

### MOZAMBIQUE - Floods

Date: February 7-12, 1985

Location: Maputo, Gaza, Manica, and Sofala provinces in south and central Mozambique

No. Dead: 8

No. Affected: 500,000 directly affected by disruption of food delivery

Damage: Over 14,000 hectares of farmland were flooded causing significant losses of rice, maize, sweet potato, and butterbean crops. The bridges at Moamba, Chiomoio, and Boane and 400 meters of National Route 1 were completely washed away. Although no official damage estimates were made, the government appealed for over \$500,000 for repair work.

#### The Disaster

After four long years of devastating drought, the rains returned to Mozambique with a vengeance in early February 1985. Torrential rains fell steadily for six days on the southern and central provinces, causing the Limpopo, Incomati, Punge, and Zambezi rivers to overflow. The rains were a mixed blessing to farmers, bringing an end to the drought, but flooding several thousand hectares of farmland and destroying crops. There were eight storm-related deaths reported, two from electrocution by downed power lines. The flooding also disrupted several of the vital transportation links used to deliver food to famine-stricken populations in these areas. The country's most important highway, National Route No. 1, was cut in several places and 400 meters of it were completely washed away. The bridges at Moamba, Chiomoio, and Boane were also washed away and landslides destroyed several segments of the southern railroad network. Streets in the low-lying areas of Maputo city were submerged beneath a meter of water.

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### Action Taken by the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique (GPRM)

In 1984 Cyclone Domoina (see OFDA Annual Report FY 84, Mozambique - Cyclone) destroyed much of Maputo's infrastructure, most of which had not been repaired before the flooding. However, due to their experience dealing with the cyclone disaster, local and national authorities were better prepared to evacuate people living along the rivers and relief operations were better organized. Lacking foreign exchange reserves, the GPRM appealed to the international community for over \$500,000 for highway repairs. The GPRM's Department of Roads and Bridges requested international donations to purchase culverts, 12-ton tipper trucks, cement and bitumen for road pavement, and diesel fuel for earth-moving equipment. A parastatal construction company was contracted to reconstruct the 400 meters of destroyed roadway and resurface an additional 2,000 meters on National Route No. 1 with asphalt.

### Assistance Provided by the United States Government

On February 22, Ambassador De Vos determined that a disaster situation warranting USG assistance existed. The Ambassador's \$25,000 Disaster Authority was provided as a grant to the GPRM's Ministry of Construction to be used to purchase cement, asphalt, and fuel for rehabilitation work on National Route No. 1 between Palmeira and Xinavave.

TOTAL	\$25,000
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### Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

### Assistance Provided by the International Community

#### International Organizations

EEC - provided a grant of \$228,000, specifically for emergency aid to flood victims.

#### Governments

Italy - contributed \$352,000 for reconstruction of the bridge over the Incomati River at Moamba.

Netherlands - provided a \$16,000 cash grant to UNDRO to reimburse the cost of helicopter operations for rescue and relief missions.

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United Kingdom - donated ten pipe arch culverts, two 12-ton tipper trucks, and two radio communication units for repair crews working on National Route No. 1 (estimated cost \$134,000).

TOTAL            \$730,000