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OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR

Assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 33/21 of 5 December 1978 requested the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations organizations and specialized agencies to continue and intensify their assistance to Ethiopia; appealed to Governments of Member States and to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and all voluntary agencies to continue and increase their assistance to the Government of Ethiopia for relief, rehabilitation and recovery of the drought-stricken areas; called upon all concerned to ensure that the international assistance provided be used for the sole purpose of relief and rehabilitation; and requested the Secretary-General, the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and the Administrator of UNDP to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session and to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1979 on the implementation of that and other relevant resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.
2. At the first regular session of the Economic and Social Council, in 1979, the report of the Secretary-General was presented orally by the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. A representative of the Administrator of UNDP reported to the Council on the nature and progress of the development work being undertaken in Ethiopia.
3. The Secretary-General's report described the assistance being given to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia, reviewed the general situation and stressed the importance of meeting the humanitarian need, not only for its own sake, but so that a firm base could be provided upon which the essential development programme could be built. Without such a development programme, Ethiopia's problems would never be solved.

* A/34/150.

Relief assistance

4. The humanitarian need is increasingly being met by a food distribution programme, whose effectiveness is being enhanced by the introduction of a more satisfactory transport network. The appeal made by the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator to a number of traditional donor countries called for a fleet of trucks designed to make possible a total port off-take capacity of about 100,000 tons of food aid annually; the response in cash and kind now corresponds to 168 trucks and 124 trailers. As the Government of Ethiopia also purchased a considerable number of truck/trailer units in 1978, there should now be an adequate vehicle fleet for the carriage of food, fertilizers, etc., from the ports to the main inland warehouses. The Government has provided a suitable site for the workshops, administrative offices and vehicle park and given the equivalent of \$250,000 to cover the initial operating costs. There is still a great need for additional smaller four-wheel-drive trucks to be used for forwarding the commodities from the depots to the distribution centres in areas where existing conditions are difficult. Access to these centres, especially during the rainy season, remains very uncertain.

5. After the multi-donor mission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in June 1978, in which UNDRO took part, an appeal was launched for 200,000 tons of cereals and 17,000 tons of complementary food to meet the needs for the next year. Against the target figure for cereals, 132,255 tons had reached Ethiopia by the end of June 1979. Further pledges not yet arrived or for which agreements were being finalized included 10,000 tons from the World Food Programme (WFP), 24,800 tons from USAID, 14,650 tons from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 15,000 tons from the European Economic Community (EEC), 5,000 tons from the Federal Republic of Germany and 5,000 tons from Bulgaria, giving a total of 206,705 tons.

6. Complementary foods received in Ethiopia or pledged between the time of the appeal and June 1979 totalled 17,476 tons. This amount was made up of 4,000 tons from Belgium, 2,523 tons from the United States of America, 4,800 metric tons from EEC, 3,500 tons from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and 2,653 tons from Catholic Relief Services and other voluntary agencies.

7. It should, however, be noted that some of the pledges for cereals and for complementary foods will arrive in Ethiopia only after the period covered by the multi-donor mission's recommendations.

8. The United States Government announced in late August 1979 that for 1979 it has given or promised more than 56,000 metric tons of food assistance, valued at \$10,718,000, in addition to monetary grants of almost \$3 million. This assistance is in part intended to meet the needs of people in the drought-affected areas and in part to provide help for those displaced from their homes by civil strife.

9. It is not yet practicable to forecast the 1979-1980 requirement for relief food supplies. The 1978-1979 main harvests were somewhat better than in the previous year, although the over-all average improvement masks the performance in particular areas which were adversely affected by lack of rain, insect pests, seed

shortages and civil disturbances. The 1979 spring harvest in the exposed areas of Tigre and Wollo has been reported well below average, the current main rainy season does not appear encouraging in those provinces, and relief grain needs in the next few months may prove substantial.

10. It is important, however, to distinguish between gross relief food requirements and the amount for which a distribution capacity exists. There should also be noted the Government's programme to move people from parts of Wollo to new resettlement areas such as Bale and Wollega, requiring substantial initial food inputs. The immediate target is to move some 250,000 people.

11. During 1978, UNICEF allocated \$4,552,000 for work in Ethiopia. The 1979 estimate is \$5,239,000. Much of the Agency's assistance to Ethiopia during recent years has of necessity been directed more towards the drought emergency conditions, with the possibilities for developmental activity limited by the war situation. The situation is gradually becoming more manageable and longer-term development aims can now be sought.

12. More than 50 per cent of UNICEF programme expenditure for Ethiopia in 1978 was granted for activities intended to strengthen and expand health services throughout the country. This contribution included equipment and drugs for 79 health centres, vaccines, refrigerators, vehicles and pre-service and in-service training for national employees in the health services.

13. The remainder of UNICEF's aid was in longer-term activities and was divided between support for work in the fields of nutrition, water supply and education. The nutrition policy of the Government was helped through the implementation of child-feeding projects in drought and war-affected areas, and also through the expansion of the food and nutrition surveillance systems. These are expected to become an effective planning and management tool for monitoring food production and distribution.

