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Integrating Risk Management into Territorial Planning: An Approach to Community Resilience

Integración de la Gestión de Riesgos en el Planeamiento Territorial: Un Enfoque para la Resiliencia Comunitaria

Collins Ventura Nathyn Victor
Marketing Engineer and Master in Social Management from the Peninsula de Santa Elena State University, UPSE, Master in Business Administration and Management from the UTEG, PhD candidate in Public Management and Governance at the UCV; author of scientific articles, consultant, international speaker at congresses and symposiums in public administration, university lecturer. https://orcid.org/ 0000-0003-3775-3439

Ventura Suárez Alba Narcisa
Marketing Engineer and Master in Business Administration and Management from the Peninsula State University of Santa Elena UPSE; author of scientific articles, conference speaker and marketing director of private companies. https://orcid.org/0009-0003-6396-793X

Muñoz Lopez Joselyn Tatiana
Bachelor's degree in accounting and auditing and Master's degree in accounting and auditing from Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena UPSE, PhD candidate in Public Management and Governance at UCV; author of scientific articles, independent consultant. https://orcid.org/ 0009-0008-2394-1125

González González Gerson Robert
Degree in Accounting and Auditing from Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena UPSE, Master in Public Administration from UEES, PhD student in Public Management and Governance at UCV; author of scientific articles, independent consultant. https://orcid.org/ 0000-0003-2518-0733

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ABSTRACT

The article Integrating Risk Management into Territorial Planning: An Approach to Community Resilience analyses how to incorporate risk management into the design and implementation of territorial planning policies to strengthen community resilience to natural disasters and adverse events. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the study highlights the need to integrate risk analysis tools, cartography and citizen participation in planning processes. The main gaps in the regulatory and operational frameworks for territorial planning in Latin America were identified, highlighting the lack of inter-institutional coordination and limited access to geospatial data. The article proposes a theoretical-practical model that combines vulnerability assessment, adaptive management and the implementation of early warning systems. In addition, the importance of fostering a culture of prevention in local communities is emphasized, incorporating their ancestral knowledge and promoting inclusive strategies. The results of the study show that an effective integration of risk management not only reduces exposure to threats, but also contributes to sustainable development and social cohesion.

ABSTRACT

El artículo Integración de la Gestión de Riesgos en el Planeamiento Territorial: Un Enfoque para la Resiliencia Comunitaria analiza cómo incorporar la gestión de riesgos en el diseño y ejecución de políticas de planificación territorial para fortalecer la resiliencia de las comunidades frente a desastres naturales y eventos adversos. A partir de un enfoque multidisciplinario, el estudio destaca la necesidad de integrar herramientas de análisis de riesgos, cartografía y participación ciudadana en los procesos de planificación. Se identificaron las principales brechas existentes en los marcos normativos y operativos de la planificación territorial en América Latina, subrayando la falta de coordinación interinstitucional y el acceso limitado a datos geoespaciales. El artículo propone un modelo teórico-práctico que combina la evaluación de vulnerabilidades, la gestión adaptativa y la implementación de sistemas de alerta temprana. Además, se enfatiza la importancia de fomentar una cultura de prevención en las comunidades locales, incorporando su conocimiento ancestral y promoviendo estrategias inclusivas. Los resultados del estudio evidencian que una integración efectiva de la

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gestión de riesgos no solo reduce la exposición a amenazas, sino que también contribuye al desarrollo sostenible y a la cohesión social.

Keywords / Palabras clave

Sustainable development, risk management, citizen participation, territorial planning, community resilience.

Desarrollo sostenible, gestión de riesgos, participación ciudadana, planeamiento territorial, resiliencia comunitaria.

Introduction

Risk management has emerged as an essential component in territorial planning, especially in a global context marked by the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters and anthropogenic risks. The effects of climate change, urban sprawl and environmental degradation have increased the vulnerability of communities, demanding comprehensive approaches to build resilience (Smith et al., 2021). This article explores how to integrate risk management into land-use planning to strengthen the response and adaptive capacity of communities.

