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Sommario/riassunto

Information technology (IT) has the potential to play a critical role in managing natural and human-made disasters. Damage to communications infrastructure, along with other communications problems exacerbated the difficulties in carrying out response and recovery efforts following Hurricane Katrina. To assist government planning in this area, the Congress, in the E-government Act of 2002, directed the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to request the NRC to conduct a study on the application of IT to disaster management. This report characterizes disaster management providing a framework for considering the range and nature of information and communication needs; presents a vision of the potential for IT to improve disaster management; provides an analysis of structural, organizational, and other non-technical barriers to the acquisition, adoption, and effective use of IT in disaster; and offers an outline of a research program aimed at strengthening IT-enabled capabilities for disaster management.