Post-Disaster Community Empowerment in West Java

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This study aims to analyze post-disaster community empowerment efforts in West Java Province. The research method used was a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Data collection was conducted through documentation studies related to the research. The results indicate that natural disasters in West Java over the past ten years have been dominated by floods, landslides, and earthquakes, which have had a significant impact on human safety, infrastructure damage, and disruption to the community's social and economic conditions. The most severe impacts are felt in the post-disaster phase, when communities face loss of livelihoods, limited economic access, housing damage, and psychosocial trauma. Therefore, post-disaster community empowerment is crucial for restoring independence and social resilience through economic recovery, community-based rehabilitation and reconstruction, capacity building and mitigation education, and social and psychosocial support. This allows communities to recover, recover, and become more resilient in the face of potential future disasters.
Keywords: community empowerment, post-disaster, disaster management, socio-economic recovery, West Java.

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1. Introduction

Indonesia is a region with a high level of natural disaster vulnerability due to its geographical location at the confluence of three major tectonic plates: the Eurasian Plate, the Indo-Australian Plate, and the Pacific Plate. These plates form an active seismic and volcanic belt known as the Ring of Fire, increasing the potential for earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis (Harijoko et al., 2021). In addition to tectonic factors, the tropical climate, characterized by high rainfall, also triggers hydrometeorological disasters, such as floods, landslides, droughts, and tornadoes. The intensity and frequency of these disasters tend to increase with global climate change (Imaduddina et al., 2023).

Over the past ten years, natural disasters in Indonesia have shown a fluctuating trend with an increasing trend, particularly since 2016, reaching a peak of 5,402 in 2021. After declining in 2022, the number of disasters increased again in 2023, before experiencing a significant decline in 2024. The lowest number of incidents was recorded in 2015, with 1,694 incidents (Dataloka, 2024). In 2024, floods were the most dominant disaster, with 1,088 incidents, followed by extreme weather with 455 incidents and forest and land fires with 337 incidents. Furthermore, there were 135 landslides, 54 droughts, 19 earthquakes, 14 tidal waves and abrasion, and five volcanic eruptions, demonstrating the diverse types of natural disasters that occur in Indonesia (Dataloka, 2024).

West Java Province exhibits a high level of disaster vulnerability, particularly to hydrometeorological disasters such as floods and landslides, which are triggered by extreme rainfall, environmental degradation, and land-use changes (Hardianto et al., 2020). Furthermore, this region also has significant earthquake potential due to the presence of active faults, such as the Lembang Fault and the South Java Megathrust zone, as well as the risk of volcanic eruptions spread across several regencies/cities (Octavianti & Watrin, 2020). Data from the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) recorded that between 2015 and

2024, more than 3,600 disasters occurred in West Java, dominated by floods, landslides, and tornadoes (BNPB, 2024). Entering early 2025, the intensity of flooding and extreme weather events increased again, while from 2024 to early 2025, a spike in forest and land fires and droughts was also recorded in several regions. Furthermore, the major earthquake that struck Cianjur Regency in 2022 is clear evidence of the high seismic risk in West Java, which has had a broad impact on life safety, infrastructure damage, and social and economic stability (Muksin et al., 2023). Natural disasters often have a very serious impact on human safety, particularly in the form of significant loss of life (Prasetyo & Unair, 2010). The high intensity and scale of disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, landslides, and volcanic eruptions, leave many people without sufficient time to evacuate, especially in densely populated areas with limited mitigation infrastructure (Wekke, 2021). Furthermore, low levels of preparedness, limited public understanding of disaster risks, and limited early warning systems contribute to the potential for loss of life (Sari et al., 2025).

In addition to causing loss of life, natural disasters also cause significant material losses, particularly in earthquakes and landslides. Survivors not only lose property but also experience profound psychological trauma due to the loss of family members and the experience of facing the enormity of the disaster (Rahmawati & Rahmawati, 2022). When disasters occur, concern and solidarity from the government and the public are generally very high, manifested through various forms of assistance and support. However, this concern tends to be temporary and gradually diminishes over time, as people return to their routine activities (Haudan et al., 2025). In fact, in the post-disaster phase, victims need ongoing attention, protection, and assistance to support the recovery process and enable them to rebuild decent and sustainable lives (Pasaribu et al., 2023).

