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OFDA
Disaster
Case Reports

Senegal Drought/Famine
1979-1980

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

SENEGAL - Drought/Famine

Data

Date: 1979-80 (FY 80)

Location: Fleuve, Louga, and Senegal Oriental regions

No. Dead: None reported

No. Affected: 950,000

Damage: Drought during 1979-80 caused serious crop failures in Fleuve, Louga, and Senegal Oriental regions and also increased vulnerability to and incidence of disease.

The Disaster

Poor rainfall during 1979 and 1980 contributed to inadequate yields of Senegal's basic food crops, including rice, sorghum, and millet. In the Fleuve and Louga regions, total rainfall was less than 50% of normal. This shortfall produced an emergency situation in the region which included food shortages and concomitant increased vulnerability to disease and malnutrition.

Action Taken by the Government of Senegal (GOS)

In late January 1980, the GOS appealed to international donors for food assistance. The GOS distributed 9,000 MT of millet initially and in June began distributing 28,000 MT of emergency stocks of millet purchased from ONCAD, the Senegalese National Cooperative and Development Assistance Office. This food was distributed in Fleuve, Louga, and Senegal Oriental, the areas most seriously affected by the drought.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

In response to an appeal for food and medical aid by the GOS, the U.S. Ambassador to Senegal declared on June 19, 1980, that a disaster of sufficient magnitude to warrant USG assistance existed in Senegal.

The USG donated 8,000 MT of PL 480, Title II sorghum valued at \$944,000 to Senegal to feed some of the 950,000 people affected by the drought and resulting food shortage.....\$944,000

The USG provided a grant of \$600,000 to the GOS to cover the costs of handling and transporting the 8,000 MT of Title II

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sorghum from Dakar to distribution points in the Fleuve and Louga areas.....\$600,000

The USG awarded a grant to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) for \$337,620 for the local purchase and distribution of medicines and vitamins in Fleuve, Louga, and Senegal Oriental regions. Medicines were distributed by CRS to persons in the affected regions through the government's 98 existing health centers in the affected regions.....\$337,620

TOTAL \$1,881,620

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies *

Through its existing program of Food and Nutrition in Senegal, and its nationwide health monitoring efforts, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) was able to recognize the potential adverse effects of the food shortage early on. CRS identified the medicines and vitamins which would be needed to combat and reduce the incidence of malnutrition, bilharzia, malaria, and amoebic dysentery, and requested a grant from the USG to purchase and distribute these medicines and vitamins in the affected areas.

CRS also contributed medicines valued at \$97,365.

TOTAL \$97,365

Assistance Provided by the International Community *

The European Economic Community provided a grant to the GOS of one million units of account for internal transport of 8,000 MT of GOS millet and other human and animal food stocks for a total value of \$751,800.

TOTAL \$751,800

* Please note: the figures for total U.S. voluntary agency and International assistance are an approximation. In many cases the value of in kind aid is unavailable.