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# Physical vulnerability curve construction and quantitative risk assessment of a typhoon-triggered debris flow via numerical simulation: A case study of Zhejiang Province, SE China

Tengfei Wang<sup>1,5</sup>, Kunlong Yin<sup>1</sup>, Yuanyao Li<sup>2</sup>, Lixia Chen<sup>3</sup>, Changgui Xiao<sup>4</sup>, Haomeng Zhu<sup>4</sup>, Cees van Westen<sup>5</sup>

1. Faculty of Engineering, China University of Geosciences, Wuhan, 430074, China

2. Institute of Geological Survey, China University of Geosciences, Wuhan, 430074, China

3. Institute of Geophysics and Geomatics, China University of Geosciences, Wuhan, 430074, China

4. Institute of Geology of Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou, 310007, China

5. Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth observation, University of Twente, the Netherlands

Corresponding author: Yuanyao Li, email: [liyuan Yao@cug.edu.cn](mailto:liyuan Yao@cug.edu.cn)

**Abstract:** Typhoons are recurrent meteorological phenomena in the South-eastern coastal area of China. They often trigger debris flows and other types of slope failure which cause significant economic damage and loss of life in an area with dense population and high economic activities. Accurate prediction of Typhoon-triggered debris flows and determination of the potential risk zones are crucial for risk management. However, little effort has been devoted to risk assessment by constructing the physical vulnerability curves in the typhoon-affected area. To cope with this deficiency, this paper presented a quantitative method to build up the physical vulnerability curves of buildings by modeling the debris flow intensity and building damage features. In this study, the Wangzhuangwu (WZW) watershed was selected, which was impacted by a debris flow induced by Typhoon Lekima on 10 August 2019. At first, detailed field investigation and interpretation of remote sensing imagery were carried out to analyze the geological characteristics, mechanism of the debris flow, and construct a database of building damage features. The 2019 debris flow initiation, movement and deposition processes were modelled based on the Soil Conservation Service-curve number (SCS-CN) approach and a two-dimensional finite model (FLO-2D). The reconstructed debris flow depth and extend were validated with observed information. Then, we proposed physical vulnerability curves for different type of building structures by combining the damage degree of buildings and the modelled debris flow intensity (flow depth and impact pressure). Based on the validated rheological parameters, the potential intensity of future debris flows was modelled considering different recurrence frequency of the triggering rainfall. Finally, the vulnerability index and economic risk of buildings to debris flow events with different frequencies were calculated using different vulnerability functions. The uncertainty of quantitative risk assessment was considered in the intensity indicator and building structure. The RC (reinforced concrete) frame building has stronger resistance than the non-RC frame building under same intensity of debris flow, and the vulnerability function using the impact pressure as the intensity indicator is more conservative than which using the flow depth. The proposed approach efficiently generated the physical vulnerability curves and debris flow risk map that can be used for effective disaster prevention in debris flow-prone areas.

**Keywords:** Typhoon-triggered debris flow; Physical vulnerability curve; Numerical simulation;

38 **1. Introduction**

39 Debris flows pose a frequent and devastating geological hazard in mountainous areas causing a  
40 significant threat to human life, property, and infrastructure (Tang et al., 2009; Ouyang et al., 2019). The  
41 south-eastern coast of China is particularly affected by debris flows due to heavy rainfall caused by  
42 typhoons (Zhao et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2021). On August 10th, 2019, Super typhoon Lekima produced  
43 extremely concentrated rainfall in the northern part of Zhejiang province, triggering numerous debris  
44 flows causing significant loss of life and property damage(Nie et al. 2021; Zhou et al. 2022; Liang et al.  
45 2022).

46 Quantitative risk assessment of debris flows is a crucial tool for disaster prevention and town  
47 planning(Eidsvig et al. 2014; Zhang et al. 2015a; Bout et al. 2018).It involves evaluating the potential  
48 hazards associated with debris flows, identifying the elements at risk (such as buildings, people, and  
49 critical infrastructure) that could be affected by a debris flow event, and assessing the vulnerability of  
50 these area and population to those hazards. The assessment process typically involves analyzing historical  
51 data, modeling potential hazards and impacts, and using this information to inform decision-making and  
52 planning efforts to mitigate the risk of debris flows (Eidsvig et al. 2014).

53 Hazard assessment of debris flows is based on simulation of the dynamic processes (Luna et al. 2012;  
54 Bout et al. 2018), which allows to calculate various indicators that describe the characteristics of debris  
55 flows. The analysis of the dynamic processes of debris flows is essential for assessing hazard and risk  
56 zones(Guo et al. 2020; Figueroa-García et al. 2021). This requires a good understanding of the properties  
57 and characteristics of debris flows, such as formation mechanisms, frequency, and intensity(Chang et al.  
58 2020; He et al. 2022). Numerical simulation using physical models can quantitatively analyze the  
59 movement of debris flows(van Asch et al. 2014; Zhang et al. 2018; Horton et al. 2019). One popular  
60 model for this is the FLO-2D model, a depth-integrated continuum method that has been used since the  
61 1990s (O'Brien et al. 1993). Researchers have used the FLO-2D model to analyze the dynamic movement  
62 of debris flows in earthquake-affected areas and to clarify the formation conditions and movement  
63 processes of mine waste debris flows (Zou et al. 2016a; Chang et al. 2020; Tang et al. 2022). However,  
64 the validity of the model is heavily dependent on the basal friction model and the parameter values used,  
65 so validation based on site investigations is necessary, especially in extreme debris flow cases(Chen et al.  
66 2019). Additionally, the model doesn't include the hydrological process, so a suitable hydrological model  
67 to calculate peak discharge and runoff processes of debris flows is crucial for the reliability of prediction  
68 results(Zhang et al. 2015a).

69 Vulnerability assessment is a challenging aspect of debris flow risk assessment(Fuchs et al. 2007;  
70 Jaiswal and van Westen 2013; Ciurean et al. 2017). The value of vulnerability is closely linked to the  
71 intensity of the debris flow and the damage index of the elements at risk. The methods of debris flow

72 vulnerability assessment have evolved from qualitative to quantitative (Li et al., 2010; Peduto et al., 2017).  
73 However, the quantitative vulnerability assessment also faces some uncertainty. For example, the  
74 vulnerability of buildings has a high uncertainty with respect to the lack of extensive damage database of  
75 buildings damaged by debris flows, the varying characteristics of debris flows, and specific building  
76 characteristics (number of floors, opening of buildings, protection by other objects). Vulnerability of  
77 people inside buildings depends on the damage degree of the building, and the number of floors.  
78 Vulnerability of people outside buildings depends on the warning time, and escape possibilities. The  
79 primary focus of vulnerability assessment is on buildings, which plays a vital role in the vulnerability  
80 assessment, since it's indicative of the overall damage, and closely linked to population vulnerability.

81 Physical vulnerability curve based on the statistics method has been seen an effective method in  
82 quantitative vulnerability assessments, which could relate the intensity of the debris flow to the damage  
83 index of elements at risk. The construction of physical vulnerability curve requires intensity information  
84 of debris flows and damage information of elements at risk. Due to the difficulty of monitoring dynamic  
85 parameters along debris flow paths and the infrequency of past event records providing information on  
86 debris flow intensity, the dynamic numerical model was gradually employed to reconstruct the debris  
87 flow process and establish the hazard intensity(Zhang et al. 2018; Horton et al. 2019). The selection of  
88 indicators that express the impact of debris flows play a vital role in vulnerability curve construction.  
89 Several methods have been proposed to describe the impact of debris flows on elements at risk based on  
90 the calculated indicators from dynamic processes such as the flow depth and velocity (Cui et al. 2011;  
91 Papathoma-Köhle et al. 2012; Quan Luna et al. 2013; Kang and Kim 2016). Tang et al. (1993) and  
92 Fangqiang et al. (2006) proposed the use of maximum flow depth and maximum flow velocity,  
93 respectively, as the intensity indicators (Tang et al. 1993; Fangqiang et al. 2006). Hu and Ding (2012)  
94 suggested the use of maximum momentum, as a kinetic energy factor, to more directly express the impact  
95 force(Hu and Ding 2012). Jakob et al. (2012) and Ouyang et al. (2019) proposed the two-factor  
96 classification method that combines maximum depth and maximum momentum is more effective in  
97 reflecting the destruction caused by debris flows than single-factor of maximum momentum (Jakob et al.  
98 2012; Ouyang et al. 2019). However, comparing to these indicators above, the impact pressure could  
99 express the damage capability of debris flows to buildings more essentially from statics and dynamic  
100 aspects(Quan Luna et al. 2011; Kang and Kim 2016).

101 In this paper, a numerical model was used to reconstruct the catastrophic debris flows induced by  
102 super Typhoon Lekima, which occurred on August 10th 2019 in Linan district, Zhejiang province, and to  
103 predict future risk under different recurrence periods. We conducted a detailed site investigation based on  
104 field measurements and UAV-based remote sensing to obtain the digital elevation model (DEM) and  
105 digital orthophoto model (DOM) of the debris flow. A numerical calculation was then performed by  
106 integrating the hydrologic model (SCS-CN) and the FLO-2D model to reconstruct the debris flow for the

107 typhoon event. A series of vulnerability curves for RC frame and non-RC frame buildings were  
108 constructed using the flow depth and impact pressure as the intensity indicators. The vulnerability and risk  
109 values of the buildings under different rainfall recurrence periods were predicted by considering the debris  
110 flow intensity, vulnerability, and economic value of buildings. The quantitative risk assessment approach  
111 proposed in this paper may provide guidance for the mitigating the risk of debris flows.

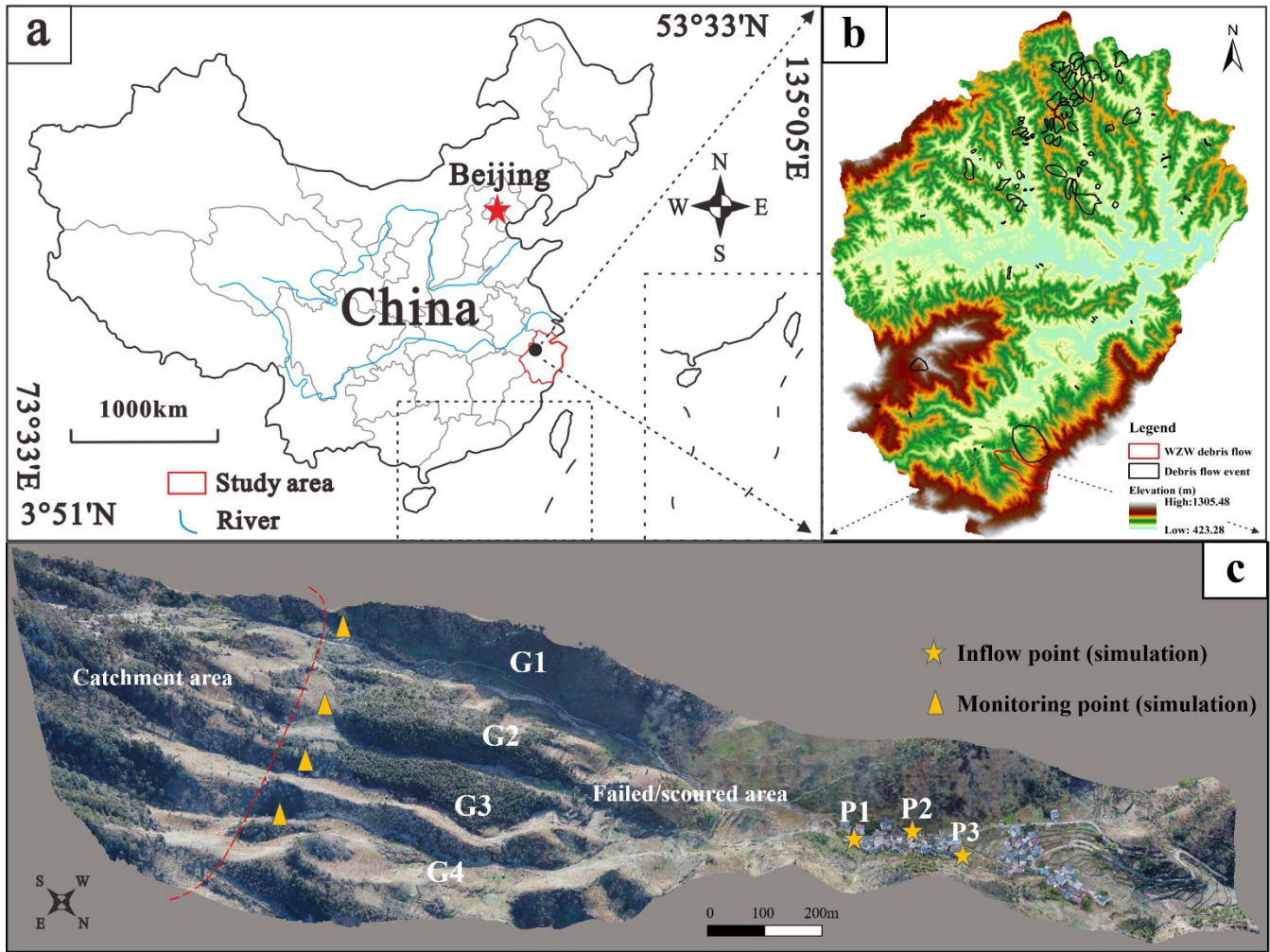
## 112 **2. Study area**

### 113 **2.1 Topography and engineering geological conditions**

114 The Wangzhuangwu watershed locates in Linan District of Zhejiang Province, China, upstream of  
115 Daoshi town (Fig.1). The main rock outcrops in the area are Cambrian limestone and argillaceous  
116 limestone, which are overlaid by Quaternary deposits including silty clay and gravel. These geological  
117 conditions make the area susceptible to slope erosion and undercutting, which provide a source of material  
118 for debris flows. The study area was affected by Typhoon Lekima, which caused 81 debris flows, one of  
119 which was the Wangzhuangwu (WZW) debris flow, which damaged 109 houses, interrupted roads, and  
120 resulted in a direct economic loss of about 4 million RMB (US \$ 57,554).