Therefore, community empowerment efforts in the post-disaster phase are crucial and must be carried out systematically and sustainably. At this stage, attention and concern from the government and the public generally begin to wane because the primary focus is considered to have been completed during the emergency response and initial aid distribution (Bahransyaf, 2009). Yet, the post-disaster phase is a crucial period for survivors in the process of recovering from their social, economic, and psychological conditions. Without adequate support, disaster victims potentially face difficulties in rebuilding a decent and independent life (Armaita et al., 2025). Through a sustainable empowerment process, it is hoped that affected communities will be able to recover from adversity, develop their potential, and accelerate the overall recovery process, preventing them from becoming dependent and rebuilding a better way of life (Salman, 2024).

Various previous studies have examined the role of community empowerment in the context of disasters, particularly in the post-disaster phase. Hupitoyo et al. (2024) emphasized that a participatory approach through community empowerment can increase community capacity in dealing with post-disaster crisis conditions, particularly through strengthening knowledge, skills, and active community participation in the recovery process. Furthermore, Perdana & Hamid (2025) found that community empowerment programs following flash flood disasters significantly contributed to improving clean and healthy living behaviors and improving environmental health.

Furthermore, Adilla & Mubarak (2025) revealed that post-disaster community economic empowerment plays a strategic role in accelerating the socioeconomic recovery of victims through the development of productive businesses and improving job skills. Research by Satro Harmendo et al. (2025) emphasized that community-based psychosocial support is effective in reducing trauma, strengthening mental resilience, and encouraging the re-emergence of community self-confidence after a disaster. However, most of this research remains partial and focuses on specific aspects, thus not providing a complete picture of the post-disaster community empowerment process as a whole.

Based on this study, a research gap exists in the form of limited studies that integrate social, economic, and psychological aspects within a single post-disaster community empowerment framework. Most studies focus on only one aspect, ignoring the interrelationships between dimensions in the recovery process for affected communities. Therefore, this study presents a novelty by examining post-disaster community empowerment in a comprehensive and integrated manner. It is hoped that it will provide a deeper understanding of holistic, sustainable recovery strategies that are oriented toward strengthening community independence and resilience in facing future disaster risks.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with the aim of in-depth exploration of the phenomena under study without intending to generalize to a broader population (Creswell, 2012). This approach was chosen because it allows for comprehensive description, understanding, and interpretation of various conditions, situations, and dynamics of social realities related to natural disasters and post-disaster community empowerment. The data collection methods used in this research are literature review and secondary data analysis, sourced from books, scientific journals, official reports from government and non-governmental organizations, policy documents, and various print and electronic media relevant to the research topic. The data analysis technique used refers to the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (which includes three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Data reduction is carried out by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and grouping relevant data according to the research objectives. The data presentation stage is carried out through the systematic arrangement of information in the form of narrative descriptions, tables, or matrices so that it is easier for researchers to understand the patterns, relationships, and meanings contained in the data. Furthermore, the conclusion drawing stage is carried out through an in-depth data interpretation process to obtain substantive findings, which are then verified continuously to ensure the validity and validity of the research results.

3. Result and Discussion

Overview of Natural Disaster Phenomena in West Java Province

Over the past ten years, approximately 2016–2026, West Java Province experienced a relatively high intensity of natural disasters, with a pattern of events dominated by floods and landslides, followed by tornadoes, extreme weather, drought, and small-scale earthquakes. Nearly all regencies and cities in West Java were the most frequently affected areas, given the varied topography, high rainfall, and high pressure on the environment. These disasters were not only influenced by natural factors but also triggered by human activities, particularly uncontrolled land conversion, environmental degradation, and changes in land use that reduce the carrying capacity of ecosystems.

1. Floods and Landslides (Hydrometeorology)

The causes of flooding in West Java over the past ten years are the result of a complex interaction between natural factors and human activities. From a natural perspective, the increase in the intensity of extreme rainfall due to global climate change is the primary trigger for flooding. High-intensity, short-duration rainfall frequently occurs, especially during the rainy season, exceeding the capacity of rivers and drainage systems. Furthermore, climate anomalies such as El Niño and La Niña exacerbate unstable weather patterns, causing erratic rainfall distribution and increasing the risk of flooding in various regions of West Java.

