

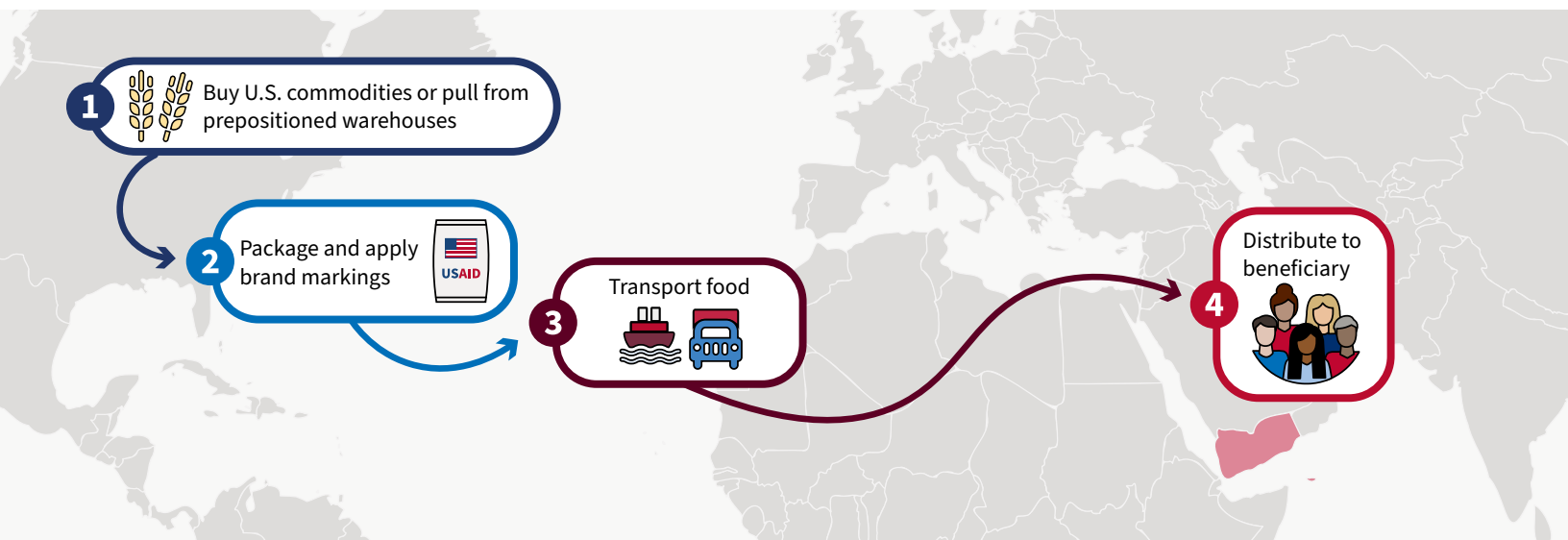
Modalities for Emergency Food and Nutrition Assistance

USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance provides emergency food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable populations affected by disasters such as droughts and floods, as well as in response to conflict and complex emergencies. Response modalities include U.S.-purchased food (“in kind” food assistance) or food purchased in the affected country or region, as well as cash or food vouchers so beneficiaries can directly access food in their local markets. There is no singular “right” way to provide food assistance. Interventions depend on the drivers of food insecurity, how markets are functioning, security conditions, and overall program goals. Cost, local dietary preferences, and timeliness are also important considerations when designing a context-specific, appropriate, and effective response to food

U.S. In-Kind Food Assistance

U.S. in-kind food assistance is often used to respond to an emergency where: 1. local markets are not functioning; 2. there isn’t enough food in local markets to meet need; or 3. beneficiaries do not have physical access to markets. A typical food basket often includes a grain, a pulse, and oil, designed to mirror local diets as much as possible. This food assistance takes an average of 4–6 months to reach beneficiaries. Early warning information and data on the projected timing, severity and numbers of people in need, as well as speed of delivery, factor into final resource allocation and program decisions.