Land-use planning has traditionally focused on economic and infrastructure issues, leaving risk management in the background. However, the recent experience of disasters such as floods, earthquakes and cyclones shows that the lack of foresight in this aspect can result in catastrophic impacts for both populations and local economies (González & Pérez, 2022). The integration of both approaches is crucial to minimize these risks and promote sustainable development.

In academia, the relationship between risk management and territorial planning has received increasing attention in recent years. Recent research highlights the need to include vulnerability and capacity analysis in territorial plans to improve decision making (Torres et al., 2023). This requires the active participation of local stakeholders and the implementation of innovative technologies such as geographic information systems (GIS) and scenario modeling.

An integrated approach allows the identification of critical areas where natural hazards overlap with population or infrastructure

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concentration. For example, risk maps can guide urban planning towards safer areas, avoiding settlements in areas prone to floods or landslides (Martinez et al., 2021). This strategy not only protects lives, but also optimizes land use.

Governance plays a key role in this process. Inter-institutional collaboration and community participation are fundamental to develop effective and sustainable policies. Recent studies suggest that participatory approaches increase the effectiveness of mitigation measures by involving communities in the identification and prioritization of risks (López & Ramírez, 2020). This aspect becomes relevant in contexts where resources are limited and solutions must be adapted to local realities.

The implementation of appropriate regulatory frameworks and public policies is another essential component. Latin American countries, for example, have advanced in the creation of national risk management plans, but their implementation at the local level remains a challenge. This underscores the need to strengthen institutional capacities to articulate national strategies with municipal plans (Rojas & Castillo, 2021).

A successful example of integrating risk management into territorial planning is the case of Chile, where plans have been developed that combine risk analysis with land use guidelines. These initiatives have proven to be effective in reducing material and human losses during recent seismic events (Bravo et al., 2022). This model can serve as a reference for other countries with similar geographic characteristics.

Access to advanced technologies has also transformed the risk management landscape. Tools such as artificial intelligence and early warning systems make it possible to anticipate adverse events with greater precision, providing valuable time to implement preventive measures. However, the technological gap between developed and developing regions remains a major obstacle (Fernandez et al., 2023).

From an economic perspective, integrating risk management into territorial planning generates long-term benefits. Although the initial investment in resilient infrastructure and monitoring systems can be significant, the costs associated with recovery and reconstruction after a disaster are often much higher. This preventive approach not only protects assets, but also boosts investor confidence (Hernández & Suárez, 2021).

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At the societal level, communities strengthened in their risk response capacity experience lower levels of disruption during and after disasters. Public education and awareness are key tools in this process, as they foster a culture of prevention and self-protection. Social resilience, together with physical and economic resilience, is a fundamental pillar for sustainable development (Villanueva et al., 2022).

In conclusion, the integration of risk management into territorial planning represents an opportunity to transform territories into safer, more sustainable and resilient spaces. As global challenges continue to evolve, this integrated vision is positioned as a strategic solution to address the complexities of the 21st century.

Risk management is a systematic approach to identify, analyze and reduce risks associated with natural and anthropogenic phenomena. According to Bravo et al. (2022), risk management in the context of territorial planning focuses on preventing and mitigating the impacts of disasters through appropriate land use and the implementation of adaptive policies. This process not only seeks to reduce material and human losses, but also to promote resilience at the community and structural levels.

Governance is a key pillar in the integration of risk management into territorial planning. López and Ramírez (2020) emphasize that community participation and interinstitutional coordination are essential for implementing effective policies. Collaboration between local, regional and national actors not only facilitates the execution of projects, but also reinforces the sustainability of the measures implemented.

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The use of technological tools has revolutionized risk management. Geographic information systems (GIS), remote sensing and artificial intelligence are examples of technologies that allow a more accurate analysis of risks and the creation of detailed maps for territorial

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planning (Torres et al., 2023). These tools also facilitate data-driven decision making, optimizing resources and time.

