

COMMUNITY FLOOD DISASTER PREPAREDNESS POLICY; A STUDY IN THE SOBO RIVERBANK AREA, BANYUWANGI

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Abstract

Floods frequently occur along the Sobo Riverbanks in Banyuwangi District. These disasters are caused by vulnerable physical environmental conditions and human activities. Community preparedness is a crucial factor in mitigating the impact of flooding, but its implementation has not been optimal. This study aims to analyze community preparedness through a policy implementation perspective by examining implementing organizations, desired policies, target groups, and environmental factors. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach using interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The results indicate that the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) still plays a dominant role in the emergency response phase, preparedness policies are not yet fully operational, community preparedness is still reactive, and physical and socioeconomic environmental factors influence low preparedness. This study emphasizes the need for strengthening pre-disaster management, community empowerment, and integrated environmental management to improve flood preparedness.

Keywords: *Community Preparedness; Disaster Management; Risk Reduction*

INTRODUCTION

Background

Floods are one of the most frequent hydrometeorological disasters in Indonesia and have a significant impact on social life, the economy, and the sustainability of the community's environment. High rainfall intensity, climate change, and environmental degradation make flooding an increasingly complex and recurring phenomenon, especially in areas traversed by river basins (DAS) and densely populated areas. In the context of Banyuwangi Regency, the Sobo River, which flows through Banyuwangi District, is one of the areas with a high level of vulnerability to flooding. The presence of residential areas along the Sobo Riverbanks, the relatively low topography, and the limited capacity of the river cause this area to frequently experience flooding during the rainy season with high intensity.

The flooding phenomenon in the Sobo River is influenced not only by natural factors but also by human activities that increase the risk level. Land conversion, narrowing of the riverbed, silting due to sedimentation, and the accumulation of waste and natural materials such as bamboo clumps around bridges and river dams hinder the smooth flow of water. These conditions accelerate river overflows, which directly impact residents' homes, public facilities, and the socio-economic activities of the surrounding community. Flooding cannot be understood solely as a natural event, but rather as an indicator of the disruption of environmental balance due to the interaction between natural processes and human activities. Thus, flooding in the Sobo River reflects structural and social problems that require comprehensive management.

Community preparedness is a fundamental aspect that determines the severity of a disaster's impact. Preparedness encompasses the community's knowledge, attitudes, and capacity to anticipate threats, respond quickly, and minimize the risks and losses caused by disasters (BNPB, 2012). Law Number 24 of 2007 concerning Disaster Management emphasizes that disaster management is a shared responsibility between the government and the community. This demonstrates that communities, particularly those living in vulnerable areas such as the Sobo River banks, are positioned not only as victims but also as crucial actors in disaster mitigation and preparedness efforts. Empirical evidence in the Sobo River area shows that community preparedness still faces various challenges. Repeated flooding indicates that the community's ability to anticipate and respond to flood threats is not

yet optimal. These problems are reflected in, among other things, low risk awareness, limited understanding of evacuation procedures, minimal utilization of early warning systems, and high dependence (Priyanto, 2023) on government response when floods occur. Although the Banyuwangi Regency Government, through the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), has undertaken various mitigation efforts, such as disaster awareness campaigns, volunteer formation, and post-disaster emergency response, these efforts have not fully fostered sustainable community preparedness. Community preparedness for flooding is influenced by knowledge, experience, institutional support, and the effectiveness of local government policies (Yahya & Syahputra, 2025; Safira, 2024). Risk communication and early warning systems enhance community response to flood threats (Ridwan & Santoso, 2022). Although mitigation efforts often focus on technical aspects, individual behavior, or the evaluation of specific programs, it is essential to assess community preparedness as part of the process of implementing disaster management policies at the local level. In public policy practice, the success of a policy is determined not only by its formulation but also by how it is implemented, interpreted, and accepted by target groups within specific social and environmental contexts. Smith (1973) emphasized that policy implementation is influenced by the interaction between implementing organizations, target groups, the policy ideal, and environmental factors. Therefore, community preparedness along the Sobo Riverbanks needs to be understood not only as an individual or community issue, but also as a result of the disaster management policy implementation process taking place at the local level. Based on the background, problems, and research gaps, this scientific article reviews community preparedness in facing flood disasters in the Sobo Riverbank area, Banyuwangi District. The analysis and results are obtained from the results of the collection, development, and grouping of data descriptively, comparatively, and associatively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Research

