

PN-AAM-120

ISA 15516

**OFDA**  
**Disaster**  
**Case Reports**

**The Gambia Food Shortage**  
**September 1980**

**Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance**  
**Agency for International Development**  
**Washington, D.C. 20523**

## THE GAMBIA - Food Shortage

### Data

Date: September 1980 (FY 80)

Location: Countrywide

No. Dead: None reported

No. Affected: 500,000

Damage: Extensive damage to maize, millet, and groundnut crops.

### The Disaster

Late and inadequate rainfall during the planting period for the early millet and maize crop severely reduced the yield and quality of The Gambia's principal food crops. The country's principal cash crop, groundnuts, was also seriously affected, and, as a result, the country had insufficient cash to either purchase needed food or transport food donated by the international community.

### Action Taken by the Government of The Gambia (GOTG)

In August 1980, the GOTG's Cabinet Committee on Drought Control estimated the country's food requirements at 14,000 MT and appealed to the international community for food assistance. Because the GOTG had no funds available to pay for internal transport of the food, it also appealed for financial assistance to cover these costs. The Ministry of Local Government and the National Food Coordinator requested that donors deliver contributed food directly to the divisional headquarters of the five affected regions. There the grain could be stored before being distributed to the villages within the division.

### Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

The USG provided 4,000 MT of P.L. 480, Title II sorghum to the GOTG in response to its request for food aid.

On June 2, 1980, the U.S. Ambassador to The Gambia declared that a disaster of sufficient magnitude existed in The Gambia to warrant the use of disaster relief funds to assist the GOTG to internally transport emergency food. The USG contributed \$29,000 to cover inland transport of 4,000 MT of PL 480, Title II sorghum from the Gambian points of entry at Bar and Farafenni to divisional headquarters distribution points in Bassa, Ybk, Brikama, Kerewan, and Tendaba.

TOTAL \$29,000

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Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided by the International Community \*

The European Economic Community contributed 2,600 MT of food, the value of which was not reported.

The World Food Program of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations contributed 2,000 MT of food, the value of which was not reported, and \$40,000 to cover costs of transporting the food from point of entry to the distribution centers.

TOTAL        \$40,000

\* Please note: the figure for total international assistance is an approximation. In many cases the cash value of in kind aid is unavailable.