

## **GENDER & DISASTER RISK REDUCTION CONSOLIDATED RECOMMENDATIONS, 1996-2009**

Offered in support of practical discussion and strategic planning at the Fourth International Conference on Gender and Disaster in Bogota, May 2012. Unedited published recommendations from meetings in Pakistan, Vancouver, Miami, Ankara, Honolulu, and Beijing. Noting also the many relevant calls to action from related fields and available in academic publications. Feedback to enarsone@gmail.com.

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### ***Proceedings: Workshop On Gender And Disasters: Multan, Pakistan 6-8 March 1996***

Duryog Nivaran. Organised by : Oxfam and Pattan (Pakistani for Duryog Nivaran)

#### **Introduction**

The workshop on Gender and Disaster was held on March 7 and 8 in Multan Pakistan.

The workshop came in the aftermath of the formation of a network of South Asian organisations involved in disaster mitigation work. Five South Asian countries were represented at the workshop- namely Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The participants greatly differed in expertise and experience. The workshop was attended by representatives and officials from the South Asian network- Duryog Nivaran, researchers, individuals with field experience in disaster management, case study presenters and media personnel from different South Asian countries.

The objectives of the workshop were

1. to present the gender perspective in an alternative approach to disaster mitigation, to the media personnel of South Asia
2. To initiate, debate and discussion in the media on gender concerns in the dominant and alternative approaches to disaster management.
3. To initiate a process of positive relationships between the media and NGOs

The alternative approach to disaster management was exemplified by the case studies presented during the course of the workshop. Six case studies from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were presented at the workshop. Due to certain travel restrictions, the Indian case study presenters were unable to attend the Multan workshop. Three of the presented studies dealt with natural disaster situations, i.e. floods; two with man-made disasters; and one with media activity during and after disasters. The first five case studies were all focused on the alternative perspective to disaster management and the empowerment of women in the aftermath of crisis. The idea was to give the media personnel present some field experiences of looking at disasters from a new, gender centered approach. The purpose of this was as much to give insights of the alternative approach to the press as to create public awareness of the concerning gender issues through the available media.

The case studies were prepared by researchers representing various organisations actively involved in disaster management work in the region- be they natural disasters like floods or man-made crisis like insurgency. The studies were based upon,

- \* Real life experiences of the organisations in approaching village communities
- \* experimenting with gender sensitive approaches, empowerment of women
- \* Dealing with bureaucracy and government agencies riddled with male chauvinism
- \* Attempts at softening obstructive traditional social structures
- \* Experiences of NGOs on media coverage of disasters.

The studies mainly dealt with the situation of women in disaster prone areas and the reasons for their increased vulnerability to crisis. Several dealt with the individual experiences of agencies implementing schemes to empower women during the rehabilitation phases of a given disaster.

They dealt with preparations for the project, introducing the project, implementation and problems encountered in the process and well as successes.

One case study from Bangladesh examined the way media institutions worked and responded in times of disaster. It examined the working mechanism of the press and the forces behind it- bringing into focus several inadequacies in disaster reporting due to the very nature and commercialisation of media. The focus was also on how NGOs and governments use the media for individual's purposes in times of disaster.

These case studies provided the basis for dynamic discussions and debate on several important issues.

The workshop also allowed opportunity for journalists and NGO personnel present to examine the issues that tend to alienate them and figure out practical means through which the chasm of understanding between the two could be bridged. It was important to discuss various means of ensuring better communication between NGOs and media, that would eventually lead to better reporting as well as enhanced transparency in NGO activity.

### **Follow Up Action Plan**

The action plan formulation was also done in two groups, chaired by the same persons as the previous session. Follow-up action was divided as national and regional-the two groups, A and B handling each. Both groups dealt with two central issues in their Action Plan.

Gender and Disaster  
Media and NGOs

Group A concentrated on formulating a follow up Action Plan on a regional level while group B had the responsibility of coming up with a cohesive strategy to deal with the above issues on a national level.

Group A came up with a series of proposals, plan and ideas that could be practically implemented within the region. Each member of the group contributed to the action plan by putting down their proposals in paper. The group as a whole concentrated on regional level cooperation between media organizations and NGOs with special reference to

information sharing and continuity of Duryog Nivaran's work in eliminating gender bias and promoting a gender sensitive approach to disaster mitigation in South Asia countries.

The proposals of the group could be very broadly catergorised as dealing with

- NGO and media relations
- Gender and Disaster relations
- Media in disaster situations

### **NGO and Media relations**

- Timely disclosure of relevant information to the media
- Ensure information flow from NGOs to media
- Keep regular contact with media
- Duryog Nivaran should build up rapport with South Asian media
- Analysis of media outlets, personnel and coverage in South Asian countries
- Regional study to ascertain media capacity and identify interventions to bring media in an interactive development partnership with NGOs.
- Communication strategy for Duryog Nivaran
- Identify at least two media people from each country for Duryog Nivaran coverage's.
- Form committees at district, national level for media and NGOs.
- Bridge the difference in perception
- Gender training for journalists

### **Gender and Disaster Issues**

- Analyse economic-political relationship of gender and disaster
- Study and implement a process of public consultation and participation.
- Incorporate gender issues in disaster preparedness.
- Better case studies on gender and disasters for background data
- Database of disasters to discern local, regional patterns
- Study the causes of gender discrimination
- Document both success and failure in gender and disaster work
- Use of public interest litigation
- Analysis of relevant international conventions and laws
- Gender training and formulating guidelines for Duryog Nivaran and other institutions
- Produce guidelines for case studies – a single format makes easy analysis
- Follow up this event on exchange of experience on gender and disasters.

### **Media in Disaster situations**

- Sensitive both local and foreign media on gender and disaster related issues.
- Identify areas that media personnel need help when reporting on disaster situations.
- Establish contact groups and continue to learn from each other's experience in using the alternative approach.

## **Group B**

Group B had a two-step approach to the issues before them, the group first brainstormed for ideas and suggestions on formulating future action. Every member of the group wrote in their ideas in this session, then the group came together to prepare a practical action plan including a time frame for future activities where ever possible

The results of the first session's brain storming could be briefly classified into gender and disaster work and NGO-media relations.

### Action for Gender and Disaster work

- In Pakistan there is a need to widen the definition of disaster
- Lack of understanding of gender issues in South Asian countries
- What contribution would gender equality make towards successful dealing with disasters?
- Empower women economically to reduce physical insecurity before, during and after disaster.
- Women are not passive victims-an actual change in development workers attitude towards gender discrimination is necessary
- Wider NGO activity to tackle non-natural disaster action for Media-NGO relationship
- The cause of disasters are beyond NGOs but they have potential for good stories that might stir someone...
- Why there is a lack of trust between NGOs and media
- NGOs and media should have better relations
- How to develop relations with media-methods, means and process
- Better relations with media and NGOs at national and international level
- Methodology for two-way communications
- Journalists lack money and resources to investigate stories in depth.

In the next step Group B members came together to prepare the action plan. The final Action plan was presented under four headings and relevant future action for each issues.

1. Widen the perception and role of NGOs in disasters and prioritise gender issues
  - Educate relief organizations and media on gender issues
  - Organise training
2. Improving NGO-media relations
  - Story ideas from Duryog Nivaran and members for media follow up
  - Organise debates on development issues
  - Photographs, train NGO officials in positive image photography, establish a library and make pictures accessible
  - Prepare and circulate a collection of positive disaster related journalism to agencies and journalists to reinforce group practice
  - Sharing information and advocacy material among countries

3. Strategising gender issues (active role of women in disaster preparedness and management.)

- Review disaster responsive plan
- Organise training for community women on gender issues and disaster management
- Exchange of information between Duryog Nivaran members on specific country experiences – copy training modules and evaluation of others.

4. Continuity in process

- Compile 2 quarterly report by Duryog Nivaran for dissemination among members – media and NGOs.
- Duryog Nivaran secretariat to compile and disseminate articles supplied by indigenous organizations-within the next three months

### **Action Plan**

#### **Summary**

The action plan was formulated under two groups concentrating on national and regional strategies respectively. Both groups tackled two central issues in their Action Plan formula

- Gender and disaster
- Media and NGO relations

Follow up action put forward by the two groups had a number of similarities, both groups advocated better NGO and media co-operation in the future and put forward strategies to go about creating harmonious relationship between the two. Both groups also realized the need to expand the work being done by Duryog Nivaran in South Asia to pave the way for gender sensitive interventions in disaster and development.

The regional Action Plan recommended a continuous flow of information form NGOs to the media. They also endorsed an analysis of media outlets and personnel from the region to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The Action Plan also endorsed choosing two or more journalists from each country to be actively involved with Duryog Nivaran. Gender training for journalists as well as developmental workers was considered a practical step.

