



International Disaster Assistance (IDA)

Supporting the most vulnerable, in the most fragile contexts



Introduction

The International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account provides critical humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters, conflicts, and other emergencies around the world. Funding provides people in need with emergency food, water, shelter, health care, psychosocial support, and complementary activities that support relief, recovery, and resilience. IDA funding ensures that people fleeing humanitarian crises have access to life-saving services in the countries of their displacement.

Why it matters

Approximately 168 million people around the world need life-saving humanitarian assistance, the highest figure in decades. Most of these people are caught in protracted, complex emergencies, including political crises, social unrest, and violent conflict that has caused significant hunger, displacement, and destruction. Others are displaced by natural disasters like earthquakes and floods. IDA funding helps countries prepare for, respond to, and recover from these crises, providing for the most vulnerable's immediate needs and supplying resources to build resilience for future emergencies.

ASK

Proposed cuts to humanitarian assistance would dramatically reduce the U.S. response to the world's ever-increasing needs. While increasing the efficiency of humanitarian assistance and the ability to deliver timely, life-saving interventions is critical, funding to meet urgent needs must be supported. Congress should fund the International Disaster Assistance account at no less than \$4.5 billion in FY2021.



> U.S. International Disaster Assistance in Syria

March will mark the ninth anniversary of the Syrian conflict, a devastating crisis that has left nearly 5 million children in need. In northwest Syria, World Vision leads the Facilitating Assistance to Syria Together (FAST) consortium, an \$80 million two-year project funded by USAID/OFDA in response to emergency health, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) needs. In 2019, the FAST project supported over 1.5 million people, primarily through assistance to hospitals and clinics, and provision of shelter and WASH services.

How it works

The International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account is the primary way the U.S. government responds to disaster, crisis, and conflict around the world. IDA funds humanitarian response through USAID Food for Peace (FFP) and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

FFP distributes food assistance to address hunger and malnutrition, supporting the early recovery of people affected by conflict and natural disasters, including refugees. Emergency food assistance is especially vital considering famine remains an ongoing threat in certain regions of the world, most recently in South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Yemen.

OFDA leads and coordinates the U.S. government's humanitarian assistance efforts, holistically caring for the most vulnerable in the face of emergencies. This includes places like Bangladesh, Yemen, and Syria (where conflict is driving displacement and fragility); the Ebola outbreaks in West Africa and DRC; and disaster response in the Philippines and India, to name a few.

Working closely with these countries' governments as well as organizations on the ground, the U.S. seeks not only to respond to immediate needs, but also to build capacity for disaster management and mitigation in future crises. By giving families, communities, and governments tools and information, we can ensure that fewer lives are lost and foreign assistance is being used effectively.

Quick facts

- Approximately 168 million people around the world need lifesaving humanitarian assistance, the highest figure in decades.
- One in four of the world's children lives in a conflict or disaster zone.
- The U.S. government responds to an average of 65 disasters in more than 50 countries every year.

Resources

- UNOCHA. <https://www.unocha.org/global-humanitarian-overview-2020>
- UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/media/62606/file/HAC-2020-overview.pdf>
- Food for Peace: <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-democracy-conflict-and-humanitarian-assistance/office-food>
- OFDA: <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-democracy-conflict-and-humanitarian-assistance/office-us>

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