

BHR/OFDA Annual Report

FY 1999

The FY 1999 Annual Report of the U.S. Agency for International Development/Bureau for Humanitarian Response/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance was researched, written, and produced by Jamy Bond, Kasey Channell, Philip Chinnici, Laura Coughlin, Alex Mahoney, Sue Moreira, Wesley Mossburg, Joseph Ponte, Eurydice Rorick, Zema Semunegus, Amy Sink, Amy Tohill-Stull, Katharine Winings, Joanne Welsh, Beverly Youmans, and Giselle Zimmerman of The Mitchell Group/Labat-Anderson, Incorporated in Washington, D.C., under contract number AOT-000-C-00-4121-00.



Vietnamese villagers return to their homes to survey the damage caused by the November 1998 floods (photo by IFRC).

Central cover photo: Aerial view of the Aguan River Valley in Northern Honduras during the aftermath of hurricane Mitch (photo by Guy Lawson, BHR/OFDA). Front cover, photo 1: Vulnerable residents in Thiet, Sudan receive food and non-food relief supplies from a World Vision program that was jointly funded by BHR/OFDA and BHR/FFP (photo by Ted Maly, BHR/OFDA). Photo 2: A man grieves over the loss of his home in Turkey, the site of one of the twentieth century's most devastating earthquakes (photo by Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue Team). Photo 3: Refugees from Kosovo line up to return from Kukes, Albania after the signing of the NATO Peace agreement (photo by Amy Tohill-Stull, BHR/OFDA). Back cover, photo 1: A farmer marks a goat that he recently purchased through a BHR/OFDA-funded animal restocking program in Marsabit, Kenya (photo by World Concern Development Organization). Photo 2: Two apartment buildings crumble to the ground in Toulon, Taiwan as a result of the September 21 earthquake (photo by Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue Team). Photo 3: A family returns to its home. The home was damaged in the conflict by Serb forces and repaired with materials from the BHR/OFDA roofing project (photo by Paul Majorowitz, BHR/OFDA).

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Commonly Used Acronyms

U.S. Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) and Private Groups

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AAH-USA	Action Against Hunger/United States
ARC	American Refugee Committee
CARE	Cooperation for American Relief Everywhere
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CWS	Church World Services
IMC	International Medical Corps
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LWR	Lutheran World Relief
SC/US	Save the Children/United States
UMCOR	United Methodist Committee on Relief
WVUS	World Vision, Incorporated/United States

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

ACF	Action Contre la Faim (Action Against Hunger)
FHI	Food for the Hungry International
MDM	Médecins du Monde/Médicos del Mundo (Doctors of the World)
MERLIN	Medical Emergency Relief International
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)
MCI	Mercy Corps International
SCF	Save the Children Fund
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid

Country of Origin

/B	Belgium
/F	France
/H	Holland
/UK	United Kingdom
/US(A)	United States (of America)

International Organizations and United Nations (U.N.) Agencies

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (U.N.)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organization for Migration (U.N.)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization (WHO)
UNDP	U.N. Development Program
UNHCR	U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	U.N. Children's Fund
UNOCHA	U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (formerly UNDHA)
WFP	World Food Program (U.N.)



U.S. Government Organizations/Programs

BHR	Bureau for Humanitarian Response (USAID)
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART)
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
FFP	Office of Food for Peace (USAID/BHR)
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/BHR)
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/BHR)
PRM	Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State)
State	U.S. Department of State
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

Miscellaneous

EDRC	Emergency Disaster Response Coordinator
FY	fiscal year
HDRS	humanitarian daily rations
IDP	internally displaced person
MT	metric ton
P.L.	Public Law
SAR	search and rescue
sq. ft	square feet



Message From the Director

BHR/OFDA and other relief organizations have long understood that responding to natural disasters is different from responding to war-generated emergencies. Natural disasters do not necessarily divide communities, as wars—by their very nature—necessarily do. A regrettable reality is that the divisiveness of the wars themselves spill into what has been referred to as humanitarian space, a space required in order to respond in a neutral manner to the suffering that wars generate.

War-torn environments impact humanitarian space and the efficacy of humanitarian relief in several ways. One complicating factor endangering humanitarian workers is the perception of those involved in or directly affected by the war. In such environments, humanitarian organizations and staff are sometimes perceived by combatants and/or victims as sympathetic to one or another specific group. This reality fundamentally impacts the ability to deliver assistance and places great demands on staff. We must recognize when we plan and deliver assistance that beneficiaries will not always be grateful for the assistance we provide, and communities will not always be friendly.