To overcome gender problems in these countries, more depth studies were recommended. The need to create data banks and documented more frequently the experience of Duryog Nivaran members so that this knowledge could be shared. Guidelines should be prepared for the case studies. The group also felt that the region did not make adequate use of public interest litigation and international conventions and laws that protect the rights and

status of women. The regional follow up activity recommended a regular exchange of experiences on gender and disaster through contact groups comprising of NGOs and media.

The national Action Plan advocates training of relief workers at grassroots and journalists on gender issues in order to widen the perception of disasters and encourage gender sensitivity in activity and reporting.

They recommended educating community women on disaster preparedness and exchange of information between Duryog Nivaran members on their experiences with using the alternative approach.

On media and NGO relationship, the group put forward a number of suggested follow up activity which included providing media people with story ideas originating from Duryog Nivaran members. Maintaining a photograph library of disaster and development work which is easily accessible to media, collecting and disseminating examples of positive disaster related journalism and sharing information between countries and states were important steps towards improving NGO-media relations.

Both groups recognized the importance of continuing the processes of experience sharing initiated at this workshop. The Action Plan recommended the compilation of a quarterly report on disaster related experiences, which should probably include reports from grassroots organizations and be circulated among media and Duryog Nivaran members.

### **Commitment of Media**

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The workshop on Gender and Disaster was attended by selected media personnel from almost every South Asian region country. The workshop objectives included exposing the media to NGO experiences of working with the alternatives perspective-therby sensitizing journalists to specific gender issues that crop up in disaster management and development activity, and strengthening bonds between the media and NGO organizations.

Duryog Nivaran felt that. The gender issues that they sought to address in their alternative outlook on disasters and development, were not fully understood or appreciated by the media, this has led to a lack of sensitive in depth-reporting on gender consideration during disasters and rehabilitation phases.

The paper presented on media in disaster situations threw light on the way media organizations and journalists act upon disaster situations. The media. The paper pointed, went about reporting on a crisis situation with the sole intention of finding a 'good story' or 'lead'. Fiercely competitive media organizations vied for larger numbers (of affected) sensationalized pathetic living conditions often using gory pictures of dead and suffering. Reporting the plight of women (and children) was mostly to add drama to

the story at hand. Very few journalists or media organizations followed up their stories to the post disaster and rehabilitation phases.

The media had its own problems. Management and editorial policy, political pressure, lack of personnel and resources, difficulty to access information were some of the problems faced by journalists when covering disasters. The lack of training and awareness on gender issues was also considered a problem for South Asian media people who generally do not specialize in subject coverage's due to the lack of staff in the media organizations.

At the evaluating sessions, the journalists present agreed that the workshop has provided them with a new outlook on disaster management. The case studies on using the alternative approach clearly provided the media with insights into NGO activity in rehabilitating disaster affected communities while building the capacity of community women to face emergency situations. The presentations gave way to lengthy, if at times volatile discussions on gender issues and the alternative approach. All this served the purpose of adding to the media's understanding of Duryog Nivaran's work and the importance of gender considerations in disaster situations. The media personnel present agreed that this exposure to NGO work sharpened their senses and increased their understanding of gender and disaster relations, and would therefore, influence their future work-writing, editing or producing in a positive way.

A point that came out quite clearly during the workshop was that the media should have better access to NGO work and research results. Again and again the fact that there is a distinct lack of trust vis-à-vis communication between agencies and media was emphasized. The importance of information sharing within the countries of the region was recognized by both parties. Informal networking was encouraged to share within the countries of the region was recognized by both parties. Informal networking was encouraged to share reports, story ideas, experiences and research between countries. Especially because the region is seemingly host to a range of natural and man made disasters ranging from floods to earthquakes to civil and inter-borders war.

The journalists present agree to share information among themselves to foster better relations and their addresses and contact numbers were circulated to aid this informal networking.

*Women In Disasters: Exploring The Issues: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, June, 1998*

**A Call To Action: Meeting The Needs Of Women in Disaster**

*To increase the visibility of women's vulnerabilities and resources in disaster and enhance effective response to their needs, we recommend:*

1. Women speaking out strongly within their own organizations to voice their views and create a climate for change;
2. Fully engaging women in proactive planning for violence-free and culturally-sensitive disaster response in every community;
3. Women participating in developing emergency plans within their agencies and reviewing, evaluating, and amending existing emergency plans, if any;
4. Community-based hazard assessment identifying the location and specific needs of vulnerable women and children, among them women living with disabilities, mental illness, or serious medical problems, senior women, new immigrant women, minority-language speakers, single mothers, poor and low-income women and others;
5. Extended and culturally-appropriate post-disaster responses, including long-term recovery outreach teams and alternative mental health models such as healing circles;
6. Developing and distributing emergency response materials in different languages and geared to different communities, including deaf and impaired-hearing women and others with special needs;
7. Funding to support Canadian research into the role of gender in the planning, response, and recovery activities of emergency responders, planners, volunteers, and the community at large;
8. Implementing a national mitigation strategy with the active participation of women, taking into account women's visions of more sustainable communities and gender issues in community planning and emergency response;
9. Facilitating women's participation in developing post-disaster recovery and reconstruction plans empowering to women, including providing child care at community meetings;
10. Integrating gender analysis into existing and new emergency management training at the provincial and national levels;
11. Distributing through traditional and new media the proceedings and recommendations of this conference to all relevant provincial and federal agencies and to women's service organizations throughout the province.

***To integrate women's services into all aspects of emergency management at the local, provincial, and national levels, we recommend:***

1. Including women's services as full and equal partners in community-based emergency planning, contributing their knowledge and expertise to more effective emergency response;
2. Developing a workbook for women's organizations undertaking emergency planning, including specific guidelines and resources, information on individual preparedness, local emergency management resources and structures, and relevant gender and cultural issues;
3. Employing diverse media and delivery strategies to educate women's organizations that serve disaster-vulnerable groups about community-specific hazards, existing resources and response plans, and other aspects of emergency management;
4. Developing or extending existing and new organizational partnerships, for example between emergency managers, women's services, and regional health care agencies.

***To address emergency planning issues specifically impacting violence against women services, we recommend:***

1. Innovative strategies to assist antiviolence programs with in-house emergency planning, including an emergency planning workbook geared to specific issues confronting these programs in the event of a major community disaster;
2. Producing and distributing to governmental and community agencies a comprehensive report educating social and human service planners and emergency responders about the social impacts of disaster on women, including the risk of increased violence;
3. Implementing proactive agreements with provincial and federal agencies which provide post-disaster financial assistance to ensure that timely and adequate financial resources are available for antiviolence organizations responding to increased service demands in the aftermath of disaster;
4. Revising relevant provincial brochures and materials to include information on the likely social and psychological effects of disaster, including increased violence;
5. Incorporating violence issues into training materials for mental health disaster outreach teams and developing mutual aid agreements between women's services and mental health agencies;
6. Developing alternative plans for women unable to safely access existing evacuation sites;
7. Initiating agreements with BC PEP and lifeline services such as BC Tel to maintain accessible services by according priority status to crisis lines during disaster;

8. Implementing mutual aid agreements among neighbouring antiviolence services to foster timely crisis and recovery assistance to hard-hit programs and services;
9. Arranging for inspection and evaluation of the physical facilities of women's services in seismic regions;
10. Educating and preparing staff and volunteers in women's services for their personal safety and for more effective assistance to others.

***To support women in emergency management and women's service roles across organizations and agencies, we recommend:***

1. Increasing opportunities for formal and informal networking between women's services and emergency planners and responders at the local level;
2. Creating opportunities for informal mentoring, job exchange and other initiatives which will increase communication between women emergency managers and women's service providers;
3. Developing a BC PEP-hosted web-site and using existing women's service web-sites to share information and increase electronic networking between women's services and women emergency managers.

***To support and sustain women undertaking voluntary relief work, we recommend:***

1. Developing a comprehensive informational packet and video about how relief workers and their families are likely to be impacted by this work;
2. Providing public recognition and other incentives for employers who support the voluntary relief work of their employees, and informational materials for unions and business encouraging proactive policies and procedures, e.g. protecting the vacation time of employees accepting emergency relief assignments, and financial assistance with out-of-pocket expenses such as child care;
3. Increasing local support for the families of emergency response workers on assignment, for example neighborhood family networking, meals-on-wheels assistance through local religious and non-religious organizations, and contact through the emergency assignment between the sending organization and the relief worker's family;
4. Encouraging a range of comprehensive child care options for the families of emergency response workers, to be provided by the sending organization or employer, or available on-site as appropriate;
5. Funding extended trauma teams to provide response workers with long-term, confidential mental health services as needed, to be provided through task numbers assigned by the Provincial Emergency Program under the terms of the Emergency Program Act;
6. Mandating on-site crisis counseling and critical incident stress debriefing for all relief workers, and effective orientation of incoming relief workers by those departing.

