Recurrent floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, and seasonal typhoons present significant challenges to vulnerable populations in the East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) region. Some countries also face civil unrest and associated humanitarian impacts, as well as limited government capacity to respond to disasters. Between FY 2004 and FY 2013, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FPF) provided humanitarian assistance in response to a diverse range of natural and complex emergencies in the region, including cyclones or typhoons in Burma and the Philippines; earthquakes in China, Indonesia, and New Zealand; floods in Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam; tsunamis in Japan and Indonesia; a drought in the Marshall Islands; volcanic eruptions in Indonesia and the Philippines; and conflict in Burma and East Timor.

Between FY 2004 and FY 2013, USAID provided more than $298 million in disaster response assistance in the EAP region. USAID/OFDA assistance included nearly $153 million for programs in health, nutrition, protection, economic recovery and market systems (ERMS), shelter, agriculture and food security, humanitarian coordination, urban search-and-rescue (USAR), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), as well as support for logistics and provision of relief commodities. USAID/FPF assistance included nearly $146 million in emergency food aid.
In the last decade, USAID deployed multiple humanitarian response teams to the region, including seven Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A multi-country DART responded to the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Indonesia and Thailand. DARTs also deployed to Indonesia for earthquakes in FY 2006 and FY 2010, as well as to Burma after Cyclone Nargis in FY 2008. In FY 2011, DARTs deployed to New Zealand following an earthquake and to Japan in response to an earthquake and resulting tsunami and nuclear emergency. The most recent DART deployed in FY 2013 for a drought in the Marshall Islands. USAID also activated multiple Washington, D.C.,-based Response Management Teams to support DART coordination and response efforts.

Due to the recurrent nature of disasters in EAP, USAID/OFDA has developed a regional disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy to complement emergency assistance interventions and address the underlying causes of vulnerability, emphasizing building local capacity for disaster mitigation and response through activities tailored to each country’s context. DRR programs include flood management in Southeast Asia, volcano monitoring in Indonesia, and training for communities, local non-governmental organizations, first responders, and authorities throughout the region on how to better prepare for and respond to disasters.

Through emergency and development food assistance programs, USAID/FFP works to save lives in times of crisis and situations of chronic food insecurity. USAID/FFP emergency food assistance includes both in-kind food aid and cash-based assistance in the form of local and regional procurement of food commodities, cash transfers, and food vouchers, where market conditions allow.

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1 FY 2013 rounded figures represent committed or obligated amounts as of September 30, 2013. FY 2013 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.

2 USAID/OFDA allocated $13,279,074 in FY 2005 for tsunami-affected populations in Asia, with $6,639,537 allocated to EAP.

* EAP countries categorized as ‘Other’ have each received USAID/OFDA disaster assistance of less than $500,000 during the past 10 years, and include Malaysia, Mongolia, Palau, the Solomon Islands, South Korea, Taiwan, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

* Due to changes to the USAID/OFDA accounting system that occurred during the decade, this chart does not include disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance, administrative support costs, or funding not categorized by sector.