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**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

Israel – Wildfires

Fact Sheet #6, Fiscal Year (FY) 2011

December 10, 2010

Note: The last fact sheet was dated December 7, 2010.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- USAID’s Response Management Team (USAID/RMT) for wildfires in Israel will stand down at 1800 hours on December 10. USAID’s Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) for the wildfires will also fully demobilize and depart Israel by December 11.
- To date, U.S. Government (USG) assistance for the Israel wildfires response totals more than \$1.65 million, including transportation costs for firefighting commodities.¹ In total, the USG delivered approximately 121 metric tons (MT) of fire retardant and firefighting foam, including more than 101 MT of USAID- and U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)-procured firefighting commodities, and 20 MT of donated fire retardant.

| NUMBERS AT A GLANCE | SOURCE | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Population Evacuated | 17,000 | GoI ² – December 5 |
| Confirmed Fatalities | 42 | GoI – December 6 |
| Total Acreage Affected | 12,355 | GoI – December 5 |

FY 2011 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED TO DATE

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| USAID/OFDA Assistance³ for Wildfires..... | \$829,320 |
| DoD Assistance⁴ for Wildfires..... | \$826,700 |
| Total USG Humanitarian Assistance for Wildfires..... | \$1,656,020 |

CONTEXT

- On December 2, a wildfire began in Israel’s Carmel Forest near Usfiya village. The wildfire rapidly spread over the next four days due to adverse 2010 weather conditions, including unseasonably high temperatures and drought. In total, the fires killed 42 people and caused the evacuation of 17,000 others.
- The wildfires in Israel damaged or destroyed 250 houses and burned more than 12,300 acres of land and 5 million trees, according to the GoI. Preliminary GoI estimates place the total cost of direct and indirect damages due to the wildfires at nearly 200 million New Israel Shekels (ILS), the equivalent of \$55 million.
- On December 3, U.S. Ambassador James B. Cunningham declared a disaster due to the effects of the wildfire. National Security Staff assigned USAID as the lead coordinating agency for the Israel wildfires response. On December 4, USAID deployed a DART to provide assistance to the GoI and coordinate USG assistance in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and USAID/West Bank/Gaza. A Washington, D.C.-based USAID/RMT was activated on December 3, and a 10-member USAID/DART was deployed to Israel on December 4.
- A total of 24 countries responded to wildfires in Israel through the provision of firefighting aircraft and commodities and the deployment of fire management experts and firefighting personnel.

GoI Response and Local Recovery Initiatives

- On December 8, the Knesset, the Israeli Legislature, preliminarily approved a law that would revise the current structure of the Israel Fire and Rescue Services by consolidating locally-run municipal fire services into a national fire service, international media report. If passed, the new law would replace the current law that was implemented in 1956.
- According to international media, the GoI Minister of Environmental Protection will lead a taskforce composed of GoI representatives, agencies, and environmental groups that will oversee Carmel Forest recovery efforts.
- The Jewish National Fund—a non-governmental organization that manages Israel’s forests—continues to raise \$10 million for forest rehabilitation and future firefighting efforts in Israel. As of December 9, the group had raised more than \$1 million for Operation Carmel Renewal: From Black to Green, according to international media.

¹ Figure based on preliminary funding estimates.

² Government of Israel (GoI).

³ Figure reflects estimated costs as of December 10, 2010.

⁴ Estimated cost of DoD assistance is an approximation for procurement and delivery of fire retardant to Israel. Please note that this is a preliminary estimate that does not cover all the costs incurred by DoD to date and funding figures may be revised when actual costs are available.

USG Response

- As of December 10, USG assistance for the wildfires response totaled more than \$1.65 million, including transportation costs for firefighting commodities. During the initial days of the response, USAID/OFDA procured and delivered approximately 27 MT of Fire-Trol retardant, 20 MT of Fire-Trol firefighting foam, and 20 MT of donated firefighting foam, at a total cost of more than \$829,000, including transportation. Between December 4 and December 6, DoD delivered approximately 54.7 MT of fire retardant and 3,800 gallons of fire retardant concentrate from U.S. European Command to Israel on five U.S. C-130 aircraft.
- On Monday, December 13, the USAID/DART team leader and a National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) representative will lead an interagency debriefing on the Israel wildfires response.
- USAID's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives will hold a conference call between the public and the USAID/DART team leader and NIMO representative on Monday, December 13 at 1115 hours EST. Interested participants should send RSVPs to fbc@usaid.gov.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR ISRAELI WILDFIRES IN FY 2011

| <i>Implementing Partner</i> | <i>Activity</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Amount</i> |
|---|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹ | | | |
| GoI | 26.6 MT of Fire-Trol Fire Retardant | Northern Israel | \$42,954 |
| GoI | 20 MT (20,000 Liters) of Firefighting Foam | Northern Israel | \$60,000 |
| | Transportation Costs | | \$371,660 |
| | Administration Costs | | \$78,091 |
| | U.S. Forest Service Technical Support Costs ² | | \$276,615 |
| TOTAL USAID/OFDA | | | \$829,320 |
| DOD ASSISTANCE³ | | | |
| | Air Support; 54.7 MT of Fire Retardant; and 3,800 Gallons of Fire Retardant Concentrate | Northern Israel | \$826,700 |
| TOTAL DOD | | | \$826,700 |
| TOTAL USAID AND DOD HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL IN FY 2011 | | | \$1,656,020 |

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of December 10, 2010.

² This figure represents estimated technical support costs as of December 10, 2010; subject to change.

³ Estimated cost of DoD assistance is an approximation for procurement and delivery of fire retardant to Israel. Please note that this is a preliminary estimate that does not cover all the costs incurred by DoD to date and funding figures may be revised when actual costs are available.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Israel may be available at www.reliefweb.int.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int