

OFDA  
**Disaster  
Case Reports**

Liberia Cholera Epidemic  
January-August 1980

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

LIBERIA - Cholera Epidemic

Data

Date: January - August 1980 (FY 80)  
Location: Monrovia metropolitan area and other counties in Liberia  
No. Dead: 466  
No. Affected: 1,887 positively identified cases

The Disaster

During the first eight months of 1980, there was a dramatic increase in the number of cholera cases in Liberia, particularly in the area of the capital, Monrovia, which has an estimated population of 280,000 people. Of the 3,281 admissions for possible cholera at the JFK Hospital in Monrovia, 1,887 were positively identified; in 1979 there were 818 admissions and only 408 cases.

Action Taken by the Government of Liberia (GOL)

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MHSW) declared a cholera epidemic and, on August 22, 1980, requested emergency relief assistance from U.S.A.I.D./Liberia in the form of tetracycline hydrochloride. After the medicine was distributed, MHSW continued preventive measures that included: chlorination of shallow wells and selected water testing; prophylactic treatment of household and other contacts; health education at the community level.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

Upon receipt of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare request, the Charge D'Affairs exercised his disaster authority by requesting the purchase of tetracycline to be paid for from the international disaster relief allotment. Arrangements were made through AID/Washington to purchase 1,400 bottles of tetracycline from Lederle Laboratories for \$19,530. Transportation and air freight was \$4,677.....\$24,207

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided by the International Community

None reported