

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2019

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY SECTOR UPDATE



FAO Agricultural Input Officer Pauline Madete inspects seeds in Hargeisa, Somalia. In FY 2019, USAID/OFDA commissioned an e-learning tool to help inform seed distributions to farmers in the wake of disasters. Photo courtesy of FAO.

Global Coordination of Animal Health Emergency Response

Changes in agro-ecological conditions and increased cross-border movement of livestock and people have heightened the risk of animal disease transmission, threatening to disrupt livelihood activities, exacerbate food insecurity, and undermine public health.

With \$600,000 in FY 2019 USAID/OFDA support, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) continued its work to develop a global coordination strategy to respond to animal health emergencies of international concern (AHEICs), and to build response preparedness for these emergencies when they do occur. Incorporating input from the Food Security Cluster, UN World Health Organization (WHO), and other relevant stakeholders, the strategy will strengthen the capacity of partner organizations to work together and with host governments when responding to AHEICs.

FAO is also establishing an online platform to facilitate communication between animal health actors that respond to AHEICs.

Managing African Swine Fever Outbreaks in Southeast Asia

The spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) in Southeast Asia in recent years has

USAID/OFDA Agriculture and Food Security Activities

FY 2019 FUNDING

Standalone Global and Regional Agriculture and Food Security Programs	\$5,084,901
Agriculture and Food Security Interventions Worldwide	\$109,543,244

\$114,628,145¹

Sector Overview

Conflict and natural disasters, such as drought, floods, and insect infestations, can have critical impacts on the food security and livelihoods of affected populations. USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) supports agriculture and food security interventions that increase livelihood opportunities and address the basic food requirements of disaster-affected populations. USAID/OFDA also works to strengthen local disaster response capacity and increase community resilience to shocks that could negatively affect livelihoods and food security. In the aftermath of disasters, USAID/OFDA supports agricultural infrastructure rehabilitation and economic recovery by providing agriculture-based livelihood assistance. USAID/OFDA-funded programs also support animal health, livestock and fisheries, pest control initiatives, and provision of agricultural inputs to vulnerable households.

¹ USAID/OFDA FY 2019 agriculture and food security sector funding supported activities in 38 countries, including Burma, Kenya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen.

resulted in substantial losses of pigs on smallholder farms and commercial operations. Since scientists first detected the highly infectious, lethal disease in China in August 2018, ASF has spread to 12 countries in East and Southeast Asia, as well as India, resulting in economic losses and food insecurity, particularly among populations with lower incomes. The strain of the virus circulating in the region has a fatality rate of nearly 100 percent, and no vaccine for the disease exists.

To reduce the risk and vulnerability of households and communities threatened by ASF, USAID/OFDA provided \$875,000 to support an FAO-led DRR program for populations in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, four of the most affected countries in the region, in FY 2019. The program helps strengthen risk-based assessment, disease surveillance, disease response, and communication related to ASF, assisting national veterinarians to mitigate and manage the spread of the disease. In addition, efforts to raise awareness of ASF within communities support the prevention of outbreaks and ensure a timely response to suspected ASF cases at the field level.

Protecting Livestock During Volcanic Eruptions

Volcanic eruptions destroy grazing lands, fodder fields, water resources, and livestock housing, seriously affecting the health of animals and often resulting in numerous livestock deaths. As such, farmers and herders in the East Asia and Pacific region often cite the need to protect livestock as one of their primary reasons for remaining in place amid volcano evacuation orders, putting them at risk of death or injury during an emergency. However, public resources for safeguarding livestock during natural disasters are limited, restricting the ability of government and private stakeholders in the region to appropriately plan and respond to volcanic emergencies.

In FY 2019, USAID/OFDA provided \$600,000 to FAO to support the development of a regional volcano risk management tool for livestock that incorporates emergency preparedness and crisis management guidelines and supports the recovery of livestock livelihoods after a crisis; the tool will be consistent with the internationally recognized Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards. Following past volcanic eruptions, governments in the region have served as the primary responders to livestock-related needs of farmers and herders. With USAID/OFDA support, FAO is improving the capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and farmers in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vanuatu to reduce the impact of volcanic eruptions on animal health, livestock production, and food security. For example, FAO is conducting simulation exercises with local governments and communities to test best practices and familiarize participants with volcanic emergency response protocols for livestock.

Supporting Well-Timed, Effective Seed Distributions in Crisis-Affected Communities

To safeguard livelihoods in communities affected by conflict, natural disasters, or recurrent drought, relief agencies often distribute seeds to help farmers resume crop production in the aftermath of a shock. The interventions require careful planning, however, to ensure that distributions are well-timed and do not result in any unintended dependencies in crisis-affected communities. For example, repeated seed distributions over successive years can harm local seed production systems by undermining the functionality of local markets and commercial seed enterprises, leaving populations reliant on seed distributions to conduct agricultural activities. Additionally, late seed distributions or the dispersal of maladapted seeds can hamper agricultural production, adversely affecting livelihoods in areas where farming is one of the primary income-generating activities.

To ensure emergency seed programs are timely and effective, in FY 2019, USAID/OFDA commissioned an e-learning course to support program managers, senior decision-makers, and other professionals working in related fields to conduct a seed system security assessment (SSSA). The SSSA assesses seed availability, accessibility, and quality in all channels a smallholder farmer may use to procure seeds, including informal sources—such as home stocks and local markets—and formal sources—such as commercial companies, governments, or research stations—to guide planning for seed distributions. Using this information, the SSSA enables organizations to screen possible outcomes for their effectiveness and feasibility based on contextual inputs and other constraints, and design timely and effective distributions. In FY 2019, USAID/OFDA supported SSSA researchers to test assessment tools in various contexts, including sudden onset disasters—such as droughts, floods, or earthquakes—and complex emergencies, as well as in areas where malnutrition is prevalent, ensuring the tools are useful in a variety of emergency environments.

CONTACT: Agriculture Team, BHA.TPQ.Agriculture@usaid.gov

USAID/OFDA is now part of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA). Historical USAID/OFDA information products are available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis>