



DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

ETHIOPIA - Drought

Date: Beginning July 1987 and ongoing

Location: Eritrea, Tigray, Wello, Harerge, Shewa, Gamo Gofa, Sidamo, Gonder, and Bale regions

No. Dead: 0

No. Affected: 5,000,000 - 7,000,000

Damage: Northern regions had near total crop losses in some areas; early estimates placed 1988 food needs at 950,000 MT.

The Disaster

Please note: At the time of publication, the Ethiopia drought emergency was ongoing. Additional U.S. and international assistance is expected to be pledged toward the disaster and will be reported in the OFDA Annual Report FY 1988.

The Meher season (June and July) is normally the time when the major rains fall throughout much of Ethiopia. In 1987, June and July passed with little to no significant rain throughout much of the country, with the north most severely affected. In August, a number of areas received heavy rains which were in some cases destructive rather than beneficial to crops; other areas remained extremely dry. Light rains which fell in September were insufficient and too late. The rain failure devastated crops in Eritrea, Tigray, Wello, and Harerge and caused considerable crop losses in Shewa, Gamo Gofa, Sidamo, Gonder, and Bale.

By the end of July, it was already becoming clear that Ethiopia was facing a drought potentially as serious as the one in 1984-85. The Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (GPDRE) sent assessment teams out to survey the extent of the drought and estimate food needs. Based on initial estimates of crop losses, on September 7 the GPDRE issued an appeal for 950,000 MT of emergency food, a figure

that the United Nations in Ethiopia endorsed. A better estimate of food needs was expected in November or December, after actual harvest losses were known. FAO and GPDRE teams returned to the field in October to conduct assessments.

Representatives from PVOs and donor nations were already present in Ethiopia when the drought began to unfold. Most had been involved in the previous drought just two years earlier. When the rains failed again in 1987, the international donor community immediately began to plan for relief operations. Representative from embassies conducted field assessments to confirm the extent of the drought and NGOs working in rural areas shared their knowledge of local conditions. Once needs were identified, relief officials attempted to position food early to avoid mass movements of people to feeding centers. During the 1984-1985 drought, thousands of lives were lost in camps around feeding centers when people weakened by malnutrition and living in crowded and unsanitary conditions succumbed to diseases. If food could be delivered in time, people could receive one-month rations and return home again.

The success of supplying relief to people affected by the drought hinged on the capacity of available infrastructure to receive and distribute food. Port handling equipment, truck fleets, and roadways had all deteriorated since the large food relief operation in 1985. Extremely rough terrain, underdeveloped roads, and military activity created very difficult conditions for overland transport. A multi-donor Relief Transport Mission performed a study of the transport capacity available within Ethiopia to meet impending food emergency needs. Nine members from different countries and international organizations examined port, truck, rail, and air transportation capacity and made recommendations on additional transport needs. In the study they identified a requirement for 300 additional trucks in the north, spare parts for many existing trucks, port handling equipment, storage facilities and aircraft. The U.N. established an "Emergency Transport Fund" to be used as a contingency for major airlift operations.

Even before pledged food contributions arrived, relief agencies began moving in-country stocks of food. Some of the most affected areas would need food by November and December. On October 23, 1987 an incident occurred which put in question the possibility of moving enough food in time. A convoy of relief trucks carrying food was attacked by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in Eritrea. Sixteen 30-ton trucks belonging to the WFP Transport Operation in Ethiopia (WTOE) and carrying 360 MT of WFP food were burned. CRS lost seven trucks carrying 94 MT of USG food. The road was closed and transport of relief food was temporarily halted. Donors called for an "open roads/own risk" policy in which clearly marked humanitarian relief convoys traveling without government escort would be permitted to move freely along the road. The U.N. Resident Coordinator authorized a resumption of U.N. relief convoys on November 9.

Action Taken by the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (GPDRE)

When the July rains failed and early indicators pointed to drought, the GPDRE began to assess the severity of the crop damage and the potential food shortage. In August, the government dispatched seven teams of members from the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), and the Central Statistics Organization to the affected regions. Although the real extent of crop losses would not be known until the harvest in November, this preliminary survey clearly indicated that there would be a severe food shortage. In mid-October, the Chief Commissioner of the RRC together with the Prime Minister and other GPDRE senior officials visited drought-stricken regions to observe the situation first-hand.

The GPDRE allocated 50,000 MT of food from its food security reserve for relief purposes. In addition, President Mengistu approved the transfer of 120 million Ethiopian birr (about \$60 million) to be used for the drought emergency. In order to meet the greater need for trucks to transport food in the north, the government's Ethiopian Freight Transport Corporation (EFTC) moved 50 trucks from the south.