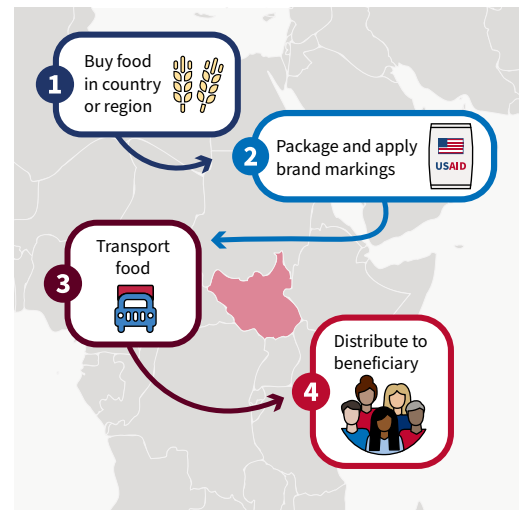
For example: in Yemen, airstrikes and ongoing conflict damaged and destroyed public infrastructure, interrupted essential services, and reduced commercial imports to a fraction of the levels required to sustain the Yemeni population, as Yemen typically imports much of its food supply. Yemen remains the largest food security emergency in the world. USAID partners in Yemen provide U.S. in-kind emergency food assistance to more than 11.5 million people per month.



Local and Regional Procurement

When local or regional markets have adequate quantities of food available to supply emergency food assistance programs without impacting prices or commercial trade, they are often used to make up all or part of a food assistance ration. Locally or regionally purchased food reaches beneficiaries within 1–2 months.

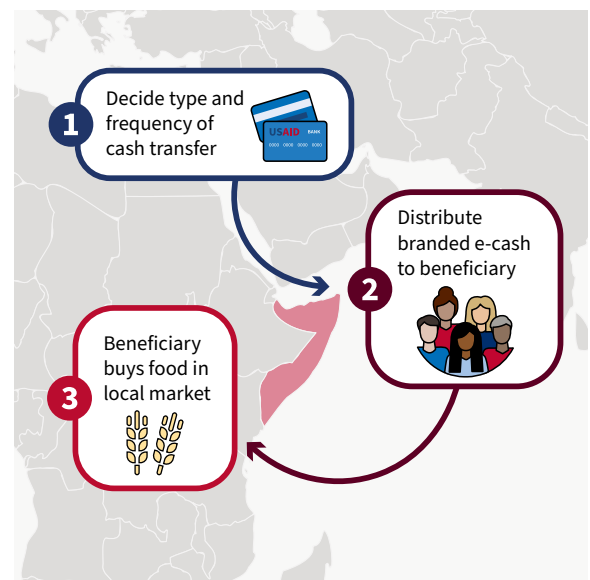
For example: When in-kind commodities were more expensive and took longer to arrive, USAID's partner World Food Program (WFP) purchased food regionally for South Sudan, thus preventing gaps in the food pipeline and ensuring that the most vulnerable got the food they needed, when they needed it.



Cash Transfers for Food

Cash transfers and vouchers are often used when local markets have sufficient food but people simply can't afford to purchase the food. Cash transfers may be used when local markets are still functioning, and providing families with emergency support can enable them to buy foods they are familiar with from sellers they trust, reinforcing the local economy and the community during a crisis.

For example: In Somalia, people face acute food insecurity as a result of the combined effects of poor and erratic rainfall, flooding, desert locusts, and conflict. In FY 2021, USAID partners programmed approximately \$209.8 million in food assistance through cash transfers for food, food vouchers, and in-kind food assistance to reduce food consumption gaps at the household level and help prevent the deterioration of food security outcomes across Somalia. Cash-based assistance gives beneficiaries the ability to shop in local markets and buy food that is culturally familiar.



Food Vouchers

Vouchers may be used when there are specific security concerns associated with the transfer of cash or there is a need to ensure people receive a specific basket of food types. Vouchers can strengthen local markets by enabling participating local vendors to sell more food. Debit card or mobile phone cash transfers, as well as electronic vouchers, may contribute to financial access and mobile connectivity while benefiting local banks and mobile phone companies.

For example: USAID and partner WFP provide assistance to Syrian refugees primarily through electronic food vouchers. Vouchers are a reliable, timely, and secure way to provide assistance to vulnerable individuals and families. It also allows recipients to tailor food assistance to their needs while supporting the local economy in refugee hosting areas.

