

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

Drought

... over a period of 3-7 years in parts of the Yemen Arab Republic causes 2,000,000 people to verge on starvation—20,000 villagers abandon their homes.

Value of U.S. Assistance	\$3,341,029
Value of Assistance Other Nations and International Organizations	4,192,260
	<hr/> \$7,533,289

DETAILS:

The Yemen Arab Republic situated in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula has a population of 5 to 6 million who live primarily in small villages. It is largely dependent on its agricultural resources, and once was considered the bread-basket of the Arab peninsula.

For three successive years rainfall has been far below average, and in some areas there has been no rain at all. It was reported that in one district there had been no rain for seven years. Part of the country north of Sanaa had only 2 to 15 percent of the normal average.

Although certain parts of the country were affected by drought for seven years, conditions worsened throughout the country from 1967 onwards. Crop failures occurred in late 1969 and early 1970, but widespread famine was not immediately evident because Yemini farmers had some reserve stocks from previous years. They were able also to sell their animals or obtain loans and from the proceeds could purchase food. By early summer 1970, the people were desperate; hundreds of thousands became entirely dependent upon the free distribution of food by the government and voluntary agencies.

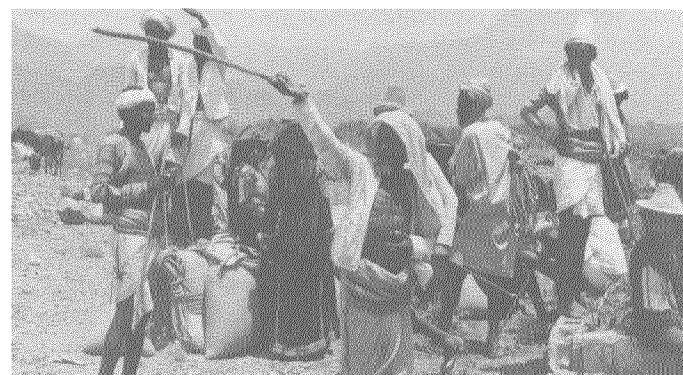
Areas seriously affected included the hills in the southern part of the country, around Taiz-Turba, the central northern high plains and most of the coastal plain. Hardest hit was the Ti-hama, normally a good agricultural zone of about one million inhabitants paralleling the Red Sea Coast. Here the situation was so severe that some thousands of people abandoned their villages and moved to urban areas such as Sanaa. Sanaa is the capital of the YAR and has a normal population of about 150,000.

By early winter 1970, unseasonably late rains had arrived and began to revive local agricultural production.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The Yemen Government was unable to pay for food imports in the quantities needed. The Prime Minister appealed to the U.S. Government Interests Section in Yemen for relief food support. It was determined that the only feasible program would be free distribution of USC-donated P. L. 480 Title II food commodities directly to the needy through a cooperating sponsor. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) volunteered to serve in

Mountain people prepare to return home with grain distributed by CRS.



that capacity and promptly reached a three-way operational agreement with the YAR and U.S. Governments. An estimated 700,000 people received food under this program. The YARG paid for living and operational expenses of three American CRS staff members, project supervisors, at a cost of 240,000 Yemeni Riyals (\$40,000) Salary of end-use checkers hired by CRS and expenses incurred in unloading food and local transport were also paid by the YARG.

Due to the limited country communications and transport problems, it was decided that USG foodstuffs would be distributed solely within the Tihama disaster area rather than throughout the whole of Yemen. Accordingly, the Governor of Hodeida Province was delegated by the YARG to provide all possible support for the distribution program. A Hodeida committee was quickly established to estimate sub-areas of greatest need and oversee distribution operations. The Governor organized port unloading procedures and commandeered a number of privately owned trucks for inland transport. A brigadier general from the Yemen Arab Republic Army assigned to the operation proved invaluable as an overseer and coordinator. Recipient committees were formed in some of the larger villages and towns. A number of these (although with reduced membership) continued in existence to coordinate distribution of CRS "rehabilitation" donations procured from European sources. Senior officials of the Yemen Arab Republic were available at all times to implement, coordinate and provide *ad hoc* solutions to incidental problems. The U.S. Interest Section stated "In the event of a future famine emergency, CRS or another cooperating sponsor would be fortunate to have the support and cooperation rendered by the Yemenis during the 1970 disaster."

