

Older adults and disasters: Overcoming stereotypes and strengthening inclusion



Photo credit: HelpAge International

May 11, 2023

CENTER FOR DISASTER PHILANTHROPY

CDP



HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Submit questions:

Use the Q & A box at the bottom of your screen.

Use #CDP4Recovery to tweet along.

Follow CDP: @funds4disaster

Complete the survey.

The link will open as you exit the webinar.

Look for the fully captioned webinar recording and summary at disasterphilanthropy.org.

Live captioning is available now via Zoom. Click on Closed Caption/Live Transcript to access it.

Photo credit: [Centre for Ageing Better, Unsplash](#)

Thank you to our co-sponsors



Land Acknowledgment

“Acknowledgment is a simple, powerful way of showing respect and a step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous people’s history and culture and toward inviting and honoring the truth.”

<https://usdac.us/nativeland>

CDP’s Land Acknowledgment is inspired by Dawn Knickerbocker, Native Americans in Philanthropy.

GOALS

At the end of the webinar, grantmakers and funders will:

- Understand the diverse experiences of older adults and how to combat stereotypes.
- Learn about considerations for supporting recovery for older adults in disasters and humanitarian crises.
- Know how to ensure financial support improves access and strengthens inclusion for older adults before, during, and after disasters and humanitarian crises.



Photo credit: HelpAge International

Speakers

Thank you to our guests for joining us today.

#CDP4Recovery



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Africa Regional
Representative and Global
Initiatives Lead

