Recurrent drought, earthquakes, floods, tropical cyclones, volcanoes, and wildfires present significant challenges to vulnerable populations in the East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) region. Some countries also face armed conflict and civil unrest, as well as limited government capacity to respond to disasters. Between FY 2011 and FY 2020, USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) provided humanitarian assistance in response to a range of natural and complex emergencies in the region through the former Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) and Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA). Examples include the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic across the region; conflict in Burma and the Philippines; cyclones and typhoons in Burma, the Pacific Islands, the Philippines, and Vietnam; drought in the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Vietnam; earthquakes in Indonesia, Japan, and Papua New Guinea; floods in Burma, Cambodia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Japan, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam; volcanic activity in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vanuatu; wildfires in Australia and Indonesia; and winter emergencies in Mongolia.

USAID provided more than $474 million to respond to disasters in the EAP region between FY 2011 and FY 2020. USAID/BHA assistance included more than $174 million for emergency food assistance and nutrition support in the form of in-kind food aid, locally and regionally purchased food, cash transfers, food vouchers, infant and young child nutrition, and livelihood activities. USAID/BHA support also included more than $300 million for programs in agriculture; economic recovery and market systems; health; humanitarian coordination, and assessments; logistics support; natural hazards and technological risks; nutrition; protection; disaster risk reduction policy and practice; shelter and settlements; and water, sanitation, and hygiene, as well as search-and-rescue activities.

In the last decade, USAID responded to crises in 26 countries in EAP, including to 101 declared disasters. USAID frequently deployed humanitarian teams to the region, including four Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). USAID deployed DARTs to New Zealand following an earthquake in FY 2011; to Japan in response to an earthquake and resulting tsunami and nuclear emergency in FY 2011; to the Republic of the Marshall Islands in FY 2013 due to a drought; and to the Philippines in FY 2014 for Typhoon Haiyan. USAID also activated multiple Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Teams to support coordination and response efforts.