

MARKET SYMPOSIUM 2023

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT



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SUMMARY

Bangladesh, a highly disaster-prone country due to climate change, has shown remarkable resilience and serves as a global model for effective disaster management. The WAVE Foundation, with support from Oxfam Bangladesh, initiated the 'Asia Community Disaster Preparedness & Transformation (ACT)' project to reduce vulnerability. Oxfam in Bangladesh, alongside partners such as SKS Foundation, JAGO NARI, and Wave Foundation, is executing the program, titled "Strengthening Community Preparedness, Rapid Response, and Recovery," in 12 communities across the country. This multi-country initiative, also implemented in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Nepal, spans from October 2020 to December 2023.

The Market Symposium 2023, organized by the Wave Foundation, aimed to foster local leadership in disaster management. Dr. Md. Enamur Rahman MP, the State Minister for the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, was the chief guest. The symposium featured plenary sessions exploring community participation and inclusion in disaster management, showcasing lessons learned and best practices. The event drew diverse stakeholders and emphasized the importance of collaboration in relief and recovery efforts.



INTRODUCTION

The Market Symposium 2023 on Local Leadership in Disaster Management took place on October 4th, 2023, at the Shoilo Propat Auditorium, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Dhaka. The primary objectives of this event were to facilitate the exchange of experiences and knowledge among young participants, establish a connection between local disaster management structures and youth, and inspire a sense of youth leadership. The symposium spanned an

entire day and was structured into three main segments: 1) The Inaugural session; 2) Thematic plenary sessions; and 3) The Concluding session.

This report provides an overview of the Market Symposium 2023 on Local Leadership in Disaster Management, summarizing the key discussions and recommendations put forth by the guests and participants across the various sessions.

INAUGURAL SESSION



The symposium kicked off with its inaugural session, marking the official commencement of the event. The opening ceremony began with a poignant poem that shed light on the current disaster situation in our country. Finally, the reference to the green revolution of the future suggests a forward-looking perspective, emphasizing the need for sustainable practices and environmental consciousness in disaster management. Overall, the poetic passage subtly weaves together themes of nature, resilience, and the human role in managing and mitigating the impact of disasters. Following the recitation, a dynamic and spirited flash mob performance by young presenters added a vibrant and relevant touch to the overall theme of the symposium. The combination of the

thought-provoking poem and the energetic flash mob set the tone for the event, engaging the audience and creating a lively atmosphere.

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Welcome speech by
Anisur Rahman
Senior Coordinator
WAVE Foundation

In his address at the Market Symposium 2023, the speaker emphasized Bangladesh's vulnerability to regular natural disasters, particularly in the southern region. Factors such as geography, rivers, overpopulation, and unplanned urbanization elevate the risk. Underprivileged populations are disproportionately affected, leading to livelihood loss and migration. Despite challenges, Bangladesh has made strides in disaster risk reduction, aligning with international frameworks. The symposium's objective is to discuss local government and organizational roles, enhance community disaster management, and share insights from the Asia Community Disaster Preparedness & Transformation project. The hope is for productive discussions contributing to the symposium's success.

Keynote presentation

Dr. Mohammad Jahangir Alam

Professor, Department of Agribusiness and Marketing,
Bangladesh Agricultural University

Dr. Mohammad Jahangir Alam's presentation underscored Bangladesh's current state of disaster management, emphasizing a forward-looking trajectory. Notably, Bangladesh, ranking 7th globally in disaster frequency, faces the persistent threat of cyclones, floods, and landslides. The country has responded robustly, establishing a comprehensive policy framework aligned with international standards, including the Disaster Management Act 2012 and the National Disaster Management Policy 2015. The



evolution of leadership, transitioning from reactive relief to proactive risk reduction, was highlighted, featuring key institutions like the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management and the Cyclone Preparedness Program. Dr. Alam emphasized the pivotal role of local leaders in disaster risk reduction, stressing their involvement in all stages of management, from raising awareness to coordinating recovery efforts. Youth participation, community-driven

initiatives, and strategic partnerships were identified as crucial components in building resilience. Challenges, including resource constraints and communication issues, were acknowledged, with learning opportunities identified in training, collaboration, and community engagement, emphasizing the pivotal role of local leadership in shaping effective disaster management strategies for Bangladesh.