***ACTION STEPS TO REACH WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN DISASTERS:  
Recommendations From The Miami Conference, June, 2000***

**Regarding policy and planning**

- A. Include a gender perspective in the structure, training, budgeting, and program implementation and evaluation of every disaster center or program
- B. Increase the numbers of women in decision-making positions in disaster preparedness and response
- reach a more diverse group of women through organizations active in disasters (public/private and profit/nonprofit)
  - communicate this need through effective use of internet resources such as websites and listserves
  - develop strategies to promulgate this objective through broad-based coalitions of disaster organizations
  - work proactively with these organizations to improve policies and practices regarding women and children
- C. Reach out to public officials and decision-makers
- target key policy-makers
  - refine messages needed and strategies for communication
  - communicate the need for integration of all disaster actors in planning and response
  - urge the integration of women and children into all aspects of disaster planning and response
- D. Expand child care resource services in disaster contexts
- audit existing services, institutions, and groups providing disaster child care of all kinds
  - provide additional training or resources as needed to ensure appropriate services in local, regional, national and international contexts
- E. Reduce the morbidity and mortality of street children in disasters
- develop protocols consistent with the comparative advantage of organizations involved with children and/or with disasters to increase their accounting of, and accountability to, children of the street in disaster contexts
  - develop mechanisms to expand awareness of and services to children pushed on to the street in the course of disasters
- F. Increase awareness of issues and 'lessons learned' in developing countries regarding women and children in disasters

- advocate for global debt reduction and the redistribution of these resources to disaster mitigation and response
  - work more creatively in disaster relief projects and organizations to enhance development applications addressing vulnerability issues

G. Effect change in the balance of disaster resources currently invested in relief and mitigation, to direct increased resources toward the root causes of disaster and community-based mitigation and preparedness

H. Mitigate developing disasters through such actions as increased international commitment to the global treaty banning land mines

### **Regarding research**

A. Disaster data ‘matchmaking’

- identify ‘translators’ to address the information needs of policy-makers, researchers, donors, community members and other key actors
- concertedly use data collectors, collators, and ‘translators’ to produce and translate knowledge, including ‘lessons learned’ about women and children in disasters
- increase communication and information sharing within the Gender and Disaster Network
- translate research findings into user-friendly language accessible to practitioners in all audiences and languages

B. Increase information dissemination and collection within and outside the disaster community

- make effective use of internet resources such as disaster organization websites and networks (academic, private, governmental, etc.)
- communicate with donors and others involved in disaster work about the need to anticipate and plan for the needs of women and children
- use information to leverage media power in the interests of women and children

C. Construct a publicly accessible knowledge base based on gender analysis to better understand community vulnerability and response to hazards

- initiate community-based research and action projects with affected or at-risk communities
- require agencies that gather collected data as part of normal processes (e.g. employment data, business starts and failures, etc.) and after a disaster event (FEMA,

SBA, etc) to gather information allowing for the assessment and tracking of gender, race, and ethnic differences

- increase consultation between researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to develop an inventory of issues focusing research attention on important theoretical, practical and policy topics regarding children and gender issues facing women and men
- develop mechanisms for sharing research tools (measurement instruments, procedures, data for secondary analysis), along with information about associated problems and strengths, to further research endeavors as a community
- consider creating multidisciplinary task forces or working groups to investigate patterns and challenge assumptions about such cross-cutting topics as the structure and dynamics of households, particularly but not exclusively female-headed households in disaster contexts

D. Advocate for curriculum transformation

- develop mechanisms to mainstream knowledge about women, children, and gender relations into all disaster and emergency management courses
- develop materials for integrating issues facing women and children in disasters into other relevant curricula

E. Seek ways to legitimate gender, disaster, and hazard research across the disciplines to increase opportunities for future generations of researchers to secure academic positions enabling them to pursue these issues.

### **Regarding the Gender and Disaster Network**

A. Commit to using gender- and children-oriented approaches in our own disaster work, and sharing our insights and experiences with this network and with those people most vulnerable to the effects of disasters

B. Initiate planning for a follow-up meeting providing increased time for dialogue and incorporating a broader range of public/private, profit/nonprofit organizations, of faith-based disaster responders, and of international disaster organizations

C. Create a system of common language and understanding about disasters to improve communication between key players, recognizing demographic differences and investigating possible cognitive differences and their value implications, e.g. how people may variously interpret and respond to disasters

## Regarding Accountability

Fully engage in these initiatives the disaster victims, survivors, vulnerable groups, clients and others to whom researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers are accountable.

- consult actively with our respective communities of interest about the priority needs they identify and their capacities and resources
- increase research which engages participatory and community based groups (CBOs, FBOs, etc) not as objects of inquiry but as partners in the generation, design, and implementation of such research

*Gender Equality, Environmental Management, And Natural Disaster Mitigation. Report From The On-Line Conference Conducted By The Division For The Advancement Of Women, 2001*

## IX. Conclusions and Recommendations

Three significant gaps were identified in this discussion of gender equality, environmental management and natural disaster reduction, each suggesting recommendations for change in governmental and nongovernmental approaches to hazards and disasters.

**1. The everyday realities of women's and men's lives respectively are not well reflected in environmental management and disaster prevention initiatives. To address this issue, risk management practices should:**

- combat gender myths that reinforce stereotypic heroic and victim images
- reflect women's central roles as natural resource managers, users, consumers, and workers
- address the root causes of women's poverty and other constraints limiting their ability to be stewards of natural resources
- take into account gendered impacts of environmental disasters, e.g. loss of life due to caregiving roles, impacts on livelihoods, expansion of domestic labor, increased violence, psychosocial stress, etc.
- incorporate knowledge of gendered barriers limiting women's access to key survival and recovery resources
- support women's organized efforts to mitigate environmental hazards and respond to natural disasters when they occur
- build upon and strengthen capacities, strengths, and resources arising from women's traditional life experiences
- incorporate knowledge about how interaction between women and men may affect the effectiveness of gender-targeted initiatives
- avoid short-term emergency assistance undermining women's economic and social status
- anticipate and address differing needs and potential conflicts among women in disaster contexts and between women and men

- respect culturally-specific practices and values affecting environmental management and disaster response

**2. The knowledge needed to build more disaster-resilient and equitable communities is not in place. To address this gap, risk management should be guided by sufficient information about:**

- the root causes of gendered vulnerability to environmental risks and global development processes
- how gender interacts with caste, class, race, ethnicity and other power relations to shape people's ability to mitigate risk and survive disasters
- culturally-specific patterns of response to hazard and disaster in specific places and times
- 'best practices' illustrating gender-fair and community-based approaches to the management of environmental risks
- the role of gender equality in sustainable development and natural disaster reduction
- how post-disaster opportunities can be exploited to sustain increased social equality and reduce vulnerability to future disasters
- how to work collaboratively with knowledgeable local residents using traditional as well as modern approaches to risk management
- how social science researchers, particularly qualitative researchers taking an ethnographic approach, can contribute to disaster planning and practice
- gender-differentiated patterns of vulnerability, impact, and response to extreme environmental events
- how women are affected by traditional command-and-control frameworks
- emergent interdisciplinary and interagency approaches

**3. The dominant approach to hazards and disasters fails to promote more egalitarian, sustainable, and disaster-resilient communities. To address this lost opportunity, future approaches to risk management should:**

- incorporate emergent programmatic approaches to sustainable development, social equality, and risk reduction which are integrated and holistic
- avoid bureaucratic "command and control" approaches disempowering those most knowledgeable about environmental risks and disasters
- foster participatory, community-driven approaches guided by a gender analysis
- engage women's community groups and other partners "outside the box" to increase dialogue and networking across sectoral boundaries
- promote the exchange of knowledge and information with local residents, including traditional or indigenous knowledge as well as scientific and technical expertise
- build on local knowledge of environmental resources to reduce risk
- integrate sustainable development objectives into all phases of risk management
- integrate risk reduction as an objective in all dimensions of development work
- integrate gender equality goals throughout the disaster process and in all sustainable development and risk reduction projects
- reflect the assumption that local residents are full and equal partners in the development of safer communities
- engage women as full and equal partners in all aspects of hazard mitigation and throughout the disaster process

- reflect culturally-specific conditions, history, and social relations impacting people's vulnerability and response to disasters
- incorporate local skills and capacities, particularly of women and others outside dominant institutional systems
- address social inequalities at risk of being reinforced during disaster response and reconstruction

Taken together, these three fault lines describe a dominant approach to environmental management and risk reduction which does not protect women and men equally or promote sustainable and safer ways of living.

