

## MOZAMBIQUE - Cyclone

Date: January 29-30, 1984

Location: Maputo and Gaza Provinces in southern Mozambique

No. Dead: 109 known dead

No. Affected: 350,000 were affected to some degree by the loss of crops; 49,000 rural people lost all their possessions.

Damage: About 250,000 hectares of agricultural land were affected by flood waters, destroying a large portion of the summer harvest, the Maputo waterworks was rendered inoperable, and small irrigation systems, including pumps and dams, were destroyed. Railway and road links to the rest of the country and to Swaziland and South Africa were cut in several locations. Total damage was estimated at over \$75 million.

### The Disaster

Mozambique found itself unexpectedly in Cyclone Domoina's destructive path on January 29-30. After battering Madagascar earlier in the month (January 20-24), the storm slammed into southern Mozambique with 100 kilometers per hour winds and torrential rains before moving on to Swaziland and South Africa.

In the capital city of Maputo (population about one million), the strong winds felled hundreds of trees, ripped roofs off houses in the center of town, and flattened less durable structures on the city's outskirts. Massive flooding of the Umbeluzi River left the city's waterworks totally disabled and forced thousands of people in the interior to flee before the rising waters. The 300 mm of rain which fell during a two-day period was the equivalent of 40% of the average annual rainfall in Maputo.

Renewed heavy rains on February 2 added to the flooding of the Umbeluzi, Incomati, and other principal rivers in Maputo and southern Gaza provinces. The situation was made even worse by the decision of the South African Government (with GPRM knowledge) to open their flood gates to relieve pressure on their own dams. The result was the worst flooding in Mozambique's recorded history.

While the death toll remained relatively low at 109, material damage from the cyclone and flooding was extensive. Besides the damage to the Maputo water pumping and treatment plant and to many dwellings and public buildings, power and communications were disrupted for a time. Overland links to the north and the south were cut in several places as road and rail lines were breached or damaged.

About 250,000 hectares of agricultural land were inundated, destroying much of the summer harvest: 55,000 tons of corn, 15,000 tons of beans, and 20,000 tons of vegetables. In addition, some 12,000 tons of citrus fruit, 7,000 tons of bananas, and 10,000 tons of sugar cane were lost, and 5,000 head of cattle perished. The loss of numerous small irrigation systems along the rivers jeopardized the winter crop as well. Small private farmers were the most seriously affected.

The heavy crop and livestock losses were regarded with special dismay in this drought-stricken country. (See also MOZAMBIQUE - Drought.) Because the three-year drought had forced farmers to move closer to river beds for most of their planting, they were especially vulnerable when the flooding occurred. Relatively normal rains in Maputo and southern Gaza provinces during the months prior to the cyclone had promised the first substantial harvest in several seasons. With only weeks to go before the summer harvest, most of the promise was suddenly wiped out.

#### Action Taken by the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique (GPRM)

The GPRM organized a major relief effort under the personal direction of the Foreign Minister. Rescue workers succeeded in moving most of the people stranded by the flooding to safe ground. The Department for the Prevention and Combat of Natural Calamities, with the assistance of the Mozambican Red Cross, distributed food, milk, clothing, and blankets to the flood victims. Food and relief supplies were airdropped to otherwise inaccessible locations.

Lacking the resources to adequately take care of the affected population, the GPRM appealed to the international community for food assistance for the 350,000 persons who had lost their crops, as well as for fuel, seeds, medicines, tents, blankets, and other relief supplies. The GPRM also identified priorities for the country's rehabilitation, with the first being the restoration of the Maputo waterworks and the replenishment of lost stores of chemicals. Provision of seeds and the replacement of the private irrigation systems were also high priority needs.

Government technicians worked round-the-clock to restore electrical power to the Maputo water plant and to improvise ways of keeping it operating until repairs could be made.

The GPRM undertook a national self-help campaign to assist the flood victims, designating February 25 as a national day of support. Donations of clothing, blankets, and household items were received from many organizations and individuals.

#### Assistance Provided by the United States Government

The U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique, Peter Jon de Vos, was one of several diplomats who joined the GPRM Minister of Internal Trade in making an aerial survey of the devastated areas. Based on his personal observation of the destruction caused by the cyclone, the Ambassador determined that a disaster existed which warranted USG assistance. The \$25,000 obligated from his disaster assistance authority was pledged to the GPRM relief effort. Some of the P.L. 480 Title II food which had recently arrived in Maputo for drought relief was diverted to meet the needs of the cyclone victims.