From an anthropogenic perspective, forest destruction and land conversion in upstream areas for residential, industrial, and commercial development have reduced the soil's ability to absorb rainwater. The

reduction in vegetation cover has significantly increased surface runoff, allowing rainwater to flow rapidly into rivers and accelerate the rise in water levels. This situation is exacerbated by development that ignores the principles of environmental carrying capacity and capacity, particularly in riverbank areas, and the limited availability of green open spaces that function as catchment areas.

Furthermore, problems with drainage infrastructure contribute to the high incidence of flooding. Inadequate, damaged, narrow, or garbage-clogged drainage channels cannot optimally drain water during heavy rains. The accumulation of waste in rivers and the resulting shallowing of rivers due to sedimentation have narrowed their channels, further reducing their water holding capacity. Consequently, river overflows and flooding in residential areas have become increasingly frequent. This combination of factors indicates that flooding in West Java is not only a natural problem but also reflects weak environmental management and sustainable spatial planning. The following are some of the most significant flood and landslide disasters that have occurred in West Java.

a. Flash Floods in Garut Regency in 2016

The flash floods that struck Garut City on the evening of September 20, 2016, were one of the deadliest hydrometeorological disasters in West Java in the past decade. The event resulted in 34 deaths and 19 missing, as well as extensive damage to infrastructure and residential areas. The flash floods were triggered by extremely high rainfall in the upper reaches of the Cimanuk River, increasing the river's flow to approximately 1,060 m^3 per second. This caused the Cimanuk River to suddenly overflow, carrying mud, rocks, and debris, exacerbating the flood's destructive force. Of the seven affected sub-districts, Garut City and Tarogong Kidul sub-districts suffered the most significant damage. The torrential floodwaters destroyed residential areas, public facilities, and vital infrastructure, disrupting local social and economic activities.

b. Floods in Sukabumi Regency in 2024

Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province, was again hit by natural disasters in the form of floods and landslides on November 3–4, 2024, significantly impacting the lives of the community. According to data from the West Java Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), 114 disasters were recorded across 29 sub-districts, demonstrating the wide coverage of the affected area and the high intensity of the events. Heavy rainfall in a short duration was the primary trigger for these disasters, causing river overflows and increasing landslides in landslide-prone areas. As a result, hundreds of residents were forced to evacuate to safer locations to avoid greater risks. Overall, 167 families (KK) or approximately 437 people were affected. Of these, 92 families (KK) or 238 people were forced to leave their homes and evacuate, while another 140 families (KK) or 230 people were at risk of further disasters. In addition to causing social impacts in the form of mass evacuations, this incident also caused damage to settlements, infrastructure, and public facilities, disrupting the economic and social activities of the local community.

c. Sumedang Landslide in 2021

The landslide that occurred on January 9, 2021, in the Cihanjuang area, Cimanggung District, Sumedang Regency, West Java Province, was one of the deadliest geological disasters in recent years. This disaster resulted in 40 deaths and caused severe damage to residential areas buried by landslide material. According to a report from the Sumedang Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), the landslide was triggered by continuous, high-intensity rainfall over the previous few days, causing the soil to become saturated and lose its binding capacity. The landslide occurred on a cliff approximately 20 meters high and 40 meters long, burying at least 14 homes, with eight of them reportedly completely destroyed. In addition to the main landslide, this incident was also followed by secondary landslides, worsening conditions at the

disaster site and hampering the evacuation process. The accumulated soil, rocks, and building debris severely limited access to the affected area, complicating search and rescue efforts. This tragedy not only resulted in loss of life and significant material losses, but also left a profound psychological impact on the survivors and their families.

d. West Bandung Landslide, January 2026

A major landslide that occurred in the Cisarua area of West Bandung Regency on January 24, 2026, at approximately 2:30 a.m. Western Indonesian Time (WIB) was one of the deadliest geological disasters in West Java in recent years. The disaster was triggered by continuous heavy rain, which caused soil saturation and the sudden collapse of the slope. As a result, at least 53 houses were severely damaged and buried by landslide debris. According to data from the West Java Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), approximately 113 residents were directly affected, with 23 safely evacuated to emergency tents, while hundreds of others were forced to evacuate to safer locations to avoid potential further landslides. During the search and evacuation process, the joint SAR team faced various obstacles, primarily due to the difficult terrain and the weather, which had not yet fully improved. As of January 25, 2026, the search and rescue team had recovered 14 additional bodies, bringing the total number of identified fatalities to 25, while another 65 people were still missing and the search process was ongoing. This incident not only caused significant material losses and loss of life, but also left a profound psychological and social impact on the survivors and their families.

