



Regional Snapshot

EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND CENTRAL ASIA

Fiscal Year (FY) 2016

Complex emergencies, limited government capacity, and natural disasters, such as earthquakes and wildfires, present significant challenges to vulnerable and conflict-affected populations throughout Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia (EMCA).¹ In addition to staff based in Washington, D.C., USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) maintains a permanent regional office in Budapest, Hungary. USAID/OFDA has maintained field teams in Jordan and Turkey since March 2012 and deployed a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in January 2013 to track and respond to the humanitarian crisis in Syria. In 2014, USAID/OFDA deployed a DART to Iraq to address the urgent humanitarian needs of populations fleeing the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and sent a team to support relief efforts for conflict-affected people in eastern Ukraine. In 2015, USAID/OFDA facilitated a cooperation agreement between USAID and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) in Saudi Arabia to collaborate on information exchange, strategic dialogue, coordination, and training and placed a Senior Humanitarian Advisor with KSRelief to advise and assist the organization.

Recent Humanitarian Events in the Region

- During FY 2016, USAID/OFDA continued responding to complex emergencies in Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen. USAID/OFDA also addressed needs arising from conflict in Libya, in addition to natural disasters in the EMCA region, including Tropical Cyclone Chapala in Yemen, an earthquake in Tajikistan, floods in Macedonia, and wildfires in Canada and Portugal.
- Humanitarian conditions in Syria continued to deteriorate as prolonged conflict and population displacement increased acute humanitarian needs in FY 2016. As of late September, approximately 6.5 million people remained displaced in Syria and an estimated 13.5 million people required urgent humanitarian assistance. In addition, nearly 5 million people have fled to neighboring countries since the start of the conflict, resulting in a regional refugee crisis.
- The protracted conflict in Iraq escalated in FY 2016, leaving more than 10 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance and internally displacing an estimated 3.3 million individuals. Significant population displacement is expected to continue as conflict persists.
- Active conflict, collapsing government services, and an economic crisis continued to result in significant humanitarian needs in Yemen during FY 2016. Violence escalated following the suspension of UN-led peace negotiations in early-August, resulting in

¹ The EMCA region includes Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, West Bank/Gaza, and Yemen.

further displacement and damage to public infrastructure. An estimated 21.2 million people—of Yemen’s 26 million population—required humanitarian assistance as of February.

- Humanitarian needs have stabilized in non-conflict areas of Ukraine; however, violence between pro-Russia separatist militias and Government of Ukraine forces continued in areas of Donetsk and Luhansk *oblasts* in FY 2016. In August, the UN estimated that approximately 3.1 million people required humanitarian assistance.

USAID/OFDA Priorities for 2017

- USAID/OFDA will continue to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to vulnerable conflict-affected populations in Syria by prioritizing health interventions, emergency relief supply distributions, and the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) needs of displaced populations and host communities, as well as supporting basic shelter repair, winterization assistance, psychosocial support programs, information management, logistics, and coordination activities. USAID/OFDA will continue to work through UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations to assist vulnerable households in all of Syria’s 14 governorates, including through cross-line and cross-border aid deliveries. USAID/OFDA will also continue to advocate for increased humanitarian access to besieged and hard-to-reach areas throughout Syria.
- USAID/OFDA will continue to support the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to address emerging humanitarian needs in Iraq, in coordination with other donors, UN agencies, and relief organizations. USAID/OFDA will likely continue to support shelter, WASH, protection, and health needs of internally displaced and other vulnerable populations throughout conflict-affected areas in the country, as well as winterization activities and coordination and information management across the international humanitarian community. USAID/OFDA will continue to work with partners to ensure maximum readiness for potential contingencies, including anticipated displacement resulting from campaigns to liberate Mosul and other cities from ISIL, and a potential breach of Mosul Dam. USAID/OFDA will also continue to support disaster risk education and alert efforts to ensure that the Iraqi population is adequately prepared and warned in the event of a dam failure.
- USAID/OFDA will continue to provide life-saving health, nutrition, WASH and protection assistance as well as provide relief commodities to vulnerable populations in Yemen.
- USAID/OFDA will continue prioritizing humanitarian assistance in the health sector and the provision of emergency relief commodities to internally displaced, conflict-affected, and other vulnerable populations in Libya.
- USAID/OFDA will continue to collaborate with USAID/Ukraine and other stakeholders to facilitate a programmatic transition as the humanitarian situation in Ukraine continues to stabilize.

Challenges

- Across Syria, decreasing humanitarian access and increasing insecurity, as well as the proliferation of armed extremist groups, will continue to complicate humanitarian response efforts. Across Iraq, the continued presence of ISIL, combined with short-term displacements due to efforts to liberate cities from their control, will continue to require a robust humanitarian response.
- Obstacles to humanitarian access in Yemen, including bureaucratic constraints and ongoing conflict and insecurity, continue to pose challenges to USAID/OFDA partners while humanitarian needs increase due to protracted conflict and economic deterioration.

Key Lessons Learned in 2016

- Supporting skilled local humanitarian professionals and independent monitoring mechanisms is essential for providing effective assistance in hard-to-reach areas.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: on the humanitarian situation in EMCA , please see USAID/OFDA fact sheets, available at

<http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis/where-we-work>.