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**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

**GUYANA – Floods**

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2005

January 28, 2005

<b>NUMBERS AT A GLANCE</b>	<b>SOURCE</b>
192,000 people affected	Government of Guyana (GOG), January 25, 2005
32,000 people requiring immediate assistance	U.N. World Food Program (WFP), January 27, 2005

**Total USAID/OFDA Humanitarian Assistance to Guyana .....\$447,012**

**BACKGROUND**

- Since late December 2004, heavy rainfall has caused severe flooding in the administrative regions of West Demerara/Essequibo Islands, Demerara/Mahaica, and Mahaica/West Berbice which encompass 75 percent of Guyana’s population and include the capital city, Georgetown. According to the U.N. Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, rains over Georgetown have continued in January 2005, causing additional flooding of four to five feet in some villages near the East and West Demerara conservancy dams.
- As of January 25, the GOG’s Joint Operations Center (GOG/JOC) reported that a total of 192,000 residents had been directly affected by the flooding. According to the GOG/JOC, 43 temporary shelters are currently serving 3,772 persons, and five boats are being used to evacuate residents and supply food and potable water between Sophia and Paradise.
- On January 27, WFP reported that Demerara/Mahaica is the worst-affected of the three regions, with 32,000 people in need of immediate assistance. Of these, 10,000 people are likely to require food assistance for a minimum of 30 days. WFP identified pregnant and lactating women and children under five as particularly vulnerable.
- According to the GOG’s Civil Defense Committee (GOG/CDC), as of January 27, GOG engineers estimated that the flood waters will take between 30 and 39 days to dissipate, depending on new rainfall.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

- Since January 19, a USAID/OFDA Regional Advisor and a USAID/OFDA Latin America and Caribbean Consultant have been assessing emergency needs and coordinating USG relief efforts. On January 24, a second USAID/OFDA Regional Advisor and a USAID/OFDA Communications Officer traveled to Guyana to participate in needs assessments and contingency planning.
- On January 27, a USAID/OFDA Communications Officer participated in a multi-agency aerial assessment of the flood-affected area. The team observed between four and twelve inches of water in houses along the eastern side of Georgetown on the coast. In addition, the team noted that the encroachment of vegetation is impeding the free flow of water into canals, and sections of the embankment wall are slipping due to rushing water. The team identified the following needs: technical expertise to examine the conservancy, maintenance of the embankment and canals, and pumping stations to remove water from the conservancy into the rivers.
- On January 27, U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that the GOG/CDC had assumed responsibility for the reception, storage, and distribution of relief supplies.
- On January 24, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) issued an appeal for approximately \$1.7 million to support emergency relief activities, including food assistance and seed provision, water and sanitation and shelter activities, and the distribution of utensils and tools.
- On January 25, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) issued an appeal for \$543,000 to support emergency health activities, including water and sanitation projects, disease surveillance, and education.

**USG ASSISTANCE**

- On January 18, 2005, U.S. Ambassador to Guyana Roland W. Bullen declared a disaster due to the damage caused by the flooding. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 to the GOG/CDC for the provision of emergency relief items, including temporary shelter materials, medical supplies, and food assistance, as well as for the initial clearing and repair of roads and drainage canals.
- On January 24, USAID/OFDA provided an additional \$100,000 to USAID/Guyana for the local purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies and for logistical support to the UNDAC team.
- On January 25, USAID/OFDA airlifted 10,000 ten-liter water containers and 10,000 hygiene kits, valued at approximately \$72,500, excluding transport.
- In addition, USAID/OFDA is providing \$150,000 to support the PAHO appeal for emergency health activities.

**USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA**

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
GOG/CDC	Emergency relief supplies	Affected areas	\$50,000
USAID/Guyana	Emergency relief supplies	Affected areas	\$100,000
Guyana Red Cross	Hygiene kits and water containers	Affected areas	\$72,512
	Transport		\$74,500
PAHO	PAHO Appeal - Emergency health activities	Affected areas	\$150,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA</b>			<b>\$447,012</b>

<sup>1</sup>USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amounts as of January 28, 2005.

**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.
- 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, warehouse space, etc); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- Information on making effective donations can be found on the following websites:
  - USAID: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov), Keyword: Donations
  - The Center for International Disaster Information: [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org)
  - InterAction: “Guide to Appropriate Giving” at [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org)
- Information on choosing a charity to support can be found on the following websites:
  - Better Business Bureau: [www.give.org](http://www.give.org)
  - GuideStar (A National Database of Nonprofit Organizations): [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)
  - The American Institute of Philanthropy: [www.charitywatch.org](http://www.charitywatch.org)
  - Charity Navigator: [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org)
- Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int).