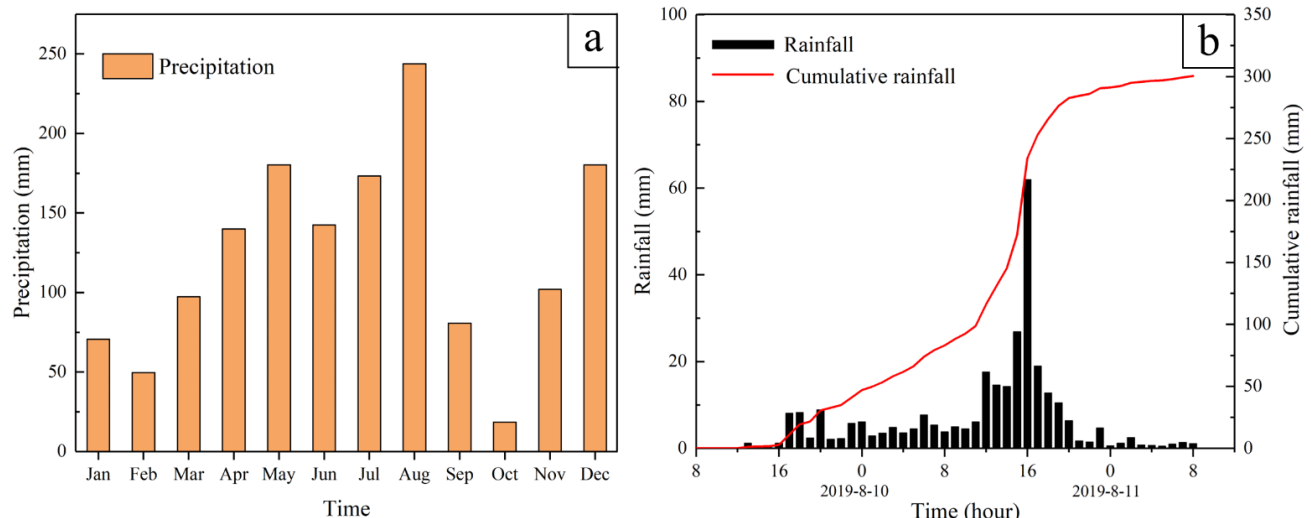
### 121 **2.2 Climate characteristics and rainfall conditions**

122 The study area is in a subtropical monsoon climate zone with four distinct seasons and high average  
123 annual rainfall of 1613.9mm, with an average of 158 days of rain per year. Most of the rainfall occurs  
124 between April and October, with an average of 1173.5mm (Fig.2a). The rainstorms associated with  
125 monsoon troughs occurring from April to early July, are widespread and have low intensity; while typhoon  
126 rainstorms, occur from mid-July to September, and very intensive and last for a short time. In the case of  
127 Typhoon Lekima, the daily precipitation reached 252.2mm on August 10th, 2019, as recorded by a rain  
128 gauge in Wangzhuangwu Village (Fig.2b).



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Figure 1 Location and three-dimensional model of the Wangzhuangwu (WZW) watershed: (a) Location of the WZW gully in Zhejiang Province, China; (b) Regional setting and debris flow distribution of Daoshi town; (c) Three-dimensional model of WZW watershed established by UAV, four main gullies (G1-G4), three monitoring points (P1-P3), catchment area and sourced area (splited by the red line)

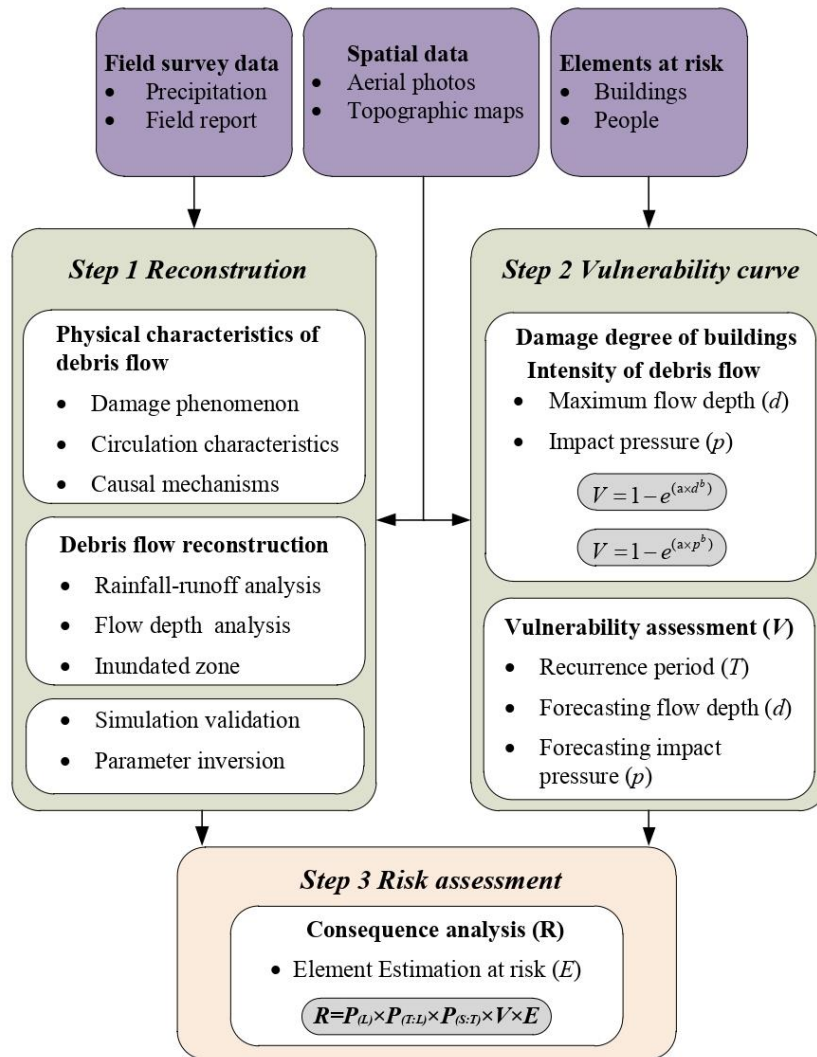


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Figure 2 Monthly rainfall of the study area and hourly rainfall during Typhoon Lekima: (a) Distribution of monthly rainfall in the study area in 2018; (b) Hourly and cumulative rainfall during the Typhoon Lekima in August 2019

137 **3. Methodology**

138 The methodological procedure of the study can be divided into three steps (Fig.3). In the first step,  
 139 we investigated the physical characteristics of the 2019 WZW debris flow through field work and aerial  
 140 imaging. On this basis, we reconstructed the run-out process and calculated the intensity parameters such  
 141 as flow depth and flow velocity using a numerical model. In the second step, we constructed the  
 142 vulnerability curves and functions of buildings with different structures using the intensity indicators of  
 143 the reconstructed debris flow and the damage information of buildings. Then we calculated the  
 144 vulnerability index of buildings in future scenario based on the validated rheological parameters and the  
 145 vulnerability functions. In the third step, we predicted the debris flow risk under different recurrence  
 146 intervals using the results from the first and second steps. This methodology allows for a detailed analysis  
 147 of the debris flow event and the potential risk to buildings in the area under different recurrence intervals,  
 148 helping to inform disaster management and mitigation strategies.



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Figure 3 Flowchart of the methodology applied in this study

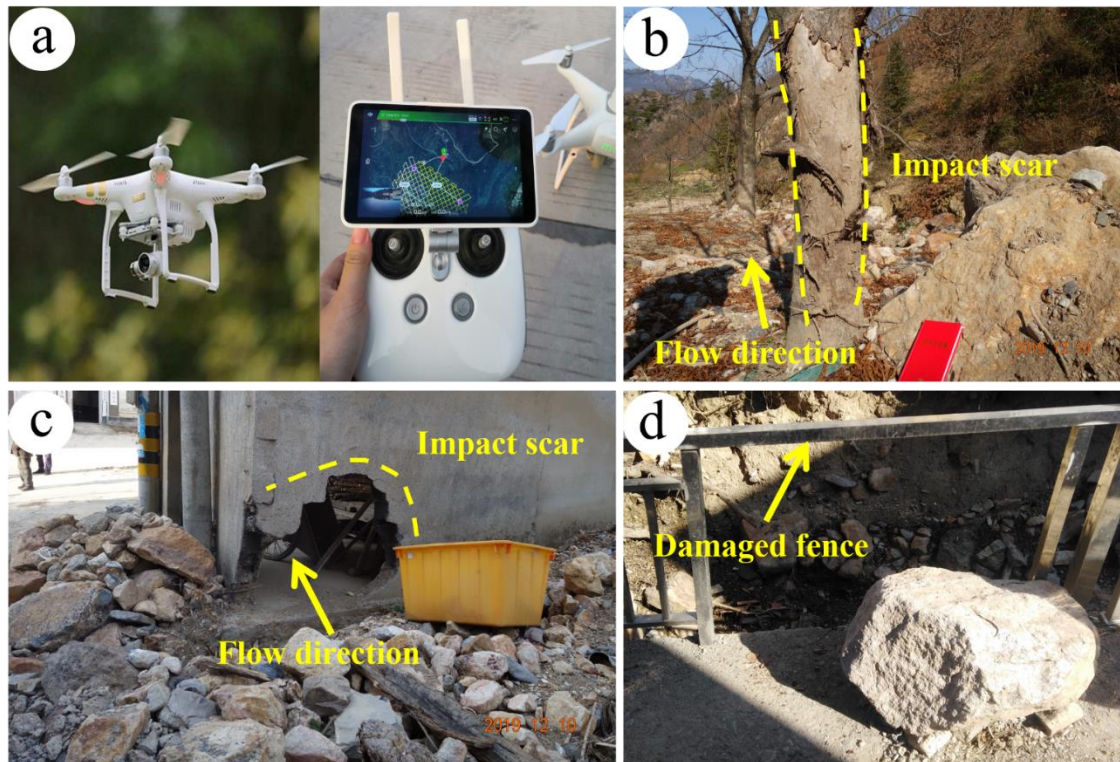


151 **3.1 Field investigation**

152 In the study, field investigation mainly consists of two components:

153 (1) Obtaining field measurements and topographic data. This includes conducting a photogrammetric  
154 survey using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to acquire topographic information of the study area  
155 (Fig.4a). DJI Phantom 4 and Mavic Pro drones were used flying at a height of 100 meters above the  
156 ground and take photographs with an 80% lateral and transversal overlap (Fig.4a). The aerial images were  
157 then used to create a 3D model and a digital elevation model (DEM) of the study area with help of the  
158 Context Capture (Fig.1c). This information was used to model the debris flow and identify geomorphic  
159 features such as the development of valleys, water catchment areas, ground undulation degree, slope ratio,  
160 and vegetation.

161 (2) Sampling evidences of the debris flow activity, to understand its characteristics such as flow depth,  
162 velocity, and sediment size (Fig.4b~d). The vegetation affected in the movement path of the debris flow  
163 and the buildings were mapped, evidence of damage such as scars and mud traces were collected and  
164 stored in a database with basic features of the buildings such as construction structure, material, number  
165 of floors. Damage characteristics were also recorded such as the damage degree, the impact azimuth angle,  
166 and the height of the impact. The damage degree was determined using a classification scheme proposed  
167 by Kang and Kim (2016)(Kang and Kim 2016). The disaster database includes information on 212  
168 buildings, of which 109 were affected by the 2019 WZW debris flow.