2. Earthquake Disaster (Geology) in West Java

Earthquakes are geophysical phenomena that can occur naturally or as a result of human activity. Naturally, earthquakes are generally caused by the movement of tectonic plates, which leads to the accumulation and release of energy within the Earth's crust. In addition, earthquakes can be triggered by volcanic activity, land mass movements such as landslides, and underground collapses. On the other hand, human activities such as mining, hydraulic fracturing (fracking), large-scale dam construction, and nuclear testing also have the potential to trigger earthquakes, albeit with relatively smaller magnitudes than tectonic earthquakes. The point where a fault or energy release occurs within the Earth is called the hypocenter or focus, while the point on the Earth's surface directly above the hypocenter is called the epicenter, which is generally the location of the strongest shaking.

The frequency, type, and magnitude of earthquakes in a region are key indicators in determining the area's seismic activity level. Seismic activity reflects the average amount of energy released over a given period of time and indicates the potential earthquake hazard in that area. Areas with high seismic activity are generally located along tectonic plate junctions or active fault lines, thus presenting a greater earthquake risk. Understanding the characteristics of seismic activity is crucial for disaster mitigation, spatial planning, and the development of earthquake-resistant infrastructure to minimize the risk of damage and loss of life from earthquakes. The following are examples of major earthquakes that have occurred in West Java.

a. 2022 Cianjur Earthquake

The earthquake that struck the Cianjur-Sukabumi region on November 21, 2022, was one of the deadliest seismic disasters in West Java Province in recent decades. The 5.6 Mw earthquake, with a hypocenter depth of approximately 10 km, was centered in Cugenang District, Cianjur Regency, and was triggered by activity on the Cimandiri fault. Although the epicenter was located approximately 9 km from the fault's main fault line, the relatively shallow depth caused the tremors to be very strong and destructive, causing extensive damage to residential areas, public facilities, and vital infrastructure in the affected area. The impact of the earthquake was significant, with a total of 318 deaths and 7,729 injuries, consisting of 595 serious injuries

and 7,134 minor injuries. Most of the victims were children, given that the earthquake occurred during school hours, when many students were in class. In addition to the fatalities and injuries, thousands of buildings were severely damaged and collapsed, forcing tens of thousands of residents to evacuate to safer areas,

b. 2024 Bandung Earthquake

The earthquake that struck Bandung Regency on September 18, 2024, was a seismic event that significantly impacted residential areas and public facilities in the region. The earthquake's epicenter was located at 7.23° South Latitude and 107.65° East Longitude, with the epicenter approximately 25 kilometers southeast of Bandung Regency. The earthquake's tremors were felt quite strongly by the community, causing damage to various buildings, particularly homes. A total of 491 houses were damaged, with varying degrees of severity, ranging from minor damage in the form of cracks in walls and structures to severe damage requiring extensive repairs. In addition to housing, several public facilities such as schools, places of worship, and public service facilities were also affected, disrupting local social and economic activities.

Various natural disasters in West Java, including floods, landslides, and earthquakes, have had a broad and complex impact on people's lives. The physical impacts are evident in the damage to settlements, public facilities, basic infrastructure, and economic infrastructure, disrupting social activities and community productivity. This damage not only reduces the quality of life but also prolongs the recovery process due to limited access to education, health care, transportation, and other basic necessities.

From a social and economic perspective, natural disasters cause loss of livelihoods, disruption of business activities, and increased economic vulnerability, particularly for low-income communities. Many residents lose their livelihoods due to the destruction of agricultural land, businesses, and production facilities, increasing the risk of poverty and dependence on aid. Furthermore, prolonged displacement contributes to various social problems, such as declining health and children's education, and weakening social cohesion within affected communities.

Psychological impacts are also a serious issue after a disaster. The experience of dealing with traumatic events, the loss of family members, homes, and possessions, leads to profound mental distress, such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and a persistent sense of insecurity. These conditions have the potential to hinder the social recovery process if not addressed appropriately through psychosocial support and strengthening the capacities of individuals and communities.

Given the complexity of these impacts, post-disaster community empowerment in West Java is crucial as a comprehensive and sustainable recovery strategy. Community empowerment is not only aimed at physical recovery, but also at strengthening social, economic, and psychological capacities so that communities can recover, become independent, and have greater resilience in facing future disaster risks. Thus, post-disaster community empowerment is a strategic approach to rebuilding the lives of affected communities in a holistic and sustainability-oriented manner.

