

Date

March - September
1988

Location

Highly localized,
worst incidence in
northern Niamey,
central Tahoua,
eastern Zinder, Diffa.

No. Dead

unknown

No. Affected

Between 1,000,000
and 1,300,000

The Disaster

Overall, crop production in Niger in 1987 was sufficient for the country's needs; however, because the rains were late and sporadic, certain regions experienced shortages. It was estimated that local shortages amounted to a 101,000 ton deficit, threatening 1 million with famine. In many cases the regions with shortages lacked the resources to buy grain. In northern Niamey, central Tahoua, eastern Zinder, and Diffa department the drought hit particularly hard. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that Nigeria banned export of corn and sorghum in January, cutting off a potential supplier for Niger. While Niger had some reserve food stocks, the amount it held was insufficient to supply all the affected areas. In addition, GON had almost no funds for internal transportation and distribution of food supplies.

Action taken by the Government of Niger (GON)

As part of its strategy to manage the drought, GON distributed food through a food for work program eliminated import licenses for grain, and supplied grains for dry season gardening.

GON also produced a list of villages that were 75% short in their food supplies for Niamey and Zinder departments. GON was experiencing financial difficulties during this period and was compelled to close some of the warehouses and lay off personnel from the OPVN, Niger's grain marketing agency.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

Ambassador Richard Bogosian declared a drought disaster on March 30, 1988, and OFDA obligated \$25,000. The original plan to spend the grant on a nutrition survey was abandoned because of complications due to the taking of the national census. Ultimately the mission hired a distribution coordinator for Zinder Department for four months (at a cost of \$15,000), made a \$5000 grant to the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies/ Niger to cover fuel costs for distribution of food

in Zinder, and used the remaining funds to assist the OPVN with food distribution costs. The difficulty of transporting grain within Niger was a major obstacle to the relief efforts. FFP sent 15,000 MT of section 416 sorghum and also made a \$444,100 grant to Niger for internal transportation.

Total OFDA	\$25,000
Total FFP	\$441,000

TOTAL	\$483,100
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Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided by the International Community

Obtaining figures for international assistance is complicated by the fact that many countries made commitments on which they were unable to follow through. A total of 30,000 MT of grain was donated to Niger by countries other than the United States.

Date

August - September
1988

Location

Nationwide, notably
the Tera arrondissement
of Tillabéri
Department and
southern Zinder
Department

No. Dead

20

No. Affected

80,000 homeless

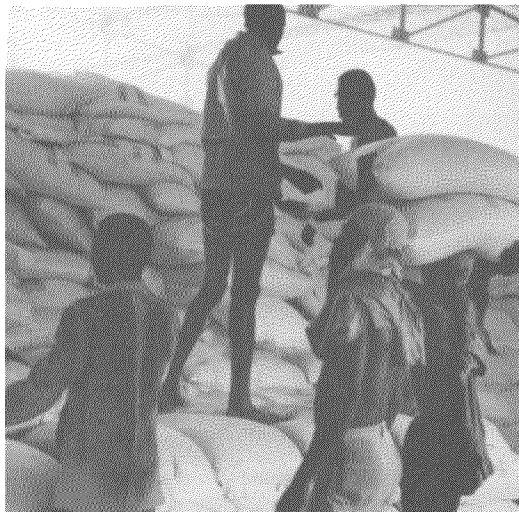
Damage

Housing, roads, and
wells sustained about
\$10,200,000 in
damage. Thousands
of hectares of
farmland were
flooded and 15,000
cattle perished.

The Disaster

During August and September, Niger experienced unusually heavy rains that induced flooding in many parts of the country, especially Tillabéri and southern Zinder departments. Cresting waters inundated thousands of hectares of farmland, killed 15,000 head of cattle, and caused \$10.2 million in damage to housing and infrastructure. Following on the heels of a major dryspell that required emergency food aid, this disaster killed 20 people and left 80,000 without shelter.