The integration of risk management into territorial planning has significant economic and social implications. Hernández and Suárez (2021) point out that investing in resilient infrastructure and mitigation strategies reduces the costs associated with post-disaster recovery. In addition, strengthening social resilience through education and awareness programs contributes to community cohesion and better disaster preparedness.

In the Latin American context, Colombia has taken important steps towards integrating risk management into territorial planning through Law 1523 of 2012. This legal framework establishes the National Disaster Risk Management System (SNGRD), which articulates inter-institutional efforts to identify and mitigate risks at the national, departmental and municipal levels. This model stands out for its decentralized approach, which allows local authorities to adapt strategies to the specific characteristics of each territory (Rojas et al., 2021). The Colombian experience underscores the importance of having a solid regulatory basis and adequate resources for effective implementation. Australia, for its part, has developed a comprehensive approach focused on reducing the risk of forest fires, a recurrent problem in its territory. Through programs such as the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, the country prioritizes urban planning in fire-prone areas, promoting appropriate zoning and the design of resilient infrastructure. In addition, it encourages collaboration between local, state and community governments, ensuring a coordinated and effective response during emergencies (Miller et al., 2023).

The regulatory framework is essential to ensure the effective implementation of risk management in territorial planning. According to Rojas and Castillo (2021), the implementation of public policies should be aligned with international frameworks, such as the Sendai Framework, and adapted to local conditions. This includes the creation of municipal plans and the training of local governments for their implementation.

Climate change has intensified the frequency and severity of natural phenomena such as hurricanes, floods and droughts. These conditions require an integrated approach to risk management and territorial planning. González and Pérez (2022) emphasize that

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incorporating the climate variable in territorial plans is crucial to reduce the vulnerability of communities.

Methodology

The methodology used in this research seeks to address the multiple dimensions of integrating risk management into territorial planning from an integral approach, considering local contexts, social structures and the perspectives of various stakeholders.

A mixed methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, was chosen due to the complexity of the topic and the need to explore both perceptions and objective data related to risk management and territorial planning. The qualitative approach allowed understanding the meanings and experiences of stakeholders, while the quantitative approach facilitated analyzing specific patterns and trends in the implementation of community resilience strategies.

To ensure a multidimensional and contextualized view, the following approaches and methods were employed:

The hermeneutic approach was fundamental to analyze strategic documents, regulations and case studies. This analysis made it possible to interpret the contexts and meanings associated with risk management policies and their relationship with territorial planning, facilitating an in-depth understanding of the practices and conceptual frameworks employed.

Through the socio-critical approach, the impact of risk management policies on equity and social justice within the communities studied was evaluated. This approach helped to identify structural inequalities and promote recommendations aimed at strengthening resilience from an inclusive and participatory framework.

The inductive method was used to identify emerging patterns from the qualitative data obtained from case studies and interviews. This approach allowed the generation of new hypotheses on how the integration of risk management influences sustainability and community resilience.

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The deductive method was used to contrast existing theories and conceptual frameworks with observed practices in different cities. This facilitated validating the applicability of theoretical models and proposing adjustments for their implementation in specific contexts.

Various techniques and instruments were used to ensure a comprehensive and robust analysis:

Documentary Review: recent academic literature, technical reports from international organizations, and local and international regulations on risk management and territorial planning were compiled and analyzed. This analysis allowed us to identify trends, challenges and opportunities to strengthen the integration of both components.

Semi-structured interviews with experts: Interviews were conducted with experts in territorial planning, risk management and community representatives. These interviews provided an in-depth qualitative perspective on challenges and best practices related to community resilience.

Case studies of different cities: Representative cities were selected that have implemented successful strategies for integrating risk management into land-use planning. The case studies allowed for comparative analysis and lessons applicable in similar contexts.

