

The Socioeconomic Aspects of Earthquakes

Researching socioeconomic impacts of earthquakes and other natural hazards is a field which can be approached in a similar way to socioeconomic impacts of changes in infrastructure and other major human interventions impacting societies. However, the great uncertainty associated with the natural hazards is the great difference in this comparison; will earthquakes take place or not... and what will the scope of the impact be? In the case of measuring or evaluating the impacts of human activities, less uncertainty is certainly anticipated than in the case of natural hazards. Planning ahead during the period prior (or at least potentially prior) to some cataclysm to happen is very important. That is, planning for the unexpected, minimizing risks and increasing awareness among the citizens. How well society is prepared to events like this can partly be studied with the methods of social sciences such as surveys and interviews. Multidisciplinary approach is important in order to make action plans for societies to be better equipped to face the hazards e.g. with input from geologists, geophysicists, civil engineers, social scientists and planners. In the presentation, methodology to deal with research of this type will be discussed, to how a large degree we can draw on research on other types of natural hazards and possible problems and uncertainty anticipated with research of this type.