169  
170 Figure 4 Fieldwork methods and sampling evidence of the 2019 WZW debris flow activity: (a) Photogrammetric  
171 survey using UAV; (b) Impact scar of the trees in the movement path of the debris flow; (c) Impact scar of the  
172 buildings in the influence area of the debris flow; (d) A fence damaged by the debris flow



173 The particle size distribution of the debris flow was also investigated for determining the debris flow  
 174 density, which can be calculated using the formula below(Yu et al. 2013):

$$175 \quad \gamma_D = \gamma_0 + \gamma_v P_2 (P_{0.05})^{0.35} \quad (1)$$

176 Where  $\gamma_D$  is the average density of the 2019 WZW debris flow ( $\text{g/cm}^3$ );  $\gamma_v$  is the minimum density  
 177 of a viscous debris flow ( $2.0 \text{ g/cm}^3$ );  $\gamma_0$  is the minimum density of a debris flow ( $1.5 \text{ g/cm}^3$ );  $P_2$  is the  
 178 percentage of coarse particles with the diameter more than 2 mm, and  $P_{0.05}$  is the percentage of fine  
 179 particles with the diameter less than 0.05 mm.

### 180 3.2 Dynamic simulation of the debris flow

181 The dynamic simulation of the debris flow can be divided into two parts. The initial stage involved  
 182 simulating the rainfall in the region to generate a discharge hydrograph and assess the impact of rainfall  
 183 intensity on the flow. The subsequent stage consisted of simulating the debris flow, which integrated the  
 184 outcomes of the rainfall and entrained material models. In this process, we use a series of validation  
 185 methods for the validation of model results and selection of parameters.

#### 186 3.2.1 Hydrological analysis

187 The HEC-HMS software was utilized to calculate the rainfall-runoff process of the WZW debris flow.  
 188 This software is based on the concept of semi-distributed modeling and is widely used in hydrology  
 189 (HEC-HMS 2010). The SCS-CN method, one of the most widely accepted hydrologic methods in HEC-  
 190 HMS to estimate runoff, taking into account the indirect impact of human activities(Laouacheria and  
 191 Mansouri 2015). The direct runoff  $Q$  (mm) is calculated using the following equation:

$$192 \quad Q = \begin{cases} \frac{(P - 0.2S)^2}{(P + 0.8S)} & P \geq 0.2S \\ 0 & P < 0.2S \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

193 Where  $P$  (mm) is the precipitation;  $S$  (mm) is the potential maximum infiltration which is related to  
 194 soil texture, land use, and AMCs. The potential maximum infiltration,  $S$ , is determined by the following  
 195 equation:

$$196 \quad S = \frac{25,400}{CN} - 254 \quad (3)$$

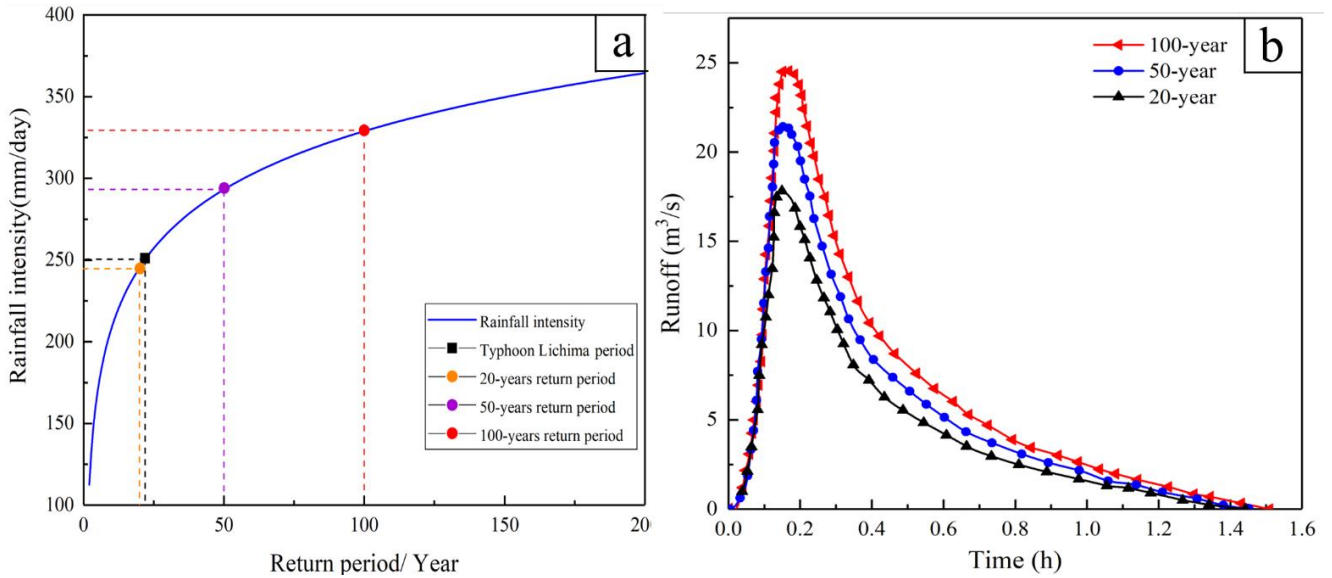
197 Where SCS curve number (CN) is an index that reflects the combination of hydrologic soil group,  
 198 land treatment classes, and prior moisture conditions. It can be determined by referencing the standard  
 199 table provided by SCS-USA and finding the matching soil description.

200 The precipitation (mm) for various rainfall recurrence periods was calculated using the Gumbel  
 201 distribution. The cumulative distribution function of the Gumbel distribution is represented as  
 202 follows(Matti et al. 2016):

$$203 \quad F_x(x) = \exp\left\{-\exp\left[-\frac{x-\xi}{\alpha}\right]\right\} \quad (4)$$

204 where  $X$  is a random variable,  $x$  is a possible value of  $X$ ,  $\xi$  is the location parameter calculated using  
 205  $\mu_x = \xi + 0.5772\alpha$  and  $\alpha$  is the scale parameter calculated using  $\sigma^2 = \pi^2\alpha^2/6$ , where  $\mu_x$  and  $\sigma^2$  are the  
 206 mean and variance of the data set, respectively.

207 The daily rainfall intensity for different recurrence periods of 20, 50, and 100 years were calculated  
 208 using the Gumbel distribution method based on historical rainfall data from 1971 to 2018 in the study  
 209 area (Fig.5a). The resulting intensities were 245.51 mm/day for 20-year, 293.16 mm/day for 50-year, and  
 210 328.87 mm/day for 100-year recurrence period. The rainfall intensity under 20-year recurrence is roughly  
 211 the same with that during Typhoon Lekima, so the simulation results of debris flow under Typhoon  
 212 Lekima can be considered representative of that under 20-year recurrence period. The hydrographs of the  
 213 catchment area of G1 gully were derived by using the precipitation as input to the SCS-CN hydrologic  
 214 method in HEC-HMS software, and the results were illustrated in Figure 5b.



215  
 216 Figure 5 Daily rainfall intensity and flow hydrographs of G1 gully under different recurrence periods: (a) Daily rainfall  
 217 intensity under Typhoon Lichima and three recurrence periods; (b) Flow hydrographs of G1 gully under three  
 218 recurrence periods

### 219 3.2.2 Runout analysis

220 The FLO-2D model is a two-dimensional debris flow evolution model that was used to simulate the  
 221 runout process and quantifies metrics of the WZW debris flow. The simulation process is implemented  
 222 through numerical integration of motion equations and fluid volume conservation (O'Brien et al. 1993).  
 223 FLO-2D model uses a Eulalia formulation with a finite difference numerical scheme that requires an input  
 224 hydrograph as a boundary condition. A quadratic rheological model is employed in FLO-2D, which  
 225 considers the Bingham shear stress as a function of sediment concentration. The model also considers a  
 226 combination of turbulent and dispersive stress components that depend on a modified Manning  $n$  value:

$$227 S_f = \frac{\tau_y}{\gamma_m h} + \frac{K\eta v}{8\gamma_m h^2} + \frac{n_{td}^2 v^2}{h^{4/3}} \quad (5)$$

228 where  $S_f$  is the total friction slope;  $\tau_y$  is the yield stress (Pa);  $\gamma_m$  is the specific gravity of the fluid  
 229 matrix;  $h$  is the flow depth (m);  $K$  is the laminar flow resistance;  $\eta$  is the dynamic viscosity (Pa·s);  $v$  is  
 230 the flow velocity (m/s);  $n_{td}$  is an empirically modified Manning n value of the mixture;  $n$ ,  $\eta$  and  $\tau_y$  are  
 231 expressed as follow:

$$232 \quad n = 0.33 v^{-0.15} \exp(C_v^{-0.15}) \ln h \quad (6)$$

$$233 \quad \eta = \alpha_1 e^{\beta_1 C_v} \quad (7)$$

$$234 \quad \tau_y = \alpha_2 e^{\beta_2 C_v} \quad (8)$$

235 Where  $C_v$  is volume concentration, which represents the discharge relation between water flow and  
 236 debris flow.  $\alpha_1$ ,  $\alpha_2$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$  are empirical coefficients.

237 In our study, the SCS-CN model hydrological analysis was used to obtain the surface runoff discharge,  
 238 which serves as a boundary condition for the FLO-2D model. This model simulates the movement process  
 239 and intensity coefficients such as flow depth ( $h$ ) and flow velocity ( $v$ ).

### 240 3.2.3 Model calibration and validation

241 A series of rheological parameters needed to be defined in FLO-2D software simulation process.  
 242 These parameters include the Manning's roughness coefficient ( $n$ ), flow resistance parameter ( $K$ ),  
 243 sediment concentration ( $C_v$ ), and empirical coefficients ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ). Since there are no independent estimates  
 244 of the model's friction parameters, the initial rheological parameters are determined based on previous  
 245 studies, physical experiments, and field investigations (Liu and Lei 2003; Chang et al. 2017). The model  
 246 calibration is then carried out through trial-and-error selection and adjustment of the input rheological  
 247 parameters. The goal of the calibration process is to adjust the parameters until the simulated and observed  
 248 characteristics of the debris flow show a good consistency.

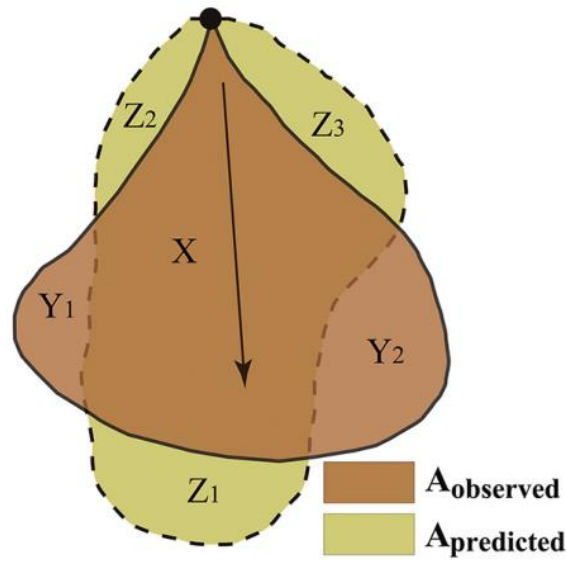
249 The methodology for validating the accuracy of the reconstruction result of the 2019 WZW debris  
 250 flow involves overlaying the reconstructed influence area ( $A_1$ ) obtained from the FLO-2D model with  
 251 the actual influence area observed during the investigation period (Scheidl and Rickenmann 2009). Figure  
 252 6 shows the schematic diagram of the methodology. The evaluation parameter ( $\tau$  and  $\partial$ ) is used to express  
 253 the overall accuracy of the reconstruction result and is calculated using the equations:

$$254 \quad \tau = \frac{S_X}{S_{observed}} - \frac{S_Y}{S_{observed}} - \frac{S_Z}{S_{observed}} + \frac{V_X}{V_{observed}} \quad (9)$$

$$255 \quad \partial = \frac{\tau + 2}{4} \quad (10)$$

256 where  $S_X$  is the positive accuracy area;  $S_Y$  is the negative accuracy area;  $S_Z$  is the missing accuracy  
 257 area;  $S_{observed}$  is the actual influence area;  $V_X$  is the correct reconstruction volume, while  $V_{observed}$  is the  
 258 actual influence volume. The range of  $\tau$  is between -2 and 2. Here we propose a normalized value,  $\partial$ , to

259 express the standard accuracy, which is between 0 and 1, respectively on behalf of no overlap and perfect  
 260 overlap.



261  
 262 Figure 6 Schematic diagram of reconstruction result verification(Chen et al. 2021)

263 In addition to overlaying the reconstructed and actual influence areas, the accuracy of the  
 264 reconstruction result of the 2019 WZW debris flow is also evaluated by setting three monitoring points  
 265 (P1-P3) at the positions of observation buildings (Fig.1c). The variation of flow depth in the simulation  
 266 process is monitored at these points, and the maximum flow depth of the debris flow at the monitoring  
 267 points is compared to the height of mud marks left on the same buildings. This provides an additional  
 268 perspective for evaluating the accuracy of the reconstruction result.