The RRC convened regular meetings with the international community to discuss relief needs and related activities. The government cooperated with international organizations, donor nations, and non-governmental organizations in allowing representatives access to drought areas to assess conditions. Requests by the ICRC, the U.N., and NGOs to lease privately owned trucks, and to bring in aircraft to begin relief airlifts were approved. The GPDRE also agreed to hold port charges to the level agreed upon during the previous drought emergency in 1985.

Assistance Provided the United States Government

The A.I.D.-sponsored Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) signaled the USG that the drought was expected to lead to a serious food shortage. The USG recognized a need to act quickly and as early as August approved 10,000 MT of emergency food for Ethiopia. In September teams of FFP officers and officials from USAID/Addis Ababa conducted field assessments in Harerge, Gonder, Gojam, and Shewa regions. Their observations confirmed the severity of the drought.

On September 14, U.S. Chargé James R. Cheek declared that the drought constituted a disaster. In support of the U.N.'s leading role in coordinating the emergency response, OFDA obligated \$1.5 million the rehabilitation and maintenance of the WTOE truck fleet. This truck fleet was established during the 1984-85 drought as an independent operation to move donor food in Ethiopia. Concern for adequate transportation resources led OFDA to make further

contributions in this area. Based on the needs identified in the WFP transport study, OFDA contributed \$1,063,000 to WFP for the purchase of 28 trailers and \$1,292,000 to Air Serv International for the purchase of two Twin Otter aircraft for use by PVOs.

A number of officials from A.I.D./Washington went to Ethiopia to observe drought conditions, review food handling and distribution capabilities, and meet with PVO representatives and government officials to discuss ways to improve relief operations. A visit by OFDA Director Julia V. Taft, OFDA Assistant Director for Africa Tim Knight, and FFP Director for Africa Bill Pearson in November, and a later trip by A.I.D. Administrator M. Alan Woods led to further U.S. commitments.

A.I.D. increased its staff in the Ethiopia Mission in order to better manage relief activities. OFDA contributed by providing USAID/Addis Ababa with \$20,000 to fund an Ethiopian transportation expert. OFDA also supplied a \$307,000 grant to UNDP as the USG contribution toward the U.N. Emergency Prevention and Preparedness Group's (EPPG) professional staff in Ethiopia. These funds covered the cost of two field monitors, one logistical information/coordination officer, two drivers, one secretary, vehicles, and related support costs.

A major commitment of emergency food was made on September 17 with the approval of 114,252 MT. The food was channeled through four PVOs who had worked with A.I.D. in the past and who had experience in food distribution programs in Ethiopia. The food was provided by Food for Peace PL-480 Title II programs and by USDA Section 416 commodities. Ocean freight and internal transport costs were also covered under these programs. In addition, OFDA provided funds for program support, which included such costs as field distribution staff, vehicles, office equipment, and other operational expenses. Later LRCS, ICRC, and the Missionaries of Charity (MC) requested food. A total of 8,346 MT of food and associated transport costs were approved for these organizations.

The USG commodities already committed are initial contributions to ease the drought emergency. The United States expects to be involved in relief efforts throughout FY 1988.

Summary of USG Assistance

FY 1987

Rehabilitation and maintenance of the WTOE truck fleet.....\$1,500,000
 Grant to UNDP for EPPG's professional staff.....\$307,000
 Partial internal transport costs for FFP-donated food (FFP funds).....\$1,527,200
 Total OFDA.....\$1,807,000
 Total FFP.....\$1,527,200
 Total FY 1987.....\$3,334,200

FY 1988

Hire of aircraft for OFDA Director's visit to Ethiopia.....\$3,000
 Mission allotment for Ethiopian transportation expert.....\$20,000
 Grant to WFP for purchase of 28 trailers.....\$1,063,000
 Grant to Air Serv International for 2 Twin Otter aircraft.....\$1,619,000
 PVO program costs funded by OFDA: CARE - \$810,400;
 FHI -\$936,725; SCF/US - \$151,373.....\$1,898,498
 FFP funds for 132,623 MT of food and related transport costs
 (see table below).....\$45,256,400
 Total OFDA.....\$4,603,498
 Total FFP.....\$45,256,400
 Total FY 1988.....\$49,859,898
 TOTAL \$53,194,098

