



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

# DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for  
International  
Development

Washington D.C.  
20523

## ETHIOPIA - Drought/Famine

Date: 1983 (FY 83) ongoing

Location: Most severely affected areas are in northern provinces of Eritrea, Gondar, Tigray, and Wollo

No. Dead: Not reported

No. Affected: 2,000,000

No. Homeless: Not reported

Damage: Although there are no reliable figures available on damages, the country has experienced extensive damage to both the agricultural and husbandry sectors as a result of the drought. Substantial government revenues which would have gone to development projects, were instead expended to respond to drought victims' food, health, and shelter needs.

### The Disaster

The present drastic food shortage in Ethiopia has been caused by several natural and man-made factors which have combined to create disaster conditions reminiscent of the devastating drought of 1972-73 which claimed over 200,000 lives. Low rainfall during the summer of 1982, following poor harvests in 1981-82, and a rash of hailstorms, flashfloods, and insect infestations all took their toll on the 1983 harvest in the north. Population pressures on the parched land and continuing armed conflict in many areas further aggravated the situation. The continuing civil strife in Tigray and Eritrea creates uncertainty and insecurity for the farmers, and discourages cultivation of crops. Finally, transportation bottlenecks result in inadequate supplies of food being moved from the ports out to the affected communities.

The drought has forced many people to leave their homes and travel long distances to feeding stations. As conditions worsen, cattle die or are sold, and as harvests fail, growing numbers of people cease to return to their home villages after trekking to the food distribution centers. This has produced large concentrations of displaced people in need of water, shelter, and medical care around the feeding stations.

The drought emergency in Ethiopia is a continuing problem which will not be resolved in the immediate future. The Government of Ethiopia, United Nations organizations, and other national governments and voluntary groups are working to address the needs of the drought-affected population. This report is therefore a preliminary summary of the situation and measures undertaken by the international community in FY 1983.

#### Action Taken by the Government of Ethiopia (GOE)

Following the drought of 1972-73, the Ethiopian Government established the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) in 1974. The RRC is responsible for identifying and responding to food shortages throughout the country and coordinating all international relief activities. The RRC maintains food warehouses, distribution centers, and a fleet of trucks, and has also been engaged in improving roads and building airstrips to move commodities to remote areas.

Anticipating the effects of reduced rainfall and yields on rural communities, in September 1982 the GOE set up a committee to conduct a nationwide impact survey of the drought. The GOE report identified Tigray, Gondar, Wollo, and Eritrea as the most affected regions, and singled out children under six and pregnant and lactating women as the most vulnerable group, numbering between 500-650,000.

In March 1983, the GOE, through the RRC, requested assistance from the international community to meet the emergency needs of the drought victims. In its appeal to UNDR0, the GOE requested assistance for one million of the most seriously affected for an initial six month period. GOE policy is to provide food relief as close as possible to where the affected people live, thereby hoping to reduce spontaneous settlements around distribution centers.

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

In response to the prolonged and expanding drought and famine conditions in northern Ethiopia, the U.S. Charge on May 5, 1983, declared that a disaster existed which warranted U.S. assistance. As an immediate response, the Charge authorized \$25,000 from the International Disaster Assistance Account to be contributed to Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a U.S. voluntary agency operating maternal/child health programs throughout Ethiopia. The disaster funds were presented to

CRS on May 20 to cover the immediate start-up and administrative costs of an emergency feeding program in Makelle, Tigray, one of the most affected areas in the country.

Through the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the USG provided a grant of \$698,991 to CRS to carry out a Famine Intervention Program in Makelle. The program was designed to reach 30,000 individuals each month and was subsequently expanded to feed 70,750 people per month over a nine month period in Wukro and Latchi as well as Makelle.

To start up the Makelle program, CRS was authorized to divert 26 MT of edible oil, valued at \$21,000 from its regular feeding program.

Through A.I.D.'s Office of Food For Peace (FFP) the U.S. provided 838 MT of assorted P.L. 480 Title II food commodities (496 MT of soy-fortified sorghum grits (SFSG), 180 MT of nonfat dried milk (NFDM), and 162 MT of vegoil) valued at \$397,000 to feed 30,000 people over a nine month period. An additional 4,500 MT of food valued at \$1,882,000, was provided when the CRS program was expanded.