OFDA arranged to send a Water and Sanitation for Health (WASH) engineer to Mozambique to assess the condition of the water treatment plant in Maputo and the small irrigation systems and to develop recommendations for OFDA action. After meeting with GPRM officials and inspecting the treatment plant, pumping stations, and pipeline to Maputo, the engineer reported that the damage was so extensive that the provision of any water at all was extremely precarious. Moreover, the water quality was certain to deteriorate drastically if new supplies of chemicals were not made available. In regard to the irrigation systems, he estimated that 50 small dams had been destroyed and 30 pump sets lost in southern Maputo Province.

In response to the WASH engineer's recommendations, OFDA approved \$550,000 for the repair of the Maputo water system. Of that amount, \$300,000 was to be used to repair or replace equipment and \$250,000 was to go toward the purchase of water treatment chemicals.

OFDA further agreed to assist in replacing the lost irrigation pumps of private farmers. Instead of furnishing 10 new pumps, however, as originally planned, the USG pledged \$340,000 for the purchase of motors and parts for pumps contributed by other donors.

Summary of USG Assistance

Ambassador's Authority.....	\$25,000
Grant to GPRM for repair of Maputo waterworks.....	\$550,000
Grant to GPRM for local purchase of motors and parts for donated pumps.....	\$340,000
Travel and administrative expenses of WASH engineer.....	\$7,518
	TOTAL
	\$922,518

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported.

Assistance Provided by the International Community

Please note: Although every effort has been made to include all contributions reported to OFDA and to avoid double counting, it has not always been possible to separate contributions intended for cyclone relief from those directed to the drought disaster.

International Organizations

EEC - water treatment products, tents, blankets, and helicopter fuel, all valued at \$406,000; also, purchase and transport costs of maize and bean seeds, totaling \$1,130,435.

LORCS - on behalf of the Mozambican Red Cross, launched an international appeal on February 11 and sent a delegate to attend to cyclone relief (in addition to the delegates already in the country working on the drought disaster).

UNDP/UNDRO resident coordinator - issued an international appeal for relief and rehabilitation requirements identified by the GPRM.

Governments

Australia - \$25,000 in cash.

Austria - \$54,350 in cash for repair of irrigation systems.

Canada - assessment mission to identify relief requirements and \$117,190 in cash through LORCS.

Denmark - 30 pumps for irrigation systems, value not reported.

Germany, Fed. Rep. - \$36,982 in cash for relief supplies and \$11,095 for seeds.

Italy - 82 rubber boats (Zodiak) with 37 outboard motors, medicines, baby food, 70 tents, 1,500 tons of rice, seeds, and transport costs, all valued at \$1,820,700; also, clothing, powdered milk, and 50 tons of fertilizer, value not reported. In addition, Italy planned an assessment mission and funded the cost of a consultant to assist the UNDP/UNDRO resident coordinator with arrangements for the repair of the rail link to Swaziland.

Mongolia - 12 tons of canned meat, value not reported.

Netherlands - \$165,000 in cash, primarily to rebuild dwellings damaged by the cyclone; also, 150 tents, clothing, blankets, and water purification tablets, all valued at \$152,636.

Portugal - 10 tons of canned meat and 35,000 food packages, value not reported; also, food, blankets, transport and technical assistance, with a total value of \$136,935. The Portuguese Air Force donated medicines, powdered milk, vitamin supplements for children, and clothing, value not reported.

Soviet Union - one ton of medicines, 50 tents, 1,000 blankets, and three tons of food, value not reported.

Tanzania - unspecified assistance.

United Kingdom - seeds, spare parts for pumps, culvert material, a Bailey bridge, and a planeload of relief supplies, all valued at \$994,040.

#### Voluntary Agencies

Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal) - \$100,000 in cash for food, medicines, and shelters.

Italian voluntary agencies - food, medicines, seeds, and blankets, all valued at \$18,750; also, alum for water treatment plant, value not reported.

Oxfam (U.K.) - \$69,700 in cash and seeds valued at \$74,516.

Portugal Red Cross - unspecified contribution.

Soviet Union Red Cross - relief supplies valued at \$250,000.

TOTAL \$5,563,329