Key Recommendation

- 1 Construction of Multipurpose Cyclone Shelters:** Build shelters equipped to handle various needs during cyclones.
- 2 Disaster Preparedness Programs:** Implement comprehensive programs to prepare communities for potential disasters.
- 3 Coastal Afforestation:** Undertake afforestation projects along the coast to mitigate the impact of disasters.
- 4 Community Engagement:** Foster active community participation in disaster management initiatives.
- 5 Resource Allocation:** Ensure effective allocation of resources for emergency supplies and response efforts.
- 6 Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration across sectors for a holistic and coordinated approach.
- 7 Regular Evaluation:** Conduct periodic assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of disaster management strategies.
- 8 Enhanced Communication:** Improve communication channels for swift dissemination of information during disasters.
- 9 Legal Frameworks:** Establish robust legal frameworks to support and enforce disaster management policies.
- 10 Early Warning Systems:** Implement and strengthen early warning systems for timely alerts.

Address on behalf of organizers

Mohsin Ali

Founder and Executive Director
WAVE Foundation



In his address, Mohsin Ali highlighted Bangladesh's vulnerability to natural disasters, emphasizing the historical perspective of the devastating 1970 calamity. Despite Bangladesh's resilience, he noted the international community's slow uptake of valuable lessons. He expressed hope for ongoing support from Oxfam, emphasizing the pivotal role of youth in disaster management. Ali urged the State Minister to facilitate collaboration between youth organizations and local government bodies. Grateful acknowledgments were extended to the event's chairperson and chief guest, and he urged youth to prepare for both natural and human-created disasters, emphasizing the need for proactive measures.



Address on behalf of Partners

Hosne Ara Hashi

Executive Director Jagonari



In her address, Hosne Ara Hashi expressed gratitude to the chief guest and distinguished attendees. She highlighted the challenges faced in rural areas, advocating for discussions to inform policies aimed at reducing disaster risk. Hashi stressed the necessity of allocating specific budgets for disaster-prone areas, considering the unique weather conditions in each region. Addressing the impact on livelihoods, especially in coastal areas, she urged investment in improved boat models for vulnerable sectors like fishing. Emphasizing effective collaboration with various organizations for coastal embankment construction, Hashi called for enhanced monitoring, particularly in local government efforts, to improve disaster risk management.

Md. Atwar Rahman

Head of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Resilience Oxfam in Bangladesh



Md. Atwar Rahman, reflecting on the 2016 summit, highlighted Bangladesh's early commitment to localization. The government's role in fostering local leadership and strengthening disaster preparedness was credited for significant mitigation of various calamities. Rahman emphasized the active engagement of local leaders in diverse disaster-related activities, contributing to effective project planning and implementation. He stressed the importance of prioritizing the enhancement of local leadership capacity, acknowledging Bangladesh's success in disaster management and localization efforts, which has become a model for other nations. Rahman expressed gratitude to partners WAVE Foundation, SKS Foundation, and Jagonari.

Speech by Iftekhar Mahmood Journalist, Prathom Alo

Drawing on his extensive experience, Iftekhar Mahmood addressed evolving challenges in disaster management. While Bangladesh excels in handling traditional disasters like floods, storms, and cyclones, Mahmood emphasized the need to recognize and address emerging threats, including heatwaves and new types of disasters affecting agriculture and rice prices. Proposing the declaration of heatwaves as disasters, he underscored the importance of preparing for these challenges. Mahmood highlighted the crucial role of youth communities, suggesting the creation of a nationwide volunteer youth group, bolstered by initiatives like the ACT project. He acknowledged instances where government intervention is essential, such as coastal embankment collapses. Mahmood proposed targeted disaster management



initiatives, including facilitating migration from vulnerable areas and encouraging media reporting to raise awareness. He urged collective preparation for these evolving disaster challenges.



Speech by the Chief Guest

Dr. Md. Enamur Rahman

MP Honorable State Minister
Ministry of Disaster Management
and Relief, GoB

Honorable State Minister Dr. Md. Enamur Rahman MP highlighted the urgency of addressing new calamities, particularly heatwaves, acknowledging the need for caution. Drawing on personal experiences in disaster-affected areas, he praised the dedicated response of local leaders and communities during crises. Expressing gratitude to distinguished guests, he urged collaboration in managing all types of disasters. He emphasized Bangladesh's substantial progress in disaster management since 1970, citing initiatives like Mujib Killa shelters and collaboration with UNDDR. The state minister acknowledged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's active involvement, positioning Bangladesh as a global role model. He



disclosed plans to enhance rural disaster management, emphasizing the need for safety equipment and learning from countries like Japan. In conclusion, he expressed gratitude to sector workers and emphasized the importance of field experience in building a disaster-resilient Bangladesh.





