

BRAZIL

Floods

... in July and August of 1970 devastate Recife and Southern Pernambuco. Flood waters and landslides kill 172 persons, leave 104,371 homeless, destroy or severely damage 15,224 houses, 53 commercial buildings, 41 industrial plants, 3 hospitals and 3 bridges. Estimated dollar damage—\$46 million.

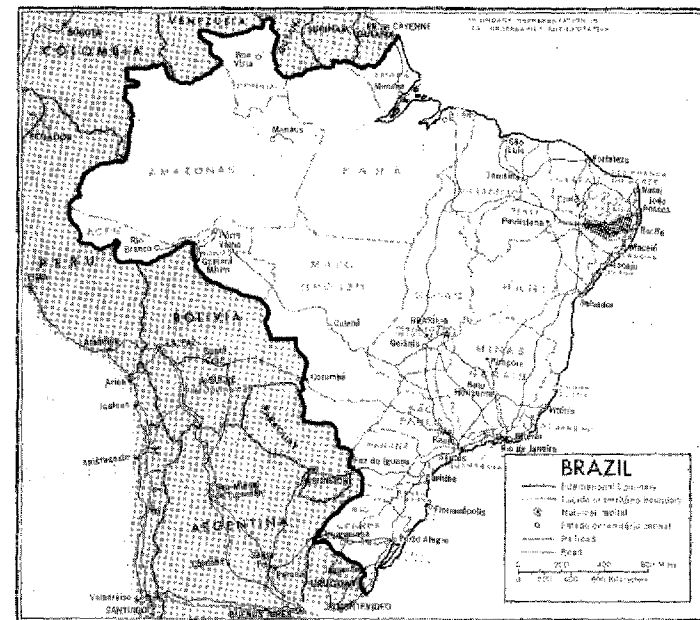
Value of U.S. Assistance\$36,377

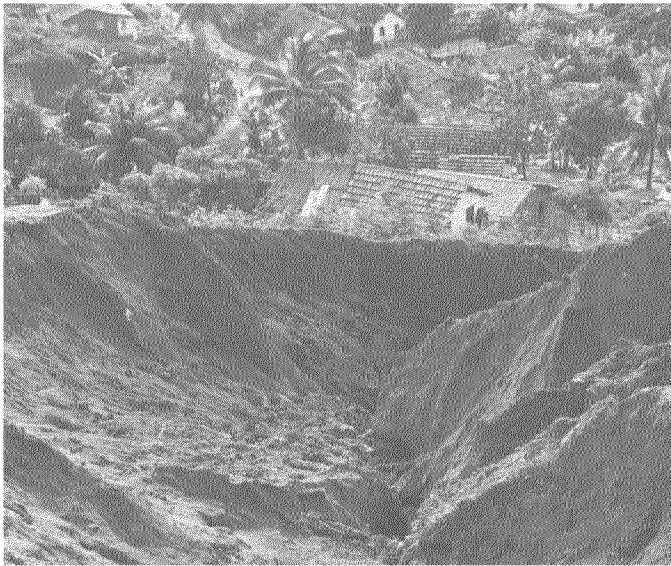
DETAILS:

This report covers two floods closely related in time.

The first occurred on July 21-24, 1970. After four days of rain many rivers overflowed their banks flooding Recife and 22 smaller cities and towns from about 50 miles north of Recife, south to the Pernambuco-Alagoas border, and from the coast inland for an estimated 130 miles. Rivers flooding included the Gurjau, Amaraji, Pirapama, Tapacura, Formoso, Serinhaem, Ipojuca, Camirao, Una, Beberibe and Capibaribe. In Recife the crest of the flooded Capibaribe coincided with high tide and the waters already covering parts of the city spread to cover one-third of Recife.

The second inundation came on August 10 and 11, 1970, following 12 consecutive days of torrential rains. Recife and other environs were hardest hit. Rainfall amounted to 13.22 inches in 12 hours. Populated wide low places became lakes covering many homes. Houses were also destroyed by creeping landslides. Most damage occurred in Recife, but 12 other cities were also affected.





