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THE EFFECTS OF DISASTER DAMAGE AND HOUSING AID
ON HOUSEHOLD RECOVERY FOLLOWING THE
1976 GUATEMALAN EARTHQUAKE*,**

Walter Gillis Peacock
The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Charles D. Killian
Frederick L. Bates
The University of Georgia

This paper examines the effects of housing programs, disaster damage, community type, and other social determinants on household recovery following a major natural disaster--the 1976 Guatemalan earthquake. The domestic assets index, a measure of household living conditions, and a refined measure of household recovery are introduced and employed. The domestic assets scale is an index of the economic value of household equipment and is an adaptation of level of living scales. While reconstruction aid was the single most important determinant of recovery, it was the type and not the value of aid that was critical. Strong support exists for the conclusion that temporary housing as a form of aid retarded the recovery process while permanent housing programs actually produced net improvement in living conditions. There is also evidence that the

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