Most of the major cereal-grain relief shipments from other donor governments were turned over to the Yemen Arab Republic Government for disposition. Unlike the USG food donations which arrived in a matter of weeks after the Yemeni appeal, these food shipments arrived after the peak hunger period was past. Sanaa officials were inclined to release commodities in the market in order to generate development project funds.

The newly created Yemen Red Crescent set up a medico-social-relief action for the drought victims in cooperation with Yemen authorities.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

By good fortune, the U.S. Government was able to divert a Title II grain shipment bound for Tanzania to Hodeida, Yemen Arab Republic. It arrived in a matter of weeks after the initial Yemeni appeal and subsequent signing of the USAID/CRS/YARG agreement. This was the first large scale shipment to reach the country.

The Principal Officer of the U.S. Interests Section exercised his disaster relief authority to commit AID contingency funds for the purpose of paying costs of bagging 8,036 tons of bulk sorghum and wheat offloaded from the "S.S. Mahout." These costs amounted to\$19,286

Other than this use of contingency funds, USG assistance consisted of FFP commodities contributed through Catholic Relief Services and the World Food Program for direct, free distribution to the needy. These food donations consisted of the following:

For Distribution by CRS under agreement w/USAID/YARG:

Metric Tons		
702.4	bulgur wheat	\$ 47,159
1,402.1	non-fat dry milk	787,997
6,000	sorghum	310,800
3,000	wheat	173,000
1,497.4	wheat soy blend	262,648
12,601.9		<hr/> \$1,581,604
	Plus ocean freight costs, about	600,000
		<hr/> \$2,181,604

World Food Program (Also see other nations section)

7,500	wheat	\$ 608,000
	Plus ocean freight	450,000
		<hr/> \$1,058,000
	Total value USG contribution	\$3,258,890

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:

Catholic Relief Services

CRS provided three staff members who coordinated distribution of all USG FFP commodities. The CRS operation was particularly effective because the food was distributed directly to the needy. CRS also obtained food and medicines from European sources, which is included under "Other Nations Contributions," and donated from its own resources in the U.S. medicines valued at \$67,139

American National Red Cross—cash 5,000

Church World Service—cash through WCC 10,000

Total Assistance—U.S. Voluntary Agencies \$82,139

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

World Council of Churches (WCC) and Caritas

WCC issued an appeal to member churches for contributions for Yemen famine relief. In its report, it indicated donations had been made in response to LICROSS, WCC and CWS appeals, but donors and their contributions were not always clearly identified. CRS reported obtaining from European sources (including Protestant churches and Caritas) high value packaged foods and medicines worth more than \$400,000

Countries contributing to this were United Kingdom, West Germany, Holland, Denmark and Austria. Additionally, WCC indicated that Norway had donated medicines valued at \$29,300 and food valued at \$21,400 for a total of \$50,700

League of Red Cross Societies (LICROSS)

Mr. P. C. Stanissis of the League travelled through the country and brought back an alarming report about the distressing situation and the need for food, medicines and personnel. LICROSS provided two delegates to advise the newly formed Yemen Red Crescent on setting up its medico-social-relief pro-

gram. Also, the League requested a number of member societies to provide support for the program with the following response:

Algeria—supplies	\$ 5,000
Belgium—cash	700
Canada—cash and supplies	11,860
Denmark—cash	2,660
Finland—supplies	3,040
Germany (Dm. Rep.)—supplies	4,860
Netherlands—cash	5,810
Norway—cash	4,650
Sweden—cash	9,640
Switzerland—cash	4,650
United Kingdom—cash	4,070
USSR—supplies	22,360
Yugoslavia—supplies	4,070

International Union for Child Welfare—cash 1,190

World Food Program—In addition to the 7,500 metric tons of wheat provided by the USG for the WFP feeding program, other donor countries contributed 4,500 metric tons of wheat and 1,320 metric tons of high protein foods and oil, valued at about \$ 660,000

European Common Market

14,000 metric tons of cereals, valued at about ... \$1,134,000

Governments:

West Germany—16,000 tons cereal grains, flour, plus airlift of approximately 30 tons of biscuits and other processed foods. Value of the 16,000 tons cereals/flour about \$1,296,000

USSR—2,000 metric tons cereals, valued at about \$ 162,000

People's Republic of China—5,000 metric tons of cereals, valued at about 405,000

Total Assistance Other Nations and International Organizations \$4,192,260