



DISASTER
RELIEF

CASE REPORT

Sierra Leone—Tropical Storm

June 1975

*Error in addition
of intl assistance*

Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523



Metal roofing sheets were literally peeled from the buildings by the strong winds at Fourah Bay College in Freetown.

Foreign Disaster Case Reports are publications of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, 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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Director acknowledges assistance received in the preparation of this and other case reports from the many public and private organizations in the United States and abroad engaged in foreign disaster relief.

SIERRA LEONE

Tropical Storm—June 1975

Winds of hurricane force accompanied by heavy rains buffeted the Atlantic coastal area on June 21, 1975. Damage and destruction was estimated in excess of \$3.6 million. One death was directly attributed to the storm.

VALUE OF U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE	\$ 24,568
VALUE OF ASSISTANCE BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES	52,107
VALUE OF ASSISTANCE BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY	122,473 133 473

In the affected area more than 2,000 private homes were either completely demolished or partially damaged by the storm. Water damage to personal property and effects was considerable and losses increased as the disaster occurred in the midst of the rainy season.

Electrical services and telecommunications were disrupted for days which added to the many problems in assessing the damage. The single major loss was to Fourah Bay College, situated in the hills above Freetown, where dormitories, classrooms, offices, and residential houses were damaged. The cost for repairing or replacing these buildings was over \$1 million.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

Immediately after the storm the Sierra Leone military forces, the Ministry of Works, and the Electricity Corporation worked around the clock to clear the downed poles and power lines and hundreds of uprooted trees. On July 1, President Siaka Stevens declared a national disaster and appealed for donations to the Special Emergency Appeal Fund from other governments and international organizations. The Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) established a Special Emergency Relief Committee to manage the Special Relief Appeal Fund, to coordinate relief efforts, and to supervise the administration of relief measures undertaken. Members of the Committee included GOSL officials, the

Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program, and representatives of C.A.R.E. and Catholic Relief Services.

Many people repaired their own houses, often reusing damaged materials. The value of this self-help activity surpassed \$100,000, but an accurate estimate was impossible to determine.

Even though the GOSL had limited experience in dealing with disasters of this proportion, the cooperation of the afflicted population in properly utilizing international assistance to rebuild and repair their damaged homes, schools, and other public buildings, helped to minimize the period when people were homeless and avoided large scale displacement of people in communities and urban centers which could have led to a disaster of much more serious dimensions.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

The U.S. Embassy was among the first to respond to President Steven's appeal for aid. On July 21, Ambassador Michael A. Samuels exercised his disaster relief authority and presented a check in the amount of \$5,250 to the Special Emergency Appeal Fund. Two subsequent donations totaling \$19,318 were presented to Fourah Bay College for repair and rehabilitation of specific buildings and facilities.

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY
U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES**

C.A.R.E.—Provided funds to rebuild a community school	\$ 2,000
Catholic Relief Services—Donated funds for materials to five com- munities to rebuild schools	50,000
American Wesleyan Mission—Cash donation to the Special Relief Appeals Fund	107
TOTAL	<u>\$ 52,107</u>

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER
NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS**

The following contributed cash and in-kind to the Special Emergency Relief Fund or to Fourah Bay College:

	<i>Value of Assistance</i>
<i>Governments</i>	
Canada	\$ 2,793

China (People's Republic of)	535
Egypt	6,420
France	321
Gambia	107
Germany (Federal Rep. of)	2,011
Guinea	268
India	4,280
Ivory Coast	20,381
Liberia	214
Nigeria	29,766
Trinidad and Tobago	4,041
United Kingdom	43,228
TOTAL	<u>\$114,365</u>

<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Value of Assistance</i>
Czechoslovakian Red Cross	*
Hungarian Red Cross	\$ 9,020
United Nations Disaster Relief Office	10,088
TOTAL	<u>\$ 19,108</u>

* Value of assistance not reported.



Wind damage was not limited to roofs. When sheet metal and support beams were flung from the buildings, walls often collapsed.



FREETOWN

SIERRA LEONE