Additionally, we need to recognize that humanitarianism and relief—which we once considered one and the same—are increasingly emerging as separate yet parallel concerns. In fact, all relief is not necessarily humanitarian. For example, there are times, as in the mass flight from Rwanda to the former Zaire, when all humanitarian energy is devoted to keeping people alive. Beyond that, assisting those with relief needs is no longer enough; we also should be looking at questions of human rights and simple dignity. To provide relief that is truly humanitarian, we need to begin setting requirements—such as the principles of unfettered access and humanitarian space—upon which the delivery of assistance will be conditioned.

Although we cannot yet ensure that humanitarian rights and humanitarian standards are respected in all war-generated emergencies, we will do our job in as disciplined and humane a manner as possible. Limits currently exist to our ability to provide truly humanitarian aid, but people continue to need help, and we will respond as best we can.

H. Roy Williams

Director

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance



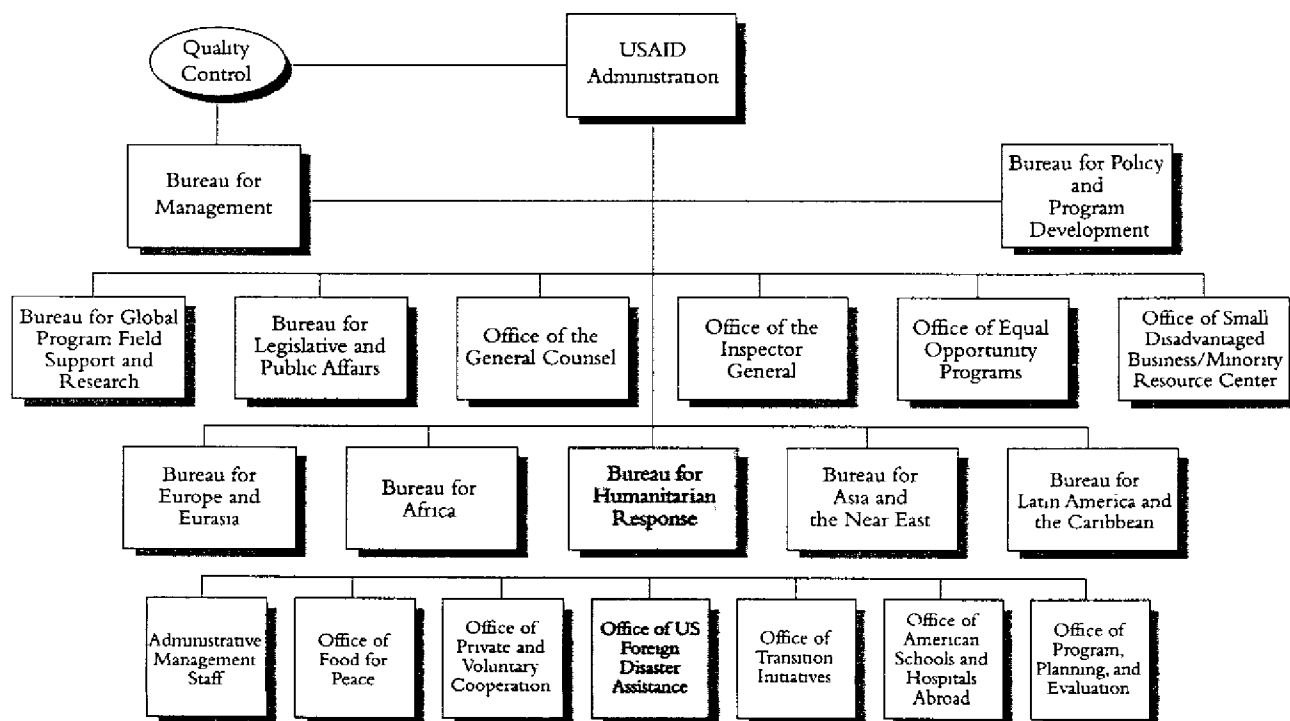
How Does the U.S. Government Provide Humanitarian Aid?