Extensive research has been conducted on community preparedness for flooding, using a variety of approaches and focus areas. Yahya and Syahputra (2025) found that community preparedness is significantly influenced by disaster knowledge, disaster experience, and institutional support from local governments. This study confirms that communities that have experienced repeated flooding tend to have a more adaptive response, although they still rely on government assistance when disasters occur. Ridwan and Santoso (2022) emphasize the importance of early warning systems and risk communication in improving community preparedness in flood-prone areas. The results show that the effectiveness of disaster information delivery contributes significantly to the speed and accuracy of community response. This research focuses more on the technical aspects of early warning systems and does not fully examine the social dynamics of communities in riverbank areas. Safira (2024) highlights the importance of community empowerment based on disaster mitigation through outreach and the formation of volunteers. This research shows that empowerment efforts are often programmatic and not fully sustainable, resulting in limited impact on improving community preparedness.

Disaster Vulnerability

Disaster is defined as an event or series of events that threaten and disrupt the lives and livelihoods of people, whether due to natural, non-natural, or human factors, resulting in loss of life, environmental damage, property loss, and psychological impacts (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 24 of 2007). Floods as a form of natural disaster are hydrometeorological phenomena that occur due to the overflow of rivers, lakes, or drainage due to high rainfall that exceeds the capacity, exacerbated by unfavorable environmental conditions (Soemarwoto, 1992). In the context of riverbank areas, floods become a structural and recurring threat due to the interaction between natural factors and human activities that increase regional vulnerability. Vulnerability to disasters is determined not only by the physical conditions of an area but also by the community's social capacity to face threats (Priyanto, 2024). The concepts of vulnerability and capacity are two key elements in disaster risk analysis, where risk is understood as a function of threat, vulnerability, and capacity (Priyanto, 2025). Communities with high capacity, characterized by knowledge, skills, and preparedness, tend to be able to mitigate the impact of disasters. Therefore, strengthening community capacity through increased preparedness is a crucial strategy in flood disaster management, particularly in vulnerable areas such as the Sobo River banks.

Community Preparedness

Community preparedness is a series of activities undertaken to anticipate disasters through organization, appropriate measures, and capacity building to effectively respond when a disaster occurs (Kusman et al., 2025). Preparedness includes indicators of risk knowledge and understanding, emergency response plans, early warning

systems, and resource mobilization capabilities. Communities with good preparedness not only understand the potential threat of flooding but also know what actions to take before, during, and after a disaster, thereby minimizing casualties and losses. Community preparedness is inseparable from the government's role in formulating and implementing disaster management policies. Policy implementation is a crucial stage that determines whether policy objectives can be achieved effectively. Smith (1973) explains that policy implementation is influenced by four main components: the idealized policy, the implementing organization, the target group, and environmental factors. In the context of flood disaster management, the Banyuwangi Regency Government's policies regarding mitigation and preparedness must be accurately translated by the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) as the implementing organization, and accepted and implemented by the community as the target group. Modern disaster mitigation approaches emphasize the importance of a paradigm shift from responsive to preventive and participatory approaches. Community *-based disaster risk reduction* positions communities as the primary subjects in disaster risk reduction, not merely policy objects (Dinasty et al., 2025). This approach emphasizes strengthening local capacity, active community participation, and collaboration between the government and communities in building regional resilience (Priyanto et al., 2021). In the context of the Sobo River, implementing a community-based approach is crucial, given that communities best understand environmental conditions and the risks they face.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of community preparedness in facing flood disasters in the Sobo Riverbank area, Banyuwangi District. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe the social conditions, perceptions, and experiences of the community and related actors in the context of implementing disaster management policies comprehensively and contextually. The research locus was determined in the Sobo Riverbank area, which is a flood-prone area with recurring events. The study was conducted in 2025. Research informants were determined purposively, including riverbank communities, village officials, disaster volunteers, and the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD). Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation to obtain relevant primary and secondary data. The obtained data were analyzed interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques to ensure the credibility and reliability of the research findings (Ayun, et al., 2025). With this method, it is hoped that it will be able to provide an accurate picture of the preparedness of the Sobo Riverbank community in facing flood disasters.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In discussing this article, the researcher uses Smith's (1973) thinking regarding Policy Implementation which consists of implementing organizations, desired policies, target groups, and environmental factors, as follows:

Aspects of Implementing Organizations in Disaster Preparedness

Implementing organizations play a strategic role in determining the effectiveness of disaster management policy implementation, particularly in building community preparedness. In Banyuwangi Regency, the implementing organization's role in flood disaster management is carried out by the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), in collaboration with sub-district and village officials, as well as disaster volunteer elements. The Banyuwangi Regency BPBD is tasked with implementing disaster management policies from the pre-disaster phase, emergency response, and post-disaster phase, as mandated by Law Number 24 of 2007. The research results show that the Banyuwangi Regency BPBD has carried out coordinative and operational functions in flood disaster preparedness efforts in the Sobo River area, including other areas prone to flooding.

Table 1.
Flood Disaster in Banyuwangi Regency 2019-2025

Year	Location	Number of Events
2019	Wongsorejo District, Muncar District, Kalipuro District, Wongsorejo District, and Banyuwangi District	6
2020	Wongsorejo District, Kabat District, Pesanggaran District, and Muncar District	10
2021	Pesanggaran District, Wongsorejo District, and Banyuwangi District	4
2022	Pesanggaran District, Kabat District, Glagah District, Kalibaru District, Kalipuro District, Banyuwangi District.	14
2023	Kalibaru District, Kalipuro District, Pesanggaran District, and Banyuwangi District.	5
2024	Purwoharjo District, Siliragung District, Muncar District, Pesanggaran District, and Banyuwangi District	11
2025	Purwoharjo District, Siliragung District, Muncar District, Pesanggaran District, and Banyuwangi District	6

Source : BPBD Banyuwangi Regency (2025)

During the pre-disaster phase, the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) conducts disaster awareness campaigns, maps flood-prone areas, and provides local volunteer training. These outreach efforts generally include providing information on potential flooding, evacuation procedures, and encouraging people to maintain clean river environments. These efforts align with the concept of preparedness, which emphasizes the importance of increasing public knowledge and risk awareness as the primary foundation for disaster impact reduction (BNPB, 2012). The research results show that the role of the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) in improving the preparedness of communities along the Sobo River still faces several limitations. Disaster awareness campaigns tend to be incidental and have not been conducted sustainably. These activities are generally conducted before the rainy season or after a flood, thus not fully establishing a culture of disaster awareness among the community. This condition has resulted in low internalization of disaster knowledge, with some communities still relying on empirical experience and spontaneous responses when flooding occurs, rather than structured preparedness procedures. From Smith's (1973) perspective, this situation indicates challenges in the implementing organization, particularly in terms of resource capacity and interaction patterns with target groups. The Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), as the implementing organization, has limited human resources and budget, resulting in the preparedness program not reaching all communities along the Sobo River. Furthermore, cross-sector coordination with relevant agencies, such as technical agencies and village governments, remains administrative in nature and is not fully integrated into a sustainable preparedness program.

During the emergency response phase, the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) was deemed quite responsive in conducting evacuations, establishing posts, and distributing aid to flood-affected communities in the Sobo River area. This speed of response indicates that the implementing organization has relatively good experience and operational procedures in emergency situations. However, the greater focus on the emergency response phase also indicates that the implementing organization's orientation is still predominantly reactive, rather than preventive. Modern disaster management approaches emphasize the importance of strengthening the pre-disaster phase through mitigation and community preparedness (Madhania et al., 2023). The research also shows that disaster volunteers trained by the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) act as an extension of the organization. Volunteers have a close social relationship with the Sobo Riverbank community, making them more easily accepted and trusted. However, the volunteers' role has not been fully optimized due to limited advanced training, supporting equipment, and a lack of clarity regarding the division of roles between volunteers, the village government, and the BPBD. This situation has the potential to lead to

overlapping roles or a high level of dependence on BPBD instructions when a disaster occurs. findings reinforce the view that the effectiveness of implementing organizations is determined not only by the existence of institutions and policies, but also by institutional capacity, program sustainability, and the quality of interactions with the target community. The preparedness of the Sobo Riverbank community has not been fully developed independently because the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) has not consistently encouraged active community participation in the planning and implementation of preparedness activities. This is in line with Safira's (2024) findings that stated that community empowerment programs by the BPBD are often *top-down* and not fully oriented towards strengthening local capacity.