Summary of FFP Assistance

Sponsor	Program & Commodity	Quantity (MT)	Commodity Cost (\$)	Transport Cost (\$)	Total Cost (\$)
CARE	Title II: vegoil	1,125	801,000	225,000	1,026,000
	Sec. 416: wheat	31,250	3,625,000	4,687,500	8,312,500
CRS/MC	Title II: 200 MT pinto beans; 1,560 MT bulgur; 186 MT vegoil; 400 MT NFDM	2,346	561,900	574,900	1,136,800

Sponsor	Program & Commodity	Quantity (MT)	Commodity Cost (\$)	Transport Cost (\$)	Total Cost (\$)
FHI	Title II: 365 MT vegoil, 210 MT CSM	575	317,600	159,400	477,000
	Sec. 416: wheat	6,300	730,800	1,431,500	2,162,300
ICRC	Title II: pinto beans	2,000	1,000,000	250,000	1,250,000
CRS/JRP	Title II: 8,700 MT bulgur; 4,800 MT NFD; 4,325 MT vegoil	17,825	5,200,000	5,342,600	10,542,600
	Sec. 416: wheat	51,100	5,927,600	9,962,400	15,890,000
LRCS	Sec. 416: wheat	4,000	500,000	431,600	931,600
SCF/US	Title II: 1,283 MT NFD; 569 MT vegoil	1,852	546,900	410,300	957,200
	Sec. 416: wheat	14,250	1,653,000	2,444,600	4,097,600
TOTAL		132,623	\$20,863,800	\$25,919,800*	\$46,783,600

* includes \$1,527,200 FY 1987 funds

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

CARE - commenced an emergency food distribution program in Harerge. In the first phase of the program, scheduled to run from November 1987 through June 1988, CARE will distribute 32,375 MT of U.S.-donated food.

CRS - conducted relief operations in cooperation with other voluntary organizations under the consortium of Joint Relief Partnership (JRP) which operates in Tigray, Eritrea, Harerge, Shewa, Wello, Gonder, Arsi, Sidamo, Wellega and Keffa.

FHI - began to distribute 22,500 MT of U.S.-donated food in Shewa, Gonder, and Wello using food-for-work projects. For the initial phase (through April 1988) FHI contributed \$219,701 of its own funds and will use A.I.D. funds for field operating expenses.

SCF/US - started a feeding program in the districts of Yifat and Timuga in Shewa Region using 16,102 MT of U.S.-donated food in the first phase.

TOTAL \$219,701

Assistance Provided by the International Community

International Organizations

In September, a nine-member, multi-donor team organized by WFP assessed the transport capacity available within Ethiopia to handle the food emergency. The study reported on port, truck, rail, and air transportation capacity and made recommendations on what inputs would be required for the expected food shortage. The needs outlined in the study were generally accepted by the RRC and the donors, who over the next several months collectively worked to meet the needs.

EEC - pledged 100,000 MT of food; provided spare parts for trucks and equipment for the road network; and contributed water cans, medicine, tents, and blankets.

FAO - conducted an extensive survey of 1987 crop production in Ethiopia and estimated the extent of food shortages for 1988.

WFP - pledged 51,300 MT of food and extended its role in food transport for at least one year. WTOE agreed to move 30 of its trucks to the north.

Governments

Australia - pledged 11,000 MT, \$1,370,000 for food transport and purchase of non-food emergency items for the north, and \$750,000 for the EPPG Emergency Transport Fund.

Austria - pledged 2,000 MT and \$41,000 to the EPPG Emergency Transport Fund.

Canada - pledged food and non-food aid, valued at \$10,000,000.

Finland - pledged 250 MT of food.

Germany, Fed. Rep. - donated \$83,000 for a special consignment of supplies for UNICEF, pledged 20,000 MT of food, and donated \$750,000 to the EPPG Emergency Transport Fund.

Italy - pledged 15,000 MT and \$2,400,000 to repair Fiat trucks.

Netherlands - pledged 20,100 MT of food.

Switzerland - pledged 2,000 MT of food

United Kingdom - pledged 10,000 MT of food (valued at \$3,100,000) and \$840,000 for distribution costs; pledged \$1,000,000 to the EPPG Emergency Transport Fund; and agreed to provide 8 tractors for the port of Massawa, 7 replacement grain dump trucks and spare parts for the port of Assab, 105 tarpaulins and 6,500 pallets.

Non-Governmental Organizations

Band Aid - pledged 20 40-MT trucks.

Redd Barna (SCF/Norway) - pledged 10,040 MT of food.

TOTAL \$20,334,000