### 269 3.3 Risk assessment

270 Debris flow risk is analyzed based on the classic definition of risk, which is the product of the  
 271 probability of a debris flow event occurring, the vulnerability of elements exposed to the event, and the  
 272 potential losses(Fell et al. 2008; Corominas et al. 2013). The focus is on the risk to buildings from debris  
 273 flow, and the risk is calculated using the following equation:

$$274 R = P_{(L)} \times P_{(T:L)} \times P_{(S:T)} \times V \times E \quad (11)$$

275 Where R represents the annual total risk of buildings.  $P_{(L)}$  is the probability of a debris flow event,  
 276 which is countdown of the recurrence period.  $P_{(T:L)}$  is the probability of a debris flow reaching a specific  
 277 point, which can be determined from the output of numerical simulation. For the elements located in the  
 278 inundation zone, the  $P_{(T:L)}$  is 1.  $P_{(S:T)}$  is the probability of elements at a certain point during a debris flow  
 279 event. For the static building, the  $P_{(S:T)}$  is 1. V and E represent the vulnerability index and the economic  
 280 value of the element at risk.

#### 281 3.3.1 Hazard assessment

282 The debris flow hazard represents the potential for damage at a specific location under a certain  
 283 condition. It is primarily determined by the temporal probability of that condition occurring and the

284 intensity of the debris flow. In this study, the temporal probability is the countdown of the recurrence periods.  
285 The debris flow intensity is a measure of the destructive capability of the debris flow which includes the  
286 siltation capability and the impact capability. The siltation capability can be reflected by the accumulative  
287 depth, while the impact capability can be reflected by the impact pressure(Ouyang et al. 2019). The impact  
288 pressure of the debris flow consists of the dynamic overpressure and hydrostatic pressure. These forces  
289 depend on the peak discharge, velocity, volume, and grain-size distribution of debris flow(Zanchetta et al.  
290 2004). The dynamic overpressure and the hydrostatic pressure can be used to reflect the impact capability:

$$291 \quad P = (1/2)\rho gh + \rho v^2 \quad (12)$$

292 Where  $\rho$  is the debris flow density ( $\text{kg/m}^3$ ),  $h$  is the depth of the debris flow (m),  $g$  is the gravity  
293 acceleration ( $\text{m/s}^2$ ),  $v$  is the velocity of the debris flow (m/s). The first term in Eq.12,  $(1/2)\rho gh$  represents  
294 the mean hydrostatic pressure component. The second term,  $\rho v^2$ , is the dynamic overpressure component.

### 295 **3.3.2 Vulnerability estimation**

296 Vulnerability is a concept that is defined differently by scientists with various backgrounds. In the  
297 field of engineering geology, vulnerability is defined as the "degree of loss" of a given element exposed  
298 to a debris flow. It ranges from 0 (no loss) to 1 (total loss). The availability of intensity and damage  
299 information of the WZW debris flow makes it a significant case study. Furthermore, the range of building  
300 damage provides an opportunity to evaluate vulnerability using a function that links the debris flow  
301 intensity to the extent of damage.

302 In our approach, we utilized the buildings damage data obtained from field investigation in  
303 combination with information from modelling outputs to calculate vulnerability functions. This method  
304 facilitates the computation of vulnerability functions based on both debris flow accumulation height and  
305 impact pressure.

306 A comprehensive analysis of field survey data, photographs, and reports is conducted to determine  
307 building damage. To evaluate the damage caused by debris flows, a damage classification system was  
308 implemented, which includes complete destruction, extensive damage, moderate damage, and slight  
309 damage categories. In the inundation area, the degree of building damage is determined by evaluating the  
310 damage to the exterior walls, the presence of cracks in the walls, loss of external and internal wall  
311 components, internal room flooding, or damage to the main building column.

## 312 **4. Results**

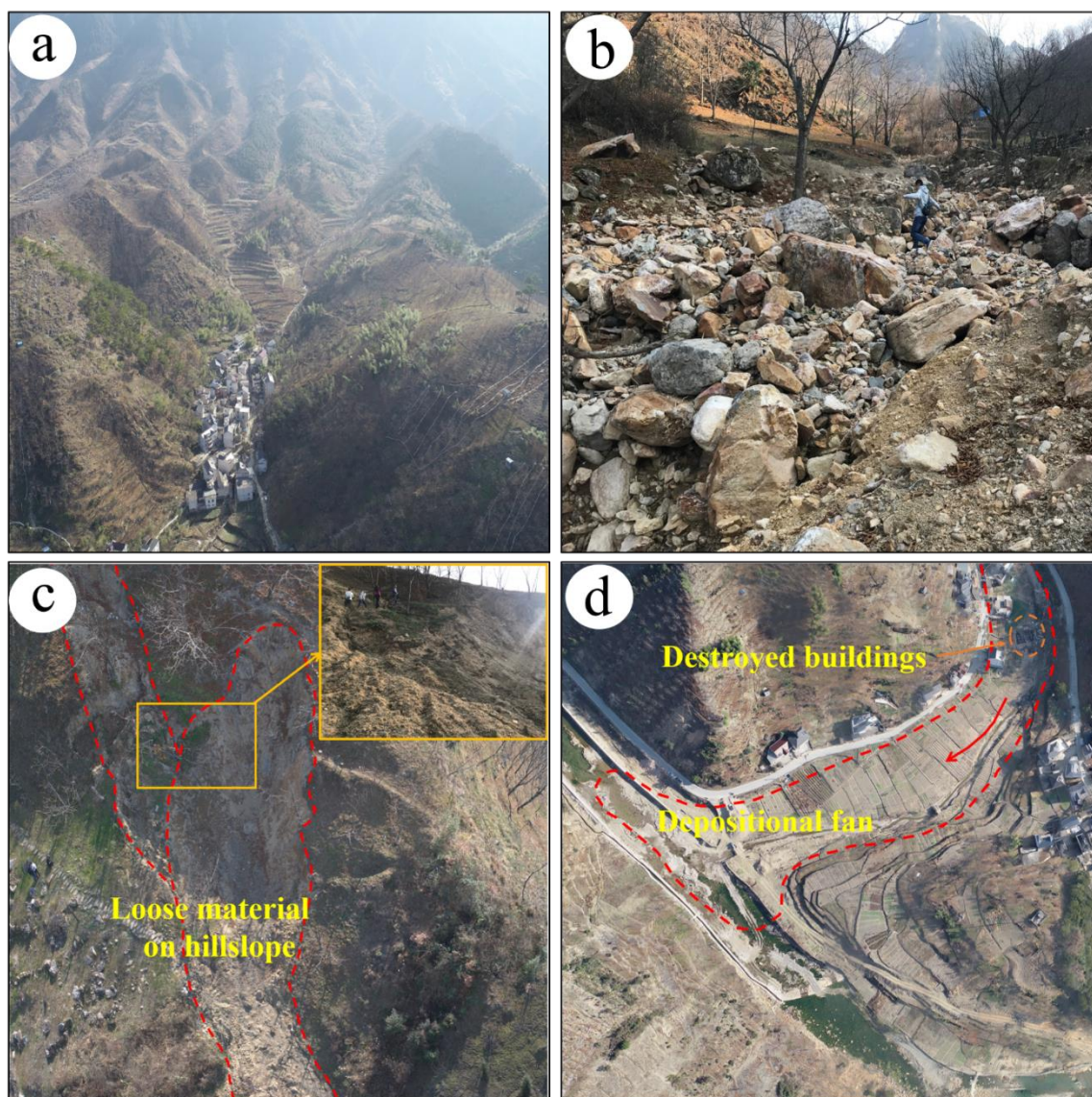
### 313 **4.1 Characteristics and damage of the 2019 WZW debris flow**

314 Remote sensing interpretation and field investigation were used to survey the disaster features and  
315 describe the mechanism of the WZW debris flow caused by the Typhoon Lekima. The catchment area is  
316  $1.55 \text{ km}^2$ , with an elevation that ranges from 606 m to 1178 m above sea level, and a gentle slope of  $15^\circ$   
317 from southeast to northwest. The study area consists of four main gullies (G1-G4) that converge about 50  
318 m upstream of the village (Fig.1c and Fig.7a). The channelized debris flow is characterized by a long



319 travel distance, a large volume of transported material, and a high level of destructiveness. The formation  
320 area of the debris flow is 0.28 km<sup>2</sup>, characterized by steep terrain, poor vegetation cover, and loose soil  
321 on the valley slopes. Soil erosion and shallow landslides frequently occur during heavy rainfall, providing  
322 a source of loose soil and debris that accumulate in the gully, leading to the formation of the debris flow  
323 (Fig.7c). Additionally, the channels in the initiation area are steep and straight, giving the debris flow a  
324 high entrainment capacity (Fig.7b).

325 The accumulation area of the debris flow occurred at the exit of a residential area, resulting in the  
326 accumulation of mud and sand in the form of a depositional fan (Fig.7d). The grain-size characteristics  
327 of the matrix in the debris fan were analyzed using the sieving method from two locations (S1 and S2)  
328 with a 2×2 m rectangular windows (Fig.8). The density of the debris flow ( $\gamma_D$ ) was determined based on  
329 the particle-size distribution of samples taken from different locations on the fan according to Eq.1.



330  
331 Figure 7 Overview of the debris flow: (a) Topography of the catchment area; (b),(c) A large amount of loose material  
332 on hillslopes and in the channels which provided abundant material sources for the WZW debris flow; (d) Location of  
333 the deposition fan and destroyed buildings after the debris flow.



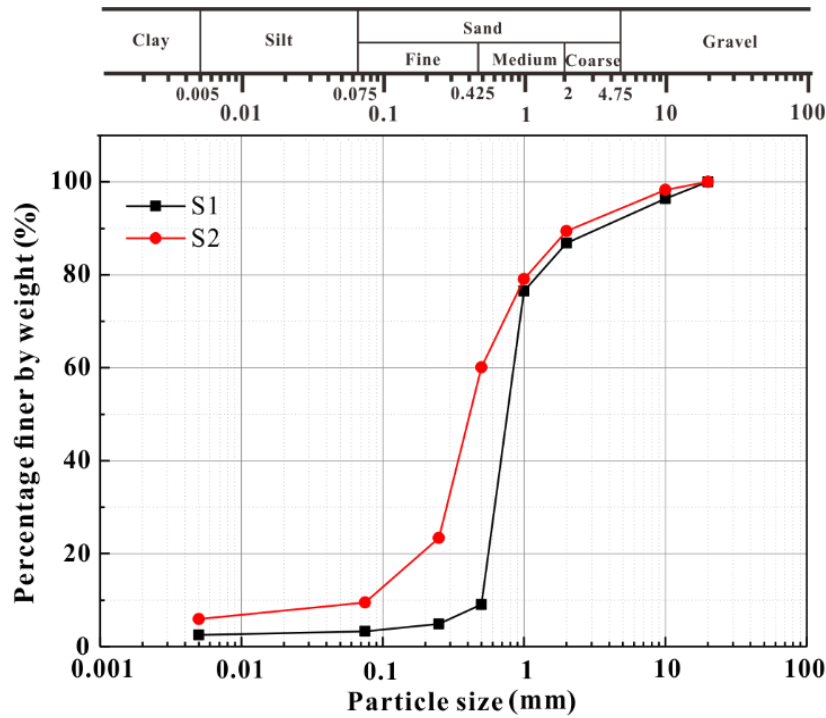


Figure 8 Particle gradation of the 2019 WZW debris flow deposits

The basic features of buildings in the Wangzhuangwu village were investigated. A total of 211 items were classified according to the structural type, number of floors, and order of impacted by debris flows (Tab.2). In this work, buildings are classified into two structural types: reinforced-concrete (RC) frame and non-concrete (non-RC) frame. In which, the non-RC frame mainly includes masonry, wooden frame. For the same intensity of the debris flow (such as impact pressure and flow depth), the buildings with RC frame have higher resistance than those with non- RC frame. Most buildings in the area have one or more than three floors. Combining the flow paths of the 2019 WZW debris flow and the location of the buildings, we classified these buildings into three orders to be impacted by debris flows. More than 80% buildings located in the first order to be impacted, which means they will face greater influence of debris flows compared to others.

The 2019 WZW debris flow, comprising of mud, sand, and rocks swept through the WZW village which is situated in the path of the debris flow, causing damage to buildings including residential houses and public facilities. 109 of the total 211 buildings were damaged with different degrees, and the number of these damaged buildings with different features was shown in Table 2. Based on the classification criteria mentioned in section 3.3.2, these damaged buildings were classified into four categories (Tab.3). Figure 9 illustrates some examples of buildings in different damage categories.

