

# Hazard, Exposure, and Risk Are Not the Same

Unstable ground is the hazard. Exposure and vulnerability help determine risk.

## 1 Hazard

Hazard = unstable ground



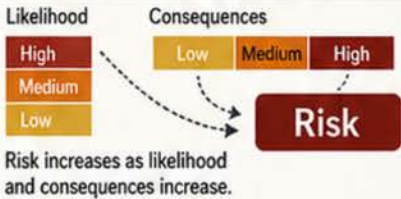
## 2 Exposure

Exposure = people, buildings, roads, and utilities in harm's way



## 3 Risk

Risk = likelihood of harm + consequences



**Hazard**  
= unstable ground

+



**Exposure**  
= people and things in harm's way

+



**Vulnerability**  
= how easily they can be harmed

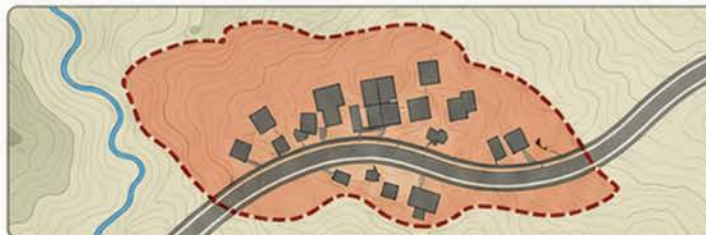
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**Risk**  
= chance of harm + consequences

Maps may show hazard, not full risk.

- Landslide hazard zone
- Buildings
- Road
- Stream



**Risk depends on what is in harm's way.**

The same hazard can mean different levels of risk in different places.



**Policy takeaway:** Hazard maps show where unstable ground may occur, but risk depends on who and what is exposed. This distinction helps agencies interpret maps, communicate clearly, and prioritize mitigation funding. Risk reduction can happen by reducing exposure, strengthening infrastructure, changing land use, improving warnings, or reducing the hazard where possible.