Desired Policy Aspects in Disaster Management

Idealized policy refers to the normative and conceptual goals to be achieved through disaster management policies as formulated by policymakers. In the context of flood disaster management, the idealized policy places community preparedness as a key element in disaster risk reduction efforts. Law Number 24 of 2007 concerning Disaster Management emphasizes that disaster management must be carried out in a planned, integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive manner, involving the active role of the community. This policy normatively requires the community not only to be an object of protection, but also a subject with the capacity to anticipate, respond to, and recover from disasters independently. Research results show that the disaster management policies in Banyuwangi Regency, including those implemented in the Sobo River area, have ideal goals of increasing preparedness and strengthening community capacity. This policy is reflected in various planning documents and programs of the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), which emphasize the importance of mitigation and preparedness in the pre-disaster phase. Conceptually, this policy aligns with the disaster risk reduction paradigm, which emphasizes a preventive and participatory approach (Priyanto & Noviana, 2023).

According to research findings, there is a gap between normatively desired policies and the reality of implementation on the ground. Community preparedness policies in river basins tend to be understood as part of outreach and emergency response programs, rather than as a continuous social learning process. Consequently, the idealized policies have not been fully internalized in the daily behavior and practices of riverbank communities. This situation indicates that the formulated policies remain abstract and have not been translated into operational guidelines that are easily understood and implemented by the community. From Smith's (1973) perspective, the discrepancy between idealized policies and on-the-ground practices reflects a tension *between* the policy's normative objectives and the capacity of implementing actors and target groups. The desired preparedness policy assumes a risk-aware, organized, and action-ready community, while the social reality on the Sobo Riverbanks demonstrates limited knowledge, resources, and experience in translating policy into concrete actions. This results in the policy functioning more as a normative framework than as an instrument for behavior change.

The desired policy also emphasizes cross-sectoral integration and synergy between local governments, communities, and other stakeholders. Research shows that policy implementation in the Sobo River area remains sectoral and incompletely coordinated. Policies related to spatial planning, river environmental management, and disaster management have not been optimally integrated, resulting in efforts to improve community preparedness not being supported by adequate structural policies. This situation reinforces the view that the desired policy requires not only regulations but also effective coordination mechanisms between agencies (Howlett & Ramesh, 2014). The desired policy also aims to strengthen the role of the community through a community-based mitigation approach (*community-based disaster risk reduction*). This approach requires broad community participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of preparedness programs. Research shows that community participation along the Sobo River is still limited and tends to be reactive. Communities are more often involved during disasters or in specific outreach activities, rather than as active partners in the formulation of preparedness policies and programs. In the view of Azizah et al., 2025), without meaningful community involvement, disaster risk reduction policies tend to lose their local context and be less effective.

Target Group Aspects in Disaster-Prone Areas

The target group in flood disaster management policy refers to the community directly affected and the primary recipients of policy interventions, in this case the community living along the Sobo River in Banyuwangi District. Within the framework of policy implementation, the target group plays a crucial role because the success of the policy is determined not only by the formulation and implementation of the program, but also by the level of acceptance, understanding, and response of the community to the policy (Smith, 1973). Analysis of the target group is crucial to understanding the extent to which disaster preparedness policies are internalized and implemented in

