



DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

EL SALVADOR - Earthquake

Date: June 19, 1982 (FY 82)

Location: Departments of San Salvador, La Paz, and La Libertad in the central zone, and Sonsonate and Ahuachapan in the western zone

No. Dead: 20

No. Affected: 30,000

Damage: Most damage occurred in areas west of the Lempa River. Forty cities with an average population of 12,000 were affected; 500 homes were destroyed and an additional 700 houses were damaged. Public buildings, schools, hospitals, roads, and utilities in the region all sustained damage.

The Disaster

On June 19, 1982, an earthquake registering 7.0 on the Richter scale struck El Salvador along the Guatemalan border. The regions west of the Lempa River, including the departments of San Salvador, La Paz, La Libertad, Sonsonate, and Ahuachapan were affected to some degree. Five hundred houses were completely destroyed, and 700 others partially damaged. In the city of Comasagua, 40 to 50% of the houses collapsed, mainly those of low income families. Two hospitals reported serious damage. Water, electric power, and telephone services were disrupted. A number of landslides blocked main highways and railroad lines. Numerous aftershocks of moderate intensity occurred for several weeks following the initial earthquake, causing additional damage and preventing people from returning to their homes.

Action Taken by the Government of El Salvador (GOES)

The National Emergency Committee, headed by the Vice President, was charged with the task of coordinating all relief operations. Three government agencies were of primary importance in the operations: the Ministry of Health provided medical personnel and supplies to affected areas; the Ministry of Public Works provided manpower to clear away rubble and debris and assist with reconstruction, mainly of public installations; and the Ministry of the Interior provided food to earthquake victims.

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Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government (USG)

On July 1, 1982, the U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador determined that the earthquake disaster warranted USG assistance and exercised his disaster relief authority. The USG contributed \$25,000 as follows: \$15,000 for the repair of five surgery operating rooms in the main public hospital in San Salvador (the United Nations Development Programme also contributed \$15,000 to this project); \$5,000 for the purchase of building materials for destroyed housing in the poor sections of Comasagua, San Miguel Tepezontes, and San Antonio Masahuat; and \$5,000 for the repair of health centers in Ahuachapan.

TOTAL \$25,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies *

None reported.

Assistance Provided by the International Community

International Organizations

The United Nations Development Programme - contributed \$30,000 from assistance funds, half of which was used (in conjunction with USG funds) for the repair of five surgery operating rooms in the main public hospital of San Salvador.

The League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS) - contributed \$56,603 (of which \$27,623 was provided by the Red Cross Societies of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Switzerland) to the Salvadoran Red Cross for the local purchase of medical and surgical equipment, gasoline, clothing and blankets, food-stuffs, and supplies for temporary shelters.

Governments

Argentina - made available 5,365 MT of wheat; value not reported.

Germany, Federal Republic of - contributed \$14,286 in cash.

Voluntary Agencies

Netherlands Red Cross - cash contribution through LORCS.

New Zealand Red Cross - cash contribution through LORCS.

Norway Red Cross - cash contribution through LORCS.

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Switzerland Red Cross - cash contribution through LORCS.

TOTAL \$100,889

* Please note: the listings of assistance provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies and the International Community are compiled from reports submitted voluntarily to OFDA. It is not always possible to verify the accuracy of these reports, nor the dollar value of in-kind contributions. As a result, the total dollar values indicated in these sections should be taken as representative figures.