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Assessing disaster risk governance effectiveness: a document-based analysis using the READ approach in Thua Thien Hue province, Central Vietnam

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Although substantial research has been conducted on the subject of good governance, our comprehension of effective disaster governance and its criteria remains inadequate.

Drawing from a comprehensive literature review, six criteria of good disaster risk governance were selected to assess the effectiveness of disaster risk governance in Thua Thien Hue province, a region prone to natural and climate-induced hazards. These criteria include *accountability, responsiveness and flexibility, transparency, collaboration, decentralization and autonomy, information sharing*. Insights into these six characteristics were extracted from an analysis of 106 legal documents, utilizing the READ approach (Dalglish et al., 2020). These insights were then categorized based on the four phases of disaster risk management: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. To enhance the robustness of the findings from the document-based analysis and delve deeper into the efficacy of policy implementation, the research incorporates perspectives from 606 citizens, collected in a standardized household survey. Through ordinal logistic regressions, the study explores the factors influencing citizens' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of flood risk governance.

The results obtained through the READ approach reveal distinct emphases in various phases of disaster risk government. In the prevention phase, legal documents underscore the importance of *responsiveness and flexibility*, achieved through the integration of climate change adaptation scenarios into diverse plans such as socio-economic development and spatial planning. However, these legal documents only addressed the integration of climate change scenarios without including vulnerability scenarios that consider changes in the socio-economic and environmental aspects. During the preparedness phase, emphasis is placed on inter-agency coordination to ensure *accountability* for financing the disaster prevention fund. In the response phase, critical emphasis is placed on *information sharing* which helps authorities, and organizations make informed decisions, allocate resources efficiently, and save lives during disasters. *Transparency* in the allocation of subsidies following disasters takes center stage during the recovery phase.

Findings from the household survey indicate that about 70% of citizens perceive flood risk management as effective. Yet, approximately one-quarter of respondents indicated that they perceive the government's handling of flood risk as either low or not effective at all. Explaining citizens' perceptions of the effectiveness of flood risk governance involves considering five influencing factors: location, age, individual responsibility, income, and past flood experiences. Specifically, individuals with greater self-assigned responsibilities in flood control, older age, those residing outside core urban areas, and households with less exposure to flood impacts over the past decade are more likely to express higher effectiveness. Interestingly, lower-income households perceive government flood management as effective, possibly due to prioritization in response and recovery, as indicated by document analysis.

Although the legal framework for risk management in Thua Thien Hue is relatively comprehensive, supplementing it with additional components currently lacking, such as vulnerability scenarios, would promote the risk management transition from the 'response and recovery' phase to the 'prevention and preparedness' phase, a trend that has been proven to be more effective in disaster risk governance (PU & UNDRR, 2021; Khan et al., 2022; WB 2023).