

GENDER EXPERTS' VOICE HEARD AT REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND SOUTH CAUCASUS ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FOR POST-2015 AGENDA

Background information

The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) which will be held in March 2015 in Sendai, Japan is very important and crucial intergovernmental event which intends to further contribute to stronger states' commitments with clear and practical measures for implementing sustainable development from gender and human rights perspectives.

As the Conference is expected to endorse an action-oriented outcome document incorporating modalities of cooperation for implementation of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (HFA2), it is crucial to ensure that a gender perspective is taken into account in the drafting of the outcome and actions on DRR promote gender equality and women's leadership in DRR actions.

In this regard, UN Women and UNFPA as co-organizers of Stakeholder Group Meeting on Gender and Women's Issues in Disaster Risk Reduction within a frame of the UNISDR's regional consultations for Central Asia and South Caucasus in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 1-2 April 2014 had intended to contribute to the consultations by highlighting a need to ensure efficient gender mainstreaming into DRR agenda formulation and reaffirming a vital role of women and the need for their full and equal participation and leadership in all areas of sustainable development and DRR and the need to unlock the potential of women as drivers of sustainable development.

What are the main barriers and challenges to implement the recommended actions?

➤ The lack of strong focus on gender as a stimulus for progress in DRR:

- Poor understanding of the socio-economic gender vulnerabilities
- Lack of gender statistics and gender-disaggregated data do not allow having a clear picture. It is initial and crucial to understand clearly the overall risks and the risk for men and women separately
- Gender has received alarmingly little prominence in the core HFA documents and national reporting by the countries
- Differentiated nature of risks and vulnerability for men and women, boys and girls
- Poor understanding of the importance of gender education for children and adolescents



➤ **Weak gender mainstreaming in national policies, strategies and plans for DRR and management:**

- Lack of evidence (gender-responsive vulnerability and capacity assessments, gender analysis) used in national development policies, planning and programs on DRR
- Needs (including health, especially, sexual and reproductive health, education, social protection, etc.) of women, adolescents/youth and people with disabilities not adequately and comprehensively addressed in DRR strategies
- Weak linkages of national gender equality policy framework with DRR strategies



- Lack of baseline information on women's and men's participation in DRR at local and national level
- Limited gender specific data and statistics on impacts of disasters and sex-disaggregated data of loss and damage
- Limited gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and measure progress on DRR
- Lack of genuine political accountability and efficient financial resources for gender responsive DRR
- Limited national reporting on progress made in mainstreaming gender into DRR and promoting gender perspectives of sustainable development at local and national level
- Lack of understanding of the relationship between gender equality and DRR.



➤ **Limited participation of women and their representation at all levels of decision-making processes:**

- Limited women's participation in formal DRR processes at all levels, including policy and decision-making with bottom-up approach
- Untapped potential of women and women's organizations for implementation of the HFA in terms of ideas, capacities, and experience.
- Lack of institutional and individual capacity and tools to mainstream gender and DRR at the organizational planning, policy-making and implementation levels
- Limited financial resources to develop and implement women's NGOs' innovative initiatives aiming to improve gender responsiveness of DRR at local and national level
- Lack of accessible information for women on DRR at all levels

Summary of discussions:

The Gender Stakeholders Group pointed a need to clearly highlight principles to follow to ensure an efficient gender mainstreaming into DRR-related agenda within Post-2015 framework:

- to focus exactly on the gender-related priorities and commitments through 1) a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment, and 2) integration of gender aspects into all goals/targets on Sustainable Development and DRR (risk prevention, risk reduction and building resilience/sustainability of achieved results);
- to supplement short-term actions with long-term ones, precisely affecting the achievement of specific changes – from changes in legislation as a short-term measure to changes in attitudes, recognition, behavior and culture as a whole;
- DRR-related goals/targets should contribute to achieving concrete progress with regard to human development and human security - so should include human-oriented indicators and outcome;
- recognize that gender education is a priority allowing to acquire necessary changes. It has to be integrated into all levels of education in general for cultural, social and other changes, especially at the level of higher education (law, social work, public health, political science, psychology, etc.)

