Chronic food insecurity and acute malnutrition, cyclical drought, pest infestations, seasonal floods, disease outbreaks, and recurrent complex emergencies presented major challenges to vulnerable populations in the West Africa region during the past decade. Between FY 2009 and FY 2018, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) provided humanitarian assistance to address the impacts of a diverse range of crises, including drought and widespread food insecurity and malnutrition in the Sahel; multiple complex emergencies, including the Lake Chad Basin; disease outbreaks, such as Ebola Virus Disease (EVD); and seasonal flooding throughout the region.

From FY 2009 to FY 2018, USAID provided nearly $3.9 billion to respond to disasters in West Africa. USAID/OFDA assistance included nearly $1.4 billion for programs in agriculture and food security; economic recovery and market systems; health; humanitarian coordination and information management; logistics support and relief commodities; nutrition; protection; and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). USAID/FFP support included approximately $2.4 billion for emergency food assistance, such as U.S. in-kind food aid, local and regional food procurement, cash transfers for food, and food vouchers. USAID/FFP’s funding also facilitated asset-building, livelihoods, nutrition, and agriculture activities, as well as food security early warning systems and analysis.

Over the last decade, USAID responded to 97 disasters in West Africa. From FY 2014 to FY 2016, USAID deployed regional Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs) in response to the West Africa EVD Outbreak and activated a Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team (RMT) to support coordination and response efforts. USAID also deployed a DART to Nigeria from FY 2017 through FY 2018 in response to the complex emergency and activated an RMT to support relief efforts across the Lake Chad Basin. In addition, USAID sent humanitarian assessment teams to Côte d’Ivoire and the Sahel in response to complex emergencies and food insecurity. In West Africa, USAID has focused on addressing immediate needs—such as food, basic relief items, health services, protection, and WASH assistance—while supporting recovery activities to build resilience against future crises, including conflict, drought, floods, below-average agricultural yields, and other shocks.