

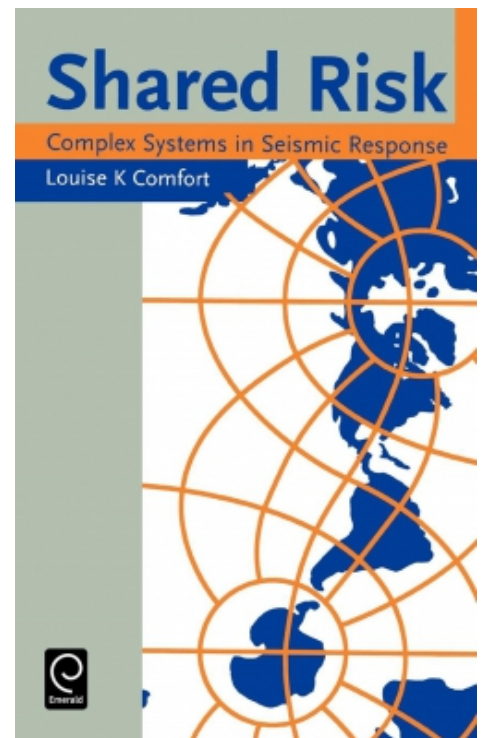
Shared Risk

Complex Systems in Seismic Response

Louise K. Comfort

About the Book

Shared Risk is an unparalleled study of how communities at risk respond to major hazards. This major new book explores the elastic boundary between structure and flexibility that enables modern organizations to function effectively under uncertain, dynamic conditions. Through a comprehensive analysis of earthquake case studies, Louise Comfort shows how communities and organizations cope with dynamic and unpredicted events. Drawing upon the concept of shared risk, she examines the self-organizing processes by which communities act in their own interest to mitigate and reduce risk. Placing shared risk within a theoretical framework consistent with disaster situations, Professor Comfort presents policy-relevant analysis of disaster response systems. The practical, theoretical and methodological issues involved in the study of shared risk are addressed in the first part of the book which also sets this problem in the global context of seismic risk. This is followed by comparative analysis of eleven different case studies of rapidly evolving response systems following earthquakes. The final part of the volume compares different classes of response systems and presents a preliminary model for a sociotechnical system to mitigate seismic risk and facilitate response when earthquakes occur. Examining the relationship between information, action and theory and theories of organizational adaptation, this book will be applicable to a wide range of organizational change efforts, as well as being a strong and distinctive contribution to the literature on seismic policy and crisis management.



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