

## **Life after Floods: Coping with Livelihood Uncertainties in post-flood Kerala**

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### **Abstract**

Globally, disasters have had a disproportionate effect on socially vulnerable populations. In the case of disasters triggered by natural hazards, disasters manifest an intersection between ecological and social vulnerabilities. It has been widely argued that there is a need for greater appreciation of the socio economic vulnerabilities that transform hazards into disasters for vulnerable sections of society. In most cases it is such pre existing vulnerabilities that get aggravated in the post disaster situation. In addition, given the preoccupation of disaster recovery with infrastructural rehabilitation, livelihood recovery of the vulnerable amongst the affected populations faces serious challenges. This could precipitate livelihood uncertainties that could result in outmigration.

These issues will be examined in flood and landslide affected pockets of Kerala, a state that is known for its achievements in social development (notably achievements in health, education and literacy) and for the implementation of decentralised governance (*panchayati raj*) reforms. Outliers to the Kerala model of development have been acknowledged, and this study aims to unravel the social vulnerabilities that manifest in disaster and livelihood recovery despite the advancements made by the state in the above-mentioned fields. In addition to assessing the livelihood impacts on the socially and economically vulnerable sections in the post disaster phase, the study will also look into how the disasters affected the livelihoods of the migrant labourers in the area, who have migrated to Kerala from other parts of the country, owing to the livelihood stress that they face in their home states.