



US Forest Service International Programs

Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP)



DASP was created in 1985 to provide the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance—now USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)—with technical support in disaster response, management, planning, operations, and disaster risk reduction.

Response Management System

DASP has adapted the US Forest Service-developed Incident Command System (ICS) to organize emergency responses internationally. Under the overarching framework of BHA’s Response Management System (RMS)—similar to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)—DASP accesses this domestic expertise to develop, manage, and continually update many critical systems, procedures, guides, and tools to enhance and facilitate BHA’s disaster planning, management, and response.

Significant examples under the RMS include:

- Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs) and Response Management Team (RMTs);
- Field Operations Guide (FOG); and
- Position Task Books (PTBs).

DASP develops and provides training to USAID and other U.S. Government (USG) staff to ensure successful implementation of the RMS and to enhance and deepen BHA’s pool of response leaders. DASP also conducts after action reviews for all BHA’s large-scale responses, with an eye toward improving future operations.

Specialized Resources

Detailers

DASP bolsters BHA’s capacity to respond to disasters by mobilizing a roster of up to 250 disaster management experts from the Forest Service and other domestic agencies. Detailers provide BHA with short-term emergency surge capacity, averaging 80 work assignments each year for the full detailer pool. Forest Service employees are particularly well-suited to this work due to their familiarity with ICS and, in turn, their ability to quickly and seamlessly integrate into BHA’s operational systems. Skillsets include logistics, operations, geographic information, data analysis, emergency operations center management, disaster risk reduction, planning, programming, disaster assessment, facilitation, training, watershed management, safety and security, and a variety of other disciplines.

Wildfire Support

DASP provides access to substantial capabilities in wildland fire management, which BHA has mobilized to coordinate complex wildfire responses in Russia, Israel, South America, Central America, Australia, and Indonesia. DASP support includes the procurement and mobilization of personal protective and wildland firefighting equipment.

Equipment

DASP accesses domestic supply caches and purchasing mechanisms to provide specialized equipment that fulfills BHA’s emergency response commitments worldwide. DASP also helps to meet the support requirements of BHA’s field teams by providing necessary personal subsistence, safety, and survival equipment.

Mission Disaster Preparedness

In coordination with BHA’s field staff, DASP leads efforts to ensure that US Missions understand their own roles, the role and capabilities of BHA, and the processes and mechanisms for providing USG assistance in response to international disasters. These efforts enhance BHA’s ability to ensure timely, effective, and appropriate use of USG disaster response resources.

Disaster Risk Reduction

DASP provides access to Forest Service experts to plan and implement capacity building initiatives in target countries as part of BHA’s global strategy for disaster risk reduction. The fundamental objective of these programs is to integrate relevant and adaptable components of NIMS, such as the Incident Command System and Emergency Operations Center, into the disaster management systems of partner countries, helping host governments to better meet the needs of at-risk populations in crisis situations.

Contact Information

Jonathon Anderson, Program Coordinator
jonanderson@usaid.gov, +1-571-438-1073