



# World Bank Group Archives Exhibit Series

East Pakistan – Cyclone Protection and  
Coastal Area Rehabilitation Project

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**WORLD BANK GROUP**





The World Bank Group Archives Exhibit Series contains exhibits originally published on the Archives' external website beginning in 2002. When the Archives' website was transferred to a new platform in 2015, it was decided that older exhibits would be converted to pdf format and made available as a series on the World Bank's external database, [Documents & Reports](#).

These exhibits, authored by World Bank archivists, highlight key events, personalities, and publications in the history of the World Bank. They also bring attention to some of the more fascinating archival records contained in the Archives' holdings.

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## East Pakistan – Cyclone Protection and Coastal Area Rehabilitation Project

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The cyclone ravaged the area leaving behind destroyed houses, roads and bridges, huge holes in the streets and enormous erosion along the streams.

The World Bank Group responded with a telegram from President McNamara to President Yahya Khan of Pakistan pledging World Bank assistance to help areas of East Pakistan devastated by the cyclone: “The Executive Directors of the Bank and IDA met in special session today and unanimously supported my proposal that the World Bank Group of Institutions should make a special effort to help your country in the reconstruction of the areas of East Pakistan devastated by the recent cyclone.” (World Bank Press Release, November 18, 1970)



*Typical damage to native dwellings as a result of the cyclone in East Pakistan, November 1970*

On January 12, 1971 the International Development Association (IDA) approved a credit of US \$25 million for Cyclone Protection and Coastal Area Rehabilitation Project to assist in rebuilding the economy of East Pakistan devastated by the cyclone and in providing the population of the region with some protection facilities. This was the first reconstruction credit for IDA.



*Holes five feet deep appeared in the streets of East Pakistan after the cyclone, November 1970*

The World Bank is the largest funder of disaster recovery and reconstruction in the world, lending more than \$40 billion for over 550 disaster-related projects. The followings are just a few examples:



- In 1961, the Bank financed the Highway Maintenance Project in Chile to rehabilitate the roads devastated by earthquakes in May 1960.
- In 1979 the Bank approved the loan for Emergency Road Reconstruction in Dominican Republic after two major hurricanes in September 1979.
- On March 16, 1987 Bank sent a delegation to the first Donors Conference of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development held in Djibouti, Ethiopia. IGADD's major goal is to fight the effects of drought and other natural disasters in the region.
- The World Bank sponsored the Colloquium on the Environment and Natural Disaster Management on June 27-28, 1990 in Washington, D.C. The issues discussed at the conference could be grouped around four main topics: strategic issues, development (from vulnerability to resilience), risk management, and the coordination of efforts to reduce vulnerability to disaster.

The World Bank continues to actively participate in disaster management and rehabilitation projects and programs. The Bank is currently taking a major role in the recent tsunami recovery efforts in South Asia.