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Jeffrey Lambert

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Foundation

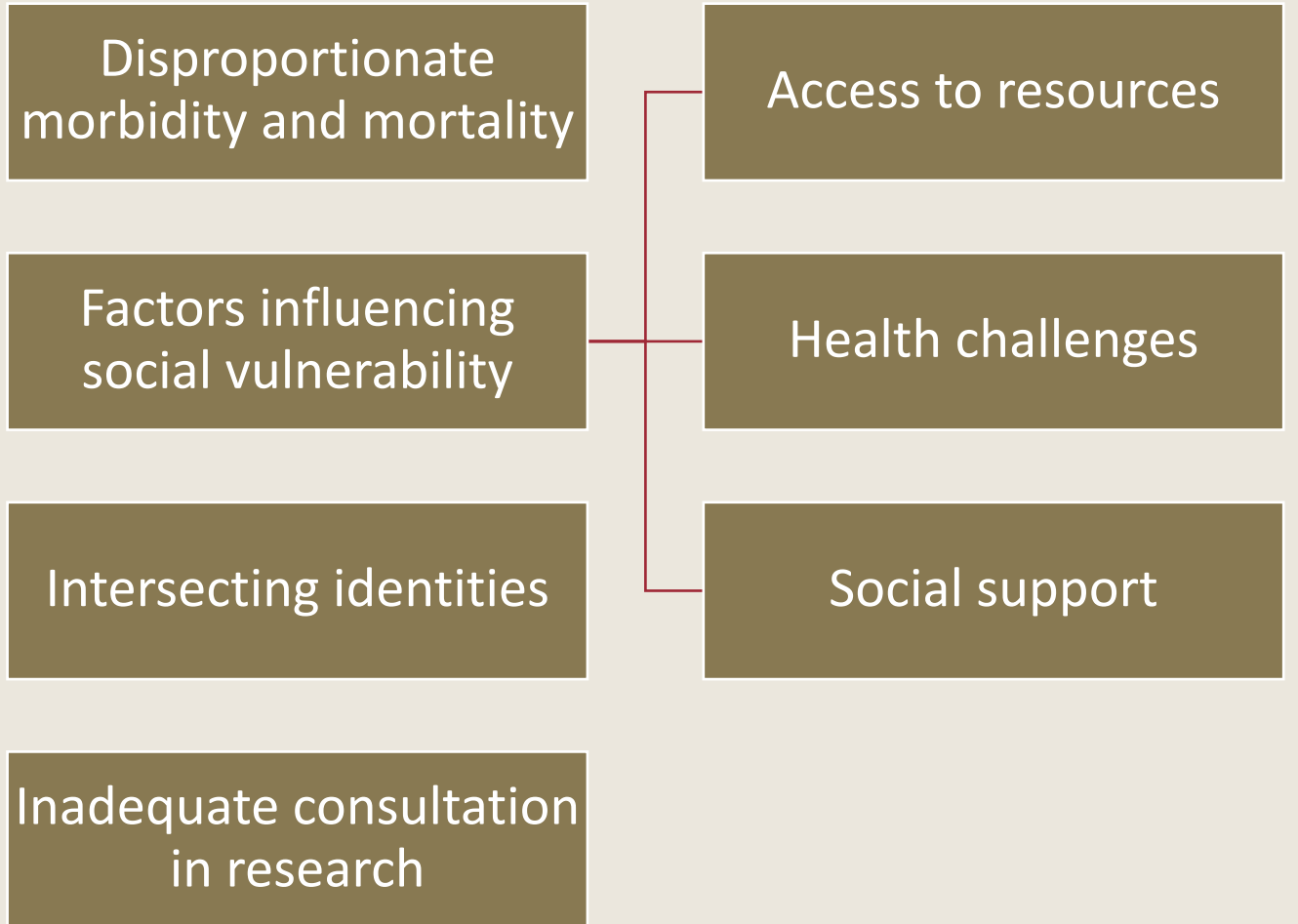


Nnenia Campbell, Ph.D.

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Older Adults and Disasters: Research Summary



Aging Adults During Disasters

Older Adults During a Disaster – Lessons Learned Thomas Fire - 2017

“Disaster planning needs to engage all perspectives and the entire community, with particular attention to those segments that have been historically missed (i.e., vulnerable populations such as **elderly**, those with **physical disabilities**, farmworkers) and geographic groups (i.e., neighborhood level disaster planning).”

“Many who are aging in their homes **do not access information through internet or cell phones** and are not being reached by VC Alert or social media content.”



Impact of drought and crisis on older people:

Some statistics from last year indicate that:-

- 73% of older people in three countries in the Horn of Africa **do not have access** to enough food (92% in Ethiopia).
- 56% of the population is eating only **one** meal per day with some not even getting that.
- In Borena, Ethiopia, 750,000 cows have died, 10,000 families have lost entire herds.
- In Kenya, an estimated 1.4 million animals have died from the ongoing drought
- By May 2022, 80 people had died ,3,500 families displaced in Kapoeta East and North County and 11,500 cows lost to cattle rustling, 2,500 died because of drought.



Impact of drought and crisis on older people

In crisis including in the Horn of Africa, older people:-

- Are primary care providers of children (85% of the refugee population), are often separated from families in internal displacement or refugee situations.
- **Eat less /forgo meals** so younger relatives can eat.
- Are **excluded** from **emergency nutrition interventions**, even in Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phases 4: Emergency and 5: Famine.
- **Do not receive** emergency food aid **tailored to their need** for a diet with higher proportion of **protein**.
- Are subjected to non inclusive, **'blanket' / 'one size fits all' approach preferred by UN agencies & NGOs.**
- Are impacted by **widespread closures/disruption of health facilities**, particularly in rural areas, **reducing access** to essential medications.

Older Adults' Contributions to Community Resilience

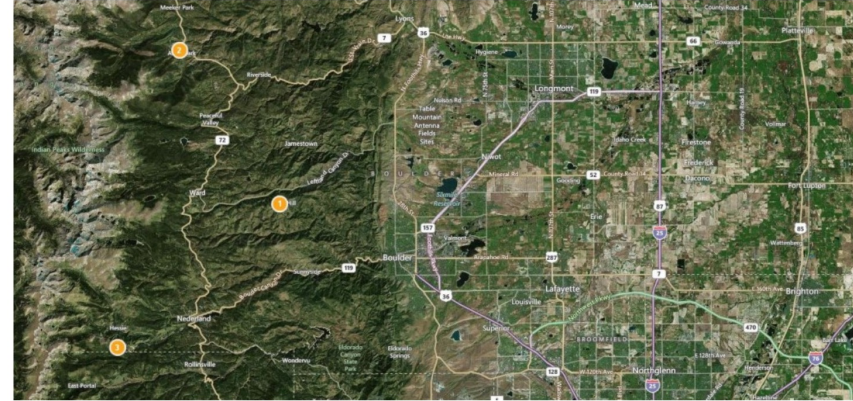
- Vulnerability and resilience are not mutually exclusive
- Retirees as an untapped resource
- Examples from research



Mountain Emergency Radio Network (MERN)

Add comments

Mountain Emergency Radio Network (MERN) was created in conjunction with Boulder County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (BCARES), Inter-Mountain Alliance (IMA), and Boulder County Office of Emergency Management. The mission: To facilitate community emergency preparedness and insure uninterrupted communication between and within six mountain communities in Western Boulder County, county emergency services, and their resources prior to and during an emergency event via a Amateur 'Ham' radio network.