Post-Disaster Community Empowerment in West Java

The most concerning issue, as previously outlined, lies in the post-disaster situation. During this phase, the attention and involvement of various government agencies and humanitarian organizations tend to decline significantly. Many assume that the emergency aid distributed is sufficient to alleviate the burden on victims, shifting their focus to other agendas and programs. As a result, the presence of these agencies and institutions gradually diminishes, even disappearing from the affected areas, including in terms of follow-up assistance and ongoing assistance. This situation leaves disaster-affected communities in a very limited situation, forced to struggle alone to recover from the setbacks they experienced.

In this situation, victims face significant challenges in resuming economic activities and social life as they did before the disaster. The loss of homes, means of production, business capital, and access to livelihoods has slowed the recovery process. Many residents are forced to stop their businesses or jobs due to limited resources and economic networks. Therefore, sustainable, targeted, and locally-based community empowerment efforts are needed to enable victims to rebuild their economic and social independence. This empowerment program is expected to focus not only on material assistance but also on strengthening capacity, skills, and access to business opportunities, so that communities can recover comprehensively and sustainably.

Post-disaster community empowerment in West Java focuses on restoring economic independence and strengthening social resilience through synergistic collaboration between the provincial government, the central government, and local communities. This approach integrates various recovery programs, such as business capital assistance, skills training, entrepreneurship mentoring, and strengthening community institutions based on local potential. Furthermore, rebuilding basic infrastructure and public facilities is a priority to support community economic and social activities. The active role of local communities in every stage of the program, from planning to implementation, is key to the success of the empowerment program, ensuring that interventions are aligned with real needs on the ground. The following are the main aspects of post-disaster community empowerment in West Java:

1. Economic Recovery & MSME Assistance

Economic recovery and MSME assistance are key pillars in post-disaster community empowerment efforts in West Java. Following the disaster, many residents lost their livelihoods due to damaged businesses, the loss of production equipment, and the disruption of market access. Therefore, the local government has prioritized economic recovery to ensure communities can quickly recover and regain financial independence. This step aims not only to restore short-term economic conditions but also to build a stronger foundation of economic resilience to face future disaster risks.

One concrete form of economic recovery is the provision of incentives in the form of business capital assistance and production equipment for affected MSMEs. This assistance is expected to encourage communities to restart their businesses, whether in the trade, agriculture, livestock, or home industry sectors. With these incentives, communities are not only assisted in meeting basic needs but also have the opportunity to generate independent income again. This program is an important first step in the post-disaster economic recovery process.

In addition to direct assistance, productivity assistance is also an important part of the empowerment process. The National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) and the West Java Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) provide assistance through natural resource and environmental restoration, such as agricultural land improvement, irrigation normalization, and rehabilitation of disaster-affected areas. These efforts aim to restore the region's ecological function while increasing community productivity. With a restored environment, community economic activities can run more optimally and sustainably.

To strengthen business sustainability, the government is also opening access to capital by establishing a collaborative forum between the government, financial institutions, and local communities. This forum serves as a bridge for affected communities to obtain business financing through easier and more affordable schemes. Access to adequate capital is expected to encourage business development, increase production capacity, and expand marketing networks. Thus, post-disaster economic recovery is not merely temporary, but can create long-term economic independence and resilience for communities.

2. Community-Based Rehabilitation & Reconstruction

Community-based rehabilitation and reconstruction is a crucial approach to post-disaster management in West Java, which focuses not only on physical development but also on community empowerment and active involvement. In this phase, affected residents are positioned not merely as objects of aid, but as key subjects in the recovery process. Through a participatory approach, communities are invited to directly participate in debris removal, home repairs, and rebuilding village infrastructure. Programs such as cash for work (CPF) are strategic instruments capable of providing dual benefits, accelerating environmental recovery while providing temporary income sources for residents.

In addition to involvement in the physical development process, participatory data verification is also crucial in ensuring the accuracy of aid targets. The West Java Community and Village Empowerment Agency (DPMD) involved community leaders, village officials, and local volunteers in the data collection and validation process for disaster survivors. This approach aims to minimize data errors, avoid overlapping aid, and ensure that every truly affected resident receives their rights fairly. By involving local actors who understand the social and geographical conditions of the area, the rehabilitation process becomes more transparent, accountable, and responsive to the real needs of the community.

