



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## FACT SHEET

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# Climate Change

*“Developing nations – especially the poorest and most vulnerable ... are already living with the unfolding effects of a warming planet – famine, drought, disappearing coastal villages, and the conflicts that arise from scarce resources. Their future is no longer a choice between a growing economy and a cleaner planet, because their survival depends on both... And that is why we have a responsibility to provide the financial and technical assistance needed to help these nations adapt to the impacts of climate change and pursue low carbon-development.”*

*President Obama, The United Nations, September 23, 2010*



A USAID-supported program trains youth in Brazil to install solar panels.

Through the Global Climate Change Initiative (GCCI), the United States will increase resilience to climate disasters and damage, accelerate the global transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy, and help save tropical forests from destruction through targeted and strategic assistance. GCCI programs address climate change while serving many other vital U.S. interests, including supporting sustainable economic growth, strengthening energy security, protecting natural resources, and reducing the risks of disruption and conflict associated with major weather events. By reducing vulnerability to climate disasters through support for reduced greenhouse gas emissions internationally, the United States is promoting economic growth today and protecting the welfare of future generations. The GCCI also demonstrates U.S. leadership on a high-profile international issue of great importance to both emerging economies and developing countries.

## WHAT WE DO

**Support Clean Energy:** Support the global transition to a sustainable, clean energy economy. With more than 90 percent of the growth in energy demand over the next 30 years projected to come from developing countries, USAID is working to:

- Help establish the policy, legal, regulatory, and economic frameworks necessary to transition partner countries to low-emission, climate-resilient development; and
- Attract private investment, and help create markets for American technologies.

*For example, USAID is working with other US Government Agencies to assist 20 partner countries to develop and implement low emission development strategies (LEDS) by the end of FY2013. These strategies will promote*

*economic growth and sustainable development in developing countries while reducing the rate of growth of greenhouse gas emissions in the near term and establishing the conditions for reducing emissions in the long term.*

**Conserve forests, promote sustainable land use, and address deforestation:** Working with partner governments, international organizations, and other US Government Agencies, USAID is working to:

- Support policies that improve forest governance and reduce deforestation;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and increase carbon stored in forests;
- Accelerate the deployment of science and technology to monitor forests and land use changes; and
- Promote sustainable and economically-viable livelihoods for the millions of people who live in forests.

*For example, through improved land use and forestry management practices promoted by USAID programs, carbon emissions will be reduced by 50% in targeted areas in Indonesia.*

**Build resilience to climate-related disasters and damage:** U.S. programs help preserve hard-won development gains and contribute to stability and sustainable economic growth in fragile developing countries. Economic losses from climate-related damage in some developing countries could be as high as 19% of GDP by 2030. USAID is helping countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, which are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, such as severe droughts and floods, to:

- Reduce vulnerability to climate change in essential sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, and health and water services;
- Help countries, such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Peru develop the capacity to use the best climate science and analysis for decision making;
- Promote the sound governance necessary to implement improved planning for climate change;
- Improve countries' abilities to plan for and respond to climate impacts through improved access to information, enhanced public communication, and effective resource management; and,
- Develop new indicators and methodologies to assess gains in resilience to climate change impacts at the both the project and national level in coordination with the academic and donor partners.

*For example, in the densely populated coastal region of Bangladesh, USAID programs increase resilience to climate threats, such as stronger storms, through coastal reforestation and wetland restoration. Over 200,000 hectares of forest and wetlands have been brought under improved resource management and over 10,000 government staff and community members have been trained in environmental law and conservation.*

## ADDITIONAL KEY RECENT EXAMPLES

- **Clean energy in India:** A USAID investment of \$9 million leveraged \$200 million in private sector investment, which brought online 381 megawatts of new electricity generation capacity using bagasse—a biofuel made from sugar cane waste—reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 26 million tons. This technology was then independently adopted and implemented by six more Indian power plants.
- **Avoiding deforestation in Indonesia:** USAID, working with other US Government Agencies, is combatting illegal logging, improving forest management, strengthening conservation of standing forests, and significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Reducing climate vulnerability through better access to information globally:** USAID, in coordination with NASA and other US Government Agencies, is expanding the SERVIR Earth observations system in several regions (including the Himalayas, covering Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other priority countries). This work integrates satellite data, ground-based observations, and forecasts to provide information about environmental changes and to improve response to climate-related hazards, for example providing decision makers with tailored, advance information on flooding.