

OFDA  
**Disaster  
Case Reports**

Djibouti Drought  
1980

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



## DJIBOUTI - Drought

### Data

Date: 1980 (FY 80)

Location: Entire country, especially the districts of Tadjourah and Obock

No. Affected: Approximately 145,000

Damage: Widespread malnutrition among children; livestock losses 50% of 1978 levels

### The Disaster

Djibouti has always been subject to a cyclical pattern of drought but drought conditions in recent years have become a semi-permanent crisis in all of the Horn of Africa. Rainfall deficits between 1977 and 1980 resulted in a gradual, serious degradation of grazing areas. The government estimated that more than 50% of the livestock reported in the 1978 census (including 500,000 goats and 400,000 sheep) were lost by 1980. As a result, Djibouti's nomadic population was seriously threatened. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) reported in May 1980 that 30% of the nomadic population had lost 90 to 100% of its livestock due to drought and disease, while the remainder had lost up to 50% of its livestock, and that the nutritional status of this population was beginning to degenerate rapidly. By the end of October 1980, CRS reported some 26,393 destitute nomads registered at camps, and another 119,000 needed partial assistance. The drought situation was exacerbated by the presence in Djibouti of refugees from Ethiopia and Somalia.

### Action Taken by the Government of the Republic of Djibouti (GROD)

The GROD's Office of National Assistance to Refugees and Needy Persons (ONARS) set up temporary camps for destitute nomads. ONARS organized a distribution system for relief supplies and provided basic foods. Using GROD funds ONARS purchased 400 MT of dura, 50 MT of cooking oil, 40 MT of dates, and 50 MT of sugar. In addition, potable water was trucked to the camps and to watering points for livestock. The GROD also appealed to the World Food Program (WFP) and other potential donors for additional food supplies.

The Djibouti Red Crescent Society (DRCS), with assistance from the League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS), provided training for local workers, food supplies, transport, medical supplies, and other medical services.

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Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

On June 11, 1980, the Government of the Republic of Djibouti, through its Office of National Assistance to Refugees and Needy Persons (ONARS), formally requested U.S. assistance for its nomads on account of drought. ONARS requested special U.S. help in the procurement of food commodities locally to bridge a gap created by the expected arrival of WFP foods later in the year. The U.S. Charge determined that a disaster situation existed and requested funds from A.I.D.'s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

OFDA requested Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a voluntary agency active in Djibouti, to administer an emergency relief program for some 45,000 Djibouti nomads seriously affected by drought conditions. On June 20, 1980, CRS signed an agreement with OFDA calling for CRS to procure food commodities and shelter material, and to monitor the distribution of the commodities through ONARS to see that they were transported, stored, and distributed to individual nomads and their families.

CRS administered the relief program through October 31, 1980. During this period 35.2 MT of vegoil and 79.4 MT of rice was procured, as well as 30 sq. meters of shelter material. The total expended by CRS was.....\$107,000

CRS also procured an additional 26,000 sq. meters of shelter material using the Ambassador's discretionary disaster relief fund.....\$25,000

TOTAL            \$132,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies \*

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) - located food commodities and shelter material purchased with USG funds; provided management and end use monitoring of U.S.-funded relief operation; provided additional shelter material (\$25,000) and 10 MT of blankets and used clothing (\$32,700); CRS Rice Bowl provided storage containers (\$20,000); total assistance valued at \$77,700.

TOTAL            \$77,700

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### Assistance Provided by the International Community \*

#### International Organizations

UNICEF - assistance from UNICEF's regular budget: drugs, medical supplies, cash grants for food distribution workers (\$27,800); emergency relief grant to begin funding a drinking water program (\$175,000); at government request a water supply consultant sent in May 1980. Total assistance valued at \$202,800.

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) - cash contribution for high protein supplementary foods valued at \$170,000.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - 80 MT of SEF (Swedish Emergency Food - high protein fish cornmeal); "large quantities" of tomato paste. Value of assistance not reported.

World Food Program (WFP) - 2,370 MT of rice, 156 MT of vegoil to feed 65,000 people (\$803,400); 3,000 MT of rice, 234 MT of vegoil to feed 65,000 people for 6 months (value not reported). Total value of assistance \$803,400.

European Economic Community (EEC) - 30 MT of butteroil through Djibouti Red Crescent, value not reported; 100 MT of non-fat milk powder through ONARS, value not reported; 165 MT of butteroil (\$995,384), 200 MT of milk powder (\$385,855), 180 MT of sugar (\$145,800) all through CRS; 1,600 MT of cornmeal and transport costs, value not reported. Total assistance valued at \$1,527,039.

#### Governments

Ethiopia - 2,000 MT of dura grain; 400 MT of sugar; 1,000 MT of sorghum; values not reported.

Iraq - cash contribution for water trucks valued at \$2,200,000.

Sudan - 100 MT of sorghum; 1,000 MT of dura grain; values not reported.

#### Voluntary Agencies

League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS) - through the Djibouti Red Crescent provided medical supplies, personnel, logistical and administrative support.

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Caritas - staple foods, blankets, clothing, and general relief; value not reported.

Caritas - Norway - 10 MT of fish protein concentrate through CRS; value not reported.

Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD-UK) - cash contribution of \$35,000; food and water storage containers, shelter materials, food, general relief (\$187,782); all through CRS for a total value of \$222,782.

Catholic Overseas Aid (COA - New Zealand) - cash contribution through CRS of \$7,666.

Enfance et Portage (France) - medical assistance and medical team; value not reported.

Lutheran World Federation (LWF) - staple foods plus transport (\$10,000); 2.5 MT of fish protein concentrate (FPC) plus air transport (\$57,270); all through CRS valued at \$67,270.

OXFAM (UK) - 2,700 blankets plus air transport through CRS valued at \$25,000.

Save the Children (Sweden) - 80 MT of SEF high protein food valued at \$120,000.

TOTAL \$5,345,957

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

This publication does not require CRB approval.

