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

## ***Southern Africa – Floods***

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

April 21, 2009

### **BACKGROUND AND KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

- Starting in January 2009, heavy rains in the Cunene, Cuvelai, Okavango, and Zambezi river basins caused widespread flooding in southern and eastern Angola and northern and northeastern Namibia. Floods particularly affected Cunene, Moxico, and Cuando Cubango provinces in Angola and Caprivi, Kavango, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana, and Oshikoto regions in Namibia. Less severe floods also affected four provinces in northern Angola.
- As of April 16, the floods had affected more than 202,000 people in Angola and more than 350,000 people in Namibia, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). On March 30, OCHA reported that government authorities in both countries had utilized aircraft and boats to evacuate people in isolated areas heavily affected by floods.
- From March 10 to 14, USAID/OFDA staff, in conjunction with USAID/Namibia, conducted an assessment of humanitarian needs in Ohangwena, Oshikoto, and Oshana regions in Namibia. From March 26 to 28, staff from USAID/OFDA, USAID/Angola, USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), and implementing partners conducted an assessment of humanitarian needs in Cunene and Cuando Cubango provinces in Angola.
- According to USAID/OFDA staff and relief agencies, gaining access to flood-affected populations in Angola and Namibia remains difficult as a result of damage to roads and bridges. In addition, USAID/OFDA staff noted that floods destroyed standing crops and food reserves in Angola and Namibia for the second consecutive year, potentially exacerbating residual food insecurity following drought in 2007.

<b>NUMBERS AT A GLANCE</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Estimated Affected Population</b>	<b>Source</b>
<b>Angola</b>	202,000	OCHA – April 16, 2009
<b>Namibia</b>	350,000	OCHA – April 16, 2009

### **FY 2009 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED TO DATE**

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Angola .....\$501,475  
 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Namibia.....\$700,000  
**Total USAID Humanitarian Assistance to Southern Africa for Floods .....\$1,201,475**

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

- On April 16, OCHA confirmed the continued northward migration of the seasonal low-pressure system that caused the heavy rains and reported that additional precipitation from the system would fall only in northwestern Angola, avoiding the catchment areas of the affected river basins in southern and eastern Angola and in Namibia. However, OCHA cautioned that high soil moisture throughout southern Africa could contribute to further localized flooding in the event of rainfall from any new systems developing between April and June.

#### *Angola*

- Following the assessment trip to affected areas in Cunene and Cuando Cubango provinces, including visits to three displaced persons camps in the town of Ondjiva, Cunene Province, USAID/OFDA and USAID/FFP staff identified the provision of shelter materials and emergency relief commodities as priority humanitarian needs. The assessment team also reported concern regarding the potential spread of cholera and malaria due to destroyed water and sanitation infrastructure.
- In addition, USAID/OFDA and USAID/FFP staff noted the potential for increased food insecurity until the next harvest in May 2010 due to widespread destruction of crops and livestock. Following observation of flooded areas and discussions with farmers and Government of Angola (GOA) officials, USAID/OFDA and USAID/FFP staff reported the nearly complete destruction of sorghum, cereal, peanut, and pumpkin crops. USAID/OFDA and USAID/FFP staff also noted the potential for increased food insecurity in areas where heavy rains washed away crops or stunted crop growth but did not cause flooding.

- As of April 16, the GOA Civil Protection Unit reported 60 flood-related deaths. On April 16, OCHA reported that floods had displaced more than 81,000 people and destroyed nearly 4,000 houses. In addition, flood damage to more than 230,000 hectares of arable land resulted in extensive livestock and crop losses, according to OCHA. However, OCHA noted that continued lack of access to many flood-affected areas may have rendered the data incomplete.
- According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), landmines displaced by flood waters in affected areas pose an additional risk to both flood-affected and displaced populations.

#### *Namibia*

- Following the assessment trip to affected areas, including visits to four displaced persons camps, USAID/OFDA staff identified the provision of emergency relief supplies, shelter materials, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support as priority humanitarian needs. USAID/OFDA staff also reported concern regarding the potential spread of cholera and malaria due to destroyed water and sanitation infrastructure.
- In addition, USAID/OFDA staff noted the potential for increased food insecurity in affected areas, since selling livestock or using savings to purchase staple cereals could deprive households of sufficient liquidity to purchase agricultural inputs for future planting seasons. On April 16, OCHA estimated that more than 544,000 individuals could be at risk of increased food insecurity in 2009 and 2010 as a result of the floods.
- On April 8, OCHA reported that flood water levels had stabilized in most areas, with the exception of Caprivi Region, where the water level in the Okavango river basin continued to rise. On April 16, OCHA reported that the flooding had killed approximately 92 people. In addition, OCHA reported that of the more than 54,500 people displaced by floods, nearly 16,400 had sought refuge in camps administered by the Government of the Republic of Namibia Emergency and Disaster Management Directorate. According to USAID/OFDA staff, a majority of individuals in the camps had also been displaced by the 2008 flooding.
- On March 27, OCHA reported that the floods destroyed more than 50 percent of roads in the affected regions. According to USAID/OFDA staff, the floods exacerbated damage to roads and bridges still under repair following damage caused by the 2008 flooding.

### **USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

#### *Angola*

- On March 17, U.S. Ambassador Dan Mozena declared a disaster due to the effects of the floods. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$48,000 through USAID/Angola to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) for the purchase and distribution of flood emergency kits to benefit approximately 3,000 households. In addition, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$436,000 to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for the purchase and distribution of shelter materials and relief commodities to benefit approximately 8,000 people in Cunene, Moxico, and Cuando Cubango provinces.

#### *Namibia*

- On March 18, U.S. Ambassador Gail D. Mathieu declared a disaster due to the effects of the floods. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through USAID/Namibia to the Namibian Red Cross Society (NRCS) for the provision of emergency relief commodities. In addition, USAID/OFDA provided \$350,000 to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) for emergency WASH assistance to benefit approximately 13,000 displaced people, including 9,200 individuals in displaced persons camps. USAID/OFDA also provided \$300,000 to IFRC for shelter materials and other relief commodities to benefit approximately 4,000 households.

#### **USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ANGOLA IN FY 2009**

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
CRS	Shelter; Emergency Relief Supplies	Cunene Province	\$48,000
IOM	Shelter; Emergency Relief Supplies	Cunene, Moxico, and Cuando Cubango provinces	\$436,475
	Administrative Support and Travel	Affected Areas	\$17,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ANGOLA FOR FLOODS IN FY 2009</b>			<b>\$501,475</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of April 21, 2009.

**USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NAMIBIA IN FY 2009**

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
IFRC	Shelter; Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$300,000
NRCS	Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$50,000
UNICEF	WASH	Affected Areas	\$350,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NAMIBIA FOR FLOODS IN FY 2009</b>			<b>\$700,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of April 21, 2009.

**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. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for flood response efforts in Angola and Namibia can be found at [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org).
- 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, and warehouse space); 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](http://www.usaid.gov) – Keyword: Donations
  - The Center for International Disaster Information: [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org) or (703) 276-1914
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int).