Flooding in Tillabéri Department particularly affected the Tera area. The bursting of a dam from high waters on the Niger River in Burkina and heavy rains starting in early August made the road from the river to Tera impassable. Bridges, culverts, and sections of the roadway washed away



Loading USG grain for delivery to distribution sites
Photos by Charles Kelly

near the communities of Gotheye, Kakassi, and Koulbaga. Emergency food shipments for drought relief to the zone were temporarily cut off. Torrential downpours destroyed mud walls and roofs of many homes and granaries around Tera, forcing many residents to temporarily relocate. Damage also occurred to the paved road from Niamey to Tillabéri and to the unpaved road from Tillabéri to the Malian border, which was blocked

in three places by high water. In Zinder Department, housing was especially affected. During a two-day period between Aug. 23 and 24, over 100 mm. of rain fell in the towns of Magaria, Mirriah, and Zinder. Many earthen dwellings collapsed in the ensuing floodwaters. USAID/Niamey personnel in the region reported 1,800 homeless in Mirriah and 4,940 homeless in Magaria. No estimates of damage from Zinder city were available. Press reports indicated that several communities in the Maradi and Tahoua regions of Niger also sustained limited damage.

Action Taken by the Government of Niger (GON)

Soon after the extent of the flooding became known, the GON appealed for international help through UNDRO and used what emergency resources it had to furnish assistance to the victims, especially in the areas of housing and road repair. The armed forces assumed responsibility for relief operations. On Dec. 7, a GON assessment report was issued that cited housing, infrastructure, and agriculture as having sustained most of the estimated \$10.2 million in flood damage.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

On Sept. 2, U.S. Ambassador Richard W. Bogosian declared an emergency. USAID/Niamey disaster relief staff in Zinder and Tillabéri departments helped the GON collect information and assess needs. An OFDA allocation of \$35,000 was used to support food transport costs, road repair, and the local purchase of plastic sheeting for temporary roofing in the Tera area. USAID/Niamey also provided \$5,000 for a vehicle and staff person to assist the GON flood assessment and \$5,000 to cover fuel costs for distribution of emergency Section 416 commodities for the Tera Department.

Total OFDA \$35,000
Total Other USG \$10,000

TOTAL \$45,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided by the International Community

Central Bank of West Africa - donated 30 MT of millet.

LRCS - contributed \$34,000 in housing, clothing and transport costs to over 3,000 flood victims in Zinder and Tillaberi departments.

Togo - furnished \$2,500,000 in flood aid.

UNICEF - gave blankets, tents, and food for use in the Tera area.

TOTAL \$2,534,000



Reconstruction of flood-damaged housing in Magaria

Accident (Toxic Waste Incident) **Nigeria**

Date

August 1987 - June 1988

Location

Koko, Bendel State

No. Dead

0

No. Affected

1,000 people evacuated

The Disaster

The dumping of hazardous industrial by-products is becoming a serious environmental problem in many Third World countries. One of the most blatant cases of dumping toxic waste occurred in the tiny port town of Koko, in the Bendel State of Nigeria. There, five shiploads of chemical waste were discovered on the property of Mr. Sunday Nana. Mr. Nana, a poor farmer, was paid \$100 a month by Italian businessman Giafranco Raffaelli to store the highly poisonous waste on his property. Mr. Raffaelli, director of Iruekpen Construction Company based in Nigeria, contracted with several European companies to dispose of various toxic industrial by-products and then forged clearance papers and bribed Nigerian port officials to gain entry for the ships carrying the waste. Over 9,000 chemical drums were offloaded at the port at Koko and then taken by truck to Mr. Nana's property, one kilometer away. The illegal dumping began in August 1987 and was not discovered until June 1988, when an Italian newspaper uncovered the story and Nigerian students in Italy alerted the authorities. Mr. Raffaelli quickly departed Nigeria, but 15 people, including several Italian nationals, were arrested in Lagos for their involvement in the dumping scheme. The Nigerian government seized an Italian-owned ship not connected to the waste trade in an effort to pressure the Italian government to admit complicity and pay for the cleanup of the dump site.

Nigerian scientists, along with teams from the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, and the International Atomic Energy Agency, performed assessments of the dumpsite to determine chemical composition and toxicity of 3,800 tons of hazardous waste. The site contained a stew of chemical toxins, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a highly carcinogenic byproduct, and various poisons, acids, and flammable liquids. Several drums were labeled with the letter R (the international symbol for hazardous waste), leading some Nigerian officials to fear that the site also contained radioactive waste. Although no traces of radioactivity were detected by the various teams, the chemical waste posed a serious health threat to the local population. Many of the drums

leaked and swelled from the heat and there was a very real risk of a spontaneous fire or explosion engulfing the dump and spreading highly poisonous smoke over a wide area. Local residents ate cassava that was grown in the contaminated soil and some residents reportedly emptied drums and took them home to serve as containers for water or a local gin, known as "kai-kai."