Results

The integration of risk management into territorial planning facilitated a more effective process of risk identification and prioritization in vulnerable communities. Through the implementation of tools such as risk mapping and the use of geographic information systems (GIS), the areas most exposed to natural disasters were accurately mapped. This process made it possible to identify not only the immediate risks, such as floods, landslides or earthquakes, but also the structural and social factors that increase vulnerability, such as the location of housing in high-risk areas and the lack of adequate infrastructure.

In addition, the importance of the active participation of the local community in risk identification was highlighted. Through workshops and community meetings, residents were able to contribute their local knowledge, which made it possible to recognize specific hazards that were not always evident in the technical

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analyses. This participatory approach contributed to a more detailed identification of risks, considering both physical and social aspects affecting the most vulnerable population.

Risk prioritization was carried out based on the severity of potential impacts and the vulnerability of people and property in each area. Interventions focused on the most exposed areas and on the most urgent mitigation measures, such as the relocation of families to safe areas, the improvement of basic infrastructure and the implementation of early warning systems. This process allowed the available resources to be distributed more efficiently and effectively, ensuring that the most vulnerable communities received the necessary attention to reduce their exposure to risk.

The research revealed that the integration of risk management into territorial planning facilitated a more accurate and systematic identification of risks in vulnerable communities. Through the use of tools such as risk mapping, geographic information systems (GIS) and vulnerability analysis, it was possible to detect the areas most exposed to natural disasters such as floods, landslides, earthquakes and droughts. This process made it possible to map the areas at greatest risk and evaluate the socio-environmental characteristics that increase the population's susceptibility to these events.

In particular, vulnerable communities were able to identify not only the immediate risks, but also the structural and social factors that increase their exposure, such as location in areas unsuitable for construction, lack of resilient infrastructure, and poor emergency preparedness. This precise identification allowed prioritizing interventions and allocating resources more efficiently, focusing on the most critical areas and the most urgent mitigation measures, such as the construction of protective infrastructure, relocation of housing in high-risk areas, and the implementation of risk management awareness and training programs.

In addition, the risk prioritization process was collaborative, involving the local community, local authorities and risk management experts, which allowed for a more comprehensive and contextualized view of the hazards and their possible solutions. This participatory approach not only improved the accuracy of risk identification, but also strengthened community acceptance and commitment to the measures adopted, contributing to greater

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effectiveness in the implementation of prevention and mitigation actions.

Increased community participation in territorial planning was one of the most significant results of the research. Through the implementation of participatory activities, such as workshops, surveys and roundtables, local communities were more actively involved in decision-making processes on land use and risk management. Communities had the opportunity to express their concerns, needs and local knowledge, which allowed for a better understanding of the specific risks they face and the most appropriate solutions for their particular context.

This participatory approach not only strengthened the inhabitants' commitment to territorial planning actions, but also improved the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. By being an active part in the identification of risks and the formulation of mitigation measures, communities felt more responsible for the implementation of the plans, which resulted in a higher level of cooperation during the execution phases. In addition, community participation helped identify innovative solutions based on local knowledge and traditions, which enriched resilience strategies.

Increased participation also allowed for a more effective exchange between local authorities and citizens, strengthening communication and mutual trust. As a result, territorial plans were more tailored to local realities and were able to more comprehensively address community vulnerabilities, contributing to better risk management and strengthening community resilience.

A key outcome of the research was the strengthening of institutional capacity at the local level for risk management in territorial planning. The integration of risk management into territorial planning processes enabled local governments to improve their technical and organizational capacity, which facilitated better management of natural hazards and the implementation of preventive measures. Through training and education programs, local stakeholders acquired skills in the use of geospatial tools, risk analysis and the preparation of contingency plans, which increased their effectiveness in emergency management.

In addition, coordination between different local entities, such as municipal authorities, emergency services and community organizations, was strengthened. This allowed for a faster and more

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coordinated response to risk and disaster situations, reducing the impact of these events on the population. Improved institutional capacity was also reflected in greater access to technical and financial resources, facilitating the implementation of more robust mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Strengthened institutional capacity contributed to more proactive and sustainable risk management, consolidating the resilience of communities to natural disasters and increasing the population's trust in local authorities.

