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**Disaster Risk Management:  
Mitigating the Effects of  
Flooding at the University  
of Guyana**

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# Introduction

- Natural disasters are part of nature and occur throughout the world
- Disasters affect people, services, systems, infrastructure, and most importantly, libraries
- Libraries like any other organization are most likely to experience disaster which are likely to result in their loss of expensive, precious or even elusive materials

# Introduction

Throughout recent history, the coastlands of Guyana have constantly been affected by flooding as a result of

- heavy rainfall
- sea defense breaches
- poor surface water drainage

# Introduction

The UGL faces severe flood threats



## Literature Review

- Zaveri (2014): all types of disasters can potentially be devastating for libraries, but it is water-related disasters such floods that are the most severe
- Few (2003): climate change is likely to cause an increase in flood hazard in many areas of the world
- Robertson (2014): any library situated within close proximity to an expanse of water is at risk of flooding.

# Literature Review

Case Western Reserve University Library

1975

Morgan Library at Colorado State University

1997

libraries in Sri Lanka and Indonesia

2004

Montserrat Public Library

1989

40 libraries in Czech Republic

2002

Chifley Library, a branch of the Australian National University (ANU) Library

2018

# Methodology



Researchers  
are insiders



Study is  
qualitative



Purposive  
sampling  
utilised



Participants  
are staff  
members



Data collected  
through interviews  
and document  
analysis







2005 Flood





# 2017 Flood



## Changes as a Result of the 2005 Flood

- All public services removed from the Ground Floor
- Major collections removed from the Ground Floor
- Staff workroom removed from the Ground Floor
- The Bag Bay was shifted
- Annual 'flood watch' exercise

# Proposal

## Preparedness

- flood proofing of susceptible areas
- preservation management
- regular maintenance of roofs and windows

# Proposal

## Mitigation

- Urgent and immediate corrective action
- Remote storage
- Building codes and regulatory land use
- Robust preservation and digitisation
- Back-up energy supply
- Floodwater diversion





Thank  
you!

