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| **Item type** |  |
| **Bibliography** | Waddell, E. (1989) Observations on the 1972 frosts and subsequent relief programme among the Enga of the Western Highlands, In: Frost and Drought in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, eds B.J. Allen, H.C. Brookfield and Y. Byron, Vol.9 (3), 210-223, URL: https://doi.org/10.2307/3673511 |
| **Abstract / Content summary** | The west-Pacific drought of 1972-1973 was accompanied in the highlands of Papua New Guinea by frosts of a severity not experienced since 1941. The food crops of between 130,000 and 150,000 people were severely damaged or destroyed. The Government instituted a major programme of famine relief, at the same time discouraging the traditional strategy of outmigration to stay with hosts, the importance of which the authorities were largely unaware. This paper, rewritten from a report prepared in 1973, reviews the event, then the famine relief programme and its effectiveness. Administration and mission perspectives are contrasted with those of the highland people, and an attempt is made to reconstruct what actually happened in 1972. The relief programme is criticized as an over-reaction on the part of the authorities, and in conclusion some later perspectives are introduced; in contrast to what happened in 1941, no one died and few were seriously hungry for long. None the less, the cost of Government intervention was high, and many mistakes were made. |
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