

Administrative Failure and the International NGO Response to Hurricane Katrina

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Abstract

The devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent failure of government agencies and public administrators elicited an unprecedented response by international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) to a disaster in the United States. This paper focuses on why so many INGOs were compelled to provide humanitarian assistance and relief in the US for the first time and the administrative barriers they faced while doing so. What does such a response reveal about administrative failures in the wake of Katrina and what might the implications be for re-conceptualizing roles for nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations in disaster relief? We answer these questions using data from interviews with representatives of INGOs, organizational press releases and websites, news articles, and official reports and documentation.

