

Preface

It is apparent that there is a need to integrate disaster mitigation and risk reduction into disaster recovery, economic and community development, and environmental policy and management. To reach these goals agencies and disciplines should work together, share knowledge and consider pre-planning strategies with the goal of increasing disaster resiliency and the overall economic health of their community. This book is intended to provide conceptual framework and empirical evidence of the factors contributing to disaster recovery and sustainable economic development. This is a unique feature of the book.

This book offers a systematic, empirical examination of the concepts of disasters and sustainable economic development applied many cases around the world. It will contribute to the literature on emergency management, community sciences, policy and planning, economic development, and environmental management. To date the scholarly literature has tended to approach disaster and development from a case study perspective. Our proposed book approaches research on disaster and development in communities and regions from a comprehensive and integrated manner. The volume provides results that are more generalizable and more widely applicable to a variety of circumstances, disasters, and geographic regions.

Ultimately, this book sheds light on how communities can increase their resiliency in response to and recovering from disasters through policy interventions and governance mechanisms. The book will also advance a scholarly understanding of what influences disaster resiliency and contributes to environmental, economic, and social sustainability of communities and regions.

Key Elements

1. *International and Comparative focus*: Disasters are worldwide. Rather than focusing primarily on disasters in the United States to inform practice and advance the scholarly literature, this book expands the scope of empirical analysis to international contexts. This brings additional contextual factors that improve the general understanding of how communities plan for and manage disasters and economic development.

2. *Interdisciplinary Perspectives*

- a. *Sociological and community perspectives*: This volume also presents chapters that measure vulnerability and resilience at the individual level of analysis. The role of culture, social capital, socio-economic vulnerabilities, and interpersonal social networks provides complementary evidence to the analyses conducted at the larger community and regional scale of disaster planning and management.
- b. *Planning and development perspectives*: The relationships among land-uses, housing decisions, and mitigation strategies to vulnerability of disasters are in some cases clearly evident, such as the recent floods in the Midwest and coastal communities. Chapters in this volume test the relations among these factors, which have implications for planning decisions and policy for both inland and coastal regions. In other cases, the implications are more widely diffuse and long term, but are certainly just as important. The difficulty of coping with the gradual event of sea level rise is addressed in this volume.
- c. *Governance and policy perspectives*: The literature on disaster mitigation, preparedness, recovery, and economic development casts the challenges for communities as creating an integrated disaster preparedness and development efforts. This refocuses attention away from a “silo” approach to a “collaboration” approach in creating disaster resilient and sustainable communities. These perspectives will lead to the development of strategies for improved management in the mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery to/from natural and man-made hazards.

Key Research Questions

The following questions are not intended to be exhaustive of the propositions examined in this volume, but indicate some basic questions that we seek to investigate with the contributing scholars in the field.

1. How can disasters and development be addressed in an integrated manner?
2. How can the concept of resiliency be operationalized/used in a way that is useful as a framework to investigate the conditions that lead to stronger, safer, and more sustainable communities?
3. What explains the resiliency of communities and regions? In other words, what factors account for the variation across jurisdictions and geographic units in the ability to respond and recover from a disaster?
4. What are the various policy interventions and governance mechanisms that can be developed to improve the resiliency and sustainability of communities and reduce their vulnerability to natural disasters?
5. How disaster and development strategies conceptualized, operationalized, and implemented in different parts of the world?

6. How certain catastrophic disasters, as focusing events, impacted policies and practice disaster management and development?
7. What are some of the key differences between developing and developed countries in respect to disaster and development?
8. How does the disaster recovery process impact the social, political, and economic institutions of the disaster stricken communities?
9. How the disaster impacted communities collaborate with multiple stakeholders (local, state, international) during the transition from recovery to development/redevelopment?
10. Can the participatory/collaborative nature of disaster recovery help build resilient communities?

The primary audiences of this book are scholars in emergency and crisis management, planning and policy, disaster response and recovery, and environmental management and policy. This book can also be used as a textbook in graduate and advanced undergraduate programs/courses on disaster management, disaster studies, emergency and crisis management, environmental policy and management, and public policy and administration.

The book includes three parts. Each part has chapters with conceptual and theoretical foci as well as cases. After reading the introductory chapter, each chapter in the book can be read independently. The book has several cases from established disaster management systems around the world as well as emerging disaster management systems. The book covers disaster recovery, disaster resiliency, and sustainability within several chapters. Economic growth aspect was not covered in great detail in the book. The book provides usable knowledge for scholars as well as practitioners. Several of the chapters in the book were presented at the 2013 conference of American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) in New Orleans, USA. We acknowledge guidance and assistance of Thomas A. Birkland, Environmental and Hazards series, and Fritz Schmuhl, Springer editor. We also acknowledge assistance from Judith Terpos during the production phase of the book. The chapters have been blind reviewed by several experts in the field. We acknowledge their contributions to the book as well.

Disaster and Development

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