

OFDA  
**Disaster  
Case Reports**

Kenya Famine  
May 1980

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



## KENYA - Famine

### Data

Date: May 1980 (FY 80)

Location: Turkana District (Kakuma, Lowar, and Lokitaung divisions)

No. Dead: Unknown

No. Affected: Approximately 40,000

Damage: Severe famine conditions; livestock losses of up to 100% of the cattle and 70% of the goats due to inadequate pasture and water, diseases, and raiders; outbreak of cholera

### The Disaster

A prolonged lack of rain during 1979 caused severe drought conditions in the Turkana District of Kenya, especially in the northern divisions of Kakuma, Lowar, and Lokitaung. Due to massive livestock losses from drought, disease, and raiders, the sole or primary source of sustenance (milk and meat) of the Turkana population was removed. The situation worsened when the Government of Kenya was unable to supply sufficient quantities of food grains through commercial or local famine relief channels. In addition, an outbreak of cholera due to poor hygienic conditions, and exacerbated by the lack of potable water, further compounded the problem.

### Action Taken by the Government of Kenya (GOK)

The GOK provided medicines, vaccine, and medical personnel to combat the outbreak of cholera. The Ministry of Health provided technical assistance, labor, and transportation to rehabilitate ten wells with A.I.D.-funded materials. The GOK also supplied 1,528 bags of maize and 100 bags of beans to the famine stricken areas. An unknown quantity of food was also provided by the Catholic Church in Kenya.

### Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

On May 13, 1980, the U.S. Ambassador made the determination that an emergency existed in Turkana and, accordingly, made available \$25,000 from the International Disaster Account. These funds were used for the local purchase of 20,400 kg. of dried fish (\$14,000) to be distributed as a protein supplement, and for hand pumps, pipe, cement, and steel netting to rehabilitate ten wells to provide potable water. Total value.....\$25,000

KENYA - Famine

An extra allotment of 108 MT of P.L. 480 Title II bulgur was distributed through Catholic Relief Services.....\$26,000

TOTAL \$51,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies \*

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) - distributed 108 MT of P.L. 480 Title II bulgur; distributed 1,500 bags of milk powder provided by the European Economic Community. Besides their regular assistance programs, CRS provided \$2,055 for the local purchase of maize; one MT of powdered milk was also purchased (value unknown)

Christian Children's Fund - provided \$2,740 for the local purchase of foodstuffs

TOTAL \$4,795

Assistance Provided by the International Community

European Economic Community - provided 1,500 bags of powdered milk (value unknown) to be distributed by CRS

\* Please note - the figure for total U.S. voluntary agency assistance is an approximation. In many cases the cash value of in kind aid is unavailable.

This publication does not require CRB approval.