At least three actionable goals follow from this analysis:

**1. Increase and utilize knowledge about gender, development, and disaster in all sectors of risk reduction and disaster management:**

- increase resources in support of qualitative and quantitative research with a gender perspective
- consistently collect gender-disaggregated data
- integrate gender holistically and integrally into vulnerability and capacity analysis
- develop practical tools, indicators, measurements, and incentives for incorporating gender perspectives broadly into all aspects of organizational planning and practice
- provide gender, development and disaster training and resources to emergency authorities, emergency practitioners, governmental ministries, development workers, women's groups, environmental science professionals, businesses, health workers, planners and others
- increase resources supporting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective throughout development, implementation, and evaluation
- explicitly incorporate analysis of gender issues impacting men in risky environments into training and project work
- integrate the education of girls and women about hazards and risks into development projects
- increase women's access to risk management information, e.g. through gender-targeted early warning systems
- educate and train women in environmental science, business, government, community work, and household roles about sustainable environmental resource management and disaster prevention
- utilize the experience and knowledge of women disaster survivors and women's community groups active in environmental management and disaster response

**2. Promote women's empowerment in every aspect of risk reduction and disaster management:**

- monitor the degree to which women's full enjoyment of their human rights is realized throughout the disaster process
- identify and address unsustainable development practices placing women at increased risk of environmental hazards and disasters

- use vulnerability and capacity analysis to identify and involve women at especially high risk in all aspects of disaster and development planning
- prioritize women's long-term strategic gender interests over short-term emergency relief measures
- identify and mitigate backlash and unintended consequences arising from gender-targeted programming
- build monitoring and accountability measures into disaster and development agencies (governmental/nongovernmental) to ensure the realization of gender equality objectives
- develop incentives to increase women's full and equal participation in disaster and development, at the grassroots level, in technical and scientific positions, and as policy-makers in governmental and nongovernmental agencies
- materially support emergent grassroots women's groups actively responding to hazards and disasters
- involve women professionals, women's bureaus, women's services, and women's community groups in collaborative, cross-sectoral initiatives to reduce risk
- document the participation of women in all aspects of development and disaster agency efforts, as managers, specialists, relief workers, recipients, and members of the community
- monitor women's access to information and other resources at the local level, with special attention to barriers at the household and community levels

### **3. Support gender-sensitive approaches to risk reduction and disaster management:**

- increase training resources to mainstream gender analysis in all aspects of project work in development and disaster agencies
- evaluate programs for their effects on local capacities and resources, with special attention to women
- encourage the integration of risk reduction activities into community organizations, with special attention to women's community-based organizations
- initiate new partnerships involving governments, business, and civil society in disaster prevention and sustainable development
- capitalize on the expert knowledge of disaster survivors and responders, with particular attention to women's proactive efforts throughout the disaster process
- initiate cross-hazard, cross-sectoral, and community-based collaboratives involving women and other community members who are most at risk as subjects rather than the objects of risk reduction measures

These general conclusions offer a platform from which more specific and targeted action recommendations can be generated, with respect to disaster mitigation and relief agencies, development groups, emergency practitioners in the public and private sectors, governmental actors, researchers and educators, community organizers, and individuals. It is anticipated that the report of the Expert Working Group will include comprehensive action recommendations reflecting this framework.

*Environmental Management And The Mitigation Of Natural Disasters: A Gender Perspective, Report Of The Expert Group Meeting, Ankara, Turkey, 6 – 9 November 2001*

## **Recommendations**

Sustainable development as a result of sound environmental management is the starting point for disaster risk reduction and the two cannot be separated. Disaster risk management should be embedded in the overall development process using a gender-sensitive and cross- sectoral approach.

### **A. Policies and programmes**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, donors, with the assistance of non-governmental organizations and other actors in civil society and the private sector, as appropriate, should:

1. Make sound environmental management, risk management and gender equality an integral part of sustainable development and vice-versa;
2. Create and implement, with the involvement of community groups and women's groups, comprehensive rural and urban development strategies, and land use plans, which provide opportunities to mitigate damages caused by hazards;
3. Include gender-based hazard mapping and social and environmental risk assessment at the appraisal stage of all development projects, involving women and men equally at all levels of the assessment;
4. Systematically include hazard proneness and gender-based vulnerabilities in environmental impact assessments and formulate disaster reduction measures where appropriate, with particular regard to the protection of lifeline infrastructure and critical facilities;
5. In rural development programmes for disaster-prone areas, promote agricultural technologies and give specific regard to addressing from a gender perspective environmental degradation hazards which threaten food-security;
6. Recognize the occurrence of frequent and on-going small and medium scale environmental emergencies, and adapt gender sensitive disaster management policies and programmes accordingly;
7. At the highest levels of government and international organizations, signal the importance of a gender-sensitive approach to all disaster management actions to inspire institutional change and make gender mainstreaming a reality, including through the use of leadership and vision statements, reward systems, and celebration of good examples and successes. The United Nations should develop an initiative to highlight the role of management in operationalizing gender mainstreaming in these areas;
8. Encourage institutions to use formal guidelines to promote gender-sensitive environmental policies and programmes and apply gender mainstreaming tools where they exist;

9. Integrate gender-sensitive and cross-sectoral approaches into contingency planning, using an inclusive process that strengthens relationships and partnerships between all actors;
10. Promote the inclusion of gender-sensitive environmental management and disaster risk reduction into the Agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the draft Johannesburg Plan of Action.

## **B. Budgeting and finance**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, donors, with the assistance of non-governmental organizations and other actors in civil society and the private sector, as appropriate, should:

1. Apply gender budgeting methods to environmental management and disaster risk reduction activities and explicitly support the socioeconomic and gender components of projects;
2. Establish innovative gender-sensitive financing mechanisms and other resources to support local authority and community initiatives for environmental management and risk reduction to reduce the frequency and occurrence of disasters;
3. Develop codes of conduct for private sector enterprises such as insurance companies, to hold them accountable to both women and men on equal terms with respect to post-disaster compensation for human and property losses;
4. Promote interventions that would expand women's livelihood opportunities and reduce their vulnerabilities to disasters;
5. Encourage enterprises and business councils to envision and operationalize environmental management and risk reduction in a gender-sensitive manner;
6. Encourage the private sector to provide local employment and stimulate sustainable socioeconomic development to improve the quality of life for women and disadvantaged groups;
7. Increase resources in support of qualitative and quantitative research with a gender perspective;
8. Support the establishment of an extra-budgetary research fund on environmental management and disaster risk reduction, under the authority and responsibility of the United Nations. The access to such a fund should be contingent upon the acceptability of comprehensive proposals which take into account the socio-economic and gender foundations that underlie disaster risk.

## **C. Legislation and human rights**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, non-governmental organizations and other actors in civil society, as appropriate, should:

1. Strengthen administrative and legal measures to support gender-sensitive environmental management and disaster risk reduction;

2. Monitor the full enjoyment by women of their human rights throughout the disaster cycle and revise, where appropriate, national legislation and policies with a view to ensuring their consistency with existing international norms and standards;
3. Introduce and/or implement legislation, assign responsibility and accountability to all actors who create disaster risks;
4. Establish mechanisms for addressing women and men's grievances in disaster contexts;
5. Protect, promote and ensure women's equal right to land, and raise awareness of the importance of women's land ownership for reducing disaster vulnerability, and facilitating recovery from disasters;
6. Adopt legislation that recognizes both women and men as heads of households for post disaster entitlements such as land, housing and all types of financial and in-kind compensation;
7. Invite the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to request statistics and other kind of information from States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on how they ensure the full enjoyment by women of human rights in disaster circumstances and on women's participation at all levels of environmental management and disaster risk reduction;
8. Encourage the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to draft a General Recommendation on women and environmental management and disaster risk reduction which would provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between women's human rights and the circumstances, problems and opportunities women encounter with respect to their human rights in all phases of disaster;
9. Provide information on the complaint and inquiry mechanism under the optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

#### **D. Participation, partnership and community involvement**

Governments at all levels, humanitarian and international organizations, including the UN system, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, including community-based organizations, as appropriate, should:

1. Enhance women's participation in decision-making in public administration and in governmental structures at all levels, so women can play a key role in defining building standards, land and property markets, land and housing taxation, planning processes and infrastructure construction and management in order to prevent disaster emanating from risky land use and environmental stress;
2. Hold local governments accountable for achieving gender balance in decision-making on natural resources management, environmental management and disaster risk reduction;
3. Involve more women in risk reduction activities; expand opportunities for women to participate in decision-making and assume leadership roles in organizations working in sustainable development and disaster risk reduction (through exchange of visits, provision of meeting space, field office visits, networking);

4. Foster community-driven, instead of individual beneficiary, approaches to environmental management and disaster risk reduction by centrally involving local stakeholders (local governments, community based organizations) and forging public-private partnerships, strengthening existing social safety nets and security schemes;
5. Make local residents full and equal partners in the development of safer communities and incorporate indigenous knowledge, skills and capacities, particularly of poor women and other disadvantaged groups, into environmental management and disaster risk reduction;
6. Initiate cross-hazard, cross-sectoral and community-based collaboration involving women and other community members who are most at risk as subjects rather than objects of risk reduction measures;
7. Involve women professionals, women's bureaux, women's services, and women's community groups in collaborative, cross-sectoral initiatives to reduce risk; specific efforts should be made to empower women and identify their potential for transformation towards sustainable development and gender equality;
8. Recognize the expertise of disaster survivors and empower them in the management of social and environmental hazards and prevention of disasters;
9. Target disadvantaged groups and households and raise their awareness of women's human rights and the critical role women play in coping with natural disasters.