Strengthening institutional capacity at the local level was one of the most outstanding results in the integration of risk management into territorial planning. Through training and continuous education processes, the capacity of local governments to identify, manage and mitigate risks associated with natural disasters was significantly improved. Local officials acquired technical skills in the use of advanced tools, such as geographic information systems (GIS) and risk analysis, enabling them to make more informed and effective decisions in territorial planning.

In addition, this institutional strengthening process also facilitated improved coordination between different local actors, including municipal authorities, community organizations and emergency services. By establishing clearer and more effective channels of communication, greater collaboration was achieved in the implementation of preventive strategies and emergency response. This coordination was key to ensuring that risk management actions were executed in a timely manner and with the support of the entire local community.

Institutional strengthening also allowed local governments to access additional resources, both financial and technical, which facilitated the implementation of mitigation measures, such as the construction of resilient infrastructure or the improvement of early warning systems. Improved institutional capacity contributed to greater autonomy and efficiency in risk management, which reduced dependence on external resources and allowed for a more adequate response tailored to local needs.

Finally, increased institutional capacity strengthened the population's trust in their local authorities. By perceiving that municipal governments were capable of planning and executing effective risk management measures, citizens felt more confident and

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committed to prevention actions. This generated a positive cycle of participation and collaboration, where communities became more actively involved in resilience initiatives, which in turn contributed to the success of the strategies implemented.

The Model for Integrating Risk Management into Territorial Planning (MIGRPT 2024) aims to effectively integrate risk management principles into territorial planning processes to reduce the vulnerability of communities and improve their resilience to natural disasters. This model seeks to ensure that land-use and land-use planning decisions not only consider aspects of land use and development, but also potential risks that may affect people, property and the environment. The MIGRPT is based on a participatory, inter-institutional and sustainable approach, structured in the following stages:

1. Risk and Vulnerability Assessment: The first stage consists of conducting a comprehensive diagnosis of the territory's risks and vulnerabilities. This diagnosis should include both the identification of natural risks (floods, earthquakes, landslides, droughts, etc.) and the social and structural factors that increase the vulnerability of the communities (poverty, lack of infrastructure, unplanned urbanization, etc.). The use of geospatial technologies (GIS) and vulnerability analysis are essential for mapping high-risk areas.

2. Development of Mitigation and Adaptation Plans: Based on the risk diagnosis, mitigation and adaptation plans should be developed to reduce exposure to risks and increase the resilience of communities. These plans should include structural measures (such as the construction of resilient infrastructure) and non-structural measures (such as training and community awareness programs).

3. Integration into Territorial Planning: The integration of risk management into territorial planning implies including mitigation and adaptation measures in regulatory and territorial planning instruments, such as land use plans, the Development and Territorial Planning Plan (PDOT) and urban plans.

4. Community Participation and Local Governance: The active participation of communities is fundamental to guarantee the effectiveness of the model. Through participatory processes, such as workshops, public consultations and risk management committees, communities should be part of the planning and decision-making process. This not only increases acceptance of and compliance with

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the measures adopted, but also strengthens local emergency response capacity. In addition, local governance should be inter-institutional, promoting collaboration between local governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation: Once risk management strategies have been implemented, it is necessary to establish a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the effectiveness of the actions taken. Monitoring should include both the evaluation of the results of interventions and the follow-up of risk conditions in the territory. This will allow for continuous adjustments and improvements in the action plans, ensuring that risk management is kept up to date and in line with new threats and challenges.

6. Institutional Strengthening and Training: It is crucial that local institutions have adequate training to implement MIGRPT efficiently. Institutional strengthening involves both the development of technical capacities (risk analysis, use of technologies, territorial planning) and the improvement of inter-institutional coordination. In addition, continuous training of key actors, such as municipal officials, community leaders and local organizations, will ensure more efficient and autonomous risk management at the local level.