14. During 1978, 24 deep-water wells were drilled in the drought-affected areas of Wollo and Tigre; these were in addition to 75 completed at the end of 1977. A number of hand-dug wells were also completed. Training was given to various categories of subprofessional staff of the water resources authority. The population served by UNICEF water projects in 1978 is estimated at 300,000.

15. More than 6,000 primary and other school-teachers benefited from a training programme designed to adapt education to regional and local needs. Twenty-seven community skill training centres were built in 1978 and 32 more were under construction at the end of the year. Equipment has been given for a total of 106 centres. Valuable assistance was given also to project support communications activities, including training of staff and supply of 3,000 radio sets.

16. Community-based services for young children in rural and peri-urban areas were promoted by UNICEF in co-operation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Municipality of Addis Ababa. A programme of the Ministry of Agriculture and Settlement for the development of women's services, including the promotion of income-generating activities, was also supported.

Assistance to displaced persons

17. By 1 June 1979, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) had obligated a total of \$US 7.075 million from the proceeds of the 1978 appeal for the benefit of persons displaced in Ethiopia as a result of the Ogaden conflict. The uprooted families lost most of their belongings when escaping from the conflict areas. In order to meet their most essential needs, UNHCR is providing domestic utensils, soap, lamps, matches, blankets and clothing. For the return of these populations to agricultural activities, seeds and tools are also being granted. This programme amounts to \$3,641,500. Because most of the food requirements are being supplied by WFP, EEC, and by bilateral arrangements, UNHCR has been able to limit its own food aid to provisions complementing the staple diet. Tea, sugar, salt, and peas and beans have been bought by UNHCR at a cost of \$764,000.

18. Many schools, clinics and other community buildings were damaged or destroyed during the Ogaden war. UNHCR has made available \$921,250 for the purpose of hand-operated brick-making presses which will be used in a self-help programme to reconstruct communal facilities and private dwellings. UNHCR is also giving funds for the improvement of water supply systems and contributing towards the construction of grain stores and health posts.

19. The UNHCR programme has also suffered from the shortage of vehicles in Ethiopia. Twenty trucks have therefore been bought and funds have been committed for other expenses connected with local and international transport of supplies.

20. Several of these assistance measures, particularly the buildings, will not be completed for several months. Visits to the regions concerned have confirmed that the assistance granted corresponds to existing rehabilitation requirements; recent reports express satisfaction with the progress which is being made. It is expected that the final phase of this UNHCR operation will be concluded early in 1980.

Trends in development aid

21. Reports on development assistance to Ethiopia for 1977 and 1978 prepared in the UNDP Office from information supplied by donors show that total aid in 1978 was almost double that of the previous year. This large increase is accounted for mainly by aid for relief and related activities. Continuation of work on a large highway construction project as well as a significant amount for the emergency transport unit has disproportionately increased the figure for aid to the transport sector. There has been considerable increase in relief assistance both in absolute and relative terms while agriculture, education and health have received approximately the same external support over the two years. Omitting the transport sector, the distribution of aid to major sectors for the two years is as follows:

Development aid by major sectors

Sector	1977		1978	
	Amount <u>a/</u>	Per cent	Amount <u>a/</u>	Per cent
Agriculture	35,600	41.7	35,470	26.6
Education	16,020	18.8	19,220	14.4
Health	5,850	6.9	7,020	5.3
Relief	23,190	27.2	49,060	36.8
Natural resources	(3,250) <u>b/</u>		7,120	5.3
Other	4,490	5.3	15,580	11.7
Total	85,150	100.0	133,470	100.0

a/ In thousands of United States dollars.

b/ Technical assistance only; figures for capital development in this sector not available.

22. Analysis of aid for technical assistance (excluding grants) by donor source for the same two years shows an apparent decline in assistance by the United Nations system other than UNDP in 1978. However, this is compensated by increases in grants for relief activities with WFP disbursing \$15 million as well as UNICEF and UNHCR granting about \$4 million each.

Source	1977		1978	
	Amount <u>a/</u>	Per cent	Amount <u>a/</u>	Per cent
UNDP	3,722	9.6	4,701	11.8
United Nations other than UNDP	4,458	11.5	1,719	4.3
Other multilateral organizations	484	1.2	2,417	6.0
Bilateral organizations	30,171	77.7	30,951	77.9
Total	38,835	100.0	39,788	100.0

a/ In thousands of United States dollars.

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23. The sums of money shown in these two tables represent only the allocations for 1977 and 1978: the total costs of many of the projects themselves will, over the life of the schemes, be far greater. For example, a scheme for the protection and rehabilitation of agricultural lands, begun in 1976 and scheduled for completion in 1981, has required assistance from WFP alone valued at \$26,450,000. A more recent project, approved earlier this year for the same general purposes, will cost the programme \$37,300,000.

24. The combination of long-standing soil erosion and years of drought, with the more recent events of insect plagues, wars and civil disturbances, and even occasional floods, coupled with the basic problems of malnutrition, low resistance to disease, and lack of education presents a daunting set of circumstances to the prospective donor, be he interested chiefly in relief or development. Indeed the lines of demarcation between the two activities are more blurred than is usually the case.
