



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

MAURITIUS - Cyclone

Data

Date: January 13-17, 1982 (FY 82)

Location: Island of Rodriguez

No. Dead: None reported

No. Affected: Entire population of 32,000 affected to some degree; 500 persons housed in mass care centers

Damage: 70 houses destroyed or damaged; damage to public buildings and public works estimated at nearly \$650,000; serious losses in the agricultural sector

The Disaster

From January 13-17, 1982, Cyclone Damia, with gusts reaching 113 mph, pounded the small island of Rodriguez (about 100 sq. km) in Mauritius. The storm's effects were most intense on the 16th and 17th. While there were no human deaths or serious injuries, the strong winds and heavy rains (nearly 12 inches in less than 24 hours) caused considerable damage to homes, crops, livestock, and infrastructure. Seventy dwellings were destroyed or damaged, forcing the removal of 500 people to mass care centers. Sixty miles of unpaved road (which account for most of the road system on Rodriguez) were heavily damaged. The water supply was disrupted as were telephone service and electricity distribution. Some hospital equipment became inoperable as a result of power surges before the electrical supply was cut off. Agricultural facilities, crops, and stocks suffered serious damage: about 25% of the corn crop, the island's staple food, was destroyed; 10% of the coconut trees and 25% of marketable coconut fruit were lost; limes, lemons, bananas, and pawpaws were severely affected; 17% of privately owned live-stock and poultry and 4% of cooperative societies' stocks were lost; several fishing boats were damaged; and 15% of forest areas and 10% of forest nurseries were damaged.

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Action Taken by the Government of Mauritius (GOM)

GOM officials invited representatives of the European Economic Community, the United Nations Development Program, the World Food Program, and the French, United Kingdom, and U.S. missions to visit Rodriguez January 19-20 to assess damages. Subsequently, the GOM appealed to the donor community for disaster assistance.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

U.S. mission personnel who assessed the situation on Rodriguez concluded that the disaster was of such magnitude as to warrant USG assistance. After receiving an official request from the GOM Minister of External Affairs for equipment and drugs for the health sector, the U.S. Ambassador, Robert C. Gordon, made a disaster determination on February 12 and exercised his disaster assistance authority. At a ceremony on February 25, Ambassador Gordon presented the following locally purchased items to the GOM: three large appliances for hospital use (one 24,000 BTU air conditioner, one 16 cubic ft. freezer, and one 13 cubic ft. refrigerator) and medical supplies (ampicillin capsules/syrup and plaster of paris), with a total value of.....\$4,393

In response to a further GOM request for USG assistance in locally procuring road repair equipment and fertilizer, A.I.D.'s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) increased the Ambassador's \$25,000 authority to permit the Embassy to provide the following: agricultural fertilizer at a cost of \$8,706 and road construction machinery and equipment valued at \$18,516.....\$27,222

Total International Disaster Assistance (IDA) funds.....\$31,615

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None Reported.

Assistance Provided by the International Community*

International Organizations

European Economic Community (EEC) - provided drugs and equipment for the veterinary services; materials for the Central Water Authority; and construction materials for one bridge; total valued at \$35,000.

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Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) - supplied five tons of groundnut seeds, ten tons of maize seeds, and 200 pounds of onion seeds; total valued at \$18,000.

United Nations Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) - provided tools for the telecommunications department and medicines; total valued at \$7,000.

Governments

Australia - gave \$50,000 in cash.

Egypt - provided drugs valued at \$25,000.

France - provided equipment and materials for the Central Electricity Board with a total value of \$40,000.

India - supplied drugs, value not reported.

United Kingdom - gave equipment for hospital services and chain saws for the forestry department; total valued at \$3,000.

TOTAL \$178,000

* 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.