My journey with the WAVE Foundation began in 2007, a pivotal moment in my life, where I gained a profound understanding of societal responsibilities through three days of soft skills training. We believe in identifying pressing social issues, planning meticulously, and executing projects that make a difference. Our diverse activities encompass tree planting, repairing bridges, and even assisting remote villagers with COVID vaccine registrations.

Mahadi Islam, Youth representative, Bakerganj, Barishal

“

During floods, the situation becomes dire as both pets and villagers often struggle to find food. To address this, we established a food bank and a fodder bank to supply sustenance during flood times. We provide food, particularly raw rice, from this bank without charging any interest. Through my involvement in the ACT project, I've gained extensive knowledge about the preparation for and response to cyclones, which has proven to be invaluable. I want to express my gratitude to the ACT project, Oxfam, and the SKS Foundation for providing me with this opportunity.

Lavly Begum

CBO leader, Saghata, Gaibandha

“

Through collaboration with the Recall project since 2018, 'Jagonari' gained insights into assessing risks during natural disasters, addressing challenges like food shortages. Our involvement in the ACT project since 2021 provided diverse training, including journalism, enabling us to document actions in a local newspaper. The ACT project enhances coordination between the UCDF and youth communities, shaping plans for GRR and CCM based on youth input through the Union Parishad."

Hedayet Ullah

Youth representative
Barguna Sadar, Barguna



Speech by the Chair

Dr. Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad

Eminent Economist and Chairman
Dhaka School of Economics (DScE)

Dr. Qazi expressed gratitude to the distinguished guests and highlighted the crucial role of local leadership in effective disaster management. He emphasized the importance of instilling ethical values in communities for sustainable disaster response. Dr. Qazi identified four essential characteristics for societal improvement: values, selflessness, empathy, and resilience. He stressed the need for accurate problem identification and prioritization in disaster management, emphasizing the ongoing impact of climate change. He expressed confidence in the proactive efforts of youth communities and hoped for continued government support to enhance their work.





PLENARY-01

Strengthening Community Preparedness in Disaster Management & Role of Government

Plenary-01, titled "**Strengthening Community Preparedness in Disaster Management & Role of Government**," commenced with a comprehensive introduction underscoring the importance of community readiness and the government's pivotal role in effective disaster management. The session featured insightful speeches from distinguished panelists, including Netai Chandra Dey Sarker, Director (MIM) at the Department of Disaster Management, Government of Bangladesh, community leader Nurnahar Begum from Saghata, Gaibandha, Union Parishad Chairman Boshiruddin Shikdar from Bakerganj, Barishal, Hosne Ara Hasi, Chief Executive of JAGO NARI, and Md. Nurul Amin, Deputy Director of the Disaster Response Department at the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society. Each panelist contributed unique perspectives on community preparedness and the collaborative role of the government in disaster management. Aniruddha Roy, Assistant Director at WAVE Foundation, skillfully moderated the session, ensuring a cohesive and insightful discussion among the panelists, fostering a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in disaster preparedness and response.

Key Learnings

- **Awareness Through Theater:** The use of theatrical performances has proven effective in raising awareness about the challenges faced by disabled individuals during disasters and how to support them.
- **Role of NGOs and Private Sector:** NGOs play a significant role in disaster response, but there is a need to bridge the gap between policies and their implementation. The community's active participation in planning and execution is crucial.

- **Localized Disaster Management Practices:** Coastal communities in Bangladesh have developed innovative disaster management practices, such as using drums to stay afloat during floods and securing belongings in floating boxes.
- **Timely Repair of Infrastructure:** Prompt action and coordination are crucial for timely repair of embankments and roads damaged by disasters, minimizing damage and loss.
- **Inclusive Disaster Management:** Inclusion of vulnerable groups like people with disabilities, women, and children in disaster management plans is essential for their safety and well-being during hazardous situations.
- **Recovery Support:** Comprehensive plans are needed to ensure effective recovery support, allowing affected individuals to regain stability and move forward permanently.
- **Youth Engagement:** The energetic involvement of youth is indispensable in disaster management, and their contributions have been significant in various critical situations.