Table 2 Building features and damaged number distribution

Building feature	Building feature classes	Number of buildings	Number of buildings damaged
Structural type	Reinforced-concrete frame	130	68
	Non-concrete frame	81	41
Number of floors	$\geq 3$	85	44
	2	40	22

	1	86	43
Order of impacted	First	171	94
	Second	30	9
	Third	10	6

353

Table 3 Damage classification scheme for the buildings

Damage degree	Damage description	Vulnerability index (used value)	Number of buildings	
			Non-RC frame	RC frame
Slight	Slight non-structural damage, stability not affected, damage to furnishings or fittings	0.1-0.3 (0.2)	16	47
Moderate	Cracks in the wall, stability unaffected, flooding of the internal rooms and damage to the furnishing	0.3-0.6 (0.45)	14	13
Extensive	Partly destroyed, loss of parts of external and internal walls, evacuation necessary, reconstruction of destroyed parts	0.6-0.8 (0.7)	4	8
Complete	Totally destroyed, evacuation necessary, complete reconstruction	0.8-1.0 (1.0)	7	0



354

355 Figure 9 Buildings in different degrees damaged by 2019 WZW debris flow: (a) Slight damage; (b) Moderate damage;  
356 (c) Extensive damage; (d) Complete damage

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#### 4.2 Reconstruction of the 2019 WZW debris flow

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The 2019 WZW debris flow run-out process was reconstructed using FLO-2D software, with a 2m grid model obtained from a photogrammetric survey using UAV as the DEM. The flow hydrograph, triggered by rainfall during the typhoon Lekima period, was calculated using the SCS-CN hydrologic method and HEC-HMS software. The inflow points were set at four locations (Q1-Q4) corresponding to the catchment areas of G1-G4, with a duration (T) of 1.5h, which matched the actual duration of the 2019 WZW debris flow.

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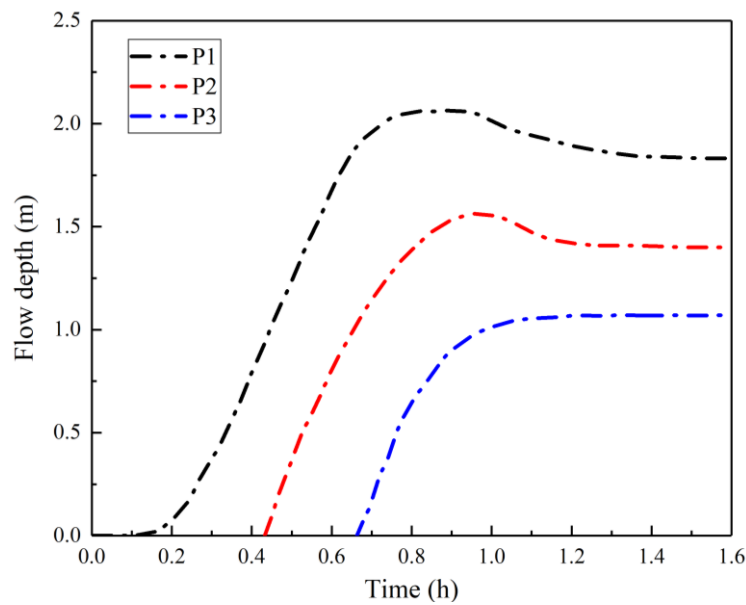
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The optimized simulation result of the 2019 WZW debris flow shows a high degree of agreement with actual measurements from the field investigation. The accuracy was evaluated by comparing the reconstructed influence area (A1) obtained from the FLO-2D software with the actual influence area observed during the field investigation period, using equation 9, 10 and the parameters in Table 4. The standard evaluation parameter,  $\delta$ , which expresses the overall accuracy of the simulation result, reached

369 0.902, indicating that the optimized simulation result matches well with the actual 2019 WZW debris flow.  
 370 The maximum flow depth at points P1-P3 in the debris flow path also matches well with the height  
 371 of the mud marks left on buildings observed during the field investigation. The flow depth evolution  
 372 process is shown in Figure 10. When the debris flow occurs, sediment reaches the locations of P1 and P2  
 373 successively, and the flow depth rises rapidly to the maximum in 0.4h. Since P1 and P2 are in the upper  
 374 part of the circulation zone, the sediment has a certain capacity for circulation and entrainment. The flow  
 375 depth curve shows a slight downward trend after reaching the maximum and then maintains a steady state  
 376 until the end of the debris flow. As P3 is in the lower part of the circulation zone, the circulation and  
 377 entrainment capacity of the debris flow have a certain degree of reduction, and the flow depth curve tends  
 378 to stabilize after the rapid rise.



379  
 380 Figure 10 Flow depth evolution process over time at the point of P1~P3 in the debris flow path

381 The optimized simulation result has been calibrated to maintain a high degree of consistency with  
 382 the actual situation through the methods described above. The optimized rheological parameters required  
 383 for the simulation are presented in Table 5. These can be used in the simulation of debris flow under  
 384 rainfall conditions of different recurrence periods.

385 Table 4 Validation parameters and results of numerical simulation accuracy

Parameter	Unit/10 <sup>3</sup> m <sup>2</sup>				Unit/10 <sup>4</sup> m <sup>3</sup>		$\alpha$	$\beta$	$\gamma$	$\delta$	$\tau$
	$A_X$	$A_Y$	$A_Z$	$A_{observed}$	$V_X$	$V_{observed}$					
Value	15.66	2.35	1.53	18.02	1.46	1.53	0.87	0.13	0.08	0.96	1.61

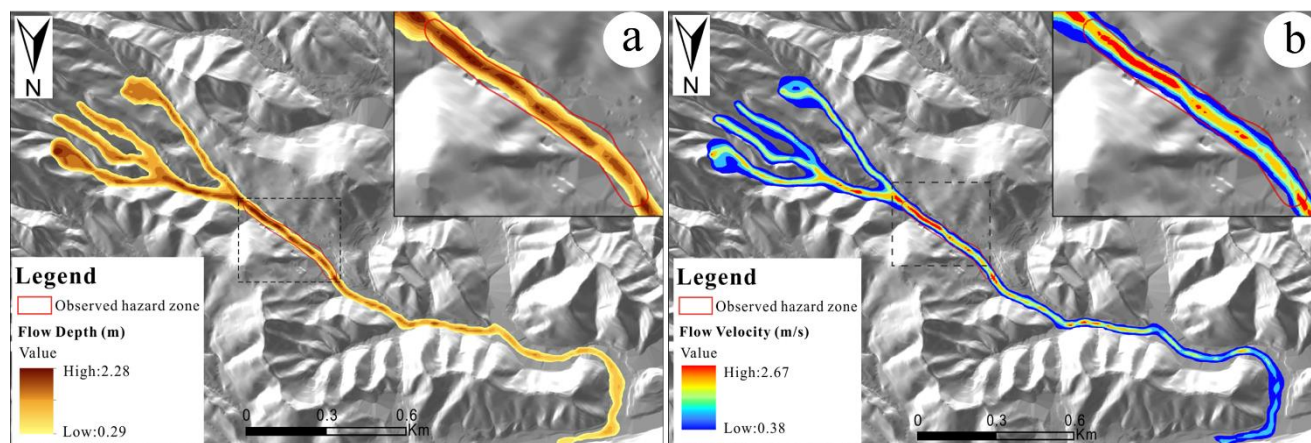
386 Table 5 The rheological parameters for WZW debris flow simulation

Parameters	Value	
Manning's roughness coefficient (n)	0.2	
Flow resistance parameter (K)	4782	
Sediment concentration (Cv)	0.48	
Empirical coefficients	$\alpha_1$	0.0765
	$\beta_1$	16.9
	$\alpha_2$	0.0648
	$\beta_2$	6.2



387 The optimized simulation results obtained by FLO-2D software including the flow velocity and the  
388 flow depth are shown in Figure 11. The study simulated an area affected by the debris flow of  
389 approximately  $1.86 \times 10^5 \text{ m}^2$ . Most of the affected area had a flow depth of less than 2 m, with 53.96% of  
390 the inundation area having a flow depth less than 1 m, 46% having a flow depth between 1 and 2 m, and  
391 only 0.04% having a flow depth greater than 2 m. The area with relatively high flow depth was  
392 concentrated at the mouth of a gully in the entrance of a village.

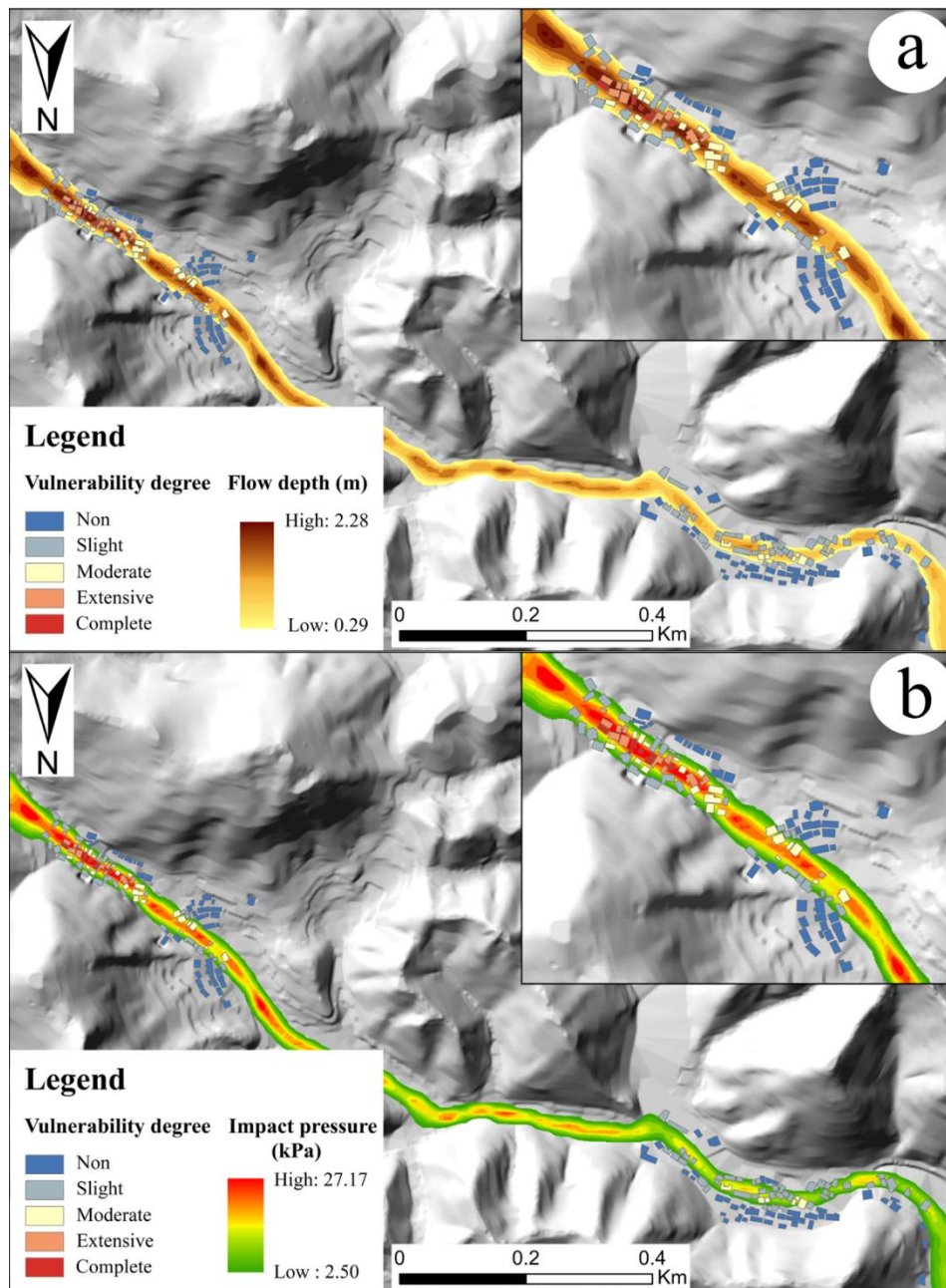
393 The flow velocity in the inundation area is mainly below 2m/s, with 48.9% and 49.5% of the area  
394 having flow velocity less than 1m/s and 1-2m/s respectively. The upstream and middle stream have higher  
395 flow velocity than the downstream part, with an average flow velocity of 1.85m/s. The highest flow  
396 velocity of 2.67m/s occurs at the intersections of branches and the lowest at the entrance of the Hou Creek.  
397 Combined with related research(Zhang et al. 2015b; Zou et al. 2016b), the characteristics of flow velocity  
398 are associated with the terrain of the gully, with narrow and relatively steep channels in the intersections  
399 of the valley and the middle of the village, and wider and gentler channels in the downstream. The middle  
400 of the channel also has larger velocities than the edges at the same location of the valley, particularly  
401 pronounced in the gully channel at the middle of the village.



