

DISASTER
RELIEF

CASE REPORT
Iran—Earthquake
April 10, 1972

Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523

IRAN

Earthquake

At approximately 5:30 AM on April 10, 1972, an earthquake registering 7.1 on the Richter scale, with its epicenter at the town of Qir (28° 28' North and 53° 02' East), shook an area of 10,000 square miles in southwest Iran killing 5,057 people and seriously injuring 1,332. A total of 108 villages were destroyed and 3,637 homes demolished.

DETAILS:

The main tremor leveled mud-brick dwellings and affected a population of 22,126. The casualties were mostly women and children. The men in this predominantly agricultural region were on their way to work in the fields, or were in open areas at morning prayer. They ran back to the villages to find their families dead beneath their collapsed homes. The nomadic tribal people living in tents in the surrounding hills of the fertile valleys of Qir-Karzin, Afzar, and Hangam were unharmed and did not suffer personal losses.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The Governor General of Fars Province was one of the first government officials to be informed of the disaster. He was the only helicopter available to take doctors to the disaster area. He first alerted all government organizations, informed the Prime Minister, and within 90 minutes flew to the affected area in a small airplane to coordinate relief operations. The doctors ferried from Shiraz to Qir worked in two teams around-the-clock under extremely difficult conditions in the field and tent hospital set up at Qir. Despite poor weather conditions, Iranian Air Force planes flew hundreds of injured persons to Shiraz and Teheran hospitals. Ambulance drivers managed to get through on

Foreign Disaster Case Reports are publications of the Office of the Foreign Disaster Relief Coordinator, Agency for International Development. This office has responsibility for coordinating U.S. Government foreign disaster relief responses and for the further coordination of such activities with those of the U.S. private and international disaster relief communities.

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roads through the Zagros Mountains that were partially blocked by landslides. Many of the seriously injured were transferred to hospitals in Firuzabad, Jahrom and Lar.

On their own initiative, the people from the surrounding towns of Firuzabad, Jahrom, and Lar were first to provide help by arranging for caravans of trucks to deliver food and water to the stricken area. They dug through rubble for survivors, finding some people still alive after being buried under debris for three days. Iranian soldiers continued to dig through the rubble, cleared a langing strip, set up tent camps, and maintained order.

The Red Lion and Sun Society (Iranian Red Cross) responded immediately by assisting in setting up tent hospitals and camps for the injured and homeless and arranging for tons of food, including dates and bread, to be shipped to stricken areas. The Red Lion and Sun Society provided other relief items of clothing, shoes and blankets. The relief workers sent to disaster sites worked tirelessly throughout the emergency to alleviate the suffering of the survivors.

Prince Mahmoud Reza, younger half-brother of the Shah of Iran, was in Bandar Abbas at the time of the earthquake and was, consequently, the only member of the Royal family close to the scene of the disaster. He visited the area and made personal reports to the Shah about the unfortunate event. Later the Shah and the Empress visited the disaster area to insure that aid was being given to the victims. They assured the people throughout the nation of the Government's concern.

The Director General of Tribal Education in Fars, within three hours after the earthquake, organized a party of 80 people from the staffs of the Tribal High School and Teachers Training School in Sheraz. They boarded 16 automobiles and trucks loaded with food and medicine and went to the Afzar area. Their relief work was very effective because the group was familiar with the region, the people, their habits and needs. Three mullahs (teacher-priests) accompanied the group to prepare and properly bury the dead.

The Prime Minister stated that the Iranians had the ability and should rely on their own resources before asking for assistance from

other nations. Cleanup work and reconstruction were very difficult because many of the survivors were still in a state of shock ten days later. The farmers made little or no effort to care for their crops and, since wheat was ready for harvest, the Government of Iran recruited labor and provided three combines to assist. A census of the survivors was taken, and orphaned children were identified in order to find adequate permanent housing before winter.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND OTHER U.S. ASSISTANCE:

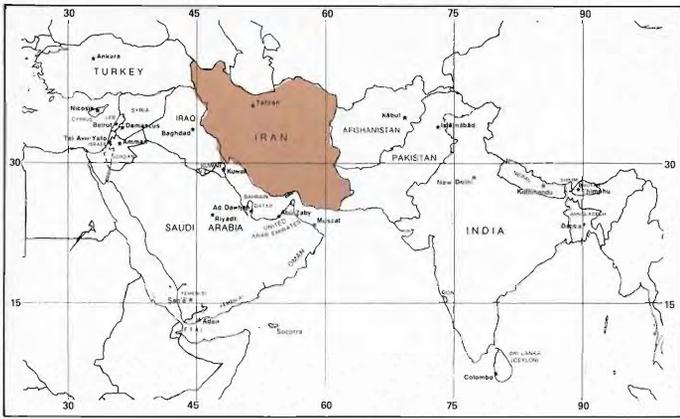
The Charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Teheran exercised his disaster relief authority and made a cash contribution of \$25,000 from the A.I.D. contingency fund to the Red Lion and Sun Society.

American wives of employees of a U.S. company in Iran, Page Communications Engineers, Inc., were among the first to arrive at the disaster scene. They served as volunteers working with the Iranian people to aid the survivors.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Contributing Red Cross societies reported their assistance through the League of Red Cross Societies as follows:

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>CASH GIFTS</u>	<u>GIFTS-IN- KIND</u>
Austria		\$ 5,078
Bulgaria		5,499
Canada (Government)	\$ 25,663	
Peoples Republic of China	135,042	90,028
Kuwait	2,049	
Luxembourg	1,157	
Monaco	1,017	
Netherlands	13,220	
Rumania		31,729
Saudi Arabia	5,314	
Switzerland (Government)		10,602
Turkey		73,061
U.S.S.R.		36,726
Private Donations	208	
TOTAL	\$183,670	\$252,723



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