

Albania

Floods

In late September 2002, heavy rains caused extensive flooding in nine of Albania's 12 prefectures, particularly in the northwestern prefectures of Lezhe and Shkoder. According to the Government of Albania (GOA), the flooding displaced 9,700 families, more than 80,000 residents were affected throughout the country, and an estimated 120,000 people were left without electricity. In the Lezhe Prefecture, 262 homes were destroyed, 3,429 were damaged, and another 13,030 dwellings were partially flooded. In addition, floodwaters inundated more than 26,000 hectares of cropland, damaged national highways, and destroyed several bridges.

On September 26, 2002, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Elizabeth W. Shelton declared a disaster due to the damage caused by the flooding. USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Tirana to AmRC/Albanian Red Cross and WVI for emergency non-food relief commodities including clothing, potable water, bedding, blankets, and water pumps. USAID/OFDA also deployed a regional advisor to the affected area to assess the need for continued relief efforts. On November 7, USAID/OFDA provided \$163,878 to AmRC/Albanian Red Cross for the purchase and transportation of 19,104 hygiene kits and 10,000 blankets for flood-affected victims.

*USAID/OFDA Assistance ... \$213,878 (FY 2003)

** Although this disaster was declared at the end of FY 2002, the \$213,878 of USAID/OFDA funding was provided in FY 2003. The total of \$213,878 in USAID/OFDA funding will be noted in the USAID/OFDA FY 2003 Annual Report under the section entitled, "Additional Funding for Prior Year(s) Declared Disasters."*



Albanian authorities distribute relief commodities, including clothing, potable water, bedding, and blankets, to residents in Lezhe and Shkoder affected by floods in September 2002 (photo by USAID/OFDA).

Central and Eastern Europe

Floods

During August 2002, central and eastern Europe experienced some of the worst flooding in centuries. Floods caused the most damage in the Czech Republic, and serious damage occurred in Romania, Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Slovakia. The impact of the floods prompted the U.S. Embassies in Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Romania to declare disasters and request USG relief assistance.

USAID/OFDA responded to each of the flood declarations, and deployed an assessment team to determine the flood damage in the region. No USG



Flood-affected countries in Europe during August 2002. (USAID/OFDA declared countries are dark shaded).

relief assistance was provided to Austria based on the Government of Austria's internal capacity to respond to the flooding crisis. The USAID/OFDA assessment team, which arrived in Prague on August 25, included a public health advisor, a water and sanitation specialist, an environmental and technological hazards specialist, and a structural engineer. USAID/OFDA provided \$2,883 to support assessment team costs.

Czech Republic

A week of heavy rainfall in the Czech Republic caused the Vltava River to swell to nearly 30 times its normal flow, flooding parts of Prague and Bohemia. The flooding killed nine people and resulted in the evacuation of up to 40,000 inhabitants. On August 12, 2002, the Government of the Czech Republic (GOCR) declared a state of emergency in six provinces and deployed soldiers to assist flood-affected residents.

On August 13, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Kenneth M. Hillas declared a disaster due to the extensive flood damage. USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Prague to the Czech Red Cross for emergency supplies of sleeping bags, food, potable water, and other relief items. Additional USAID/OFDA support included \$105,000 through the U.S. Embassy for the purchase of ground-penetrating radar to assess the stability of flood-affected dwellings. USAID/OFDA also provided

\$15,000 to DOD for the transport of pumps and dryers to the Czech Republic, and provided \$1,400 for the transport of 6,400 water containers and 1,536 hygiene kits. The relief commodities were transported from a USAID/OFDA stockpile and consigned to AmeriCares for distribution in the flood-affected areas.

Romania

Heavy rains in Romania led to severe flooding of the Danube River and its tributaries from July 26 through August 15, 2002. The flooding affected 26 counties, with floodwaters damaging 1,317 homes and causing eight deaths. More than 15,000 people, primarily in rural areas, were affected by the flooding, which inundated more than 4,500 hectares of agricultural land. The floods also destroyed 400 bridges and rendered 430 km of road inaccessible.

U.S. Ambassador Michael E. Guest declared a disaster on August 20 due to the effects of the flooding. USAID/OFDA responded on August 21 with \$50,000 through USAID/Romania to WVI for the provision of emergency relief commodities to flood-affected residents.

Slovakia

Heavy rains in central Europe increased the flow of the Danube River to nearly six times its normal level. Although the capital city of Bratislava experienced minimal flood damage due to an advanced warning of the flooding upstream, high waters along the Danube and mountain rivers in Slovakia affected a number of towns, particularly Denin, Cerny Baloch, Sturovo, Komarno, and Brezno.

On August 21, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Scott Thayer declared a disaster due to the effects of the flooding. USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava to support emergency relief assistance for the flood-affected population.

USAID/OFDA Assistance\$274,283



The Vltava River overflowed its banks into downtown Prague, Czech Republic (photo by George Havens, USAID/OFDA).

Georgia Earthquake

An earthquake measuring 4.8 on the Richter scale struck Tbilisi on April 25, 2002, at 10:40 p.m. local time. Six residents were killed, more than 70 people were injured, and 362 families were left homeless. The earthquake damaged several thousand buildings in the old city, including apartments, clinics, schools, prisons, and communal centers sheltering IDPs from the ongoing civil conflict. UN OCHA estimated that an additional 2,500 families would be displaced during a period of six months while the damaged apartment buildings were being repaired.

On May 3, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Philip N. Remler declared a disaster due to the damage caused by the earthquake. USAID/OFDA provided an initial \$50,000 on May 6, and an additional \$74,713 on May 15, both through the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi to Mercy Corps to assist in meeting the emergency water and sanitation needs of victims affected by the earthquake.

USAID/OFDA Assistance\$124,713



Construction workers in Tbilisi use heavy machinery to remove earthquake debris (photo courtesy of USAID/Georgia).

Iran Earthquake

An earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale struck western Iran on June 22, 2002, at 7:28 a.m. local time. UN OCHA reported that the earthquake caused 227 deaths and 1,300 injuries. An estimated 15,000 residential, commercial, and public buildings were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable in the three most affected provinces of Qazvin, Hamadan, and Zanjan. The Iranian Red Crescent Society estimated that 25,000 people were displaced by the earthquake and more than 110,000 people were affected. Telecommunications, electricity, and water services were disrupted or damaged. An estimated 2,000 hectares of farmland were also destroyed.

On June 22, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs William Burns declared a disaster due to the damage caused by the earthquake. The USG offered humanitarian assistance to the Government of Iran and Iranian President Mohammad Khatami accepted. USAID/OFDA responded by providing \$50,000 to the IFRC in support of its worldwide appeal to assist with the emergency relief needs of the victims of the earthquake. USAID/OFDA also airlifted 5,000 blankets, 12,000 hygiene kits, six 10,000-liter water bladders, and two mobile water purification units each capable of providing potable water for up to 10,000 people per day. These relief commodities, valued at \$299,810 including transport, were provided to UNICEF for distribution to victims affected by the earthquake.

USAID/OFDA Assistance\$349,810

Russia Floods

Heavy rains in southern Russia from mid to late June 2002 resulted in widespread flooding in nine regions. The most affected regions were Stavropol Kray, Krasnodar Kray, and Karachayevo-Cherkess republics. According to the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM), the flooding resulted in 94 deaths and affected more than 335,000 people. EMERCOM estimated that 7,519 homes