



Gender, Age, Social differences and Climate Change

Alessandra Petrucci and Silvana Salvini
University of Florence, Italy (alessandra.petrucci@unifi.it)

Climate and society evolve together in a manner that could place already vulnerable areas and their population at a greater risk to extreme weather events. While efforts have been devoted to better planning preparedness and responses to weather extremes, the interactions among various stakeholders who deal with hazard mitigation and response, and the community members, also related with gender and age differences, are not completely understood. In contrast to physical vulnerability, which arises from the potential for environmental extremes to create adverse physiological changes, social vulnerability arises from the potential for these extreme events to cause changes in people's behavior. People can vary in their potential for injury to themselves and their families. They also vary in the potential for destruction of their homes and workplaces, as well as the destruction of the transportation systems and locations for shopping and recreation they use in their daily activities. It is important to recognize that social vulnerability is not randomly distributed either demographically or geographically. In particular, the social vulnerability arising from a lack of psychological resilience, social network integration, economic assets, and political power vary across demographic groups. Some of these components of social vulnerability can be predicted by demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, income, and ethnicity. This review explores the gender and social difference dimensions of vulnerability and adaptive capacity in relation to climate change.