#### **E. Media**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, mass media, the private sector and civil society should:

1. Develop public awareness programmes and campaigns on the relationship between sustainable development, natural hazards, disaster vulnerabilities and gender relations to enhance disaster reduction measures;
2. Develop media campaigns on a gender perspective in environmental and disaster matters through providing appropriate information and language for media use;
3. Make efforts to combat gender stereotypes and biases and the lack of gender perspective in government programmes, non-governmental organizations' activities and in the media; eliminate gender myths that reinforce stereotyped representations of women as either heroines or victims in disasters.

#### **F. Information and dissemination**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, as appropriate, should:

1. Adopt gender-sensitive strategies to generate an on-going two-way information flow between central government and the local level to create dialogue and feedback mechanisms relevant to disaster risk management;

2. Recognize the right to freedom of information and take into account gender differences in the understanding of women and men about their respective capacities and vulnerabilities in disaster contexts;
3. Commission and deliver warning and environmental management information adjusted to the needs of users, rather than what the generators of the information want or feel the users should have;
4. Increase women's access to risk management information through gender-sensitive early warning systems and target specific social groups for warning information to ensure that gender-specific needs and circumstances are recognized;
5. Collaborate in the creation of networks that promote community access to gender-sensitive information and communication technologies supporting information exchange on environmental management and disaster risk reduction;
6. Establish appropriate channels and mechanisms for information flow and dialogue that can be accessed by women and men in disaster affected areas;
7. Collect, preserve, utilize and disseminate cultural memory and beneficial traditional skills and knowledge (e.g. oral histories, posters, admonitions, legends), ensuring the protection of women's and men's intellectual property rights;
8. Establish and enact freely accessible data resources and search engines for all available gender based information on environmental management and disaster risk reduction;
9. Create and adapt effective methods of information dissemination to a wide range of audiences (e.g. international organizations, ministries and government bureaux, grass-roots organizations) with a view to promote appropriate language and illustrations and with effective outreach to the media;
10. Create mechanisms for information exchange, including through use of survivors as experts and resource persons, exchange of visits and sharing of experiences among actors at various levels, e.g. governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations and grass roots organizations.

## **G. Education, training and capacity building**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, as appropriate, should:

1. Develop a programme of holistic and gender-sensitive training incorporating scientific and sociocultural dimensions through the creation of manuals that link scientific and socio-cultural data and the preparation of curricula in both environmental management and risk mitigation;
2. Support capacity building at local levels including through identifying women's and men's needs and opportunities, elaborating and selecting appropriate training materials and methodologies, establishing collaborative partnerships with training institutions, facilitating workshops, monitoring results, and using the results of systematization and knowledge networking;
3. Incorporate gender equality goals into every aspect of capacity-building and strengthening of institutional arrangements to address disaster risk reduction as an ongoing function, including

through the adoption of legislation related to reducing risk, covering land-use regulation, building codes and re-enforced links to environmental protection;

4. Provide gender, development and disaster management training and resources to emergency authorities and practitioners, ministries, sustainable development workers, women's groups, environmental science professionals, businesses, health workers, planners and others;
5. Establish, in support of the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) and its goal of increasing public awareness and participation, a practical education initiative/platform supporting an integrated and gender-sensitive approach to environmental management and disaster reduction;
6. Increase public awareness on how to reduce vulnerability to hazards in the formal and non-formal education and through public information campaigns, education and multi-disciplinary professional training.
7. Promote, through ministries of education and international organizations, the integration of gender and disaster risk management perspectives into all formal and informal educational interventions in the areas of development and disaster;
8. Promote the education and training of women in environmental and natural sciences and enhance women's participation as specialists in spheres where men dominate (e.g. in hazard and disaster assessments, occupational health and safety, science and technology, emergency service, civil protection), across all levels of government and in emergency services and professions.

## **H. Research**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, academia, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector, as appropriate, should:

1. Introduce a gender perspective into ongoing research on the relationship between climate, natural hazards, disaster and related environmental vulnerability, and foster the coordinated application of these results;
2. Encourage the utilization of gender-sensitive indices and indicators as important tools for assessing environmental vulnerability and risks, to provide women and men in communities exposed to disaster risk with accurate information about impending hazards as early as possible, and to support women to act upon warnings in a timely and appropriate manner to reduce the probability of suffering, personal damage, death and property losses;
3. Support research and analysis, from a comparative perspective, on how gender contributes to the configuration of disaster risks;
4. Undertake a comparative analysis of gender, across cultures, as a factor in the social construction of vulnerabilities and disasters at varying scale, and throughout the disaster process;
5. Ensure that particular attention be given in research to continuously occurring small- and medium scale disasters which represent a particular challenge for communities at risk; identify and analyze gender differences in coping strategies including different experiences of local level risk management;

6. Undertake a comparative study of national machineries for disaster preparedness, response and mitigation, focusing on the role of women and other affected groups of actors and communities;
7. Support studies of gender-sensitive environmental management and disaster risk reduction, and make their outcomes available and accessible to the community to promote concrete actions; the reward system within academic institutions should be changed to encourage such approaches;
8. Disseminate comparative international research results to policy-makers and planners in all agencies involved in disaster risk management, particularly at the local level;
9. Document lessons learned and best practices from effective community-based strategies where women have been involved in planning and decision-making; compile them in such a way as to provide guidance for policy makers and programme planners;
10. Support community-based social and economic assessment from a gender perspective in order to establish baselines enabling the systematic measurement of the impact of disasters of any scale on livelihoods at the community level.

### **Methodologies and data collection**

Governments, international organizations, including the UN system, academia and civil society, as appropriate, should:

1. Make efforts to develop, test and validate tools, methodologies, indicators and other instruments for including gender analysis in disaster risk management at local level. This may include participatory action research and diagnosis, training methods, the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and others for mapping elements of hazard and vulnerability, with potential to improve the effectiveness of disaster risk management at the local and national levels;
2. Address the needs of women and men in any given situation in vulnerability assessments, including through demographic, socio-economic and environmental information, disaggregated by sex and age, as well as information on ethnic and cultural differences that are a necessity for risk mapping;
3. Collect data disaggregated by sex and information related to environmental and disaster risk management, including gender aspects of climate change, biodiversity and other major international environmental concerns;
4. Collect demographic and socio-economic data disaggregated by sex on disaster occurrence and associated loss including data on the impacts of natural disaster on the employment of women and men in the formal and informal sector.

### **J. Action at the international level**

Governments at all levels, international organizations, including the UN system, and financial institutions, as appropriate, should:

1. Report to existing and future international monitoring bodies, including human rights treaty bodies on cross-sectoral and gender-sensitive environmental management and disaster risk reduction strategies and activities, in particular within the International

- Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the ten-year review process to the Yokohama Disaster Reduction Action Plan for a Safer World;
2. Establish financing facilities and provide access to other financial and human resources to local governments, non-governmental organizations and community based organizations in order to implement gender-sensitive environmental management and disaster risk reduction strategies and activities;
  3. Apply a gender analysis to environmental management and disaster risk reduction and include a gender perspective in the negotiation positions on international agreements (on global trade, environment and biodiversity, climate change, etc.);
  4. Include technological and conflict-induced disasters in all disaster risk reduction activities and consider their gender dimension.

***Gender Equality And Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop Honolulu, Hawaii USA, 2004***

**Call to Action**

In recognition of the importance of gender in disaster risk reduction, participants from 28 countries met in Honolulu, Hawaii to develop a strategy for incorporating gender-fair practices in disaster risk management. Workshop participants included representatives from international, regional, national, local, and community-based governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and academic and research institutions engaged in disaster risk management.

The participants of this workshop now call upon our own agencies, organizations, and the broader disaster risk management community to implement a range of actions to reduce disasters and impacts of disasters on communities. We promote this Call-to-Action for the disaster risk management community to conscientiously integrate gender into policies and practices.