Key Recommendations

- Ensure that disaster management plans are inclusive and consider the specific needs of vulnerable groups.
- Document and share localized disaster management practices and success stories to benefit wider communities and inspire similar efforts.
- Establish coordinated mechanisms for the timely repair of damaged infrastructure to minimize the impact of disasters.
- Continue to empower and engage youth in disaster management activities due to their enthusiasm and effectiveness in such roles.





PLENARY-02

Inclusion and Best Practices in Disaster Risk Management at Grassroots

Plenary 02, focused on "**Inclusion and Best Practices in Disaster Risk Management at Grassroots**," featured a diverse panel of experts who provided valuable insights and experiences. The panelists included Santa Islam, a youth representative from Bakerganj, Barishal; Md Arifur Rahman, a community leader from Barguna Sadar, Barguna; Rafiqul Islam Montu, a Climate & Coastal Journalist; Saha Dipak Kumar, Assistant Director of Advocacy & Communication at SKS Foundation; Jannatul Mouwa, Executive Director of BINDU Women Development Organization; and Dr. M Ehsanur Rahman, Former Chairperson of the National Alliance of Humanitarian Actors Bangladesh. The session was skillfully moderated by Kaniz Fatema, Deputy Director at WAVE Foundation, ensuring a well-rounded discussion on the inclusion of diverse perspectives and the identification of best practices in grassroots disaster risk management. The panelists shared their expertise, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and successful strategies in building resilience at the community level.

Key Learnings

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VOTE OF THANKS



Nasefa Ali
Deputy Executive Director
WAVE Foundation

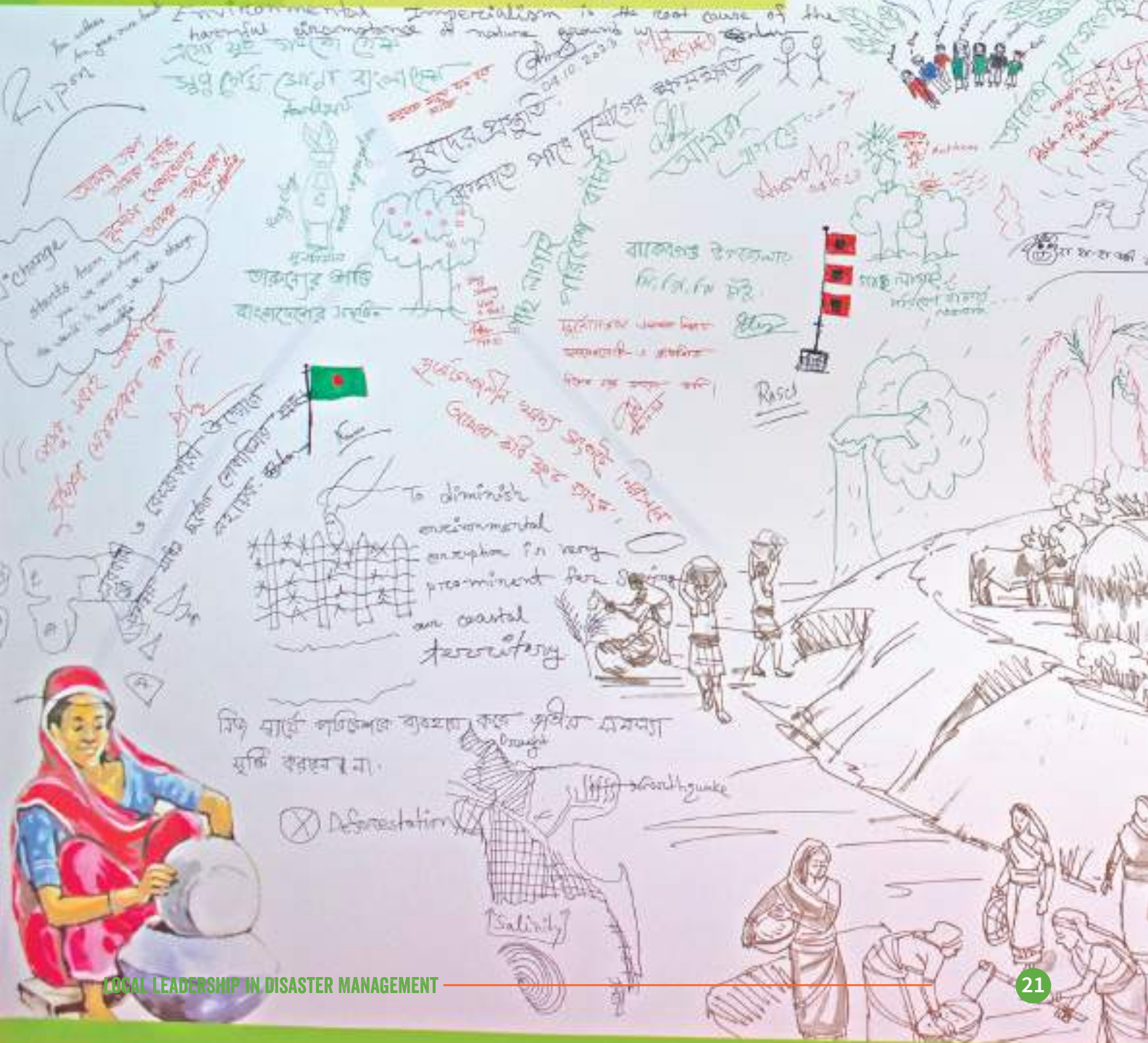
In her address, Nasefa Ali expressed her gratitude to various groups and individuals who played pivotal roles in making the symposium on "Local Leadership in Disaster Management" a resounding success. She thanked participants, organizers, sponsors, and everyone involved for their contributions and support to make this symposium successful. Overall, Nafisa Ali's "Vote of Thanks" conveyed appreciation for the collective efforts and support that contributed to the success of the symposium while underlining the importance of working together to address the critical issue of disaster management in Bangladesh.