the daily lives of the community. According to research, communities along the Sobo River have a high level of awareness of the potential for flooding as a recurring threat. Their experience of dealing with flooding every rainy season has fostered a collective understanding of the early signs of flooding, such as increased river discharge and prolonged rainfall. However, this awareness has not been fully accompanied by structured preparedness. Most residents rely on personal experience and local wisdom to deal with flooding, such as spontaneously securing valuables and conducting independent evacuations without a clear plan. This situation indicates that community preparedness remains reactive and not based on a systematic emergency response plan. Regarding the preparedness policies implemented by the Banyuwangi Regency Government, research results indicate that public understanding of disaster programs and procedures remains limited. Outreach conducted by the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) and village governments has not fully reached all levels of society, especially vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women, and children. As a result, some residents do not fully understand evacuation routes, assembly points, or coordination mechanisms when flooding occurs. Limited knowledge and access to information are key factors contributing to low community preparedness in disaster-prone areas. The research findings indicate an ambivalent attitude among communities along the Sobo River toward disaster management policies. On the one hand, the community expects an active role from the government in providing protection and assistance when flooding occurs. On the other hand, there is a tendency for high dependence on government responses, thus limiting community self-initiative in mitigation and preparedness efforts. This situation reflects the still-dominant *top-down relationship* between the government and the community as the target group. The community is positioned more as a recipient of aid than as a partner in disaster risk reduction.

According to Smith (1973), this situation demonstrates a gap between policy assumptions and the capacity of the target group. Preparedness policies assume that communities are capable of active participation and taking on a role in disaster risk reduction, while the reality on the ground demonstrates limited resources, knowledge, and confidence in the community to play an active role. Zakiyah & Priyanto (2024) explain that socioeconomic factors, such as education level and livelihood, also influence a community's ability to absorb information and apply it in daily practice. This study found that the social capital of the Sobo Riverbank communities has the potential to be a strength in building collective preparedness. Strong kinship ties and social solidarity enable reciprocal assistance when flooding occurs, such as assisting with evacuations and sharing information. However, this potential social capital has not been fully facilitated and directed by government policies to support organized preparedness. Firdaus et al. (2025) emphasized that strengthening local capacity and utilizing social capital are key to community-based disaster risk reduction. Communities along the Sobo River have sufficient awareness and experience of flood threats, but their preparedness remains reactive and unstructured. The gap between preparedness policies and the capacity of target groups is a major challenge in implementing disaster management policies. A participatory and sustainable approach is needed to empower the target community, ensuring they become not only policy recipients but also active actors in building flood preparedness and resilience.

Environmental Aspects in Disaster Management

Environmental aspects are a crucial component in the policy implementation process because they act as the external context that influences the success or failure of policies on the ground. In Smith's (1973) policy implementation theory, environmental factors encompass physical, social, economic, and cultural conditions that are beyond the direct control of implementing organizations but significantly influence the response of target groups. In this study, environmental aspects were analyzed to understand how environmental conditions in the Sobo Riverbank area shape the community's level of flood preparedness. The research results show that the physical environment of the Sobo River is a dominant factor influencing community vulnerability and preparedness. The Sobo River is characterized by a relatively narrow flow in several areas, with high sedimentation and the presence of dense buildings and settlements along the riverbanks. These conditions reduce the river's capacity to accommodate water discharge during heavy rainfall, increasing the potential for overflow and flooding. Furthermore, the low elevation of residential areas around the Sobo River accelerates water inundation and prolongs flood duration. These physical environmental factors reinforce the view that flooding is not caused by natural events, but rather the result of an interaction between natural conditions and uncontrolled human activity.

The social environment of the Sobo Riverbank community also significantly influences flood preparedness. Research shows that the community has relatively strong social ties and solidarity, especially in emergency situations. When flooding occurs, residents tend to help each other with evacuations and the rescue of belongings. This social solidarity has not fully developed into organized collective preparedness (Majidah et al., 2025). Mutual cooperation activities are still incidental and have not been integrated into sustainable mitigation efforts, such as

