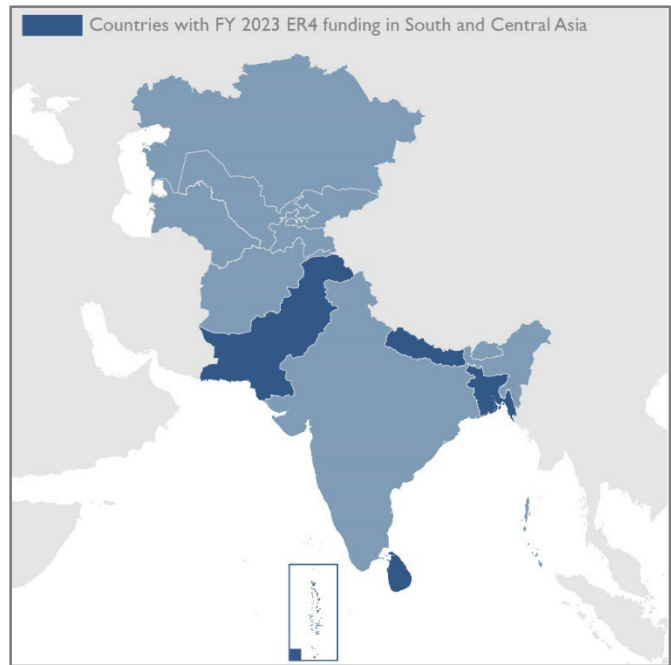


Early Recovery, Risk Reduction, and Resilience

Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance – South and Central Asia

REGIONAL SUMMARY

- USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) provided nearly \$35 million to partner organizations conducting early recovery, risk reduction, and resilience (ER4) activities regionally and in Bangladesh, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka during FY 2023. Populations throughout South and Central Asia are vulnerable to a range of natural disasters, including cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, floods, and landslides. These hazards compound existing vulnerabilities faced by many communities in the region.
- In FY 2023, USAID/BHA continued to fund UN and nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners—including ACTED, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and World Vision—throughout the region to implement climatic shock resilience programs, which expanded existing emergency preparedness and risk reduction tools while simultaneously building resilience among local communities vulnerable to natural hazards.
- In Sri Lanka, USAID/BHA provided nearly \$12.4 million in FY 2023 ER4 funding to NGO partners and UN agencies to build upon and expand climate resilience, as well as to strengthen emergency response capacity, by supporting sustainable agricultural practices and emergency coordination efforts among vulnerable populations.



USAID/BHA ER4 Funding for South and Central Asia in FY 2023¹

Funding Type	Country	Total
Standalone ER4	Bangladesh, Central Asia Regional, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, South Asia Regional, Sri Lanka	\$34,675,253
Integrated ER4	Bangladesh	\$32,123
FY 2023 ER4 Total		\$34,707,376

¹ Integrated ER4 refers to programming that incorporates ER4 components within an active humanitarian response. USAID/BHA supported regional standalone ER4 programs in FY 2023 that may allocate funding to additional countries not detailed in above map.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Strengthening Disaster Preparedness Through Community and Youth Engagement in Central Asia

USAID/BHA provided more than \$2 million in FY 2023 funding to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, including droughts and earthquakes, on at-risk populations by strengthening local emergency response capacities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. During the fiscal year, joint IFRC–UNICEF programming done in coordination with national Red Crescent Societies and local and national governments strengthened national disaster risk reduction (DRR) and preparedness systems by working closely with local authorities focused on education, emergency response, and social protection. IFRC, national Red Crescent Societies, and UNICEF continued developing child-centered and community-based emergency preparedness programs in Central Asia by training Red Crescent staff, teachers, and volunteers to increase youth engagement in disaster response planning and enhance school safety protocols. For example, the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan and UNICEF organized seminars and trainings on disaster preparedness, DRR, climate change adaptation, and school safety for more than 1,500 schoolchildren in Kyrgyzstan.

Strengthening Preparedness and Resilience Through Inclusive Community Governance in the Maldives

USAID/BHA partner the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) worked with the Maldivian Red Crescent (MRC) and the Government of the Maldives National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to lead the Strengthen Preparedness and Resilience through Inclusive Community Governance (SPRING) program. As part of the SPRING program, ADPC, MRC, and the NDMA conducted island disaster management planning workshops focused on hazards, vulnerability, and capacity assessments with members of six target island communities across the Maldives. Through the workshops, members of the local island communities developed island disaster management plans verified by island committees and validated through community consultations involving discussions and trainings among community members to identify, prioritize, and plan for disaster risks and needs.