We encourage the decisions and outcomes in the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan in January 2005 and ongoing work in disaster risk reduction to:

- Include gender issues and social equity in assessment, design and implementation and monitoring as a compulsory element for all development projects;
- Ensure that dynamics of disaster risk, gender, social equity, and environmental analyses are considered in an integrated manner;
- Highlight gaps in the millennium development goals in terms of disaster risk reduction and gender; and,
- Guarantee representation of grassroots and wider civil society organizations by ensuring that they receive adequate resources to be active participants.

Whereas, we stress the importance of **building capacity in women's groups and community-based organizations**, we will use existing tools, such as Peer Learning Programs, Disaster Watch, neighborhood preparedness, and best practices, and develop new tools to:

**1) Involve community at all levels.**

- Involve community women and men in the academic work and research conducted in their community. This will assist citizens to give back in a way appropriate to their community.
- Support formal roles of community women's groups and other community-based organizations in preparedness and recovery processes, information gathering and dissemination, and training.
- Respect and reward community ability to collect information, design, and implement programs.
- Acknowledge and understand existing relationships within the community.
- Support community to recognize and meet specific needs and responsibilities of women in preparedness and recovery.

**2) Ensure equitable power in partnerships.**

- Foster equal partnerships and equal goals among members in disaster risk reduction partnerships across sectors and at multiple levels.
- Provide equitable distribution of resources and support within community.
- Ensure that grassroots women should benefit from and lead partnerships.
- Respect and incorporate diverse cultures and traditional knowledge.

**3) Ensure resources and funding.**

- Allocate resources so that partners receive benefit based on needs.
- Ensure transparency and accountability to local groups.
- Provide flexible funding to encourage sustainable, short and long term projects.
- Concentrate resources in the hands of the local residents – without imposing outside interests/goals.

**4) Address root causes of vulnerability.**

- Integrate issues of poverty and social vulnerability in designing disaster risk reduction programs to ensure that root problems are addressed and increase opportunities for participation from grassroots groups.

Whereas, in all aspects of disaster risk management, we recognize the importance of **Communications, Training, & Education** in policy, academic settings, and both formal and informal arenas and through practical training, such as drills and exercises, to provide access to information and resources at all levels from the upper tiers of government and decision making to the localized community action groups, we will strive to:

### **1) Improve formal and informal curriculum standards**

- Develop curriculum standards at all levels including the areas of science, technology and economics, with an integrated and gender-sensitive approach to environmentally sound and sustainable resource management and disaster reduction, response, and recovery to positively change behavior and attitudes in rural and urban areas.

### **2) Develop gender-sensitive policies, programs, and laws**

- Involve women's groups and encourage, develop, review and implement gender sensitive laws, policies, and programs that include land-use and urban planning, natural resource and environmental management, and integrated water resources management, to provide opportunities to prevent and mitigate damage.
- Encourage, as appropriate, the development and implementation of national building standards that take into account natural hazards so that women, men and their families are not exposed to high risk from disasters.
- Influence policies at national levels on gender and disaster risk reduction.
- Develop and establish mechanisms to influence policies on gender and disaster risk reduction at the national level.

### **3) Improve management, leadership skills, and decision making with gender awareness.**

- Improve basic management and leadership skills and pursue gender equality and gender-sensitive environmental management and disaster reduction, response and recovery as an integral part of sustainable development.
- Ensure the full participation of women in sustainable development decision making and disaster reduction management at all levels.

### **4) Ensure access to information.**

- Increase and ensure women's equal access to information and formal and nonformal education on disaster reduction, including gender-sensitive early warning systems, that empower women to take action in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Ensure equal access for women and men to information related to disaster risk reduction issues.

### **5) Educate the media.**

- Educate media regarding their role in disaster risk reduction and the opportunities to utilize culturally appropriate mediums and effective communication tools (i.e. radio soap opera, risk management game board) to effectively warn and educate the public, specifically marginalized groups, on disaster risk management in the context of sustainable development.

### **6) Mainstream a gender perspective in educational and training initiatives using nongovernmental organizations and non-traditional institutions.**

- Encourage civil society organizations to mainstream a gender perspective in the promotion of sustainable development initiatives, including in disaster reduction
- Target information and resources to non-traditional leaders of social institutions in

the civil society community (i.e. religious leaders, leaders of women's groups, leaders of men's groups) to facilitate education of disaster issues.

- Use women and youth organizations at both the national and community level to educate disaster issues.

### **7) Establish and strengthen cross-cutting partnerships and mainstream gender in corporate society.**

- Establish and strengthen cross-cutting, interorganizational partnerships with the private sector, community-based women's groups, NGOs, and government agencies.
- Mainstream gender into corporate society to ensure its full participation.

### **8) Encourage women in disaster management positions.**

- Encourage women to enter disaster management field through equal access to training and education because women are underrepresented in disaster risk management organizations.
- Develop retention mechanisms through mentoring, training, and flexible programs.

*Whereas*, disaster risk reduction tools have been improved by **Science & Technology**, and it is important that stakeholders in science and technology must recognize that community participation should be at the heart of disaster risk reduction, that women should be engaged in the development of science and technology, and that access to tools and information at all levels should be provided, we will strive to:

### **1) Increase participatory action research in science and technology. Promote a paradigm shift that infuses participatory research and gender issues in all disaster-risk reduction related activities.**

- Recognize that community participation should be at the heart of risk reduction initiatives and the development tools and technology in context with local concerns, using social science methods and participatory action research. Trust between science and community is essential for success.
- Link science to society and produce a range of tools that can be used for multiple purposes. This facilitates innovation and application.
- Increase funding for participatory research through scientific funding agencies. Required resources need to be made available to scientific agencies for participatory research.
- Change reward structures in agencies, organizations, and academic institutions to acknowledge applied and participatory research and promote tenure for applied researchers.
- Train scientists (physical, life, social, engineering, etc.), educators, decision-makers, and the public to recognize that science and technology is a process of exploration, not just a collection of facts and figures, by promoting inquiry science (teachers and students engaged in "hands-on" science projects) and citizen scientists.

## **2) Recognize expertise from many different backgrounds.**

- Recognize that a disaster risk reduction framework requires knowledge and expertise from different backgrounds and from multiple scientific and technological disciplines, multiple agencies at all levels, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and local communities.
- Foster greater integration of local and traditional knowledge into disaster risk reduction programs.

## **3) Continue to focus on recruiting and retaining women into science and technology.**

- Move women not only into the workplace, but also into management level positions and leadership roles by empowering girls to pursue science and by increasing scholarships at the higher educational levels.
- Increase job retention by developing programs in the workplace that recognize and support unique needs of women and men (e.g. for flexible schedules, job sharing).
- Institutionalize mentoring relationships for women and establish support groups for girls and women for engaging in scientific inquiry (government, university, NGO, community, and private-sector).

## **4) Promote awareness about scientific and research ethical issues in disaster risk reduction.**

- Balance the benefits of science and technology with issues of confidentiality and privacy.
- Provide equitable access to scientific and technological information and tools.
- Promote equitable representation in science, policy development, and program implementation.
- Consider how new information can change power structures within society and communities so that social systems are not irreparably altered in negative ways.
- Focus research to understand these issues in the context of new technologies and tools (including looking for lessons in technological adoption from other fields).
- Develop methods to assess ethical impacts of technological tools in communities.

## **5) Enhance efforts to share lessons from science and technology in different communities, regions, and disciplines, and elements of the disaster risk reduction community and learning from focus on successes and failures.**

- Secure support for the Gender and Disaster Network (GDN) as a clearinghouse or forum ([http://online.northumbria.ac.uk/geography\\_research/gdn/](http://online.northumbria.ac.uk/geography_research/gdn/)).
- Establish regional hubs/chapters for the GDN (look to examples from other organizations)

*Whereas*, disaster risk reduction includes reducing the impacts of all forms of disasters including complex and humanitarian emergencies, it is important to recognize the specific challenges in **engendering complex emergencies**. Therefore, we will:

### **1) Promote recruitment and retention of experienced women and men in the field.**

- Retain experienced people in the field by providing training, incentives and opportunities that will reduce problems by having inexperienced staff. Implement a survey of experiences to find out why people leave work in the area of complex emergencies. There have been institutional-based studies, but maybe not an overall study for all in the field.
- Improve appreciation of fieldworkers to maintain morale in this type of work.
- Develop a gender analysis *and* an analysis of studies that have been done on retention of people working in complex emergencies.
- Recruit people who have humanitarian perspective and not an elitist view. Fieldworkers and organizations need to understand and be sensitized to the context of people and their situations.

### **2) Create institutional memory that promotes dealing with specific gender issues on the ground during complex humanitarian emergencies.**

- Develop professionalism in the field of complex emergencies in which there would be institutionalized memory and opportunities for career progression once leaving fieldwork duties.
- Bring in-country people into integration with disaster management, so experienced people are brought into the field of complex emergencies.
- Establish a standardized process and protocol to gather feedback from the field, because data and information is rarely collected because of the urgent nature of the work with variations in staffing, involvement of multiple organizations, and temporal variations of specified duties.