The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

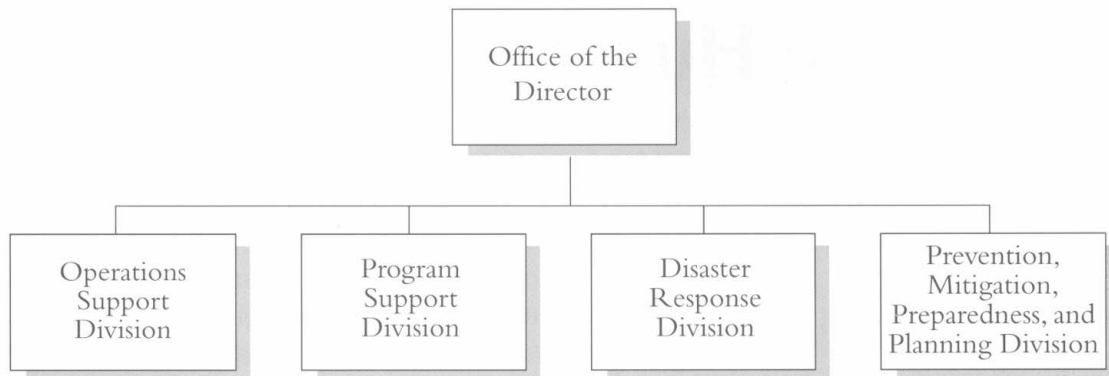
OFDA is the office within USAID responsible for providing non-food, humanitarian assistance in response to international crises and disasters. The USAID Administrator is designated as the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance, and OFDA assists in the coordination of this assistance. OFDA is part of the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR), along with the Office of Food for Peace (BHR/FFP), the Office of Transition Initiatives (BHR/OTI), the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (BHR/PVC), and the Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (BHR/ASHA).

BHR/OFDA is organized into four divisions, under the management of the Office of the Director. The Disaster Response Division (DRD) is responsible for the aid given in response to disasters and crises that occur overseas. The Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness and Planning (PMPP) division oversees assistance that is provided to prevent or reduce the impacts of disasters on the people and economic infrastructure in foreign countries. The Operations Support (OS) division provides the necessary technical and logistical support to the Office and its programs and personnel overseas. The Program Support (PS) division administers the Office's financial and accounting systems, which allow for rapid disbursement of funds in order to respond quickly to disasters. BHR/OFDA also maintains a staff of field personnel stationed in critical countries to monitor both disaster response and mitigation activities.

U.S. Agency for International Development



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

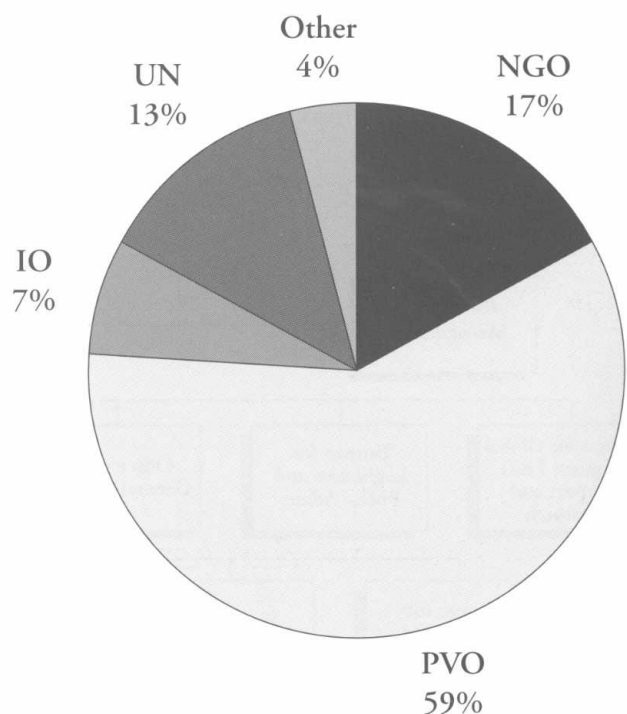


BHR/OFDA/DRD provides humanitarian assistance in response to a declaration of a foreign disaster made by the U.S. Ambassador or the U.S. Department of State. Once an event or situation is determined to require U.S. Government (USG) assistance, BHR/OFDA can immediately provide up to \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy or USAID Mission to purchase relief supplies locally or give a contribution to a relief organization in the affected country. BHR/OFDA can also send its own relief commodities, such as plastic sheeting, tents, and water purification units, from one of its four stockpiles located in Italy, Guam, Honduras, and the U.S. Increasingly, BHR/OFDA deploys short- or long-term field personnel to countries where disasters are occurring or threaten to occur, and in some cases, dispatches a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART).