Action Taken by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN)

Upon learning about the toxic waste dump, the FRN immediately declared the area around Koko a disaster area. Approximately 1,000 people were evacuated and soldiers cordoned off the area. A task force was established under the leadership of the FRN's Ministry of Works and Housing. The FRN immediately made an urgent request for international assistance. Teams from the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan met with the FRN Minister of Works and Housing before visiting the site and debriefed the Minister following their assessments. Nigerian scientists from the universities of Ibadan and Lagos also visited the site. The teams presented reports to the Minister, outlining the human and environmental risks of the toxic waste and recommendations for removal and disposal of the chemicals.

Following an agreement between the FRN and the Government of Italy (GOI), a work force of 150 men began to repackage and load the industrial waste into containers to be put on board ships back to Italy. The cleanup began on July 6 and took approximately 21 days. Several of the workers reported experiencing chemical burns or vomiting blood and one man was temporarily paralyzed. On July 10, dockworkers temporarily stopped work to protest their exposure to the toxic waste without adequate protection. The last ship left Koko on Aug. 15, and all of the waste was returned to Italy where it was disposed of in accordance with Italian environmental protection standards.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

On June 15, following a direct appeal from the FRN and a diplomatic note to Secretary of State George Shultz, U.S. Ambassador Princeton Lyman determined that the toxic waste dump at Koko posed a serious environmental risk to Nigeria and, therefore, warranted USG assistance. OFDA convened a meeting with officials from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to discuss the USG response. Three technical specialists from EPA, Captain Ellery Savage, John Gilbert, and Harry Compton, were assembled, briefed, and dispatched to Nigeria to provide technical assistance to the FRN. The EPA technical team was joined by Dr. Jason Weisfeld, a CDC epidemiologist stationed in Kaduna, Nigeria, to perform health surveys on the local population. They began their assessment on June 20 and spent three days examining the site. Team members wore protective suits and used radiation meters and chemical analyzers to measure toxicity. The team found high concentrations of toxic chemicals, but no appreciable levels of radioactivity. They shared the results of their survey with subsequent assessment teams from the United Kingdom and Japan. In its final report to the Minister of Works, the team made a number of recommendations concerning containment of the site and options for disposal of the waste. OFDA paid for the airfare and 14-day per diem of the team members at a cost of \$40,700.

TOTAL \$40,700

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided by the International Community

Friends of the Earth (U.K.) - sent an environmental assessment team.

International Atomic Energy Agency - dispatched a radiation expert to detect radioactivity.

Italy - sent 2 ships to Koko to transport the waste back to Italy. The GOI paid for the cost of loading the ships and disposal of the waste. The GOI also agreed to decontaminate the site.

Japan - dispatched 2 teams to examine toxicity of the waste.

United Kingdom - sent a team to conduct an environmental assessment of the site and investigate the threat of radioactivity.

Date

May 27, 1988 - present

Location

Northwestern Somalia; an area bounded on the east by Las Anod and Erigavo, and on the west by Boroma; this area is approximately 88,400 sq. km (34,000 sq. miles)

No. Dead

Estimated at 10,000-20,000 civilians

No. Affected

1,000,000, about 300,000 Somalis fled to Ethiopia

Damage

Extensive damage to the cities of Hargeisa and Burao and surrounding villages, particularly in the triangle bordered by those two cities and the port of Berbera; the war also caused damage to other areas of the north as far east as Erigavo and as far west as close to Boroma; homes, infrastructure, water systems, and livestock destroyed

The Disaster

There has long been enmity between the Somalis and Ethiopians, with both countries making a claim over the Ogaden, an area under Ethiopian sovereignty but whose population comprises predominantly Somali and related Muslim people. Tensions spilled over into full-scale war in 1977 when the Somali army invaded the Ogaden in support of the anti-Ethiopian Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) uprising. The new Marxist Ethiopian government, with emergency help from the Soviets and Cubans, pushed back the Somalis. In the wake of the Somali defeat, hundreds of thousands of people fled to Somalia in search of refuge. The majority of these mostly Ogadeni refugees still remain in camps in both northern and southern Somalia.

Since a 1969 coup, the Somali government has been led by Siad Barre. President Siad is a member of the Marehan clan (of the Darod clan family) and there has been some resentment among other clans of the perceived dominance of the Marehans and other Darod clans such as the Ogadenis and Dolbahantes. This resentment became more pronounced in the 1980s, particularly in northern Somalia among the Issak and other northern clan families. The Issaks believed that they were being unfairly pushed out of jobs and government posts in favor of Darod clan members. Some of the anti-government sentiment among the Issaks was directed at the Ogadeni refugees in their midst, who were viewed as prime beneficiaries of government favoritism.

