

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

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION UPDATE – JULY 2009

OVERVIEW

Natural, technological, and conflict-related disasters adversely affect millions of people every year. Since USAID/OFDA's establishment in 1964, the office has become a leader among international donors in supporting disaster risk reduction (DRR) initiatives aimed at saving lives, alleviating human suffering, and reducing the social and economic impact of disasters.

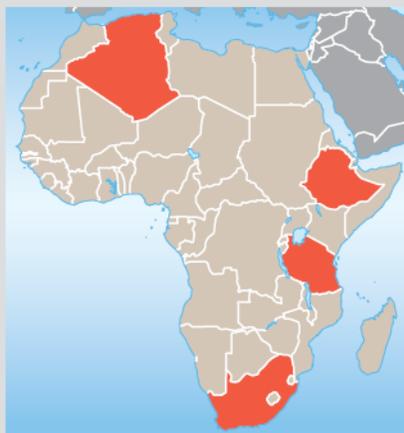
The three broad pillars, or key priorities, that guide USAID/OFDA's approach to DRR and inform potential programming for DRR activities include reducing vulnerability, increasing capacity, and enhancing resiliency. USAID/OFDA defines DRR as actions intended to minimize the adverse impacts of hazards by reducing vulnerability to disasters, increasing capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disaster shocks, and enhancing the resiliency of vulnerable groups and local communities.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has supported DRR activities in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to supporting regional, country, and local-level programming related to floods, droughts, cyclones, extreme weather events, tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanoes, USAID/OFDA also provides technical assistance and supports global DRR initiatives.

PERIPERI U

Countries in Africa are vulnerable to a range of natural disasters and complex emergencies, including floods, drought, food insecurity, and protracted civil unrest. To meet increasing demands for skilled professionals to manage disaster risks in Africa, USAID/OFDA has supported the Partners Enhancing Resilience to People Exposed to Risks – Universities (Periperi U) program since FY 2006. Periperi U is an innovative, multi-year program that aims to strengthen the capacity of disaster-related scholarship and practice in ten universities located in Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Periperi U utilizes a multi-pronged approach that comprises short course training in subjects relevant to the risk profile of individual countries, formal education, local research, and policy advocacy. In the long-term, Periperi U aims to reduce the impact of disasters on communities across Africa through strengthening governments' capacity to prepare for potential disasters, improving collaboration, and increasing the pool of qualified disaster risk managers.

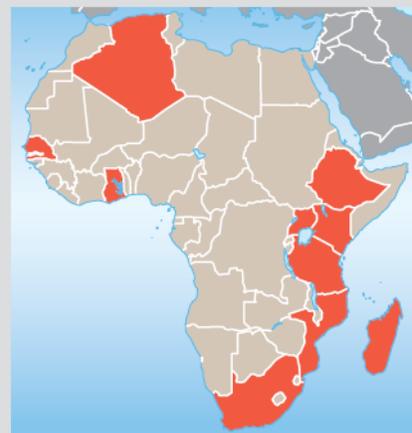
LOCATIONS OF INSTITUTIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE PERIPERI U PROGRAM



Established in 2007/2008
Algeria, Ethiopia, South Africa, Tanzania



Established in 2008/2009
Ghana, Mozambique, Uganda



Established in 2009/2010
Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal

HYDROMETEOROLOGICAL RISK MITIGATION IN ASIA

Due to poor infrastructure and inadequate early warning systems, rapidly growing urban areas in Asia are particularly vulnerable to hydrometeorological disasters, such as storm-related flooding and other meteorological extremes. Since 2005, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$1.8 million to the Asia Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) for the three-year Program for Hydrometeorological Risk Mitigation in Asian Cities (PROMISE) to implement disaster preparedness demonstration projects in highly vulnerable secondary urban centers in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. With support from USAID/OFDA, ADPC has facilitated DRR planning workshops, conducted hazard mapping and vulnerability assessments, and established community-based early warning systems.



A staff member of the USAID/OFDA-supported ADPC stands ready to respond in Vietnam (Courtesy of ADPC).

HEALTH PREPAREDNESS AND SURVEILLANCE

Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are highly vulnerable to a variety of natural disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, landslides, volcanoes, and drought. Since 1998, USAID/OFDA has supported Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote improved disaster preparedness and response in the health sector, including a program designed to increase the disaster response capacity of health professionals. Additional PAHO activities include production and dissemination of training materials and health guidelines, support for developing building codes for health and water facilities, and health surveillance for local communities in the immediate post-disaster period.



Constructed with USAID/OFDA support, a canal channels water to crops in Malawi (Photo by Alexandra Riboul, USAID).

DROUGHT MITIGATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Recurrent droughts across southern Africa increase community and household vulnerability to food insecurity, morbidity, displacement, and disease. In Malawi, a non-governmental organization consortium has implemented the USAID/OFDA-funded Rehabilitation through Irrigation and Production Extension (RIPE) initiative since 2006 to promote small-scale irrigation in six drought-prone and food insecure districts.

More than 4,800 farming households have directly benefited from RIPE activities, including the establishment or expansion of 37 irrigation sites. Through the promotion of irrigation and better agricultural practices, the RIPE program has improved food security for vulnerable smallholder farmers, while benefiting communities in the longer-term through increased productivity and a strengthened resilience to future droughts and other climactic shocks.