### **3) Undertake gender training activities and improve gender awareness with a view toward long-term implementation.**

- Promote gender training as a component of professionalizing the field. Gender training is part of raising the standard of excellence.
- Foster training of local people to increase their skills. Education in complex emergencies is also an issue, but examples for this work could come from UNICEF.
- Develop ways to convince policy and decision makers and funders that having gender sensitive issues is important by emphasizing security issues, including physical safety and access to food and water.
- Increase attention, resources (time and space) and awareness. Donors allocate a certain percentage to gender based evaluation and training. Maybe use the consideration of “vulnerable people” instead of “gender”.

### **4) Engage in civil-military interaction and interface training.**

- Provide a place for discussions concerning disaster risk reduction in civil-military interactions. By engaging in mitigation actions resulting from these interactions, it is possible to reduce risk.

- Engage dialogues, develop cross program interaction, and model joint interventions to build clarity of roles and relationships between civil society and the military during complex humanitarian emergencies.

**5) Develop mechanisms for accountability, funding, and evaluation to pursue long-term improvement in gender awareness.**

- Educate decision makers and upper management. They need concrete plans: cost, who will do it, etc and require details on how training will happen.
- Establish a body that examines and monitors these issues during the conference in Kobe.
- One of first steps is to convince leaders of NGOs that engendering complex emergencies will improve their output.
- Provide funding for follow up! Evaluation is an important step toward making improvements, but there needs to be follow-up action once evaluation is complete to implement findings. We need to push for IMPACT! Note of Caution: Evaluations should not be done alone, but need to involve the public and make public evaluations.
- Expose linkages between these issues so that it is transparent. Kobe could be the way to create space to push forward independent, transparent evaluations. This could start to uncover the problem.

*Whereas, **organizational structures** provide the framework for policy and action in reducing disaster risks, it is essential that we recognize changes needed in these frameworks that encourage gender sensitivity, gender-fair practices, social equity, inclusion of indigenous and cultural knowledge, participation and partnerships, and access to resources and information. In changing and influencing organization structures, we will strive to:*

- 1) Develop legislation ensuring disaster risk reduction is gender sensitive and addresses social equity.
- 2) Ensure that gender issues and social equity become part of disaster risk reduction agendas at international and national levels.
- 3) Develop a global legal framework for ensuring risk reduction is gender sensitive.
- 4) Improve structural arguments in national governments, local governments and in non-governmental organizations that link gender, social equity, and risk reduction.
- 5) Institute a Global Fund for Gender-specific Disaster Risk Reduction (GDRR) (in all phases of Disaster Management) with national commitment and membership prerequisites to ensure resource allocation.
- 6) Establish mechanisms for gathering and distributing information related to gender mainstreaming in disaster risk management.

*Whereas it has been well recognized that disaster risk reduction benefits from*

multidisciplinary action with multiple perspectives working at international, national, and local levels through governmental and nongovernmental organizations, we promote **participatory action research and participatory approaches** to disaster risk reduction. We will, therefore, work to:

**1) Develop a gender focused ethical framework.**

- Develop a gender-focused ethic to frame disaster research with vulnerable populations, especially as it pertains to women – with consideration of unequal power relations---recognizing that gender: a) includes diversity of families and relationships, b) assists in examining diversity, and c) is an evolving concept due to its complexity in context and culture. This ethic should be incorporated into government, NGO, research and community levels, so that it permeates all levels of action and policies and funding.

**2) Ensure accountability to gender guidelines and frameworks.**

Hold all governments and NGO's, international agencies and research bodies accountable to existing gender guidelines and frameworks when commissioning design and practice of research.

- Review the ethical guidelines of researchers to insure the extent to which they are non-exploitive in process, practice, and policy.
- Ensure informed consent (what are the ethical guidelines of research) timing issues.
- Do no harm! Do Good always. Love thy neighbor. --- These are the ethical basis of any type of action and policy.

**3) Fund research that addresses vulnerability.**

- Focus funding sources on supporting research for social action, that address root causes of vulnerability.

**4) Develop indicators for gender analyses.**

- Develop indicators for gender analysis that include the following: a) health, b) assets, c) leadership, d) relationships, and e) poverty/economics. These should be understood and incorporated into action research.
- Develop benchmarks and indicators to monitor efforts to integrate gender equality and social vulnerability in national and international disaster risk reduction activities.

*Whereas* the participants of the Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop, Honolulu 2004, recognize that we all have spheres of influence and varying expertise, and that the men and women acknowledged and advocate their specific roles in ensuring gender equality, we will pursue disaster risk reduction in our activities and will strive to:

- Review the proposals and policies in disaster management and incorporate gender as an integral part (continuous and critical review of documents leading to Kobe 's discussions).
- Take core message of this conference and suggested action points to respective organizations.

- Build alliances and coalitions or work with existing coalitions to promote and build regional, national, international subsequently platforms towards influencing Kobe discussions and outcomes.
- Form an advocacy and learning group to monitor policy commitments made by our governments and international actors.

*Gender And Disaster Workshop III, Kocaeli Turkey October 2008*

*Executive Summary*

Responding to a [call](#) from USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, Office of Capacity Building and Development (FAS/OCBD) in 2007, a group of academicians from Kocaeli University, sent their proposals to organize the third workshop on gender and disasters. Considering the achievements that were made in the two previous workshops (Florida 2000 and Hawaii 2004), the applicants intended to create a workshop on the link between gender equality and disaster risk for effective disaster management and focused cultural issues and expanding the given framework towards gender-related issues and the influence of values and culture in disaster risk reduction. On the basis of their disaster work and the personal experience based upon horrific East Marmara earthquake that took thousands of lives in 1999 in the region where Kocaeli University is located, the organizers intended to bring scholars as well as community leaders, and NGO people together to investigate how gender based values and practices of culture influence actions responding the disasters and post-disaster relief efforts.

With its dynamic disaster relief community, the call was timely and corresponded well with the internal research and implementation agendas of the surrounding relief work community of Kocaeli. The applicants especially highlighted the need to work on both gender and culture related differences and problems in the post disaster context and developing strategies to deal with them. The purpose of the workshop – in a broad sense - was explained as the discussion and identification of gender related issues in the context of disasters on both national and international levels, helping to raise awareness for all involved and the proposal of possible solutions. More specifically, gender based powerlessness and identity related issues of the carriers of the humanitarian help and the community members were proposed as another focal point of the workshop. Although a significant amount of work has been produced in general, a very limited amount of this focused on gender related issues of disasters, the culture/religion related aspects of the support mechanisms and the economic facade and the application specifically focused on these.

After receiving the grant the organizers especially encouraged applications focusing on the perceived gender inequity and highlighting the connection between culture, gender and disasters. In light of these observations, the aim of the Workshop was supporting activities for raising awareness for specific gender related difficulties which victims face in disaster settings and promoting gender sensitive research in the field of disaster relief and management.

## Format

The opening of the meeting took place in Prof. Baki Komsuoğlu Congress Center, located at the Umuttepe Campus of [Kocaeli University](#). The rest of the workshop was hosted in [Derbent Hotel](#). The Workshop gathered about 200 junior and senior faculties working in disaster and disaster relief work along with participants from grassroots organizations and community leaders from the whole world.

After the presentation of a short documentary “Hear my Voice” by Nuran Bayer of Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) that introduced the major challenges that were faced by the women, men and children, the Workshop began with a keynote given by Professor Belkıs Kümbetoğlu, presenting the grounds and the objectives of the meeting. In the following one and a half day, [three panels](#) presented different aspects of the given issues and provided a significant background for the following discussions. On the basis of unique case studies, the first one discussed the gender aspects of natural disasters in general. Describing challenges faced by people in poverty in the context of disasters, the second panel explored the economic aftermath, socio-economic impacts of natural disasters, economic impact assessment of disasters on communities and normalization processes, empowerment mechanisms and capacity building. Highlighting the complexities, contradictions, and outcomes associated with women's, men's and children's responses to the disasters through academic work, the participants of the third panel discussed contemporary disaster research in Turkey.

After opening the meeting with the panels, the organizers met the session facilitators, the people who will be responsible for drafting workshop proceedings and the workshop participants to explain what we expect from them and how to conduct the sessions. In the following six workshops which were attended by the victims of the recent disasters, emergency responders, relief workers, volunteers of voluntary organizations, governmental representatives, as well as the researchers who will focus on gender related disaster topics, the various aspects of the disaster were discussed and the experiences were shared.