Increasing dissatisfaction and resentment with the government led to the formation of the Somali National Movement (SNM) in the early 1980s. The Issak-dominated SNM was supported, in weapons and other material needs, largely by the Ethiopian government. In early 1988, the governments of Somalia and Ethiopia concluded an agreement to stop supporting each other's rebel groups. Shortly after this, on May 27, 1988, the SNM launched an attack on Burao; this was followed on May 31 with an attack on the old capital of British Somaliland and the largest town in the north, Hargeisa. The Ogadeni refugee camps of Las Dhure and Agabar were also

attacked by the SNM in these early days of the conflict.

The battles in Burao and Hargeisa lasted for several months and were very brutal. SNM soldiers dispersed themselves in heavily populated residential civilian neighborhoods. The Somali Armed Forces responded with heavy aerial bombardment. Civilian crossfire deaths reached into the thousands, and many thousands of Issak survivors fled these towns. At least 90% of Hargeisa was left damaged by the time the Somali Armed Forces re-took the city. Fighting was also intense in the surrounding rural areas: the Somali government forces attacked many Issak villages, whether or not SNM forces were present, in savage reprisal for SNM activities. The SNM continued to target Ogadeni refugee camps throughout the summer, claiming that many of the men were actively fighting with the Somali Armed Forces. Summary executions---in many cases seemingly motivated only by tribal affiliation---were carried out by both sides. The largest group of such executions took place in Berbera, a port town in which the United States has interests, and which had not been the scene of battle. For at least four months in the summer of 1988, the Somali Armed Forces rounded up Issak men, detained them for varying lengths of time, and then systematically executed them, usually by cutting their throats. At least five hundred men, and possibly more than a thousand, lost their lives in this manner. These atrocities were described in a State Department report written by Robert Gersony, an independent consultant who, in the spring of 1989, interviewed almost 300 refugees, displaced persons, and others affected by the war.

It is estimated that at least 10,000-20,000 civilians lost their lives in this war. In addition, hundreds of thousands of Somalis---mostly Issaks---fled the north for sanctuary in other countries, particularly Ethiopia. Thousands of other northerners, both Issaks and non-Issaks, have felt compelled to leave their homes for other towns or for remote interior locations.

By the beginning of 1989, the level of violence had seemed to have significantly decreased, but

the situation remained very tense in northern Somalia. - The continued insecurity in the north made relief operations difficult.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

President Muhammad Siad Barre approached U.S. Ambassador T. Frank Crigler on July 26, 1988, requesting relief assistance for northern Somalia. On Aug. 1, 1988, Ambassador Crigler determined that the intense civil strife had caused a disaster in northern Somalia. The USG then sent a three-person assessment team to Somalia to observe the extent of damage in the north and to recommend appropriate USG relief options. The team was headed by the State Department's Bureau for Refugee Program's Deputy Assistant Secretary Kenneth Bleakley and comprised OFDA's Joseph Gettier, the Africa Division's Deputy Assistant Director, and USAID/Mogadishu's food specialist Tom Brennan. The team arrived in Somalia on Aug. 8, met with donor and Somali government officials, and traveled to Garoe, Las Anod, Berbera, and Hargeisa. The team decided that OFDA would concentrate its efforts on the needs of the displaced, while the Bureau for Refugee Programs would take responsibility for providing USG assistance to refugees, both those of *Ethiopian* origin in Somalia, who had been receiving assistance for close to a decade, and those *Somalis* who had fled to Ethiopia. OFDA assistance to the displaced in Somalia in FY 1988 was as follows:

Amb. authority used for the local purchase of relief supplies	\$25,000
250 rolls of plastic sheeting from the Leghorn stockpile	\$72,475
Radio equipment	\$4,078
TOTAL	\$101,553

The continued insecurity in the northern regions of Somalia in the summer and fall of 1988 precluded the implementation of a more extensive relief program.

Assistance Provided by the International Community

International Organizations

EC - provided \$44,800 to the Somali Ministry of Health for medicine.

FAO - performed an assessment on the potential food deficit situation in the north and on the outlook for the following year's harvest.

ICRC - provided, in conjunction with the Somali Red Crescent Society, medicine and equipment for hospitals in Mogadishu, Garoe, Berbera, and Las Anod; provided a surgical team comprising a surgeon, operating nurse, and four ward nurses to Martine (military) Hospital in Mogadishu; and taught a four-day course for Somali doctors in basic principles of war surgery. The ICRC augmented its expatriate staff in-country to 16 in anticipation of increased medical needs.