403 Figure 11 Reconstruction results of the WZW debris flow using FLO-2D model: (a) flow depth map, and (b) flow  
404 velocity map

### 405 4.3 Construction of vulnerability curves

406 The damage degree of buildings and the reconstruction results make it possible to assess the  
407 vulnerability of buildings using the vulnerability curve that relates the intensity of debris flow (flow depth  
408 and impact pressure) coupled with the damage degree of buildings (Tab.3). In this work, the impact  
409 pressure distribution of the 2019 WZW debris flow was calculated based the flow depth and flow velocity  
410 using Eq.12. Figure 12 exhibits the intensity results and the buildings damage degree distribution of the  
411 2019 WZW debris flow. The buildings in extensive and complete damage degree mainly distributed in  
412 upstream of the village and concentrated in middle of the debris flow area, where the flow depth and  
413 impact pressure are higher.

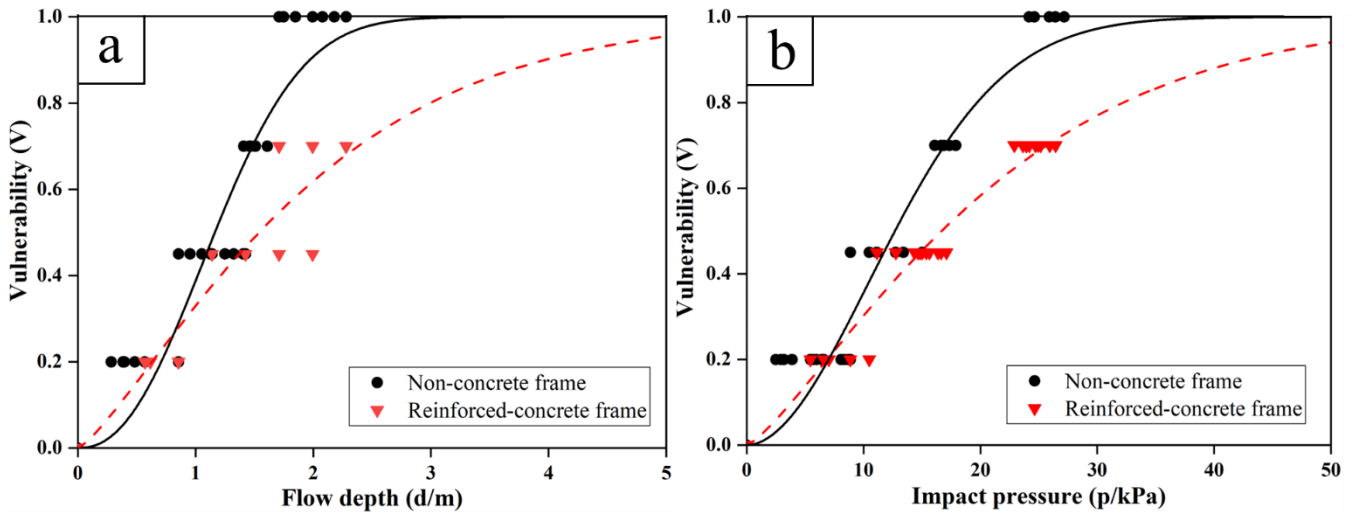


414  
415 Figure 12 Intensity of the 2019 debris flow based on FLO-2D model and buildings distribution in different damage  
416 degrees: (a) flow depth distribution; (b) impact pressure distribution

417 The average vulnerability indexes of buildings in different damage degrees were used to develop the  
418 vulnerability curves. Figure 13 exhibits two empirical vulnerability curves which were functions of debris  
419 flow depth, debris flow impact pressure, respectively. Due to different resistance of non-RC frame and  
420 RC frame buildings to the debris flow, the structure of buildings were distinguished in the empirical  
421 vulnerability curves. The non-RC frame buildings exhibited a steeper increase in vulnerability curves  
422 with increasing flow depth and impact pressure than RC frame buildings. The intensity of debris flow  
423 required to cause extensive damage to an RC frame building can result in the complete destruction of  
424 Non-RC frame buildings. The difference in the vulnerability index between non-RC frame and RC frame  
425 buildings increases with the increasing of the intensity of debris flow. To achieve a vulnerability index of

426 1, a flow depth of 2.85 m and impact pressure of 37.3 kPa are required for non-RC frame buildings. In  
 427 contract, for RC frame buildings, a flow depth of 5.32 m and impact pressure of 54.6 kPa are required.

428 An analytic expression was employed to establish the relationship between vulnerability and debris  
 429 flow intensity. The selected function for the analysis was a sigmoid function with an “S” shape, which  
 430 exhibits an asymptote from a value near zero to a finite value. Table 6 lists the vulnerability functions for  
 431 the non-RC frame and RC frame buildings using the flow depth and impact pressure as the intensity  
 432 indicators. The vulnerability functions make it possible to assessment the vulnerability index of buildings  
 433 using debris flow intensity under different recurrence periods.



434 Figure 13 Debris flow vulnerability curves: (a) as a function of flow depth; (b) as a function of impact pressure  
 435

436 Table 6 Vulnerability functions for different type of building structures

Intensity parameter	Vulnerability function	
	Non-RC frame	RC frame
Flow depth [d (m)]	$V = 1 - e^{(-0.49 \times d^{2.28})}$	$V = 1 - e^{(-0.40 \times d^{1.27})}$
Impact pressure [p (kPa)]	$V = 1 - e^{(-0.44 \times (0.1 \times p)^{1.91})}$	$V = 1 - e^{(-0.36 \times (0.1 \times p)^{1.28})}$

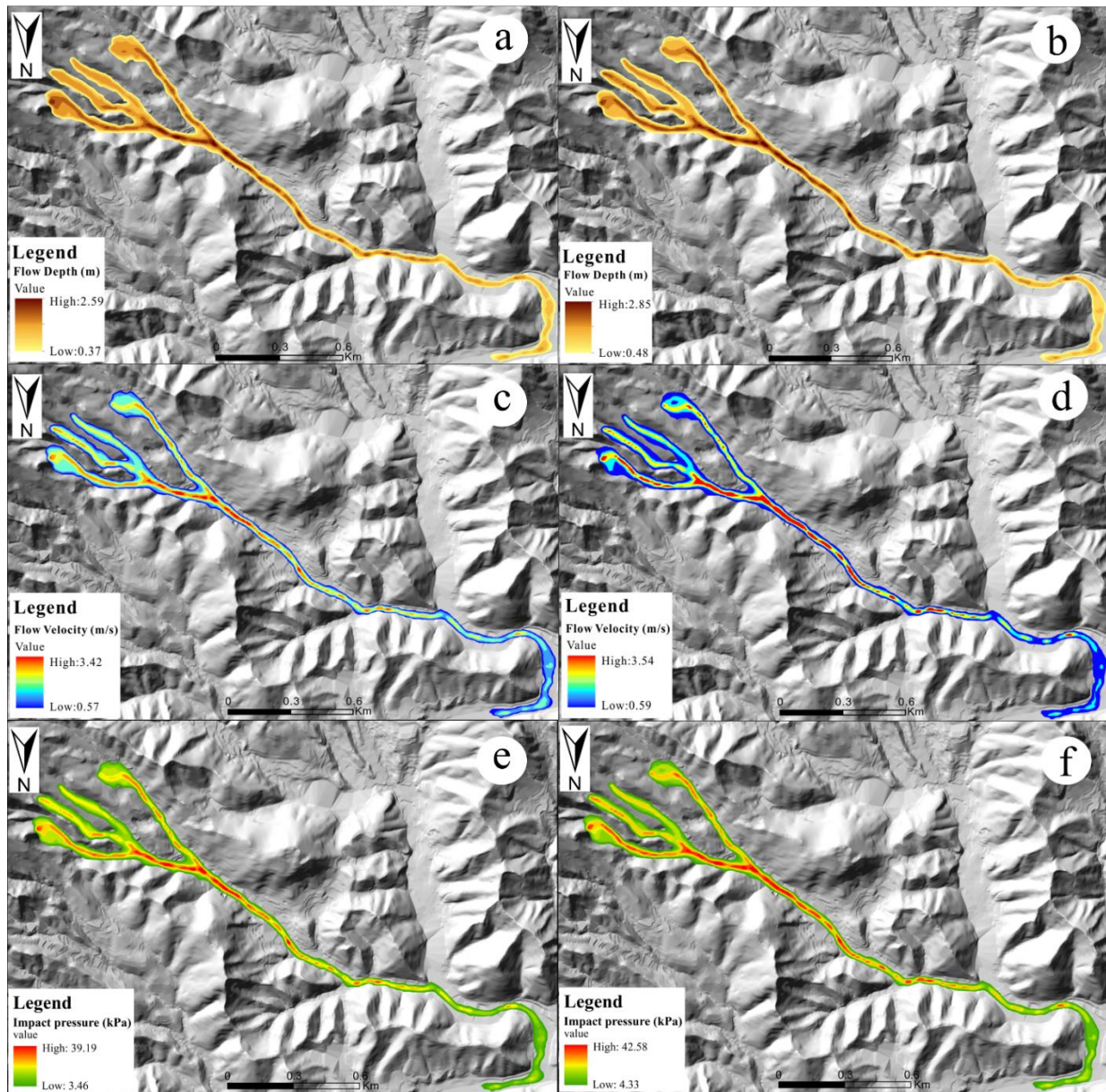
437  
 438 **4.4 Intensity prediction of debris flows for different recurrence periods**

439 Using the optimized rheological parameters from Section 4.1 and the flow hydrographs shown in  
 440 Figure 5b, the FLO-2D software was also used to predict the movement and deposition of debris flow for  
 441 the 50 and 100-year recurrence periods. Figure 14 displays the predicted flow depth, velocity and impact  
 442 pressure maps of debris flows during 50 and 100-year recurrence periods. The results reveal that the  
 443 highest flow velocity, flow depth and impact pressure are located around the intersections of branches  
 444 and decrease as they move downstream. Additionally, the higher flow velocity, flow depth and impact  
 445 pressure are concentrated in the middle of the channel. It's worth noting that high flow velocity tends to  
 446 correspond to the maximum flow depth and flow velocity which may happened at different moments in  
 447 the whole simulation process.

448 Simulation results for debris flow under different recurrence periods reveal variations in inundation



449 area, flow depth, and flow velocity. As the recurrence period increases from 20 to 100 years, the  
450 inundation area increases. Specifically, under a 50-year recurrence period, the inundation area is  $1.92 \times$   
451  $10^5 \text{ m}^2$ , representing a 3.2% increase from the 20-year recurrence period. Under a 100-year recurrence  
452 period, the inundation area is  $1.95 \times 10^5 \text{ m}^2$ , representing a 4.8% improvement from the 20-year recurrence  
453 period. The increased inundation areas are concentrated in the WZW village, indicating that more  
454 residents will be affected by debris flow under either 50 or 100-year recurrence periods. In the meantime,  
455 we can notice that the improvement of inundation area is limited with increasing of recurrence period, as  
456 the debris flow is also discharging into the river along with the development. Additionally, the flow depth  
457 also increases as recurrence period increases, with the maximum flow depth under a 100-year recurrence  
458 period being 25% higher than that under a 20-year recurrence period. Similarly, the maximum flow  
459 velocity under 100-year recurrence period is 32.6% higher than that under 20-year recurrence period.  
460 Combining the analysis results above, smaller occurrence probability of the debris flows usually means  
461 larger-scale inundation area with greater threat. Smaller-scale debris flows occur frequently but with  
462 smaller threat.