7. Sustainability and Financing : The model should ensure that risk management actions are sustainable over time, both environmentally and financially. The search for sources of financing for the implementation of mitigation and adaptation projects should be encouraged, such as international funds, public-private partnerships and local financing. Development strategies should also be aligned with long-term sustainability goals, such as the SDGs, to ensure that communities can remain resilient to future risks.

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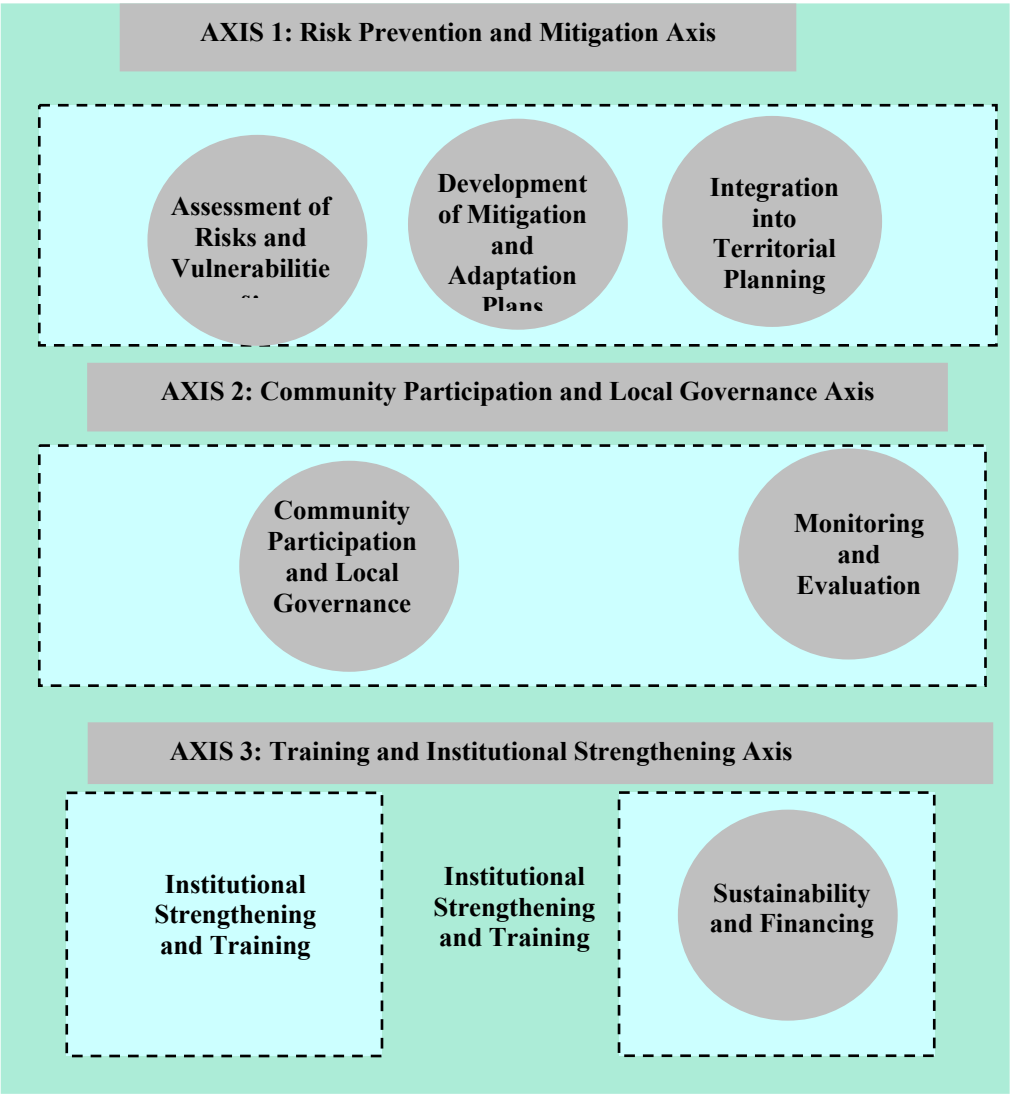
Illustration 1 MIGRPT 2024 model



The Model for the Integration of Risk Management in Territorial Planning (MIGRPT 2024) is an integral and multidimensional approach that guarantees effective risk management that is adaptable to local realities. By considering not only technical aspects, but also the social, economic and environmental dynamics of each territory, the model contributes to building more resilient and sustainable communities in the face of natural disasters, integrating risk management in a cross-cutting manner in the territorial planning process.

