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Disaster risk and poverty: assessing the global exposure of the poor to floods and droughts

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Poor people generally have a lower capacity to deal with the impacts of natural hazards. Yet, in several countries, low-income households have been shown to be disproportionately overrepresented in hazard-prone areas compared to households with higher income. Furthermore, the hazardous conditions under which poor households are exposed to now may become worse due to climate change with resulting increases in intensity and frequency of floods and droughts.
To date, the relationship between poverty and natural hazard related disasters has only been explored on a case by case basis in a limited amount of countries. With the recent advances in the global spatial modeling of flood and drought hazard, it becomes feasible to study the relationship between poverty and natural hazards globally. In this presentation we present the most comprehensive analysis so far on the exposure of the global poor to floods and droughts under the current climatic conditions as well as under a range of future climate scenarios. We combine state-of-the-art global river flood and drought hazard models with detailed household asset and income datasets for over 50 countries world-wide, to analyse poverty-specific household exposure to current and future hazard levels.