



The International Environment and Social Development Initiative at the

# CENTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

in the BROWN SCHOOL at Washington University in St. Louis

## WHAT?

The Environment and Social Development initiative at the Center for Social Development examines *social vulnerability* to environmental change, and strategies for social action and adaptation.

## WHY?

Global environmental changes, like pollution, climate change, biodiversity loss, and freshwater decline, affect people worldwide, with impacts that are not just physical, but also social and economic.

These changes affect family and community stability, social relationships, health and sometimes even *survival*.

And the consequences of environmental change are usually worse for some groups than others.

People with less social, economic and political advantage are more likely to experience negative effects from pollution, resource shortages, severe weather events and other environmental problems.

## IMPACT

Social action is the mobilization of people in organized, collective efforts to question the status quo and advocate for policy change. We emphasize:

- \* Social action that leads to reductions in negative environmental problems.
- \* Adaptation through formal programs and policies designed to reduce vulnerability to environmental change.

The Environment and Social Development initiative aims to contribute to a more environmentally sustainable world, in which all people have fair and optimal opportunities to live full, healthy and productive lives.



"CREATE SOCIAL RESPONSES TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT" IS ONE OF THE 12 GRAND CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL WORK.

ADAPTATION INCREASES THE CAPACITY TO COPE WITH CHANGES THAT ARE ALREADY IN MOTION OR EXPECTED IN THE FUTURE.

MORE THAN 130 PEOPLE ATTENDED OUR INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON PEOPLE AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN 2016 AT THE BROWN SCHOOL.



*“People and Climate Change: Vulnerability, Adaptation, and Social Justice”*, a forthcoming book to be released in 2019, closely examines climate-related injustice and inequity, people’s lived experience, why some groups are more vulnerable than others, and what can be done about it, especially through greater community inclusion in policy change.

THIS INITIATIVE ADDRESSES THE “CREATE SOCIAL RESPONSES TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT” GRAND CHALLENGE FOR SOCIAL WORK.