Linha do Tiro area where landslides and erosion caused heavy loss of homes and property

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BRAZIL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

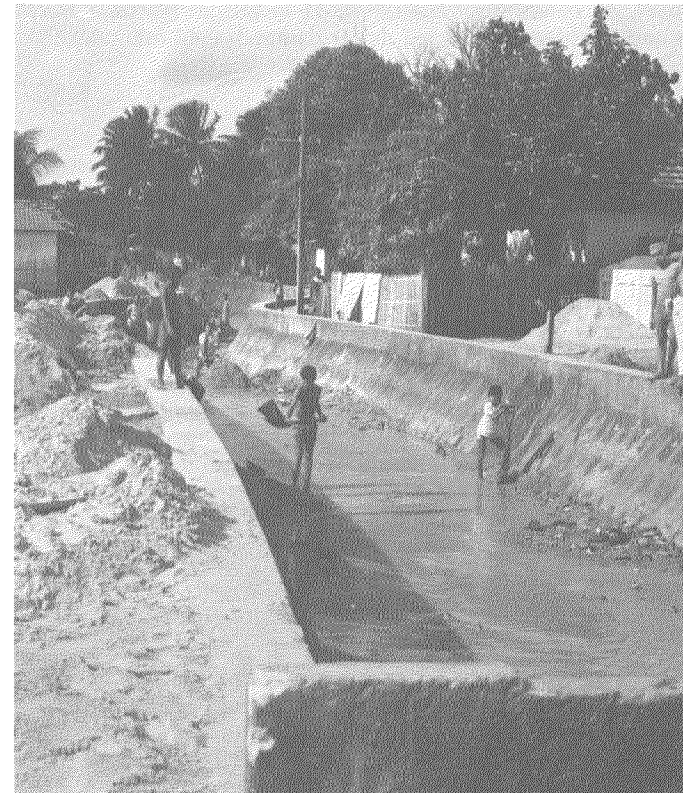
Except for some contributions of food and medicine, relief operations from the beginning were entirely Brazilian, carried out by local, state and federal governments.

Rescue operations were conducted chiefly by "Operacao Alivio," a permanent organization of the Brazilian Army appointed by the Governor of Pernambuco to act in this capacity. This organization made flood forecasts, evacuated people from river banks and other threatened areas, placed the evacuees in pre-chosen centers and fed them. One hundred seventy-five thousand people were evacuated. After

48 hours, relief operations became the responsibility of the State of Pernambuco through a temporary special committee appointed by the Governor. Throughout the crisis period, firemen, soldiers and police cared for emergency cases.

The "Superintendency for Development of the Northeast" (SUDENE) provided food and technical assistance whenever necessary throughout the emergency.

Cleaning and draining canals after the floods in Recife.



Although accurate figures are not available on Brazilian donations of food, it was estimated it exceeded 136 metric tons. This represented only official donations and did not take into account the numerous private contributions for which no estimate was available. President Medici released the Curzeiro equivalent of \$500,000 for assistance to Recife and other municipalities.

The U.S. Mission said that the Brazilian relief operations were well planned and carried out with efficiency. As small problems arose they were solved by the Governor's Committee.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

There was no official request for outside assistance by the Government of Brazil. However, Catholic Relief Services sent a shipment of medicines for the flood victims for which AID/DRC agreed to pay air transportation from the Contingency Fund in the amount of \$ 1,122

Relatively small contributions of USG P.L. 480 food commodities were also made to attend to "pockets" of need on a one or two day basis. These were provided by Church World Service/Lutheran World Relief and Catholic Relief Services supplies already in the country and consisted of 48.7 metric tons of wheat flour, CSM, bulgur, rolled oats, non-fat dry milk, vegetable oil and cornmeal with a value of \$12,859
\$13,981

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:

Church World Service—provided 120,000 water purification tablets and 500 blankets, estimated value . \$ 1,896
Cash donation of 3,000
\$ 4,896

Catholic Relief Services

70,000 penicillin tablets
6,000 chloromycetin tablets
1,890 vials rabies vaccine
5,000 disposable syringes/needles
These medicines were obtained through donations by the Catholic Medical Board and through purchases by CRS from funds donated by the Australian Catholic Relief.
Total value CRS donations \$17,500

Mennonite Central Committee

MMC volunteers and community leaders made plans to build 30 houses for people of Amaraji who lost their homes in the flood *
\$22,396

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The U.S. Mission indicated there were some food donations from other countries but that the amount and value were not known.

* Value not reported