



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

COMOROS - Cyclone

Date: February 14-17, 1985

Location: Major damage to most of the island of Anjouan, particularly to the prefectures of Sima, Mutsamadu, and Domoni, and some damage to the east side of Grande Comore island

No. Dead: Two

No. Affected: 35,000

Damage: Road damage was estimated at \$1.35 million; some bridges and more than 100 houses were destroyed. Food crops, banana trees, and clove trees were damaged.

The Disaster

On February 14, Cyclone Feliksa lashed the Comoran island of Anjouan before moving northwest to hit the eastern coast of the island of Grande Comore. Anjouan is the most densely populated island of the Comoro archipelago and is an important producer of cloves and ylang-ylang. Clove trees are particularly fragile and suffered a 40% loss in the prefecture of Domoni.

Other crop losses on Anjouan included 70% of the food crops and 90% of the banana trees in Sima prefecture; 45% of the banana trees and 40% of the manioc and bean crops near Anjouan's capital of Mutsamudu; and all of the bean, maize, and rice crops and 80% of the banana trees in Domoni.

The storm also caused major damage to infrastructure and dwellings in Anjouan. A bridge at Domoni and a ford about 15 km away were washed out by the torrential rains, leaving that region completely isolated. The rains also washed away road beds and covered the downtown areas of Mutsamudu and Bambao in almost a meter of silted water. Many smaller villages were also flooded. A hundred huts were carried away by the water. Roads on the east, the less inhabited side of Grande Comore, were also badly damaged by the storm, though not cut. An engineering study assessed total road damage at 750 million CFA (U.S. \$1.35 million).

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Action Taken by the Government of the Comoros (GOC)

When the extent of the damage done to Anjouan by Cyclone Feliksa became apparent, President Ahmed Abdallah requested UNDRO to appeal to the international community for help in dealing with the disaster. Specifically, the GOC asked that donors provide cash for hospital equipment and reconstruction. The government also asked officials from the U.S. Embassy in Antananarivo (which was accredited to the Comoros) to assess the situation in Anjouan.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government

Two U.S. Embassy/Antananarivo officials toured Anjouan in late February at the GOC's request. After confirming the extent of the damage, Ambassador Robert Keating declared the situation to be of disaster proportions on March 1. He then presented a check for \$25,000 to the GOC to clean up and repair the Anjouan Hospital.

TOTAL \$25,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported.

Assistance Provided by the International Community

UNDRO - provided \$15,000 in cash for the purchase of hospital equipment.

WFP - handled major problems related to the agricultural sector.

TOTAL \$15,000