Supporting Climate-Induced Shock Resilience in Pakistan

For more than a decade, USAID/BHA has supported programming in Pakistan focused on strengthening households’ resilience to drought and other climate-induced shocks through food security and livelihoods support. With support from USAID/BHA, ACTED and Concern Worldwide implemented programming on flood- and drought-resilience, respectively, across Pakistan. With USAID/BHA funding, ACTED trained nearly 5,000 farmers on livestock management, provided cash-for-work assistance to more than 300 individuals for constructing rainwater harvesting infrastructure, and distributed multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to approximately 120 households in Sindh Province’s Umerkot city. Concern Worldwide bolstered drought resilience across Sindh through climate-smart agriculture training for 400 farmers, held livestock management workshops for 45 community members, and distributed certified vegetable seeds to approximately 800 farmers. Additionally, Concern Worldwide facilitated more than 1,200 water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) education sessions across Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh provinces, teaching nearly 27,000 participants how to maintain proper hygiene practices to mitigate the transmission of diseases. USAID/BHA also funded the UN World Food Program (WFP) to bolster household food security in the Khyber, Mohman, and Orakzai districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through capacity strengthening on income generating activities and livelihood rehabilitation activities, including the reconstruction of critical community infrastructure, along with providing cash assistance to help nearly 62,400 individuals affected by recent floods purchase basic food items.

Enhancing Nepal's Food Security and Disaster Risk Management Capacity

Communities in western Nepal's Karnali River Basin and other mountain districts such as Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk remain vulnerable to a range of risks, including limited access to affordable and nutritious food and safe drinking water, as well as natural disasters such as floods and landslides. During FY 2023, USAID/BHA provided \$4.4 million to Mercy Corps to address long-term food insecurity through climate-resilient agricultural support programs, while also responding to short-term emergency shocks in the Karnali River Basin. In partnership with local NGOs, Mercy Corps provided more than 62,700 individuals with a range of assistance, reaching approximately 3,400 people with cash and voucher assistance, training more than 13,500 individuals on sustainable agriculture practices, and ensuring access to irrigation for crops to more than 6,500 people. The international NGO (INGO) also strengthened disaster management skills at local, district, and provincial levels by conducting more than 250 mock drills. In addition, Mercy Corps worked to expand inclusion and livelihood opportunities for marginalized groups, such as women from the Dalit and Janajati ethnic minorities, through gender equality and social inclusion workshops.

Also in Nepal, USAID/BHA partner Practical Action supported the development of community-centric early warning systems (EWS) to reduce the impact from recurrent natural disasters on vulnerable populations in Sindhupalchowk's Helambu Rural Municipality and Melamchi Municipality. Practical Action managed the creation of 14 community disaster management committees (CDMCs) in Helambu and Melamchi and organized trainings for nearly 180 CDMC members to build community EWS capacity and disaster preparedness skills. Additionally, Practical Action partnered with Nepal Department of Hydrology and Meteorology to enhance local hydrological and meteorological observations that will help in early warnings of hydrometeorological hazards. Practical Action also developed standard operating procedures for forecast-based early action initiatives in collaboration with CDMCs, district-level stakeholders, and local government leaders. Furthermore, USAID/BHA partner UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) established landslide early warning mechanisms, including a landslide assessment and susceptibility mapping project in Gandaki Province's Gorkha District, as well as the installation of landslide early warning system sensors in Barpak Sulikot Rural Municipality.

Building Resilience of At-Risk Communities and Strengthening Emergency Preparedness in Sri Lanka

In recent years, Sri Lanka faced significant socioeconomic challenges driven in part by poor fiscal and tax policies, as well as reduced foreign revenue. Additionally, poor agricultural policies, including a sudden ban on the use of agrochemicals and chemical fertilizers by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2021, along with a lack of training for farmers in organic farming practices, left more than one-third of Sri Lanka's agricultural land fallow between May and August 2021, and led to lower-than-average harvests in 2022. These factors accelerated shortages of various commodities in the country—including basic food items, fuel, and key agricultural inputs—and exacerbated already high levels of inflation, challenging the ability for the poorest households in the country to afford enough nutritious food and other basic services. During FY 2023, USAID/BHA provided nearly \$3.4 million in funding to World Vision to continue working with its local partner LEADS to rebuild and strengthen household resilience against the effects of climatic shocks. With USAID/BHA support, World Vision assisted nearly 14,900 people in Sri Lanka's Northern Province with livelihoods support for farmers to increase financial stability; improved agricultural practices, such as seed system security to increase yields; and MPCA for households for immediate needs over a five-month period to increase livelihood opportunities and reduce the impact of shocks on marginalized populations.

