

BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Early Recovery, Risk Reduction, and Resilience

Central Africa

Fiscal Year (FY) 2021



Many communities across Central Africa continue to face the consequences of ongoing complex emergencies characterized by conflict, persistent food insecurity, population displacement, and tenuous access to health care, safe drinking water, shelter, and other basic services, and are increasingly vulnerable to climatic shocks. In FY 2021, USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) supported programs that mitigated the effects of chronic food insecurity and helped communities to better prepare for potential future disruptions to their livelihoods.

- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), USAID/BHA continued to support partners in implementing multi-year programs that assist households in mitigating, adapting to, and recovering from shocks and stresses, with the aim of reducing chronic vulnerability. During FY 2021, USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) provided food assistance to bolster the coping capacity of vulnerable households in the DRC. In addition, USAID/ BHA support enabled Mercy Corps to lead a consortium of implementing partners (IPs) focused on promoting better local governance practices and decision making to both improve food and nutrition security and the economic well-being of vulnerable households in South Kivu Province. In Kasai Oriental Province, USAID/BHA supported Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to lead a non-governmental organization coalition working to sustainably improve food security within the community and reduce chronic malnutrition in children ages five years and younger.
- In Uganda, USAID/BHA supported CRS and Mercy Corps to assist households facing chronic food insecurity in Karamoja sub-region through multi-sectoral programming in the sectors of agriculture, livelihoods, disaster risk reduction, nutrition, health, governance, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). In partnership with the Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI) Foundation, USAID/BHA also helped improve the food security and livelihoods of refugees and Ugandan host-community households in southwestern Uganda’s Kamwenge District. This innovative activity, the first to adapt the Graduation Approach for use in a refugee setting at scale, seeks to graduate poor refugee and Ugandan host community households from conditions of food insecurity and fragile livelihoods to self-reliance and resilience.

USAID/BHA ER4 FUNDING FOR CENTRAL AFRICA IN FY 2021

Standalone ER4	\$46,274,902
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Total: \$46,274,902

In Central Africa in FY 2021, USAID/BHA supported standalone activities in the DRC and Uganda.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Supporting Agricultural Production to Improve Food and Nutrition Security in Eastern DRC

With \$15.1 million in FY 2021 funding, USAID/BHA continued to support a coalition of IPs led by Mercy Corps to implement a seven-year program helping communities in DRC's South Kivu Province address food and nutrition insecurity through improved agricultural production, enhanced nutrition, strengthened local governance, and expanded water and sanitation facilities. In FY 2021, the program utilized 24 Local Development Committees (LDCs) to help coordinate local infrastructure and other projects and advance the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making. These LDCs oversaw the completion of more than 30 community-led projects during the fiscal year, such as the rehabilitation of agricultural service roads, bridges, and water infrastructure. A survey of LDC participants found that 97 percent of respondents felt that LDCs positively affected their community. During the fiscal year, the Mercy Corps-led program also supported more than 9,300 households through food-for-asset activities, which provided food assistance—including rice, peas, and vegetable oil—to participants working on infrastructure projects prioritized by the LDCs. Participants have rehabilitated more than 180 miles of roads since the start of the program in 2016, increasing community members' access to markets and health facilities.

Additionally, the program trained 48 community members as Village Agriculture Agents (AVAs) in FY 2021, helping participants develop business plans, connecting them with certified distributors of agriculture products, and providing coaching on the marketing of various crops, enabling 40 of the AVAs to establish contracts with distributors to sell bean, cassava, and maize seeds to farmers in their communities. Subsequently, the AVAs trained nearly 3,400 local farmers in strengthened agriculture techniques, promoting the sustainable implementation of effective agricultural practices at the community level.

Increasing Household Income and Reducing Chronic Food and Nutrition Insecurity in Uganda

After decades of conflict in northeast Uganda's Karamoja sub-region, communities have transitioned from primarily nomadic, pastoralist livelihoods to raising animals in stationary kraals—fenced enclosures for cattle and other livestock—and crop farming for income generation. This shift in livelihoods has made farmers more dependent on the increasingly erratic climate in northern Uganda, which has just one annual rainy season from April to October. Additionally, concentrated grazing, dependence on rain-fed agriculture, and suboptimal farming practices exacerbate food needs during the March-to-July lean season, the period of the year when food is most scarce. USAID/BHA supports two long-term, multi-sector programs in Karamoja to address these chronic needs. In FY 2021, USAID/BHA continued funding for a five-year CRS program that prioritizes building resilience to shocks, enhancing livelihoods, and improving food and nutrition security in Karamoja's Abim, Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit, and Napak districts. During the fiscal year the program aimed to reach 196,000 people, primarily engaging them in agricultural and livelihood activities that incorporated a focus on community ownership, conflict sensitivity, gender, social accountability, and youth. Through the program, CRS works with communities to disseminate information on seasonal agricultural forecasts, while also informing farmer decisions regarding land preparation, planting, and seed purchases.

With USAID/BHA support, Mercy Corps continued the implementation of a five-year program in Karamoja's Amudat, Kaabong, Karenga, Kotido, and Moroto districts, conducting activities such as awareness-raising exercises with local farmers on best agriculture practices—focused on strengthening and enhancing household capacity to sustain food and nutrition security—targeting 310,000 participants in FY 2021. The program is structured to achieve four interrelated objectives: improved livelihood and income support; inclusive and effective governance; nutrition security for adolescent girls, children ages five years and younger, and pregnant and lactating women; and the reduction of diseases related to WASH conditions. Notably, the program helped to improve nutrition outcomes during 2021, with the prevalence of dietary diversity amongst female participants in agriculture activities increasing from approximately 16 percent to more than 38 percent.

The AVSI Foundation, with USAID/BHA assistance, continued to implement its Graduating to Resilience (GRAD) program in Uganda’s Kamwenge District during FY 2021. The seven-year program aims to improve participant households’ ability to sustainably meet basic needs and manage shocks through a range of capacity-building initiatives, including coaching sessions focused on topics such as business management and financial literacy, as well as nutrition education and screening. During FY 2021, GRAD successfully concluded programming for the first of two cohorts of participants. Overall, 73 percent of the more than 37,000 participants successfully achieved the II graduation criteria—a set of indicators measuring a household’s self-reliance—during three consecutive quarters. Preliminary impact evaluation results for GRAD indicated significant improvements in food security—such as a nearly 70 percent increase in meal frequency amongst children ages 6 to 23 months—and increases in household consumption, income, and savings, among participants.

USAID/BHA ER4 ASSISTANCE FOR CENTRAL AFRICA IN FY 2021¹

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	AMOUNT
Standalone ER4			
DRC	Resilience Food Security Activity (RFSA)	CRS	\$10,652,312
	RFSA	Mercy Corps	\$15,145,031
	Food Assistance	WFP	\$2,450,054
Uganda	RFSA	AVSI	\$7,727,505
	RFSA	CRS	\$4,300,000
	RFSA	Mercy Corps	\$6,000,000
TOTAL STANDALONE ER4 FUNDING			\$46,274,902
TOTAL ER4 FUNDING IN FY 2021			\$46,274,902

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of September 30, 2021.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)