

Logistics and Relief Commodities Sector Update

HIGHLIGHTS OF FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2014 ACTIVITIES | OCTOBER 2014

SECTOR OVERVIEW

As part of its efforts to ensure a rapid response to humanitarian emergencies around the world, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)—the lead U.S. Government office for international disaster response—stockpiles relief supplies at strategic global warehouses in Miami, Florida; Pisa, Italy; and Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Stockpiled humanitarian commodities include thermal blankets, plastic sheeting for emergency shelter, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, and water purification systems.



On August 24, the Ebola Disaster Assistance Response Team airlifted more than 16 tons of medical supplies and emergency equipment to Monrovia, Liberia, from USAID/OFDA's Dubai warehouse. (Carol Han/USAID)

In addition to facilitating the transport and storage of emergency relief commodities, USAID/OFDA deploys trained personnel when disaster strikes to directly assist in response efforts by managing commodity transport and consignment, with the support of the Washington, D.C.-based specialists. USAID/OFDA's Logistics Unit also provides technical assistance to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), U.N. agencies, and host government counterparts to respond to disasters, as well as to mitigate against the impact of future disasters.

In FY 2014, through grants and in-kind contributions to humanitarian partners, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$232 million for relief commodities and associated transport, as well as for other logistical support. This funding represents approximately 20 percent of the total humanitarian assistance USAID/OFDA provided globally during the fiscal year.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

USAID/OFDA stresses the implementation of thoughtful actions today in order to benefit disaster-affected populations of the future. In FY 2014, investments targeted the improvement of standards to increase the effectiveness of the humanitarian community actively engaged in disaster relief interventions.

Fritz Institute

Since 2006, USAID/OFDA has supported the Fritz Institute and its partner humanitarian organizations to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian logistics worldwide through its Humanitarian Logistics Certification Program. Designed using state-of-the-art logistics training from the commercial sector put into the humanitarian context, the program focuses on building essential skills in supply chain and logistics operations. Since the program's launch, more than 1,000 individuals working in 118 countries and representing more than 200 agencies—including U.N. agencies, national and international NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, governments, military, donors, academia, and private organizations—have benefitted from the logistics training received through the Fritz Institute.

In FY 2014, the USAID/OFDA scholarship program awarded 41 logisticians—focusing on front-line logisticians to whom certification as a humanitarian logistician may not otherwise be available—a full scholarship to participate in the training, bringing the total USAID/OFDA-awarded scholarships to more than 120 to date. The Fritz Institute is highly respected, recommended, and often required for logistics positions by leading actors in humanitarian assistance throughout the world;

USAID/OFDA's scholarship program therefore trains up a new cadre of qualified logisticians to respond to humanitarian disasters, while also opening up new opportunities for scholarship recipients.



In February, USAID/OFDA airlifted 67 tons of life-saving supplies to Juba, South Sudan, for distribution to South Sudanese people affected by the violence. (Photo Courtesy of U.S. Embassy Juba)

WFP Logistics Cluster

In FY 2014, USAID/OFDA continued to partner closely with the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), the lead agency for the Logistics Cluster—the coordinating body for humanitarian logistics activities, comprising U.N. agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders. The Logistics Cluster as a whole coordinates the sharing of key transport resources among humanitarian actors during a response, with WFP providing the assets to support transportation of emergency relief commodities as needed. By providing technical assistance to WFP as the Logistics Cluster lead, USAID/OFDA is also ensuring that funding provided to NGOs and other agencies in the sector reaches those most in need of assistance.

Following the mid-December 2013 outbreak of violence in South Sudan between government factions, a USAID/OFDA logistician performed an extended detail with WFP in South Sudan to support the rapid scaling up of humanitarian activities by humanitarian agencies and lead cluster activities.

OFDA FOCUSES ON RAPID RESPONSE TO MEET ACUTE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS



USAID/OFDA kitchen sets are offloaded in CAR for consignment and distribution to conflict-affected populations. (Photo Courtesy of UNICEF)

In FY 2014, USAID/OFDA deployed logisticians to support seven disasters in 10 countries; support included technical assistance and more than 50 shipments of emergency relief commodities.

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a U.N.-designated Level 3 emergency—the highest on a three-level scale. The response to the crisis in CAR demonstrates the ability of USAID/OFDA's Logistics Unit to quickly mobilize resources to respond to emergency needs.

Central African Republic

Security conditions in CAR deteriorated in December 2013, when clashes erupted between the ex-Séléka forces and anti-Balaka groups. The ensuing insecurity led to large-scale displacement and significant humanitarian needs. In response, USAID/OFDA airlifted emergency relief supplies to

CAR's capital city of Bangui, where commodities were consigned to the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, Catholic Relief Services, and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), which distributed the supplies to conflict-affected populations. In only a few weeks, six charter airlifts delivered 39,000 water containers and storage tanks, 48,000 blankets, 24,000 kitchen sets, 6,000 hygiene kits, and 1,430 rolls of plastic sheeting for emergency shelter needs. Valued at \$2 million plus transport, USAID/OFDA commodities helped to address the needs of approximately 120,000 people in need of assistance.

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