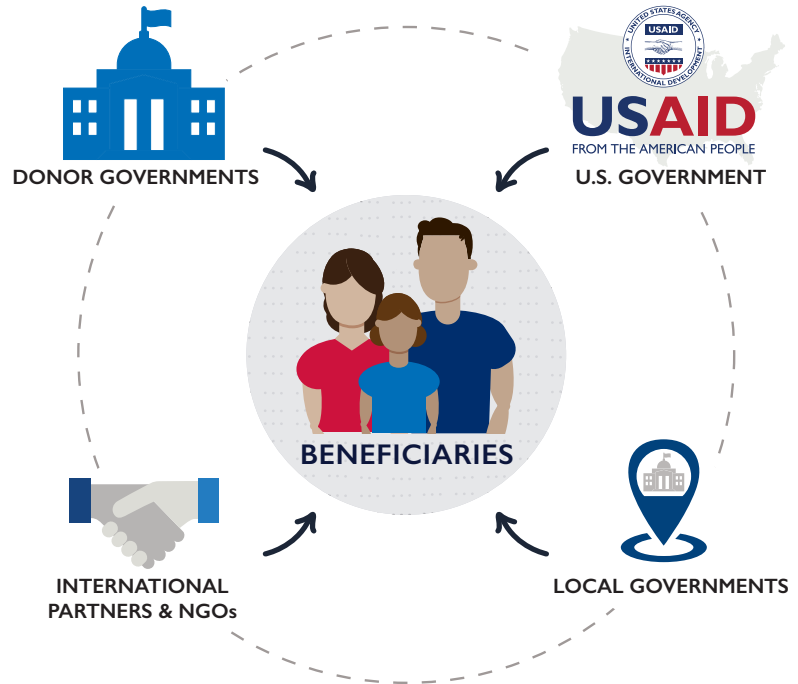


Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

BHA helps reduce morbidity/mortality associated with water- and sanitation-related diseases, as well as poor environmental conditions resulting from shocks or displacement. Programs include latrine construction, waste removal, hand-washing and sanitation education, and the provision of safe drinking water.

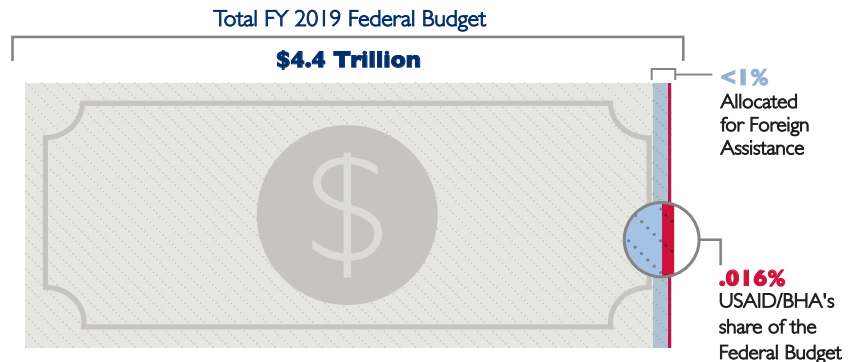
HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

BHA works strategically with international responders, international system actors, and other donor governments to maximize resources to save more lives. The Bureau taps into a vast international network of humanitarian partners through its funding of UN agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, and community organizations, as well as its engagement with donor governments, local governments, the private sector, and other entities. BHA can call on other U.S. government agencies to assist with response efforts, whenever needed.



FINANCIALS

Approximately one percent of America's federal budget is allocated for foreign assistance, and BHA's budget is a mere fraction of that. Humanitarian aid can mean the difference between life and death for tens of millions of people every year. In fiscal year 2019, USAID responded to 66 disasters in 57 countries, providing more than \$6 billion in humanitarian assistance. We also provided nearly \$362 million in development food assistance to 12 countries.



HISTORY OF BHA

BHA was established in 2020 to bring together USAID's Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP), enabling us to deliver life-saving aid more efficiently and effectively. BHA builds on more than half a century of experience beginning in the aftermath of World War II, when FFP was formed to reinforce peace and feed the hungry and continuing to the 1960s, when OFDA was created to help lead U.S. disaster assistance efforts overseas.



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