**Vulnerability and safety nets**

This session explores participatory analysis of vulnerability to climate impacts at the local level. It draws on research conducted in the Sierra Madre Oriental, Mexico, in 2012. The research used a participatory vulnerability analysis toolkit, grounded in a political ecology approach to vulnerability. As such it sought to disaggregate the communities we worked with into the more heterogeneous  sets of  actors of which they were comprised (i.e. along gender, class, age etc lines), and to try to understand which climate impacts people were vulnerable (or resilient) to, and how vulnerability differed between different groups within the community.

The session will seek to do three things:

1. Present the conceptual approach we took to vulnerability and how this informed the toolkit
2. Put people ‘in the middle’ of the analysis by road-testing one of the methods with participants
3. See if there are ways to draw on the collective experience of participants to point to ways to improve the toolkit

In this way, we hope to contribute to the social learning agenda by discussing, amongst a group of people with strong experience in working on vulnerability, a set of methods which explicitly attempts to:

* Involving heterogeneous actors
* Being open to beneficiaries from the start
* Following a bottom up and empowering approach
* Keeping dynamic and experimental
* Paying attention to power neutrality of information and knowledge
* Ensuring contextual relevance"