- Workshop 1: Effective and Gender Sensitive First Aid
- Workshop 2: Disaster Management, Security and Justice
- Workshop 3: Gender Differences in Psychological Distress and Emotional Recovery
- Workshop 4: The Roles of the Non-governmental Organizations During and After Disasters, Bridging the Local and International Agencies
- Workshop 5: Economics and Labor Relations: Natural Disasters and Women
- Workshop 6: Everyday Disaster Education and Gender Equality

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this workshop was to review our current understanding of gender and disaster dynamics and to outline important areas of emphasis for future international cooperation, research and awareness raising within the given framework. According to the participants of the previous workshops, the main difference of this one was its significant service for awareness raising, for bringing various actors together and its efforts to fill the gap between national-international, rural-urban and governmental-nongovernmental sectors. It needs to be highlighted that the workshop as a whole was a great success in bringing a number of public servants, NGO representatives and academicians together to discuss important issues related to the gender and natural disasters.

The closing session of the Workshop was dedicated to a general discussion on the output of the meetings, the potential next steps, and the lessons learned during the three days. The Workshop was an important step toward further cooperation among the different components of the disaster relief work as well as the international actors. While everybody agreed on the great opportunity during this event to gather people working in different sectors and create a suitable environment for these to share their experiences, it is clear that there is still a lot that needs to be done.

In their closing remarks, the participants identified the following potential next steps:

- This event demonstrated the need for a public forum to share and capitalize experiences in different contexts. Continuance of this forum would be an excellent place where victims of the natural disasters and the relief experts could share expertise.
- The location of the event allowed participants to compare their own experience with the experiences of other geographies and helped them to realize commonalities and specificities between different regions. Therefore, it may be appropriate to run a series of such events around the globe to gather more input from other regions.
- Calling attention to gender based vulnerability in the context of disasters, the participants agreed upon the introduction and/or continuation of grassroots education and capacity building efforts and creating practical tools to implement gender equality into disaster relief policies and programs.
- Raising the level of gender awareness of the national/local agencies requires collaborative work at the global scale and fostering mutual understanding and collaboration among international agencies and community agencies, integrating feedback from the grassroots is critical.
- Empowering women and making them part of the solution regarding not only gender related issues but also others, namely natural disaster risk reduction, environmental management, disaster response planning, relief efforts needs to occupy a focal point.

- Enhancing the aptitude of the international organizations to operate more effectively local community participation and engagement need to be promoted more efficiently.
- Improving community resilience during and after natural disasters is a crucial part of disaster readiness and the development of gender-sensitive programs designed to improve conditions are necessary for more functional and just recovery programs.
- It is essential that disaster respond models need to be updated constantly and the diffusion of gender sensitive information is crucial to have more balanced recovery programs.
- The current strategies of disaster research and their implementation are not adequate to address complex gender dynamics and multidisciplinary research. Therefore, more effective scholarly response which brings better understanding in various disciplines needs to be promoted.
- The workshop highlighted the need for more effective approaches to address cultural, national and local differences.

*For individual workshop reports, visit the Gender and Disaster Network:  
www.gdnonline.org*

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***Beijing Agenda for Global Action on Gender-Sensitive Disaster Risk Reduction  
Beijing, China, 22 April 2009***

We, the participants of the International Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction from 43 countries bringing expertise and knowledge from all regions of the world, have met in Beijing, China, from 20-22 April 2009. The conference built on the gains of a series of regional and international events in promoting gender equality in disaster risk reduction, including all gender-sensitive policies, risk assessment, early warning, and success indicators for building resilience of nations and communities to disasters. We acknowledge key regional and international processes and declarations such as the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and Africa, Call for Action on Gender and Climate Change by the International Colloquium in Liberia, Nairobi Plan of Action for African Parliamentarians on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation, Beijing Platform for Action, and the Manila Declaration for Global Action on Gender in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction presents consensus among the world political leaders on the critical importance of gender mainstreaming to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

We, the participants from 43 countries, UN agencies and Civil Societies around the world, have carefully reviewed the progress, and identified and agreed upon challenges

from a gender perspective under the five themes of the Conference: (1) Promoting policy changes for gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction; (2) Linking disaster risk reduction with poverty reduction from a gender perspective, (3) Making disaster risk reduction a tool for climate change adaptation; (4) Ensuring equal participation of men and women in building community resilience to disasters and (5) Women and post-disaster relief and reconstruction: one year after the Wenchung earthquake in China.

We fully recognize that disasters triggered by natural hazards such as flood, drought, tropical storms and earthquake are on the rise. Today, the most frequent disasters are climate-related. The rising trend of disasters poses serious challenges for the world to achieve MDGs, especially food security, poverty reduction, and environment sustainability. International data available highlight disasters hit poor the most although the rich are not necessarily excluded from the impacts.

We are fully aware that women comprise 70% of the world's poor and women are more vulnerable to the impact of disaster due to the existing socio-economic, political and cultural disadvantages. Prevailing policies and frameworks do not adequately recognize and support the crucial role that women play in sustaining household and community economies and social networks. Climate change outcomes will make the daily life of millions of women in developing countries even more difficult, primarily due to environmental degradation. We raise concern that gender remains a marginalised issue in the current national and international negotiations around disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Gender considerations have been hardly applied as fundamental principle in policy and framework development.

We are fully convinced that issues of *gender, poverty reduction, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and post disaster recovery and reconstruction* that we discussed at this conference are all components of development process. Gender equality is a fundamental development issue, which needs to be integrated and addressed throughout the development process. Disaster risks and the risks arising from climate change and rapid urbanisation are challenges that the development process faces to an ever increasing degree. We need political will and commitment, scientifically-sound approach, policies and programmes, and action plans to address these complex issues. It is important to adopt an innovative and comprehensive approach.

We need integrated development policies, planning and implementation processes which take into account disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation with gender as a cross cutting issue. We fully promote that multi-stakeholder, multi-sector, multi disciplinary and multi-level cooperation and collaboration as a winwin option to achieve and sustain gender equality. Only in this way, will sustainable development be achievable.

We are all convinced and committed to advocate the importance and need for integrating a gender perspective in policies and programmes in our own capacities as politicians, senior government officials, and development and humanitarian actors.

*We, therefore, recommend 9 achievable actions before 2015. We request national Governments to make strong commitments in line with international mechanisms:*

1. Increase political commitment to gender analysis and gender mainstreaming through enhanced cooperation and collaboration between Ministries responsible for disaster risk reduction, climate change, poverty reduction and gender issues, with the participation of civil society;
2. Develop and review national policies, relevant laws, strategies, plans, and budgets and take immediate action to mainstream gender into national development policies, planning and programmes;
3. Foster the linkage between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation from a gender perspective through policy and administrative measures;
4. Collect gender-specific data and statistics on impact of disasters, carry out gender-sensitive vulnerability, risk and capacity assessments and develop gender sensitive-indicators to monitor and measure progress;
5. Increase awareness of the public and media on the gender-sensitive vulnerabilities and capacities in disasters and gender-specific needs and concerns in disaster risk reduction and management;
6. Support research institutions to study the cost-benefit and efficiency of gender-sensitive policies and programmes in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and poverty reduction;
7. Secure the actual application of disaster risk assessments as part of development policy-making and programme formulation to prevent disasters from making the poor even poorer;
8. Improve and mainstream a gender perspective and equal participation between men and women in the coordination of disaster preparedness, humanitarian response, and recovery through capacity building and training.
9. Build and enhance the capacities of professional organizations, communities and pertinent national and local institutions to enable gender mainstreaming into all development sectors.

*We, the participants, endorse the 9 points listed above and reaffirm our commitment to gender equality as a fundamental development issue, which needs to be integrated and addressed throughout the development process.*

We, the participants, require accountability from all development stakeholders, in particular, Governments, especially national committees or platforms, development

cooperation partners for disaster risk reduction, review and report their progress in the implementation of the above actions, as part of the reports to UNISDR secretariat for the mid-term review of Hyogo Framework of Action in 2011. Parliamentarians and counselors take actions to ensure gender mainstreaming in national legislation through policy and budget allocations at national and local levels. UNISDR secretariat and UNIFEM to facilitate the process in mainstreaming a gender perspective into disaster risk reduction and provide technical support to the governments and all stakeholders UNISDR Secretariat in collaboration with other relevant UN agencies must continue to develop tools and methodologies to build awareness and support national processes to ensure that gender equality considerations are fully integrated in all disaster management processes and practice UNDP, in collaboration with other UN agencies to provide concrete guidelines and support for making disaster risk assessment and reduction as an integral part of poverty reduction strategies and programmes at country and local level. The World Bank and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) must ensure disaster risk reduction is integrated in the country development assistance. UNFCCC secretariat and UNISDR secretariat work closely together to provide concrete guidelines for making gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction as part of the Copenhagen strategy for climate change adaptation at COP-15.

*We therefore recommend* that the global initiative on gender and disaster risk reduction should be linked to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and use the biennial Global Platform for disaster risk reduction as a mechanism to monitor and assess the progress made at national level.