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**Living with risk and socioeconomic obligations; a case study from landslide prone areas of Mathale District, Sri Lanka**Menake Wijesinghe<sup>1</sup>

Disaster risk management is reducing hazards, and vulnerabilities while enhancing capacities of a particular system or population. Vulnerability of a particular community depends on multiple factors such as geography, vegetation, climate and socioeconomic aspects.

Nevertheless the socioeconomic aspects play over physical features to enhance (or reduce) risks in a particular area or community therefore interventions on such socioeconomic factors become vital in the process of risk reduction.

The paper discusses with a bottom-up approach how different socioeconomic causes have bound people to live with risk rather than evading risk by relocating themselves in less vulnerable areas. The study was conducted in four Grama Niladhari Divisions in Mathale District, Sri Lanka. Results of the study show that there are complex reasons why families take the risk of living in landslide prone areas with danger. Those reasons justify their decisions to remain in vulnerable slopes though there were request for permanent evacuation from lands with threat. The survey was looking at some unique local conditions. Mostly poor families were compelled to live with threats of landslides due to socioeconomic obligations. Though their lands were identified as 'risky' economic benefits such as home gardens and surrounding environment, amenities of water and electricity, together with social advantageous of living with kin, closeness to urban centers, schools, and social cohesiveness has positively influence their stay.

This reveals that risk reduction plans such as relocation should consider such underlying factors that support the 'risk culture' of vulnerable populations.

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