
Guatemala: Rebuilding Lives Through Housing and Services Restoration Following Hurricane Mitch

Operating Unit: USAID/Guatemala

Source: USAID/Guatemala Results, Review, and Resource Request (R4), FY 2002.

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Keywords: Guatemala; Hurricane Mitch.

Related Strategic Objective:

SO 7: Rural economy recovers from Hurricane Mitch and is less vulnerable to disasters.

During Hurricane Mitch, the Motagua River in Guatemala swept away the riverside homes of approximately 120 poor families that were living on federal land near the town of Paso de los Jalapas. These homeless families were then relocated to a local elementary school for approximately three months. With support of USAID, the families petitioned the government of Guatemala for assistance. In response the Government of Guatemala purchased 4.2 hectares of land on higher elevation outside of town. The land was divided into lots for each family, and very basic houses were constructed. USAID then provided cement blocks to make more durable housing, and assisted in the provision of basic sanitary facilities. Since that time, an additional 70 poor families have also joined the community. Although Hurricane Mitch washed away their houses, USAID helped them to rebuild their lives.