USAID/BHA partner WFP supported the Government of Sri Lanka Disaster Management Center's National Disaster Management Plan 2023–2030 sensitization workshop during FY 2023. The workshop—including multiple government bodies, such as the Sri Lanka armed services and Sri Lanka police forces, as well as

community-based organizations, local NGOs, and INGOs—aimed to improve communications, coordination, and information management during emergency responses. Furthermore, WFP undertook a comprehensive participatory assessment of government entities' emergency preparedness and response capacity, with a focus on the current DRR landscape in Sri Lanka, including EWS and anticipatory action.

Bolstering Community-Led ER4 Efforts in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District, natural disasters have damaged or destroyed houses, degraded environmental resources, and reduced livelihood opportunities, compounding existing needs among low-income households and the Rohingya refugee population. In response, USAID/BHA provided \$2 million in FY 2023 funding to CRS, in partnership with Caritas Bangladesh (CB), to implement the Landslide Early Warning Systems (LEWS) project that aims to build capacity at both the community and government levels to prepare for and respond to landslides and other natural disasters. This LEWS project follows previous CRS and CB programs that strengthened disaster risk management processes among host communities in Chakaria administrative district in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban District in Chittagong Division to build resilience to cyclones, flooding, and other natural hazards. CB and CRS coordinated with community members and local government officials to develop climate adaptation and disaster risk management plans, which included reactivating and strengthening the capacity of ten local disaster management committees comprising representatives of the local community from various bodies, such as education centers, private companies, and religious institutions. USAID/BHA also funded ADPC's Bangladesh Resilience Advancement in City Ecosystems (BRACE) program aimed at enabling communities to undertake risk assessments and identify priority interventions to strengthen resilience in Cox's Bazar and Bangladesh's capital city of Dhaka. During FY 2023, BRACE established a Program Advisory Committee, engaging the Government of Bangladesh Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, and Cooperatives to lead DRR initiatives.



Emergency supplies given out to participants in the USAID/BHA-funded joint CB-CRS program. Photo credit: CRS

Also in Bangladesh, USAID/BHA partner International Organization for Migration (IOM) is working to strengthen national-level coordination and collaboration for more effective DRR interventions. IOM and other partners, including the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and CRS, are engaged in a comprehensive mapping exercise of evacuation shelters in 31 of 64 districts in Bangladesh. By mapping the evacuation centers, IOM and its partners aim to gather detailed information on availability of services, capacity, and location of the evacuation shelters to enhance disaster preparedness and response efforts.

During FY 2023, USAID/BHA partner CARE continued to support vulnerable communities in northern Bangladesh by improving agricultural practices, increasing the capacity of community flood volunteers, and enhancing community infrastructure in the flood-prone Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Kurigram, and Lalmonirhat districts. CARE provided approximately 800 farmers with technical training on climate-smart technology, in addition to raising more than 190 homesteads and nearly 10 community structures above the highest recorded flood levels. CARE also trained more than 1,300 community volunteers on early warnings, evacuation protocols, gender, shelter management, and protection issues during disasters.

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	AMOUNT
Standalone ER4			
Central Asia Regional	Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice (DRRPP), Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS)	IFRC	\$1,150,000
	DRRPP	UNICEF	\$900,000
South Asia Regional	DRRPP	ADPC	\$1,185,000
	DRRPP	U.S. Forest Service (USFS)	\$300,000
	Program Support		\$74,375
Bangladesh	DRRPP	ADPC	\$684,157
	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	\$750,000
	DRRPP	CRS	\$2,000,000
	Agriculture, DRRPP, Shelter and Settlements	CARE	\$2,815,843
	DRRPP	BDRCS	\$250,000
Maldives	DRRPP	MRC	\$600,000
Nepal	Agriculture, Food Assistance, DRRPP, MPCA	Mercy Corps	\$4,400,000
	DRRPP	IOM	\$600,000
Pakistan	ERMS, MPCA, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	ACTED	\$1,000,000
	WASH	Concern Worldwide	\$1,150,000
	Food Assistance, Nutrition	WFP	\$4,423,500
Sri Lanka	DRRPP, ERMS, HCIMA	ACTED	\$3,349,999
	Agriculture, DRRPP, ERMS	Save the Children Federation (SCF)	\$3,127,379
	Natural and Technological Risks and Hazards	U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)	\$65,000
	Agriculture, DRRPP, ERMS	World Vision	\$3,350,000
	DRRPP	WFP	\$2,500,000
TOTAL STANDALONE ER4 FUNDING			\$34,675,253
Integrated ER4 With Response²			
Bangladesh	DRRPP	International Rescue Committee (IRC)	\$32,123
TOTAL INTEGRATED ER4 WITH RESPONSE FUNDING			\$32,123
TOTAL ER4 FUNDING IN FY 2023			\$34,707,376

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, 2023.

² Integrated ER4 With Response refers to programming that incorporates ER4 components within an active humanitarian response.

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
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at 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)