FFP also authorized the diversion of 630 MT of P.L. 480 Title II high protein blended food (ICSM) from a CRS program in Egypt to the emergency program in Ethiopia. The World Food Program (WFP) airlifted the ICSM, valued at \$180,000 from Egypt to Ethiopia. Subsequently, an additional 145 MT of food were donated to WFP.

In addition to the emergency food program, the USG funded the regular CRS program which, during 1983, distributed a total of 6,422 MT of NFDM, SFSG, and vegoil, valued at \$2,820,000, including ocean freight.

In response to an UNDRO appeal for support of emergency relief for drought/famine victims, the USG contributed \$800,000 to be used to transport emergency food and relief supplies within Ethiopia.

#### Summary of USG Assistance

Charge's disaster determination contributed to CRS.....	\$25,000
Grant to CRS for feeding program in Makelle.....	\$698,991
OFDA grant to UNDRO to transport emergency food.....	\$800,000
Total OFDA assistance.....	\$1,523,991

Diversion of 26 MT of edible oil from ongoing CRS programs to emergency feeding program.....	\$21,000
Supplemental 838 MT of emergency food to CRS for program in Makelle.....	\$397,000
Expansion of CRS program, additional 4,500 MT of food.....	\$1,882,000
Transfer of 630 MT of ICSM from CRS/Egypt to WFP.....	\$180,000
Increased donation of 145 MT to WFP program.....	\$74,000
Regular CRS feeding program in Ethiopia in FY 1983, 6,422 MT.....	\$2,820,000
Total P.L. 480 assistance.....	\$5,374,000
Cash grant to an international organization for its drought and relief programs in northern Ethiopia.....	\$1,500,000
Total USG Assistance	\$8,397,991

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) - operated an ongoing maternal child health program in Ethiopia and proposed and executed an Emergency Famine Intervention program in Makelle, Wukro, and Latchi for 70,750 people for nine months under a grant from the USG. Working with the relief agency consortium, Christian Relief and Development Association (CRD), CRS purchased and airlifted 40 MT of seeds valued at \$75,000 to victims in Tigray. CRS also distributed \$100,000 worth of medicine in Tigray.

Lutheran World Federation (LWF) - provided 1,000 blankets for distribution by Save the Children Fund in Korem. LWF worked with CRDA to distribute 440 quintals of faffa (Ethiopian high protein blend of grains), 2,000 blankets, and 50 boxes of soap in Makelle; 600 quintals of faffa and 1,000 blankets in Eritrea; and 220 quintals of faffa, 100 water containers, and tools in Gondar.

World Vision Relief Organization - administered an ongoing program in Gondar, maintained a close working relationship with the RCC, and worked with UNDRO in transporting relief goods and food to isolated areas.

TOTAL	\$175,000
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## Assistance Provided by the International Community

Because of the continuing nature of the food shortage and other problems associated with the drought in Ethiopia, U.S. and international relief activities are ongoing. It is therefore difficult to compile a complete list of assistance provided in response to this emergency. The following list is not comprehensive and represents only a portion of the assistance directed to Ethiopia.

### International Organizations

Food and Agriculture Organization - undertook an emergency assistance project in Gondar, Wollo, and Tigray in which 730 MT of seeds were distributed to 2,000 families for planting.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) - operates a major program in northern Ethiopia, working with the displaced community, and returnees.

League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS) - launched a \$2,400,000 appeal on behalf of the Ethiopian Red Cross for drought victims in Wollo and Gondar. (See contributions below.)

UNDP - made a cash contribution of \$30,000.

UNDRO - issued an international appeal for assistance for the relief of the drought-affected people of Gondar, Wollo, Tigray, and Eritrea. UNDRO served as liaison between international donors and the RRC in coordinating assessments, delivery, and transportation of emergency food.

UNICEF - allocated \$310,000 from its emergency reserve fund to assist mothers and children among the drought victims. Of this amount, \$155,000 was to assist with transportation and \$155,000 was used to purchase blankets, clothing, medicines, supplementary food, and cooking utensils. UNICEF also issued an appeal for \$3.5 million to assist 250,000 young children and mothers.