The largest percentage of BHR/OFDA's assistance goes to relief and rehabilitation project grants managed by Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and International Organizations (IOs). Relief projects include airlifting relief supplies to affected populations in remote locations, managing primary health care and supplementary feeding centers, and providing shelter materials to disaster evacuees and displaced persons. A rehabilitation project might immunize dislocated populations against disease, provide seeds and tools to farmers who have been affected by disasters, or drill wells or rehabilitate water systems in drought-stricken countries. BHR/OFDA carefully monitors the organizations implementing these projects to ensure that resources are

used wisely and to determine if the project needs to be adapted to changing conditions. The goal of each project is to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected population, with the aim of returning the population to self-sufficiency.

OFDA Funding of Grants by Agency Type, FY 1999



Note: Figures are estimates.

The “notwithstanding” clause of Section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 states that no statutory or regulatory requirements shall restrict BHR/OFDA’s ability to respond to the needs of disaster victims in a timely fashion. BHR/OFDA follows the standard USAID procedures for routine procurements, but utilizes expedited or modified procedures when necessary to achieve its disaster response objectives. The first principle in disaster response accountability is to ensure that appropriate assistance gets to the neediest victims in time to minimize death and suffering. Procurement and accounting procedures may be expedited, but must include effective systems of internal control.

Not all of BHR/OFDA’s assistance goes to providing aid in response to disasters. BHR/OFDA’s mitigation staff oversees a portfolio of projects designed to reduce the impact of disasters on victims and economic assets in disaster-prone countries. During the last several years, BHR/OFDA has invested in a number of programs in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, the World Environment Center, and other offices within USAID. These programs not only enhance a country’s capacity to manage its own disasters and hazards, but also promote the transfer of technology, goods, and services between the U.S. and the host country. BHR/OFDA mitigation-related programs range from investing in drought early warning systems that can possibly head off a famine to training local relief workers to manage the response to a disaster more effectively. BHR/OFDA is increasingly investing in programs designed to prevent, mitigate, prepare, and plan for complex emergencies, which are more the result of human actions than of acts of nature.

Other U.S. Offices that Provide Foreign Humanitarian Assistance

BHR/OFDA is not the only office within the USG that provides humanitarian aid to foreign countries. BHR/FFP is responsible for administering the USG’s foreign food aid programs, under U.S. Public Law (P.L.) 480 Titles II and III. Title II emergency food aid programs are targeted to vul-

nerable populations suffering from food insecurity as a result of natural disasters, civil conflict, or other crises. Title II emergency food aid is provided without repayment requirements, whereas Title III food aid is provided as a bilateral loan program to countries in need of assistance. BHR/OTI is the office within USAID responsible for providing assistance to countries that are in a stage of transition from crisis to recovery. Its assistance is designed to facilitate the transition to peace and democracy by aiding in the demobilization of combatants or developing democratic governance structures within the country. Other parts of USAID, such as the regional bureaus, provide foreign development aid, which often complements humanitarian relief programs or can be regarded as disaster rehabilitation assistance. Countries that have achieved sustainable development are less likely to require massive USG humanitarian assistance.

Three of the biggest providers of USG humanitarian assistance are the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (State/PRM) and the U.S. Department of Defense’s Office of Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs (DOD/PK/HA). USDA works closely with BHR/FFP in allocating surplus food commodities to developing countries, under the Section 416(b) program of the Agricultural Act of 1949. This food aid is often used for emergency feeding programs in countries experiencing food shortages due to drought or civil strife. State/PRM provides multilateral grants to international relief organizations in response to refugee emergency appeals and contributes to the regular program budgets of organizations such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). DOD/PK/HA coordinates the utilization of DOD assets for humanitarian assistance overseas. In addition, DOD works closely with BHR/OFDA and the U.S. Department of State to coordinate the Denton Program, a program that transports humanitarian goods on a space available basis, using U.S. military transportation. The USGS, the U.S. Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also provide technical assistance in response to disasters and potential hazards overseas.



BHR/OFDA Publications

In addition to its annual report, BHR/OFDA produces several other publications that are available on the Internet and by request. One of the most useful is the Field Operations Guide, a pocket-sized manual that contains methodology for conducting disaster assessments, as well as information on BHR/OFDA response procedures. BHR/OFDA also produces current reports on disasters and crises around the world, which describe the situation and the corresponding USG response.

Current reports are available on several Internet gophers and World Wide Web sites, such as:

USAID Home Page

<http://www.usaid.gov>

UNOCHA ReliefWeb Home Page

<http://www.reliefweb.int>

Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) Disaster Information Center

<http://www.vita.org>

To have these reports sent to you automatically, send an E-Mail message to:

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