In the past decade, chronic food insecurity and malnutrition, cyclical drought, locust infestations, seasonal floods, disease outbreaks, and recurrent complex emergencies have presented major challenges to vulnerable populations in the West Africa region. Between FY 2005 and FY 2014, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) have provided humanitarian assistance to lessen the impacts of a diverse range of crises, including food insecurity, malnutrition, high food prices, and locust infestations in the Sahel; complex emergencies in countries such as Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, and Nigeria; meningitis, cholera, measles, and Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreaks in multiple countries; and flooding throughout the region.

Between FY 2005 and FY 2014, USAID provided more than $1.8 billion in humanitarian assistance to West Africa, comprising nearly $1.5 billion from USAID/FFP 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 and more than $370 million from USAID/OFDA for agriculture and food security, economic recovery and market systems, health, nutrition, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions, as well as support for humanitarian coordination, logistics, and the provision of relief commodities.

Over the last decade, USAID has sent Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs) to the region—most recently in 2014 to Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea for the EVD outbreak and for food insecurity in the Sahel in 2005.

**Number of Disasters Declared in West Africa**

*By Type (FY 2005 – 2014)*

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USAID Disaster Response Funding to West Africa¹
(FY 2005 – 2014), in millions

USAID/OFDA also deployed multiple humanitarian assessment teams to the Sahelian countries in 2012 in response to food insecurity and to Côte d’Ivoire in 2011 following large-scale insecurity and displacement. USAID/OFDA disaster response activities in West Africa focus on meeting immediate needs while building resilience against future crises. To assist conflict-affected populations, USAID/OFDA supports the provision of emergency relief supplies and basic services, as well as protection activities. Following periods of below-average agricultural yields, droughts, and floods, USAID/OFDA programs aim to improve livestock health and crop production, strengthen management of acute malnutrition, support livelihood activities, and improve water and sanitation conditions.

In addition to short-term urgent assistance for vulnerable populations, USAID/OFDA supports national and regional structures to strengthen early warning and response systems. To complement emergency assistance interventions, USAID/OFDA’s West Africa disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy seeks to reduce the risks and effects of acute malnutrition, displacement, and epidemics through programs that decrease community and household fragility and increase resilience to future shocks.

Likewise, USAID/FFP supplements its emergency food aid with development food assistance, which aims to address the underlying causes of food insecurity and increase the resilience of vulnerable populations to cope with future shocks while continuing to meet the immediate needs of affected populations. In West Africa, USAID/FFP development food aid programs work with communities to improve agricultural productivity and natural resource management, reduce chronic malnutrition, and strengthen local capacity among civil society groups.

¹ FY 2014 rounded figures represent committed or obligated amounts as of September 30, 2014. FY 2014 figures are subject to fluctuation due to end-of-fiscal-year financial review and reconciliation activities. Figures do not include USAID/OFDA disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance provided outside of declared disaster responses or USAID/FFP development assistance.

* Countries and responses categorized as other have received less than $1.5 million cumulatively from USAID/OFDA over the past 10 years and include Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and Togo, as well as a regional locust emergency.

** Countries and responses categorized as other include Benin, The Gambia, and Senegal, as well as the regional EVD response.

+ Chart does not include disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance, administrative support costs, or funding that cannot be categorized by sector due to changes to the USAID/OFDA accounting system that occurred during the decade covered by this document.