



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

EL SALVADOR - Displaced Persons

Date: April 1984

Location: Departments of Morazan, San Miguel, and La Union

No Dead: Not reported

No. Affected: 6,400

Damage: Not reported

The Disaster

After four years of civil strife in El Salvador, the number of people displaced by the conflict had grown to approximately 500,000. By April 1984, some 309,000 displaced people were registered with the government and receiving assistance, while another 150,000 to 200,000 were unregistered. In addition, several thousand people had taken refuge in neighboring countries.

Toward the end of April, reports indicated significantly increased numbers and movement of displaced persons and returning refugees in the departments of Morazan, San Miguel, and La Union. Approximately 1,400 Salvadoran refugees had returned from Honduras, citing the relocation of the Honduran refugee camps away from the border as the reason. Additionally, an estimated 5,000 people had fled their villages in northern Morazan and San Miguel, reportedly to escape both conscription and pressure to support the guerrillas.

Many of the newly displaced were soon accommodated in surrounding communities, particularly in the marginal areas around the city of San Miguel. However, some 400 families (2,200 persons) remained in the care of government and voluntary relief agencies. Of that number, about 200 families were moved to two abandoned Salvadoran Agrarian Transformation

Institute (ISTA) farms, one in Moncagua, San Miguel, and the other in San Carlos, Morazan. The other 200 families were temporarily sheltered in public facilities in San Miguel.

Action Taken by the Government of El Salvador (GOES)

The National Commission for Assistance to Displaced Persons (CONADES) and the GOES Ministry of Health provided emergency food, shelter, and medical services to the newly displaced persons. The Salvadoran army transported returning refugees from the Honduran border to the city of San Miguel, where they were housed in public accommodations.

CONADES moved approximately 200 of the displaced families to two abandoned ISTA farms, where limited shelter was available. The GOES proposed the construction of emergency shelters for up to 200 additional families on the two farms.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government

The U.S. Ambassador, Thomas R. Pickering, determined on May 30, 1984 that an ongoing disaster existed in El Salvador with respect to persons displaced by the continuing civil strife. In view of unconfirmed reports of additional displaced persons in northern Morazan and San Miguel, he recommended that USG resources be made available to provide emergency shelter for 400 families.

In response to the Mission's proposal, OFDA authorized an increase of \$75,000 to the existing funds for emergency housing for displaced persons. The increase would be used to initiate the construction of shelters for 200 families on the ISTA farms. Other improvements on the farms would be carried out through works projects of the USG/GOES "Health and Jobs for Displaced Families" program.

TOTAL \$75,000

It should be noted that OFDA had already provided \$546,372 in fiscal year 1984 for the continuing displaced persons disaster in El Salvador. For a detailed account of the disaster and all USG assistance prior to the new determination, see the OFDA case report, EL SALVADOR/Displaced Persons (FY 80, FY 81 and FY 82).

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported.

Assistance Provided by the International Community

International Organizations

ICRC - which had been active in the displaced persons relief effort in El Salvador since 1980, provided food, medicines, and clothing to the newly displaced people.