



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

El Niño

How USAID is Preparing and Responding Globally



Photo: Mercy Corps

The current El Niño event is one of the strongest in recorded history. Droughts, floods, and other extreme weather exacerbated by El Niño are driving families from their homes, hurting people's ability to earn an income, triggering food shortages, and threatening health and nutrition.

The impact of this year's El Niño is exceeding the capacities of the most affected populations and their countries' ability to respond to the crisis. USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) estimates approximately 17 million people will face crisis food insecurity due to El Niño's impacts, especially in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia.

Based on early warning and careful tracking of the progression of El Niño, USAID quickly mounted an integrated effort to forecast, plan, and respond to El Niño by: activating built-in mechanisms to inject emergency funds into development programs; mobilizing humanitarian assistance to the most affected people; and adjusting development efforts to mitigate the impact of El Niño and accelerate recovery.

USAID is working on a coordinated response with other donors to manage and prevent the potentially devastating and destabilizing impacts of El Niño.

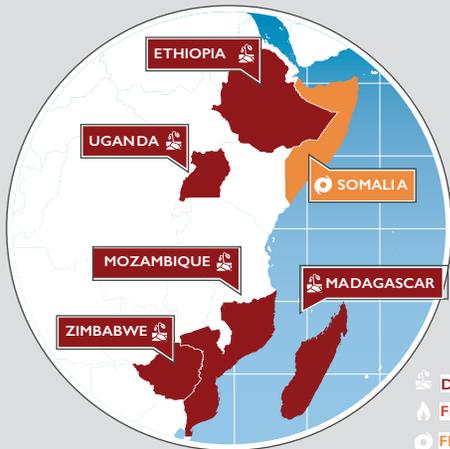


Commercial destocking at the Dembel Market, Ethiopia.

Photo: Mercy Corps

What We're Doing

Ethiopia & Southern Africa



The Government of Ethiopia's early response has been critical to mitigate the worst impacts of El Niño. Nevertheless, more than 10 million people in Ethiopia will face crisis food insecurity due to El Niño—accounting for more than 60 percent of those impacted globally. The U.S. Government has provided \$435 million in food, nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene support since October 2014. We mobilized 271,000 metric tons of food to feed 4 million people in Ethiopia — enough food to fill more than 13,000 tractor trailers from Washington, D.C. to Philadelphia. We activated emergency funds in development programs to help households meet their immediate needs without selling assets — such as livestock — that provide a source of income and nutrition now and in the future.

In Southern Africa, USAID has invested \$18 million since 2014 in disaster risk reduction programs, and contributed \$97 million in food assistance to meet immediate needs and address chronic hunger.

Latin America and the Caribbean



USAID helped drought-affected populations in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador by providing more than \$15 million in food assistance, helping communities cope by supporting soil conservation and rainwater harvesting, and establishing savings and loan programs that can serve as a safety net. In Haiti, USAID collaborates with the government to address the immediate food needs of over 14,000 households through an electronic food voucher-based safety net system. In response to forest fires in Colombia, USAID provided firefighting and communications equipment and training to improve fire response coordination.

Asia



In Indonesia, drought has made it difficult to fight fires raging across the country, where slash and burn practices prevail with weak enforcement. Nearly half a million people are suffering from acute respiratory infection due to toxic haze caused by the fires. USAID has provided \$3 million in “clean air” shelters and firefighting equipment and technical assistance.

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