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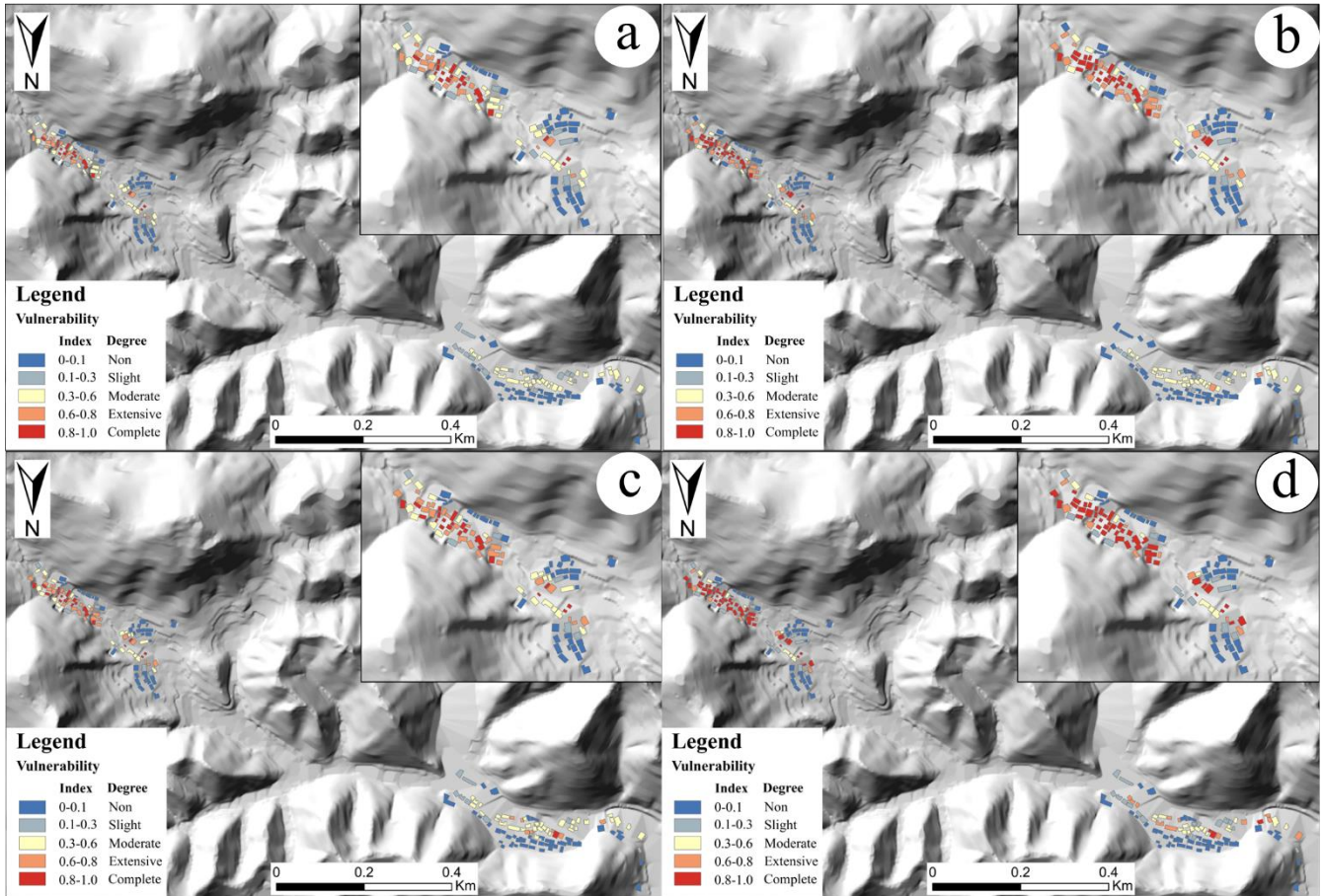
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Figure 14 Predicted results of the WZW debris flow under different recurrence periods: (a) (b) flow depth maps for 50 and 100-year recurrence periods; (c) (d) flow velocity maps for 50 and 100-year recurrence periods; (e) (f) impact pressure maps for 50 and 100-year recurrence periods

#### 4.5 Vulnerability assessment of the buildings

The vulnerability index of buildings under 50 and 100-year recurrence periods can be determined using the intensity indicators of debris flows (Fig.14) and vulnerability functions (Tab.6). Figure 15 shows the vulnerability maps for the 50 and 100-year recurrence periods. Under the 50-year recurrence period, 128 buildings are likely to be impacted. According to the vulnerability degree map using the flow depth as the intensity indicator (Fig.15a), 19 buildings would face the complete damage and 18 buildings would face extensive damage. While according to the vulnerability degree map using the impact pressure as the intensity indicator (Fig.15b), 30 buildings would suffer complete damage and 23 buildings would suffer extensive damage. The result above indicates that the vulnerability function using the impact pressure as

476 the intensity indicator is more conservative than that using flow depth as the intensity indicator. The result  
 477 exhibits the same pattern for the case of 100-year recurrence period. The vulnerability degree map using  
 478 flow depth as the intensity indicator shows 23 buildings would face complete damage and 34 buildings  
 479 would face extensive damage (Fig.15c). While 47 building would suffer complete damage and 22  
 480 buildings would suffer extensive damage according to the vulnerability degree map using impact pressure  
 481 as the intensity indicator (Fig.15d).



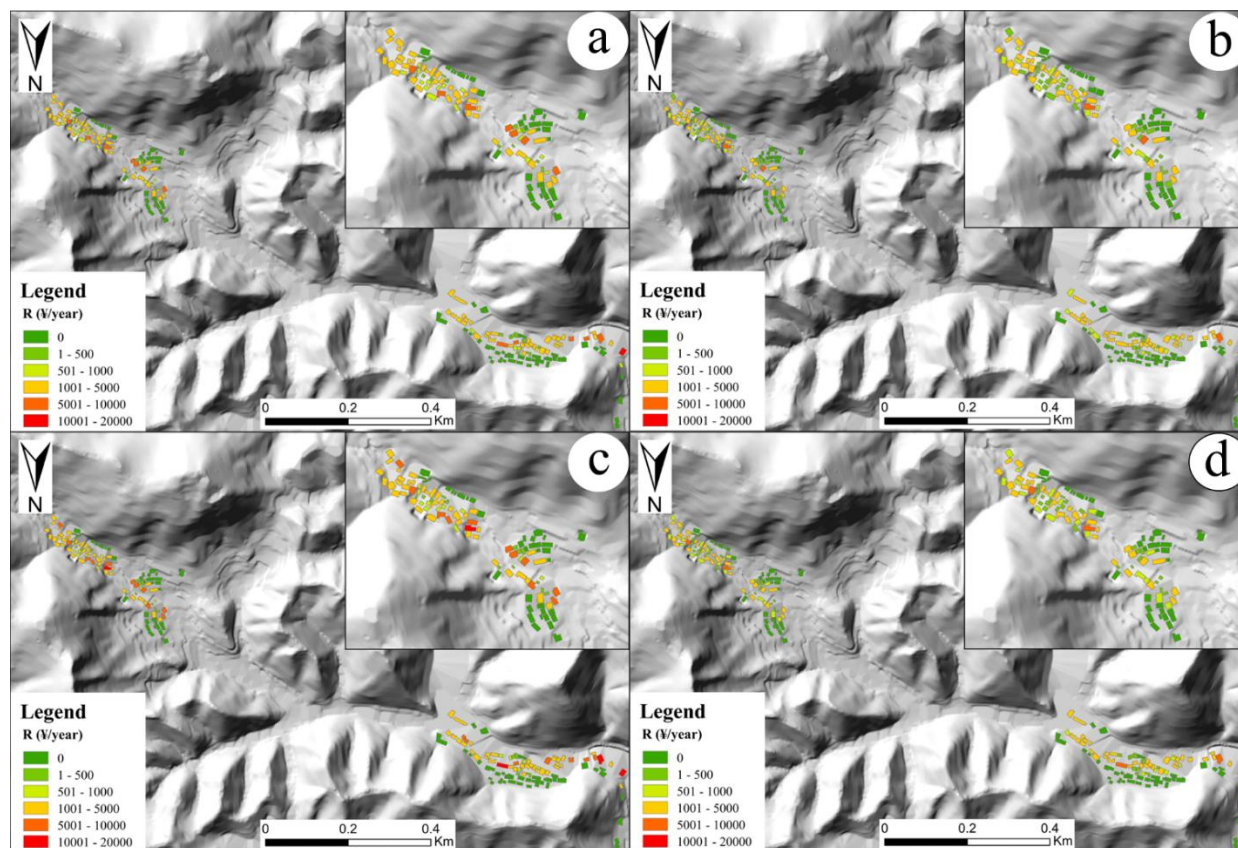
482 Figure 15 Building vulnerability maps under 50, 100-year recurrence periods: (a), (b) vulnerability for a 50-year  
 483 recurrence period using the flow depth and impact pressure as the intensity indicator; (c), (d) vulnerability for a 100-  
 484 year recurrence period using the flow depth and impact pressure as the intensity indicator  
 485

#### 486 4.6 Quantitative risk assessment

487 The quantitative vulnerability result makes it possible to quantify the risk, particularly the direct  
 488 economic loss to the buildings under different recurrence periods. According to Eq.11, the probability of  
 489 a debris flow occurring ( $P_{(L)}$ ) was assigned 0.02 and 0.01 for the 50 and 100-year recurrence period,  
 490 respectively. Both the probability of a debris flow reaching a specific point ( $P_{(T:L)}$ ) and the temporal-  
 491 spatial probability of the elements ( $P_{(S:T)}$ ) were set as 1. The vulnerability value of a specific building ( $V$ )  
 492 was assigned based on the vulnerability index calculated in Section 4.5. The economic value of buildings  
 493 ( $E$ ) was calculated by multiplying the unit price by the total area of the building. According to the  
 494 compensation standards for buildings with different structures for immigrants in Southeast China (Wei et  
 495 al. 2021), the unit prices per square meter for buildings with RC frame structure and non-RC frame



496 structure used in this study are ¥1720 and 1000/m<sup>2</sup>, respectively. Figure 16 exhibits the annual debris flow  
 497 risk maps under 50 and 100-year recurrence periods using two kinds of vulnerability functions. It's  
 498 obvious that the annual risk of buildings is considerably affected by the difference of vulnerability  
 499 functions. Risk reaches almost ¥ 10066/year for a single building in case of the flow depth vulnerability  
 500 calculation and 12420/year for a single building in case of the impact pressure use.



501  
 502 Figure 16 Debris flow annual risk map under a 50 and 100-year recurrence period: (a), (b) risk map for a 50-year  
 503 recurrence period using the flow depth and impact pressure as the intensity indicator; (c), (d) risk map for a 100-year  
 504 recurrence period using the flow depth and impact pressure as the intensity indicator

505 The annual economic risk and expected loss to all buildings in WZW village were calculated based  
 506 on the annual risk map (Tab.7). Considering two kinds of vulnerability functions and the 50, 100-year  
 507 recurrence period, the village would face a direct economic loss of ¥ 1.83-3.85 × 10<sup>5</sup>/year. The expected  
 508 loss would reach ¥ 1.56-1.93 × 10<sup>7</sup> when the debris flow occur under the condition of 50-year recurrence  
 509 period, and the expected loss would reach ¥1.83-2.03 × 10<sup>7</sup> when the debris flows occur under the  
 510 condition of 50-year recurrence period, respectively. The annual economic risk and expected loss to be  
 511 faced could provide a sound foundation for local managers to implement risk management strategies and  
 512 minimize human and economic losses.

513 Table 7 Overall risk to the WZW village under 50 and 100 year recurrence period

Recurrence period-intensity indicator	P(L)	P(T:L)	P(S:T)	V	E (¥/m <sup>2</sup> )	R (¥105/year)	Expected loss (¥10 <sup>7</sup> )
50Y-d	0.02	1	1		1720	3.12	1.56

50Y-p	0.02	1	1	0-1	(RC frame)	3.85	1.93
100Y-d	0.01	1	1		1000	1.83	1.83
100Y-p	0.01	1	1		(non-RC frame)	2.03	2.03

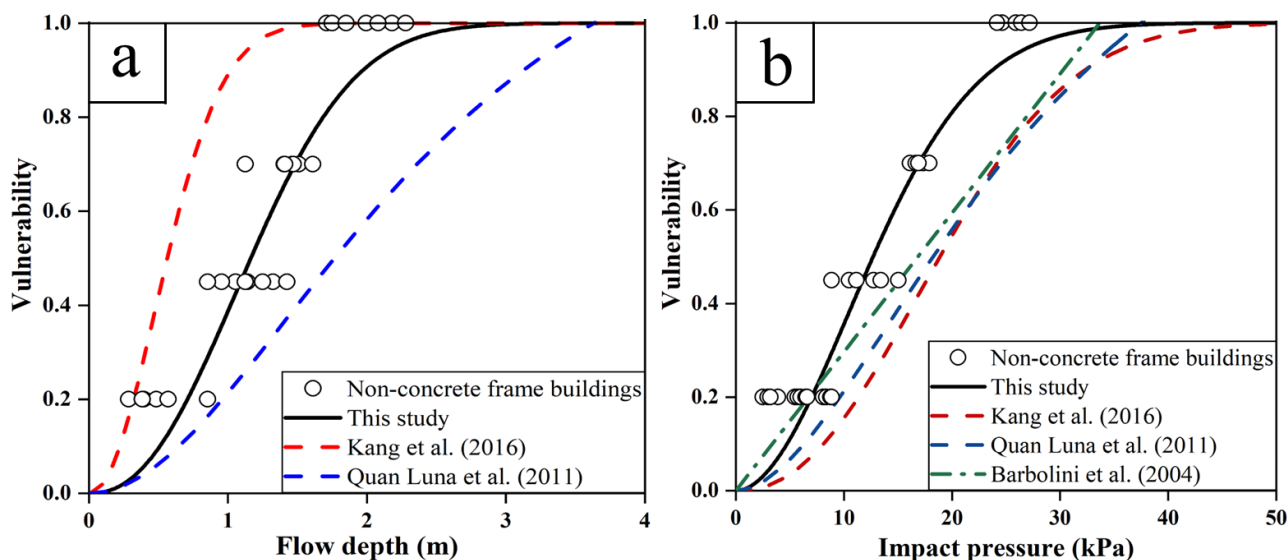
## 5. Discussion

In the simulation of debris flows, the factors that require attention may vary depending on the type of debris flow (Kim et al. 2018; Zhang et al. 2018). For debris flows on slopes, identifying the distribution and stability of landslides and collapses is crucial. While selecting the drainage point and determining the flow hydrograph are essential for channelized debris flows. The numerical simulation was used as an effective method of characterizing debris flows in this study, due to its precision and relatively low number of required parameters (Tang et al. 2011; Chen et al. 2012; Zou et al. 2016b). As sudden debris flows often lack continuous monitoring data, several methods have been developed to predict flow hydrographs (Chen et al. 2016; Chang et al. 2017; Wei et al. 2018). We chose a hydrological model, named SCS-CN model, for the watershed analysis. We used the SCS-CN model to perform a watershed analysis for generating the basin unit and the drainage point. On this basis, the flow hydrographs were determined based on the actual rainfall data and a digital elevation model (Fig.5b). The SCS-CN method has the advantage of incorporating real terrain data and being highly efficient, compared to the empirical formulae used in some previous studies (Zhang et al. 2015a; Wei et al. 2018).