UNHCR - sent drugs for refugee health units in camps east of Hargeisa.

UNICEF - provided medicine and medical supplies, valued at \$770,000.

WFP - pledged to resume its refugee feeding programs in the north.

Governments

Egypt - delivered 5.5 MT of medicine and provided four more surgeons to work with a 12-doctor, ongoing medical program.

Italy - contributed 60,000 bags of IV fluid and antibiotics; donated relief supplies valued at \$1,000,000; and provided \$1,100,000 for hospital equipment.

United Kingdom - gave \$83,738 to Christian Aid for medical supplies and drugs.

TOTAL \$2,998,538

Food Shortages South Africa

Date
1988

Location
Gazankulu, Venda, Lebowa, Bophuthatswana, Qwa-Qwa, Kangwane, KwaZulu, Transkei, and Ciskei homelands and black townships in Cape, Orange Free State, Natal, and Transvaal provinces

No. Dead
Unknown

No. Affected
1,350,000 requiring emergency food assistance

The Disaster

The number of black South Africans requiring emergency food assistance continued to climb in 1988. Over 1.3 million people depended on a daily food ration of protein stew and mealie meal in 1988, compared to 1.2 million in 1987 and 850,000 in 1986. Most of these people live in the so-called black homelands, marginal rural areas established by South African government for the relocation of large numbers of the black population. These areas are often barren landscapes, completely unsuitable for subsistence agriculture. Most homeland residents live in overcrowded shantytowns, without access to potable water, sanitation, or adequate health services. A large percentage of the children suffer from severe malnutrition and the homelands population has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world. In addition, approximately 225,000 Mozambican refugees have fled to the homelands to escape the civil strife in their country.

The underlying cause of this chronic human disaster is South Africa's system of apartheid. The homelands are entirely dependent on the economy of South Africa for their survival. Approximately 60% of the black males residing in the homelands work in the cities or mines of South Africa. The income from these workers, who earn barely a subsistence wage, accounts for roughly 70% of the gross income of the homelands. South Africa's current economic recession has drastically reduced the remittances that these laborers send to their families. This, coupled with spiraling inflation of basic food staples, has forced over 1.3 million black South Africans to rely on free food rations in order to survive. The South African government takes no responsibility in providing assistance to the homeland population.

Action Taken by South African Non-Governmental Organizations

Operation Hunger, a multi-racial, non-political private voluntary organization, manages the largest emergency feeding program in South Africa. Operation Hunger works independently of the South African government and the homeland authorities and relies entirely on donations from

local businesses, church groups, public fund-raising campaigns, and foreign donors. It responds only to community requests for assistance and distributes food rations through schools, clinics, churches, and other designated outlets. Operation Hunger also manages self-help gardening projects in the homelands, designed to relieve community dependence on food assistance. While several homeland communities became self-sufficient, other communities were forced to join Operation Hunger's feeding program. In 1988, Operation Hunger provided food rations to 1.35 million people. The vast majority of the recipients were women, children, the elderly, and the increasing number of unemployed. The daily food ration consisted of dehydrated protein stew and a portion of mealie meal, the staple of the black South African diet. The food is trucked in by Operation Hunger and then prepared by local women and children.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

For the third year in a row, the USG provided assistance to Operation Hunger's feeding program inside South Africa. During the previous two fiscal years, OFDA obligated two grants of \$125,000 each to Operation Hunger. On Feb. 18, U.S. Ambassador Edward J. Perkins determined that the grave situation in the homelands constituted a disaster warranting USG assistance. USAID/Pretoria recommended that OFDA continue to fund Operation Hunger's program. On Feb. 24, OFDA allocated a matching grant of \$200,000 to Operation Hunger. As in previous years, OFDA agreed to match one dollar for every three dollars collected by Operation Hunger.

TOTAL	\$200,000
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Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

Presbyterian Hunger Program - donated \$162,010 to Operation Hunger.

TOTAL	\$162,010
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Assistance Provided by the International Community

Belgium - donated \$16,400 to Operation Hunger.

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe - contributed \$841,000 to Operation Hunger.

Germany, Fed. Rep. - donated \$1,200,000 for the purchase of maize meal through German NGO Agro-Action.

ICRC - distributed supplies to Mozambican refugees in Gazankulu and Kangwane

United Kingdom - gave \$41,000 to Operation Hunger.

TOTAL \$2,098,400