



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

TONGA - Typhoons

Data

Date: Dec. 27, 1977, Typhoon Anne; Feb. 21, 1978, Typhoon Ernie (FY 78)

Location: Ha`Apai Island group, the middle of three island groups that make up the Kingdom of Tonga (200 miles south of Samoa in the western Pacific)

No Dead: None

No. Injured: 5

No. Affected: 10,000

Damage: Coconut and pandanus crops destroyed, banana crop damaged (estimated loss of foreign exchange \$1.08 million); subsistence crops damaged by salt water spray and wind; 250 buildings destroyed and 420 damaged; water supply systems, wharves, and telegraph damaged; total losses estimated at \$1.1 million

The Disaster

The area suffered from drought in 1977 and then was struck by Typhoon Anne on Dec. 27, 1977, and Typhoon Ernie on Feb. 21, 1978. The major relief problem facing the Tongan government was to supplement the islanders' food supplies until newly planted crops were ready for harvesting. High internal transportation costs, resulting from the scattered nature of the Ha`Apai island group as well as the extremely high cost of fuel and other items in Tonga, made delivery of relief supplies a substantial burden for the government.

Action Taken by the Kingdom of Tonga (KOT)

The government provided relief supplies including food, and transportation, valued at \$61,000. The local Red Cross, church organizations, and Commodities Board all made various contributions to the relief effort.

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Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

On May 8, 1978, the U.S. Ambassador determined that conditions warranting the use of disaster funds existed and made a contribution of \$25,000 to the Kingdom of Tonga. The funds were used for the transportation of food and relief supplies.....\$25,000

TOTAL \$25,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported.

Assistance Provided by the International Community *

Australia - 800 tons flour; 20 tons rice

EEC - contribution for reconstruction of water supplies

Federal Republic of Germany - relief assistance; details not reported

New Zealand - Red Cross in kind contribution, \$1,471

UNDRO - contribution for purchase of food supplies, \$10,000

TOTAL \$11,471

* Please note: the figure for total international assistance is an approximation. In many cases the cash value of in kind aid is unavailable.