The FLO-2D model was adopted in our study for the debris flow kinetic simulation. The initiation and features of debris flows can be characterized by this method, which enables the analysis of the risk in the study area. The accuracy of the modelled result depends on not only the quality of the input data, but also the rationality of rheological parameters (Ouyang et al. 2019; Chen et al. 2021). Firstly, the terrain data we adopted in this study was the digital elevation with high spatial resolution (2m) obtained from a photogrammetric survey using UAVs, which ensures the data is accurate and up-to-date. Secondly, we initially determined the range of rheological parameters by combining the debris flow features obtained from the field investigation and the recommended values in the FLO-2D manual. Then we used a series of validation procedures for the optimal selection of parameters. On one hand, we compared the reconstructed and observed influence areas to determine the overall accuracy of the simulated results, and performed trial-error selection and adjustments of the input rheological parameters. This approach has advantages in terms of accuracy and comprehensiveness comparing to other studies (Chen et al. 2021). Additionally, we placed monitoring points at the locations where mud marks were observed on buildings during field investigation and compared the predicted maximum depth and height of the mud marks. Through these two methods, the effectiveness of the hydrograph and runout models was verified. However, there are still some limitations in the validation process. The simulation result was validated from the aspect of inundation zone and flow depth, didn't consider the flow velocity, as the lack of validated data about the flow velocity during the debris flow.

The vulnerability curves established in this study provided the possibility to quantify the vulnerability

547 of buildings to the future debris flows in Typhoon-prone area. To justify the vulnerability curves, they  
 548 have been compared with the related results(Barbolini et al. 2004; Quan Luna et al. 2011; Kang and Kim  
 549 2016). Figure 17 showed the comparison result of vulnerability curves based on the flow depth and impact  
 550 pressure as the intensity indicators for the non-RC frame building. Barbolini et al. (2004) initially proposed  
 551 a linear vulnerability curve only using the impact pressure as the intensity indicator based on the avalanche  
 552 data in West Tyrol, Austria. Quan Luna et al. (2011) proposed two vulnerability curves based on the flow  
 553 depth and impact pressure as the intensity indicator through numerical simulation and loss reports of  
 554 Valtellina Valley, Northern Italy. The vulnerability curves built up by Kang et al. (2016) used the empirical  
 555 formula and the buildings damage information of 11 debris flows. These four kinds of vulnerability curves  
 556 show a good agreement in trend and range. For the flow depth vulnerability curves (Fig.17a), the  
 557 vulnerability curve of this study located below that established by Kang et al. (2016), and above that  
 558 established by Quan Luna et al. (2011). For the impact pressure vulnerability curves (Fig.17b), the  
 559 vulnerability curve of this study located above others. In addition, we could notice that the vulnerability  
 560 curves developed in this study more accurately represent the vulnerability index of buildings in this study  
 561 area, which may relate to the differences in construction codes in different regions. The comparative  
 562 results of the vulnerability curves in different study areas emphasized the uncertainty inherent in utilizing  
 563 vulnerability function for quantitative risk assessment. The vulnerability curves proposed in our study  
 564 have enriched the family of vulnerability curves for different type buildings, and have good applicability  
 565 to other regions with similar debris flow hazards and built environments. And the method proposed in  
 566 this study can be applied to quick construction of vulnerability curves for other building types in other  
 567 specific study area.

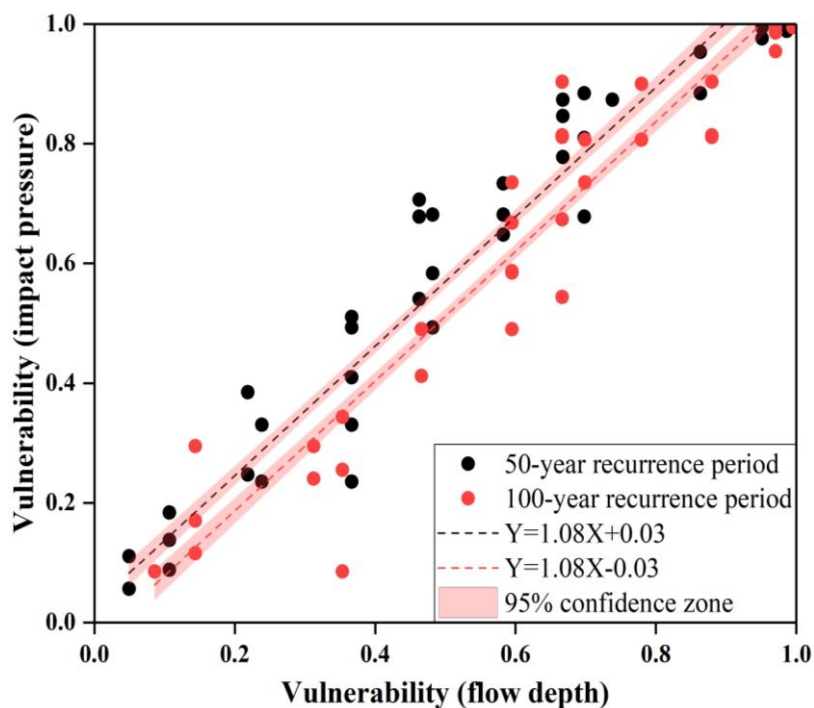


568  
 569 Figure 17 Comparison of the vulnerability curve calculated in this study and proposed by Kang et al. (2016), Quan  
 570 Luna et al. (2011) and Barbolini et al. (2004) this research

571 To further compare the estimated vulnerability index using two kinds of vulnerability functions under  
 572 the same recurrence period, figure 18 exhibits a scatter cloud of the vulnerability index of buildings to be



573 affected. The fitted curves are approximately two straight lines going from 0 to 1 and the slopes of the  
 574 curves are only 1.08, which demonstrated that two kinds of vulnerability results show a degree of  
 575 consistency. The vulnerability function using the impact pressure as the indicator leads to slightly greater  
 576 estimates than that using the flow depth as the indicator, and the percentage of extensive and extreme  
 577 vulnerability degree is higher (Fig.15). The comparative results of the vulnerability index emphasized the  
 578 uncertainty inherent in utilizing different intensity indicators for quantitative risk assessment. Comparing  
 579 to relevant studies using other indicators, such as the product of flow depth and flow velocity(Tang et al.  
 580 1993), the product of flow velocity squared and flow depth(Chen et al. 2021), the impact pressure has  
 581 clearer physical meaning which represents the damage ability of debris flow to buildings from the terms  
 582 of hydrostatic pressure and dynamic overpressure. And the impact pressure has also widely used in other  
 583 disaster risk assessment, for example the avalanches(Barbolini et al. 2004; Quan Luna et al. 2011).



584  
 585 Figure 18 Scatter cloud of the vulnerability estimates for 50 and 100-year recurrence period using two vulnerability  
 586 curves: the flow depth and impact pressure

587 This method adopted in this study abandoned the qualitative and semi-quantitative risk assessment,  
 588 which exist many uncertainties and subjectivity. However, there are some certain limitations in the  
 589 research process. First, during the modelling phase, we used a constant volume concentration ( $C_v$ ) to  
 590 represents the sediments entrainment capacity of the debris flow, without considering the change in  
 591 topography and sediments volume. Second, under the condition of lacking research into the debris flow  
 592 triggering mechanism, we used the recurrence period of rainfall to represent the recurrence period of  
 593 debris flow occurrence. Third, the constructed vulnerability curves only consider the buildings structures,  
 594 while other features also affect the resistance of buildings to debris flows such as buildings material, the  
 595 number of floors. Last, our analysis of risk only focused on the economic risk of buildings, but the

596 population and environmental risk are also important components of risk. These factors should be  
597 considered in future research to improve the comprehensiveness of risk assessment. These limitations  
598 highlight the need for further research in the future to improve the understanding and management of  
599 geohazard risks in urban areas.

## 600 **6. Conclusion**

601 This study attempted to quantitatively evaluate the risk of debris flows through building up the local  
602 vulnerability curves, which is crucial in helping local managers to manage the debris flow risk. The 2019  
603 WZW debris flow was determined as a channelized flow caused by heavy rainfall and surface water runoff  
604 through a comprehensive survey method consisting of field investigations, remote sensing, and laboratory  
605 analysis. Shallow landslides and soil erosion resulted in a significant buildup of loose gravel and soil in  
606 the gully, providing the necessary material conditions. Additionally, the large vertical ratio of the channel  
607 and the confluence effect of the catchment area provided the necessary hydraulic and driving conditions  
608 for the formation of the debris flow. The typhoon-induced rainstorm with a daily intensity of 252.2 mm  
609 which had a recurrence period of 20 years, has surpassed the critical threshold of the debris flow  
610 occurrence.

611 The study presents a method to quantify the risk of debris flows in urban areas using a case study on  
612 the WZW gully. The features of the 2019 WZW debris flow were reconstructed using the SCS-CN model  
613 and FLO-2D model. Multiple validation process showed that the reconstruction results (inundation zone  
614 and flow depth) were consistent with the observed information. The accuracy evaluation parameter,  $\partial$ ,  
615 reached 0.902, indicating the modelled results matches well with the actual situation.

616 We constructed different physical vulnerability curves for the RC frame building and non-RC frame  
617 building, based on the damage degree of buildings obtained from field investigation and the modelled  
618 debris flow intensity (flow depth and impact pressure). The debris flow intensity threshold of complete  
619 damage for the non-RC frame building corresponds to flow depth of 2.85m and impact pressure of  
620 37.3kPa; The debris flow intensity threshold of complete damage for the RC frame building corresponds  
621 to flow depth of 5.32 m and impact pressure of 54.6 kPa. The uncertainty of quantitative risk assessment  
622 was considered in the building structure. The RC frame building has stronger resistance comparing to RC  
623 frame building. The vulnerability curve proposed in the study provided crucial basis to assess probability  
624 damage distribution of building in similar built environments for different debris flow intensity. The  
625 method proposed can be applied to quick construction of vulnerability curves for other building types in  
626 other specific study areas.

627 The potential intensities of future debris flow under 50 and 100-year recurrence periods were  
628 predicted based on the validated rheological parameters, considering different frequency of the triggering  
629 rainfall. Under a 50-year recurrence period, the maximum flow depth and flow velocity will reach 2.59  
630 m and 3.42 m/s, and the maximum impact pressure will reach 39.19 kPa; Under the 100-year recurrence

631 period, the maximum flow depth and flow velocity will reach 2.85m and 3.54 m/s, and the maximum  
632 impact pressure will reach 42.58 kPa. With the increasing of the recurrence period, the buildings in this  
633 study area will face the threat of debris flows with greater intensity.

634 The vulnerability index of every building under 50 and 100-year recurrence periods was calculated  
635 using the constructed vulnerability function based on the flow depth and impact pressure as the indicators.  
636 The vulnerability map based on the flow depth vulnerability function showed that there will be 18 and 30  
637 buildings facing complete damage under 50 and 100-year recurrence periods respectively; The  
638 vulnerability map based on the impact pressure vulnerability function showed that there will be 23 and  
639 40 buildings facing complete damage under 50 and 100-year recurrence periods respectively. The  
640 uncertainty of quantitative risk assessment was considered in the intensity indicator. The impact pressure  
641 vulnerability function is more conservative than the flow depth vulnerability function.

642 The annual risk of every building to be faced in the future was calculated based on the economic  
643 value and vulnerability index of buildings with different structures, consider 50 and 100-year recurrence  
644 periods. The annual economic risk and expected loss provided the practical value for local managers to  
645 make risk management strategies and land use planning.

## 646 **Author Contributions**

647 “Conceptualization, T.W. and Y.L.; methodology, T.W., K.Y; software, T.W.; investigation, T.W., Y.L.;  
648 data curation, C.X., L.C., and H.Z.; writing—original draft preparation, T.W.; writing—review and  
649 editing, K.Y., Y.L. and C.W.; visualization, T.W.; supervision, K.Y., C.W.; funding acquisition, L.C., K.Y.  
650 All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## 651 **Declaration of Competing Interest**

652 The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this article.

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