DOS PHOTOS

The U.S. and East Asia and the Pacific:

Assisting in Disaster Preparedness

The United States provides approximately $16.8 million in annual disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance in the East Asia and Pacific region. This funds efforts to lessen the impact of disasters and to improve the response capabilities of governments and assisting agencies. In addition, when major disasters occur, U.S. agencies, led by USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), respond with generous assistance.

BILATERAL ASSISTANCE

USAID, which provides the bulk of U.S. disaster assistance, focuses strongly on Southeast Asia. Programs aim to help mitigate floods, droughts, tsunamis, and other natural disasters. These efforts build up local and national government response capabilities, provide forecasting capabilities, and minimize the public health risks of disasters.

PAST U.S. DISASTER ASSISTANCE IN THE REGION

- 2004 Tsunami
- Cyclone Nargis in Burma
- Typhoon Frank in the Philippines
- Sichuan, China Earthquake

U.S. ANNUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE REGION (ESTIMATED)

- Bilateral- $8 million
- Regional- $500,000
- Through U.S. PACOM and ARF - $3.35million
- Tsunami Warning Systems - $4.975 million

REGIONAL EFFORTS

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

U.S. assistance helps Southeast Asian nations implement ASEAN's goals for disaster management and emergency response. U.S. assistance includes support for the establishment of an ASEAN Emergency Response Assistance Team for Cyclone Nargis relief, assistance for an ASEAN-wide Incident Command System for ASEAN response to domestic crises, and work on developing more effective needs assessments for disasters.

APEC's Task Force on Emergency Preparedness (TFEP) programs have strengthened community resilience to natural disasters and pandemics, improved disaster communication and damage assessment, and exchanged strategies on large-scale disaster recovery. The U.S., through TFEP, aims to mitigate business disruption, promote the economic benefits of disaster risk reduction investments, and highlight the importance of public-private partnerships.

U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

Joint efforts strengthen the ability of regional governments to coordinate in the event of large disasters requiring major, multilateral, civil-military responses. ARF efforts grow out of and sometimes expand the work of PACOM's Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) Program and Center of Excellence for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs (COE-DMHA). These centers develop coordination between regional militaries and with the humanitarian community. Programs include multinational exercises, development of common operating procedures, and raised awareness of international standards. ARF plans to host a Disaster Relief Exercise in the Philippines in mid-2009.

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)

The U.S. will continue to support the International Tsunami Information Center and the Pacific Tsunami Warning System. The U.S. provides interim tsunami forecast services for the Indian Ocean and other regions while working with the IOC to deliver tsunami warning expertise and capabilities to the Member States.