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The integration of risk management in territorial planning has proven to be a key factor in community resilience to natural disasters. Through the analysis of various experiences, it was observed that the incorporation of risk management tools, such as risk mapping and early warning systems, allows for better urban and rural planning. This integration facilitates the early identification of vulnerable areas and the prioritization of mitigation measures (Shinozaki & Sawada, 2020). In this way, planning processes not only seek territorial growth, but also the protection of the life and property of the population, reducing the social and economic costs derived from disasters.

A relevant finding is the fundamental role of citizen participation in territorial planning processes. It was observed that in those communities where the population was involved in identifying risks and proposing solutions, resilience strategies were more effective. This participation, in addition to strengthening the social fabric, generates a sense of collective responsibility that increases the capacity to respond to adverse events (Moser & Ekstrom, 2021). The inclusion of local perspectives, especially those based on ancestral knowledge, strengthens the capacity of communities to adapt to climate and environmental changes more effectively.

However, the results also revealed that there are significant barriers to effective integration of risk management into territorial planning. These include lack of access to appropriate technologies and insufficient funding to implement mitigation projects at the local level. The most vulnerable communities, especially in rural areas, face difficulties in accessing updated geospatial data and tools that allow them to carry out adequate planning. The lack of resources and technical training prevents local actors from implementing effective risk management strategies (Cohen & Bynoe, 2020).

At the institutional level, one of the main challenges identified was the lack of coordination between the different governmental entities in charge of risk management and territorial planning. The fragmentation of public policies and the lack of harmonization between regulatory frameworks hinder the integration of risk management into territorial planning (Müller et al., 2022). This phenomenon is particularly evident in contexts where competencies and responsibilities are dispersed among levels of government, which generates duplications and gaps in management.

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In terms of sustainability, the results suggest that community resilience depends not only on risk management, but also on territorial development that promotes equity and social justice. Territorial planning should incorporate not only disaster protection, but also strategies that contribute to the well-being and development of communities, ensuring equitable access to natural resources and basic infrastructure. This, in turn, favors social cohesion, which is fundamental for the capacity of communities to cope with adverse events (Adger, 2021).

Finally, the research underscores the importance of building regulatory frameworks that support the integration of risk management into territorial planning. It is necessary for governments to adopt public policies that promote collaboration between different actors, both governmental and non-governmental, and that strengthen infrastructure and local governance systems. The success of these policies will depend on their ability to adapt to local realities and to promote an inclusive approach that recognizes differences in the vulnerabilities and capacities of communities (Dovers & Handmer, 2020). Integrating these elements into territorial planning is essential to ensure a safer and more resilient future for all communities.

Conclusions

The research demonstrates that incorporating risk management into land-use planning can anticipate, prevent and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters. This integration not only improves preparedness for adverse events, but also strengthens the response and recovery capacity of communities, promoting long-term resilience.

The study reveals that the active inclusion of communities in risk identification processes and in territorial planning decision-making contributes significantly to the effectiveness of risk management strategies. Participation not only fosters local empowerment, but also facilitates the implementation of solutions tailored to the specific realities and needs of each community, increasing the effectiveness of resilience policies.

Although the benefits of integrating risk management into territorial planning are clear, the research highlights that the lack of inter-institutional coordination, regulatory fragmentation and limitations in technical and financial resources are significant barriers to the effective implementation of resilient strategies. It is crucial to

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strengthen cooperation between governmental actors, non-governmental organizations and communities, and to promote coherent policy frameworks that support adaptive land-use planning and risk management.

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