In November 2008, USAID assumed responsibility for disaster response and reconstruction in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), reflecting the transition of FSM and RMI from U.S.-administered trust territories to independent nations. Under the new arrangement, FEMA provides USAID with funding to conduct response and reconstruction activities following a U.S. presidential disaster declaration, and USAID maintains FEMA’s previous commitment to supplement host government efforts to provide humanitarian assistance in the event of a significant disaster. To provide a framework for U.S. Government (USG) disaster response and reconstruction in FSM and RMI under this hybrid agreement, USAID and FEMA developed an Operational Blueprint, which guides coordination between the two agencies. USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) collaborates closely with FEMA, as well as USAID/Philippines and USAID’s Bureau for Asia, to implement humanitarian programs in FSM and RMI.

### RECENT RESPONSE ACTIVITIES IN FSM AND RMI

- **RMI Drought:** Below-average rainfall—exacerbated by the 2015/2016 El Niño climatic event—resulted in drought conditions and water shortages across RMI, affecting approximately 21,000 people and contributing to a deterioration of agriculture, food security, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) conditions. On March 10, 2016, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, a.i., Sarah A. Nelson declared a disaster due to the humanitarian needs resulting from the drought. In response, USAID/OFDA provided the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with an initial $50,000 and deployed staff to RMI to conduct assessments and help coordinate response activities. On April 27, 2016, U.S. President Barack H. Obama signed a presidential disaster declaration, authorizing the release of federal funding for emergency relief and reconstruction assistance. USAID/OFDA subsequently provided more than $2.5 million in additional funding to IOM for the procurement and distribution of supplemental food assistance and WASH supplies to drought-affected communities. USAID/OFDA-supported response efforts in RMI concluded in May 2017.

- **Typhoon Maysak:** From March 29 to April 1, 2015, Typhoon Maysak crossed over FSM’s Chuuk and Yap states, causing four deaths, affecting approximately 29,700 people, and damaging houses, crops, fruit trees, and public infrastructure. On April 2, U.S. Ambassador Dorothea-Maria Rosen declared a disaster in FSM due to the effects of the typhoon. In response, USAID/OFDA provided an initial $50,000 and deployed staff to FSM to conduct assessments and help coordinate response activities. On April 28, 2015, President Obama issued a disaster declaration for FSM, authorizing the release of federal funding for emergency relief and reconstruction assistance from FEMA and other USG agencies. In total, USAID/OFDA provided nearly $8.1 million to IOM and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization to provide logistics support; distribute shelter materials and other relief items; support WASH interventions; and help restore agricultural production. USAID/Philippines-led reconstruction activities in FSM remain ongoing.

### USAID/OFDA REGIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR) PROGRAMS IN FSM AND RMI

- **Enhancing Humanitarian Coordination in the Pacific:** In FY 2017, USAID/OFDA provided $500,000 to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Regional Office for the Pacific in Suva, Fiji, to facilitate information sharing, initiate contingency planning, and enhance disaster response coordination among humanitarian actors in the Pacific. USAID/OFDA has provided nearly $2.2 million to OCHA since FY 2013 to strengthen humanitarian coordination in the Pacific.

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1 This funding figure does not include all costs associated with USAID/OFDA pre-positioned relief commodities distributed in response to the drought.
2 This funding figure does not include all costs associated with USAID/OFDA pre-positioned relief commodities distributed in response to Typhoon Maysak.
Building Disaster Management Capacity in FSM, Palau, and RMI: FSM, Palau, and RMI are vulnerable to a number of natural hazards, including drought, floods, and storms. With prior year USAID/OFDA funding, the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (MIRCS), Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS), and Palau Red Cross Society (PRCS)—supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies—continue to partner with local government agencies, businesses, and communities to build awareness of disaster response activities and cultivate a trained volunteer base for emergency responses. USAID/OFDA has provided nearly $1.5 million since FY 2013 to support the preparedness and mitigation activities of MIRCS, MRCS, and PRCS.

USAID/OFDA DRR and Pre-Positioning Programs in FSM and RMI

Increasing Resilience Among Vulnerable Communities in FSM: With more than $1.5 million in FY 2017 funding, USAID/OFDA is supporting Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to bolster the capacity of local authorities and communities in Yap to prepare for and recover from frequently occurring natural hazards, such as drought and typhoons. As part of the two-year program, CRS is facilitating the development of a national disaster risk management and climate change adaptation plan; training households to develop and adopt household-level preparedness plans; promoting effective hygiene practices; and supporting 300 vulnerable households to diversify or enhance agricultural livelihood strategies, thereby ensuring food sources and agricultural livelihoods are resilient to drought and typhoons.

Reducing Vulnerabilities Through School Collaborations: USAID/OFDA provided IOM $350,000 in FY 2017 to scale up the Community Adaption, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Education (CADRE+) program in FSM and RMI. The current phase of the CADRE+ program is targeting 4,500 school-aged children, 300 educators, and 7,500 community members with activities to improve resilience to natural and climate-induced hazards. Program activities include establishing community disaster preparedness and response committees, developing school emergency management plans, training teachers in climate change and evacuation center management, and supporting the Governments of FSM and RMI to implement national strategies for adaptation and disaster risk management. In addition, the program aims to facilitate planning and coordination among local, national, and regional stakeholders; assess the suitability of existing emergency evacuation centers; and equip 10 schools with emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers and water catchments. USAID/OFDA has supported the CADRE+ program in FSM and RMI since FY 2015.

Pre-Positioning Emergency Relief Commodities: Since FY 2010, USAID/OFDA has supported IOM to pre-position emergency relief supplies in three strategic locations throughout FSM and RMI and develop standby agreements with island-based organizations for logistical support during an emergency response, if necessary. In FY 2017, USAID/OFDA provided IOM with approximately $84,000 to support the pre-positioning of emergency relief supplies.

Bolstering Disaster Response Capacity: In FY 2016, USAID/OFDA partnered with the American Red Cross (AmCross) to initiate a multi-year program with MCRS to build local capacity and reduce communities’ vulnerability to disaster risks in FSM by improving sanitation infrastructure and increasing water supply. USAID/OFDA provided AmCross with $1.5 million to address WASH needs in disaster-prone areas, including conducting hygiene awareness activities and repairing sanitation facilities.