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

WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE SECTOR UPDATE – JULY 2011

SECTOR OVERVIEW

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs often represent vital components of the USAID/OFDA response to rapid-onset disasters and complex emergencies, as disaster-affected populations are more susceptible to illness and death from waterborne and communicable diseases. As a result, WASH interventions include latrine construction, provision of safe drinking water, and hygiene promotion—commonly focused upon improved hand washing, water collection and storage, and sanitation practices. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$117 million for WASH programs in 17 countries. USAID/OFDA also links emergency activities with transition and development programs funded by other offices in USAID and incorporates institutional partners, such as local governments, in program planning and implementation to promote sustainability. The following are selections of recent USAID/OFDA-funded projects.

WASH INTERVENTIONS IN PAKISTAN

In July and August 2010, monsoon rains and subsequent flooding throughout Pakistan affected more than 18 million people in 82 of Pakistan's 122 districts. With floodwaters damaging and contaminating existing water sources and infrastructure, the most pressing needs included ensuring that affected individuals could obtain safe drinking water and access other WASH interventions. Through funding and commodity provision, USAID supplied 134,335 families with two 10-liter water containers, provided up to 2 million people a day with drinking water, and distributed 25,000 bars of soap daily to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases among flood-affected populations.

USAID/OFDA also provided grants to local NGOs to deliver emergency relief supplies, promote good hygiene behaviors, and increase access to safe drinking water. In addition, USAID/OFDA-funded NGOs utilized cash-for-work programs to rehabilitate water sources and infrastructure in flood-affected areas.

RESPONDING TO WASH NEEDS IN ETHIOPIA

Successive seasons of failed rains and a rapidly growing population have led to chronic water shortages in areas of Ethiopia. As a result, decreased water availability has negatively impacted health and nutrition conditions among affected populations and adversely affected livestock health and food security. In addition, inflation, endemic poverty, and limited government capacity have exacerbated existing humanitarian needs.

To date, in FY 2011, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$2.6 million to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) to improve access to safe drinking water for more than 365,000 drought- and flood-affected people throughout Ethiopia. In addition, USAID/OFDA partners are conducting training and educational campaigns on proper sanitation and hygiene practices—such as improved hand washing—under prolonged drought circumstances. USAID/OFDA also maintains a WASH rapid response mechanism through the International Rescue Committee that enables ongoing activities to quickly expand in the event of a large-scale emergency. The countrywide program provides disaster-affected communities with access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, well rehabilitation, water trucking, and community-based water supply transportation. The flexible nature of USAID/OFDA rapid response programs in Ethiopia has been essential to respond to escalating needs during the current drought affecting eastern areas of East Africa.

USAID/OFDA CONTACTS

Trevor White, WASH Advisor, (202) 712-5052 or trewwhite@usaid.gov
Peter Wallis, WASH Advisor, pwallis@ofda.gov