The construction of permanent housing is also a top priority in the reconstruction phase, given that adequate housing is a basic need for survivors. The local government is working to accelerate the construction of temporary housing (hinterland transitional shelters), taking into account safety, feasibility, and disaster resilience. The housing constructed serves not only as shelter but also as a means of psychosocial recovery and family stability. With the provision of safe and comfortable housing, it is hoped that communities can quickly resume normal social and economic activities, enabling a more rapid and sustainable post-disaster recovery process.

3. Capacity Building & Mitigation Education

Capacity building and mitigation education are crucial pillars of post-disaster community empowerment efforts in West Java, aiming to build long-term preparedness for potential future disasters. This program focuses not only on physical and economic recovery but also on strengthening the mental health, knowledge, and skills of communities to become more resilient and independent. Through an educational and participatory approach, communities are equipped with an understanding of disaster risks, mitigation measures, and appropriate emergency actions, thereby reducing their vulnerability and the impact of future disasters.

One concrete form of this effort is the provision of various skills training programs, such as basic disaster management, rapid assessments, and leadership training in disaster management, including the 2025 Village/Community Resilience School (SDMT) program. This training is aimed at community administrators, volunteers, and village officials to develop adequate technical and leadership capacity to deal with emergencies. By increasing human resource capacity at the local level, it is hoped that a solid, responsive, and well-coordinated preparedness system will be established, allowing for swift and effective disaster management.

Furthermore, strengthening technological literacy is a key focus through the use of disaster applications such as InaRISK Personal. This application allows communities to independently monitor the vulnerability level of their area, obtain information on potential disasters, and understand appropriate mitigation measures. Furthermore, the integration of the West Java Resilience Culture Province program aims to instill mitigation awareness as part of everyday behavior and culture. By developing a resilient culture, communities are not only technically prepared but also develop an attitude of vigilance, concern, and responsiveness to disaster risks, thus creating safer, more adaptive, and sustainable communities.

4. Social & Psychosocial Support

Social and psychosocial support are crucial aspects of post-disaster community empowerment, as the impact of disasters is not only physical and material, but also affects the emotional, mental, and social dimensions of victims. The loss of family members, homes, and livelihoods often causes profound and prolonged psychological distress. Therefore, social and psychosocial interventions are an integral part of the recovery process, aiming to restore emotional stability, a sense of security, and self-confidence so that people can recover and continue their lives more productively.

One form of social support provided is compensation for the heirs of deceased victims. The Ministry of Social Affairs distributes assistance in the form of compensation of approximately IDR 15 million per person to bereaved families as an effort to ease the economic burden and help maintain the financial stability of post-disaster households. This assistance has strategic significance, not only as a manifestation of the state's concern for its citizens, but also as initial capital for affected families to meet basic needs and restart their economic activities under limited conditions.

Meanwhile, psychosocial support focuses on recovering the mental and emotional well-being of survivors, particularly children, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups. Assistance is provided through counseling services, trauma therapy, educational activities, and recreational and participatory social activities. This approach aims to help victims overcome trauma, reduce anxiety, and restore self-confidence and optimism. With a more stable psychological condition, it is hoped that the community will be able to adapt better to post-disaster changes, strengthen social ties, and rebuild a more resilient and empowered life.

4. Conclusion

Natural disasters in West Java over the past decade have shown increasing intensity and complexity, both in terms of frequency and impact. Floods, landslides, and earthquakes are the most prevalent types of disasters, with serious consequences for human safety, infrastructure damage, and disruption to social and economic stability. This situation is exacerbated by environmental factors and human activities, such as land conversion, watershed degradation, and development that neglects environmental carrying capacity. The impacts of disasters are felt not only during the emergency response phase but also continue into the post-disaster phase, which is the most crucial period in the recovery process for affected communities.

In the post-disaster phase, the main challenges faced by communities include loss of livelihoods, limited economic access, housing damage, and psychosocial trauma. In this context, community empowerment is a key strategy for restoring independence and social resilience. Empowerment efforts undertaken in West Java, such as economic recovery through MSME assistance, community-based rehabilitation and reconstruction, capacity building and mitigation education, and social and psychosocial support, have proven to be crucial in accelerating the recovery process. A participatory approach that actively involves the community not only accelerates physical development, but also strengthens social cohesion, a sense of belonging, and the residents' self-confidence to rise from adversity.

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