WFP - launched an emergency food-aid program to supplement rations for 220,000 people and nutritional supplements for 50,000 mothers and children; contributed at least 15,120 MT of food assistance, valued at approximately \$4 million, including freight; airlifted 630 MT of ICSM from CRS stocks in Egypt to Ethiopia; airlifted 120 MT of dried whole milk from Switzerland.

World Health Organization - the Regional Office for Africa contributed \$20,000 for medicaments.

## Governments

Australia - contributed 93.4 tons of high protein milk biscuits, valued at \$611,564, to the WFP emergency operation; airlifted 20 tons of high protein milk biscuits to Ethiopia for World Vision International (WVI) to Ethiopia at a cost of \$125,000; and shipped 5,000 tons of wheat to WVI.

Austria - made a cash contribution of \$60,000 to the RRC for the purchase and repair of heavy and light trucks.

Canada - contributed \$243,900 in cash through UNDRO; \$325,200 in cash through UNICEF; \$162,600 to WFP; \$203,250 through LORCS; and \$81,300 to the LWF.

Denmark - contributed \$920,000 through Danchurchaid; \$57,471 to LORCS; and another \$57,471 to cover transportation costs of relief supplies from Denmark to Ethiopia.

European Economic Community (EEC) - contributed \$547,885 to the RRC for spare parts; \$219,154 to UNICEF; \$821,828 to the ICRC, and \$602,674 to Dutch Interchurchaid for food and in-country transport costs. The EEC also provided 94 MT of butter-oil and 500 MT of cereals to CRS for the Makelle feeding project and contributed 2,000 MT of cereal to Diakonische Werk; 1,000 MT of cereals to Caritas Germany; and 1,500 MT of cereals to Dutch Interchurchaid.

Finland - contributed two 4-wheel drive trucks valued at \$125,000, including transport.

France - contributed 3,500 MT of wheat valued at \$840,000.

Germany, Federal Republic of - contributed \$205,000 to the GOE for in-country transport; \$340,000 to Caritas Germany; and 3,000 MT of wheat, value not reported, to LORCS.

Hungary - the national UNICEF committee contributed \$7,000 to a UNICEF appeal for field and medical supplies.

Italy - contributed spare parts and tires, valued at \$638,978, for Fiat vehicles (models 682 and 639); also provided tents, blankets, babyfood, and agricultural tools, the total value of which, including air and sea-freight, was \$4,000,000.

Netherlands - donated 5,000 MT of grain for the Ethiopia National Food Reserve valued at \$862,069; contributed \$172,414 to the ICRC; and \$702,570 to the ICCO, a Dutch Protestant aid society.

Norway - contributed \$660,000 to Norwegian Churchaid and the Norwegian Red Cross.

Soviet Union - contributed 9,500 MT of rice, value not reported.

Sweden - contributed \$256,410 in cash to support operations of the ICRC; provided a team of five mechanics to work under UNDRO auspices assisting the RRC in the repair of 41 heavy duty trucks; the value of this assistance was \$51,948.

Switzerland - contributed 100 MT of dried whole milk to WFP; 1,400 MT of wheat to the ICRC; 40 MT of dairy products to Swiss voluntary agencies; 20 MT of dairy products, 200 family tents, 700,000 water purification tablets, and cash to Terre des Hommes; \$225,000 in cash to the Swiss Red Cross for ICRC and UNICEF. Total value of Swiss assistance: \$1,900,000.

United Kingdom - contributed \$113,700 to UNDRO and \$152,471 to British Save the Children Fund for feeding activities in Wollo.

#### Voluntary Agencies

Finland Red Cross - contributed \$75,000 in cash.

Germany (F.R.) Red Cross - delivered grain to be converted into 330 MT of faffa, and pledged further consignments for conversion into 660-1000 MT of faffa.

Japan Red Cross - contributed 84 MT of butter oil.

Oxfam (U.K.) - provided feeding kits and plastic sheeting in Wollo and Gondar, value at \$75,000.

Save the Children Fund, UK - worked with the Christian Relief and Development Association; provided a doctor, two nutritionists, and a number of nutritional field workers in Wollo.

Switzerland Red Cross - contributed 10 MT of wheat-soya-milk.

TOTAL                    \$20,576,857