routine river cleanups or the development of community-based emergency response plans. Septriana et al. (2024) emphasized that social capital that is not properly managed has the potential to lose its driving force. From an economic perspective, research results show that the majority of the Sobo Riverbank community relies on the informal sector and jobs with relatively low incomes. This economic condition affects the community's ability to undertake independent mitigation efforts, such as strengthening house structures or providing emergency supplies. Economic limitations cause people to tend to accept the risk of living in flood-prone areas as part of the reality of life that is difficult to avoid. Socioeconomic vulnerability contributes significantly to the community's low adaptive capacity to disasters. The policy and institutional environment at the local level also influences community preparedness. Research shows that spatial planning and river environmental management policies are not fully consistent with disaster management policies. The persistence of settlements in riverbank areas indicates weak enforcement of environmental policies, which ultimately increases the risk of flooding. This situation creates an ambiguous policy environment for communities: on the one hand, they are encouraged to be prepared for flooding, but on the other, they continue to live and operate in areas that are structurally vulnerable to disasters. As Agustin et al. (2025) argue, in the context of policy implementation, the lack of synchronization of cross-sectoral policies is an environmental factor that hinders the effectiveness of preparedness policies.

The cultural environment plays a role in shaping community perceptions and attitudes toward flooding. Research shows that communities view flooding as a natural, seasonal event that cannot be fully prevented. This perception influences the level of urgency felt by communities regarding long-term preparedness. While repeated flood experiences increase awareness, normalizing flood risk also has the potential to reduce the incentive to adopt more adaptive behavioral changes. Priyanto & Hentika (2024) emphasize that a paradigm shift from accepting risk to actively managing it is a key challenge in community-based risk reduction. The preparedness of communities along the Sobo River is influenced by a combination of physical, social, economic, policy, and cultural factors. The vulnerable physical environment, economic constraints, policy inconsistencies, and cultural perceptions of flooding create a complex context for the implementation of disaster management policies. Improving community preparedness cannot be achieved in isolation but requires an integrated approach that considers all environmental aspects as part of a comprehensive and sustainable policy implementation strategy.

CLOSING

Conclusion

1. Regarding the implementing organization, the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) has carried out its emergency response function relatively effectively. However, this success underscores the weakness of its pre-disaster orientation. The dominance of a responsive approach reflects the implementing organization's continued operation within the logic of crisis management, not risk reduction. Limited resources, weak cross-sector integration, and a *top-down interaction pattern* have prevented community preparedness from developing into sustainable social practices.
2. While the desired policy aspect, disaster management policy conceptually calls for a risk-aware, participatory, and independent society, lacks adequate implementation instruments to achieve these goals. Preparedness policy remains a normative discourse and fails to transform into a mechanism for behavioral change at the community level.
3. In terms of target groups, the Sobo Riverbank community has empirical experience and awareness of flood threats, but their preparedness capacity remains reactive and unstructured. High dependence on government intervention indicates that policies have not succeeded in shifting the community's position from being an object of protection to a subject of risk reduction. Strong social capital has not been converted into collective preparedness due to the lack of systematic facilitation and organization.
4. Environmental factors, such as river degradation, socioeconomic vulnerability, cross-sectoral policy inconsistencies, and the cultural normalization of flooding, create a structural context that simultaneously increases risk and weakens the effectiveness of preparedness policies. Low community preparedness is not simply a matter of individual behavior, but rather a product of policy failures in managing the interactions between implementing organizations, target groups, and the environment.

Recommendation

1. In this aspect The implementing organization , the Banyuwangi Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), needs to reposition its role from *emergency responder* to *risk manager* . Strengthening institutional capacity should be directed toward establishing consistent pre-disaster programs, strengthening

substantive cross-sector coordination, and redistributing the role of volunteers as community organizing agents, not merely extensions of the bureaucracy during a crisis.

2. In terms of desired policy , the Banyuwangi Regency Government needs to bridge the gap between normative objectives and implementation practices by developing contextual and locally-based operational policies. Preparedness must be positioned as a long-term social process, not a short-term outreach activity. Integrating disaster management policies with spatial planning and river environmental management is an absolute prerequisite, not a policy option.
3. In terms of target groups , intervention strategies must shift from an informative approach to transformative empowerment. Local governments need to facilitate the formation of community-based preparedness structures that provide decision-making space for communities, while simultaneously channeling local social capital into organized and inclusive collective preparedness mechanisms for vulnerable groups.
4. From an environmental perspective , increasing community preparedness will be ineffective without structural improvements to the physical and socioeconomic conditions of riverbank areas. Enforcing river boundary policies, environmental rehabilitation, and strengthening community economic capacity must be viewed as an integral part of preparedness policies, not a separate agenda.

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