



DISASTER  
RELIEF

CASE REPORT  
Guyana—Floods  
July 1971

Agency for International Development  
Washington, D.C. 20523

**Foreign Disaster Case Reports are publications of the Office of the Foreign Disaster Relief Coordinator, Agency for International Development. This office has responsibility for coordinating U.S. Government foreign disaster relief responses and for the further coordination of such activities with those of the U.S. private and international disaster relief communities.**

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## GUYANA

### Floods

In July, 1971 an estimated 4,249 families living on farmlands along the east coast of Guyana were affected by flooding in the river areas of Cane Grove, Mahaica, and Mahaicony.

Value of U.S. Assistance .....\$4,956

The cultivated fields including the principal food crop of rice were completely destroyed by the inundation of vast areas of land. Numerous agricultural machines and equipment were ruined or temporarily disabled by the flood waters.

#### ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The National Flood Relief Committee under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Labor and Social Security was set up on July 10, 1971 by the Government of Guyana (GOG). The Committee, consisting of representatives of the Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Health, Labor and Social Security, Guyana Red Cross, Guyana Army, police, and representatives from the affected areas, dispatched investigating teams to assess the damage and needs of the flood victims. Another team headed by the Acting Chief Medical Officer organized a vaccination campaign to combat possible outbreaks of typhoid, and over 10,000 people were vaccinated.

The Committee, with the help of the Central Food Unit of the Ministry of Economic Development and the Guyana Red Cross, assembled food parcels for distribution to the victims whose food sources were almost exhausted. Basic foodstuffs of flour, corn meal, powdered milk, and vegetable oil were provided by the U.S. Government under the PL 480 Food for Peace Program. Additional foods were purchased by the GOG and included in the relief parcels in quantities commensurate with the size of each family.

The parcels were designed to last for a period of two weeks. Four parcel distributions were made between July 15 and October 12, 1971. All parcels were transferred from the capital city of Georgetown by the Red Cross and Guyana Army to the rivers and taken by private boat owners to various distribution centers set up at Government schools in the affected areas.

The radio station GBS assisted in a united effort to raise money and collect relief supplies by broadcasting an appeal to the people of Guyana. \$3,609 was collected as a result of these broadcasts and deposited in a special savings account at the National Co-op Bank in Georgetown. An additional \$3,842 was donated by businesses and private organizations and used to purchase food and school supplies.

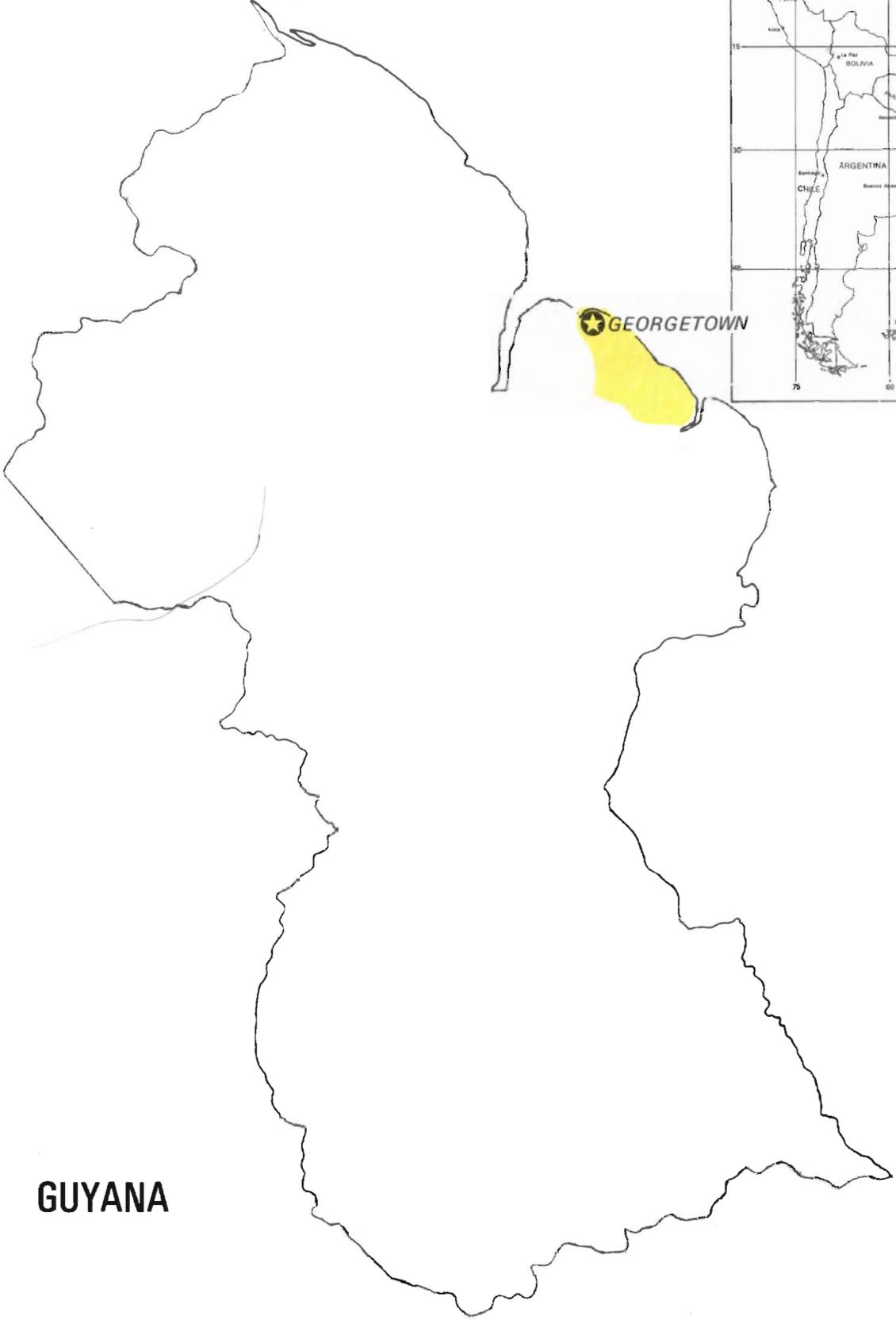
Items of clothing received from a few firms and a number of religious and social organizations and private citizens were assembled and distributed to 3,504 people.

Many farmers who suffered losses and were unable to plant an autumn crop were assisted by a rehabilitation program developed by the GOG. They received seeds, fertilizers, and loans because many of them had no source of income for a period of eight months.

#### ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

Through the Agency for International Development, food assistance was made available from Food for Peace stocks in Guyana for distribution by the Guyana Red Cross. Families who had lost 10 or more acres of crops were eligible for this food aid. The total amount and cost of the PL 480, Title II commodities utilized during the flood relief operation from July 14 to October 12, 1971 is as follows:

Commodity	Amount (metric tons)	Value(\$US)
Wheat flour	16.8	\$1,955
CSM	1.0	211
Vegetable oil	2.6	1,314
Nonfat dry milk	2.1	1,476
	<u>22.5</u>	<u>\$4,956</u>



**GUYANA**



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