Following the Four Mile Canyon Fire, BCARES conducted a review intended to assess overall response, identify weaknesses, and generally determine what could be done in anticipation of future catastrophic events affecting our served mountain communities. It was no surprise one issue was the lack of viable communications. Mountain communities are subject to frequent power outages which interrupt electricity-based modes of communication. During forest fires and other emergency situations, telephone, internet and electricity are often nonexistent.



HelpAge's experience in successful recovery and increasing resilience for older adults

- Data is fundamental using the **Sex, Age, Disability Disaggregated Data (SADDD)** approach in needs assessments to ensure inclusion of older people in problem analysis and promoting solutions with greater dignity, well being and voice of older people.
- Developing **tools and guidelines** such [Humanitarian Inclusion Standards](#) to ensure no one is left behind at every state of the emergency project cycle and across all areas of intervention (food, WASH, livelihoods, shelter, NFIs).
- Secondment of **Humanitarian Age Inclusion Specialists** into the Global Protection Cluster, and into the **Protection Cluster** at country level, to co-lead **Age and Disability Working Groups**.
- **Sector specific age inclusive interventions** including home based clear-outreach approach, cash transfer value for OP, dignity kits, assistive products, treatment for on communicable diseases.

Ageist attitudes we need to challenge in crisis



- Failure to recognize the **diverse** experiences of older people particularly those who are **marginalized** or at-risk.
- **Misconception** that **all** older people are cared for by their families
- Failure to acknowledge and recognize the **abuse** of older people within family settings
- **Further misconception** that all older people are a **homogenous** group with little or nothing to contribute in humanitarian settings.

Resilience

Disaster Resiliency – Preparing for the Next Disaster

"Community Resilience and Capacity Building focusing on addressing critical disaster needs"

- Foster disaster resilience
- Empower existing organizations and service providers
- Focus on Immediate Unmet Needs
- Address vulnerabilities using an All Hazards, Whole of Community approach
- Facilitate successful long term community recovery by reducing vulnerabilities, supporting sustainable initiatives, and building capacity to sustain long term recovery efforts
- Foster capacity building to support Immediate and long-term disaster related needs





Considerations for Funders

Open the tap

“Nothing about us without us”

Connections to emergency management

Organizational disaster support capacity

How can funders support older adults in disasters and humanitarian crises?

- After climate change, a **rapidly aging global population** is today the **most significant macro issue** globally, yet the **biggest blind spot** for governments and the international community.
- **Ukraine**, where **one-third** of the population in need are aged over 60, is a **foretaste of things to come** given as humanitarian crises increase.
- Support HelpAge for the adoption of **SADDD** as standard practice in the UN and NGO sector.
- Fund the expansion of **Age and Disability Working Groups** – it is our goal to have a **full-time Humanitarian Age Inclusion Specialist seconded** in every country with an active cluster.
- Fund **research** for more **evidence** on exclusion of older people in the humanitarian system.
- Fund **age-inclusive** humanitarian programmes
- Support projects which focus on promoting **participatory** approaches, **intersectional** and **intergenerational** action.

Recovery

Disaster Recovery is Long Term

Thomas Fire Experience:

- 542 homes were destroyed
- 408 have submitted plans to rebuild
- 370 permits have been issued
- 299 permits have been finalized and received occupancy

VCCF Long Term Recovery:

Marcy's story





NEXT STEPS AND ACTIONS

Work to end ageism.

Practice inclusion.

Invest in older adults.

Expert Resources



Disaster Philanthropy Playbook



Website

- Blogs, Issue Insights, Disaster Profiles, Weekly Disaster Updates



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OUR UPCOMING WEBINARS

Survivor and community-led response: Putting people first in a crisis

June 8th at 2 p.m. ET

disasterphilanthropy.org/events

Photo credit: Hayata Destek Derneği/Support to Life

Thank You

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