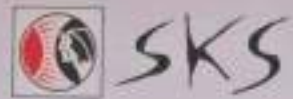


MARKET SYMPOSIUM 2023

LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

04 October 2023 Parjatan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka





MARKET SYMPOSIUM 2023

LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND MARKET MANAGEMENT

04 October 2023

Panipat, Dhaka





OXFAM

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DRAMA: “CHENA KICHCHHA”

Performed by Youth Action for Social Development (YASD)

Youth Action for Social Development (YASD) delivered a compelling theatrical performance, "Chena Kichchha," focusing on climate change and disaster management. This captivating drama not only entertained the audience but also effectively communicated crucial messages about these pressing issues. Through engaging storytelling and vivid characters, YASD demonstrated the impactful role of art in raising awareness and inspiring action. The performance served as a powerful medium for education and advocacy, leaving a lasting impression on the audience and encouraging reflection on individual responsibilities in addressing climate change and disaster preparedness. In essence, YASD's drama showcased the organization's dedication to using creativity as a force for positive change and building a more resilient and sustainable future.

FLASHMOB





MARKET SYMPOSIUM 2023













CONCLUSION

The Market Symposium 2023 on Local Leadership in Disaster Management, orchestrated by the WAVE Foundation, not only signifies a remarkable success but also serves as a pivotal milestone in advancing our collective comprehension of disaster management. The symposium brought together a diverse array of participants, spanning government officials, community leaders, NGOs, and youth activists, all underscoring a united commitment to fortifying disaster resilience at the grassroots level. The dynamic discourse, enlightening presentations, and the valuable exchange of experiences have accentuated the symposium's impact, offering a platform for thought leaders to collaborate on pioneering solutions. A critical insight gleaned is the irreplaceable role of local leadership in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

Moving forward, The symposium highlighted the critical role of youth in disaster management, acknowledging their energy and effectiveness. This aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The project, particularly the ACT initiative, exemplifies a collaborative approach (SDG 17) to address the challenges posed by climate change (SDG 13). By empowering local communities, enhancing resilience, and fostering partnerships, the project contributes to the broader global agenda of creating a sustainable and disaster-resilient future. Looking ahead, the symposium's insights are poised to steer practical implementations aligned with these Sustainable Development Goals, ushering in a future that is more resilient, sustainable, and collectively nurtured.



