Protracted complex emergencies and natural disasters, including drought, earthquakes, floods, and wildfires, present significant challenges to vulnerable populations in Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia (EMCA). Between FY 2007 and FY 2016, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) provided assistance in response to a range of disasters, including floods, wildfires, winter emergencies, and complex crises. Examples include complex emergencies in Georgia, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen; earthquakes in Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkey; floods in Moldova, Montenegro, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia; and wildfires in Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, and Portugal.

Between FY 2007 and FY 2016, USAID provided nearly $5 billion for emergency response programs in the EMCA region. USAID/FFP assistance included nearly $2.8 billion for food assistance in the form of U.S. purchased food, locally and/or regionally purchased food, cash transfers for food, food vouchers, and related activities such as nutrition messaging, community asset building, and support for UN World Food Program special operations. USAID/OFDA assistance included more than $2.2 billion for agriculture and food security, health, livelihoods, nutrition, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions, as well as support for humanitarian coordination and logistics and the provision of relief commodities.

In the last decade, USAID responded to 88 disasters in EMCA. USAID also frequently deployed humanitarian teams to the region, including five Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). DARTs deployed to Georgia in FY 2008 and Libya in FY 2011 in response to complex emergencies. During FY 2011, a DART deployed to Israel in response to wildfires. Escalated conflict in Syria prompted USAID to stand up a DART in FY 2013, and a DART deployed to Iraq in the wake of deteriorating security that prompted significant population movement in FY 2014; both DARTs remained active throughout FY 2016. During the past ten years, USAID also activated multiple Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Teams to better facilitate DART coordination and response efforts.