



Latin America and Caribbean (LAC): Disaster Preparedness and Response

OVERALL STRATEGY

- USAID/OFDA promotes an integrated approach to disaster preparedness and response that is based primarily on long-term engagement with national disaster management authorities in 26 countries. Effective disaster preparedness results in reduced requirements for disaster relief.

DISASTER HAZARDS

- Primarily natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, landslides, volcanoes, and drought, as well as civil conflict in some cases.

KEY ELEMENTS

- USAID/OFDA maintains five regional advisors at its LAC regional office in Costa Rica and a consultant network of 19 disaster experts dispersed throughout the region.
- USAID/OFDA introduced a disaster management training curriculum in 1989. Countries throughout the LAC region have adopted the curriculum to train their disaster managers and first responders (e.g. Collapsed Structure Search and Rescue, Damage and Needs Assessment, Training for Instructors, Incident Command System, among others).
- Since the inception of this Regional Disaster Assistance Program (RDAP), more than 4,200 instructors have been certified and 43,000 participants trained in 26 countries, including many current middle and upper level disaster managers.
- In many LAC countries, disaster management training is now conducted entirely by national training cadre, with USAID/OFDA providing only technical assistance through its consultant network and regional advisors.
- USAID/OFDA responds to an average of about 16 declared disasters annually in the LAC region. When a disaster occurs, USAID/OFDA mobilizes all necessary resources for disaster response, including its consultant network.
- Long-term engagement with national authorities, through the preparedness and training program, is the basis for effective collaboration when a disaster does occur.

FY 2006 ASSISTANCE

- \$6.9 million for disaster preparedness and mitigation (including training)
- \$6.7 million for relief in response to 17 declared disasters

A Fact Sheet on USAID/OFDA Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Programs in the LAC Region can be found at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/.