The Gender Stakeholders' Group agreed on the priority areas for inclusion of gender perspectives in DRR in the context of Post-2015 international development agenda

Priority area	Recommendations
<p>1. Increased accountability of countries for implementation of international commitments to promote gender equality through gender mainstreaming into national policies, strategies and plans for sustainable development and DRR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to improve institutional and individual capacity and tools for gender mainstreaming into DRR national coordination mechanisms and national platforms and for an analysis of a progress towards gender mainstreaming in DRR • to improve conceptual and practical understanding of linkages between gender and DRR at the national level • to develop tools that will strengthen public accountability and obligations to implement gender-responsive DRR and for results-based monitoring and reporting on a progress of gender mainstreaming in DRR • to promote collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data on disaster risks, occurrence, impact and losses at all levels (including in line with the new indicator system on DRR) (more than every 10 years). To include gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and track progress on DRR, consequently sustainable development • to improve mechanisms for policy implementation, knowledge and education on DRR, including public officials, public (especially women and vulnerable constituencies), and media • to introduce gender budgeting instruments for planning/budgeting of DRR • to ensure consideration of the impact of migration and the relationship between risks of conflicts and disasters in terms of gendered vulnerability • to ensure interactions and partnership with religious institutions/faith-based organizations on enforcement of DRR commitments • to include gender issues in the Third National Communication on Climate Change • to develop and adapt educational materials for key stakeholders that ensure gender mainstreaming into DRR • to strengthen focus on the responsibility of the business sector (how to avoid discrimination within business companies, etc.)
<p>2. Gender equality at all levels of decision-making, implementation, coordination and evaluation of DRR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to build national and local women's groups'/NGOs'/gender experts' capacities on gender aspects of DRR strategies formulation, implementation and monitoring and provide them with a platform to be heard and lead • to enhance participation of gender experts, women/women's groups/NGOs, including from rural areas, with a focus on communities and the most vulnerable and marginalized in institutional arrangements/partnerships/coordination mechanisms and platforms and to create interdisciplinary expert groups on DRR • to document and disseminate good practices on integration of gender into DRR to promote women as agents for change • to enhance women's (including women with disabilities and women in post-crisis) understanding of and access to early warning systems, to healthcare (including sexual and reproductive health/SRH) and basic social services, shelter and security in the context of the DRR

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to actively cooperate with the media in order to highlight the vulnerability of women and girls in the context of the DRR, to promote success stories on women's participation in decision-making and to overcome stereotypes regarding the roles of women and men in saving lives • to support networks and partnerships between members of women's movement in the region • to introduce a quota for women's participation in decision-making • to develop the assessment tools for gender-sensitive DRR (how to achieve holistic and integrated actions in environmental policy, climate change, emergencies and gender mainstreaming commitments, etc.) • to promote legal education of women about their rights, including sexual and reproductive health with a focus on vulnerable women (HIV- positive, sex workers, people with disabilities, etc.) and to improve their access to services to protect their rights • to promote equality within women's group (to avoid discrimination among women themselves) and to avoid "manipulation" involving women - not just ensuring women's representation, but a meaningful participation by giving them voice, the right and opportunities to express their position
<p>3. Prevention of gender discrimination and gender-based violence in order to reduce the risk and vulnerabilities in the context of DRR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to conduct gender-analysis and gender-based vulnerability and risk assessments • to integrate priorities on prevention and response to violence against women and girls in disaster and post-disaster contexts into a national DRR framework • to design international guidelines for the development of plans subject to the minimum standards and commitments • to integrate the Minimal Initial Service Package (MISP) for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in humanitarian crises (risk reduction and disaster management) into relevant sectoral plans and programs for DRR • to strengthen mechanisms for the protection and assistance to women and girls in the context of DRR

Gender Stakeholders Commit:

- to assist in the implementation of international agreements reached within the framework of the global agenda on DRR, through integration into national and sectoral policies
- to promotion of international standards related to the achievement of gender equality through education within the framework of the existing training programs and courses
- to facilitate harmonization of the obligations under the HFA 2 and sustainable development commitments previously made by States in the field of human rights and gender equality
- to facilitate assessment of potential health system preparedness for crisis management using WHO tools
- to contribute to development of a strategy for DRR for the period Post-2015 from a gender perspective at all levels
- to contribute to empower and strengthen the capacity of women as the main actor for the sustainable development of communities to

ensure the full and equal participation of women in all areas of sustainable development and DRR

- to support dissemination of information about HFA2 among young people



- to facilitate creation of national groups with the participation of UN agencies, the National Women's Machinery, representatives from line ministries and NGOs to develop the action plan which reflects the recommendations and commitments developed during this consultation in an integrated manner

The Group suggests:

The following mechanisms for the periodic review of the commitments:

- Through regular national reports on progress and thematic submissions by various partners (including by NGOs, etc.)
- At the global level, there should be an institutional mechanism for the collection, analysis, reporting on the progress and feedback on the prioritization of the actions by the country to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including gender.

Means for the measurement of a progress:

- The indicators included in the document on the new system of indicators to measure progress in disaster risk management should be disaggregated by sex and age.
- It is necessary to supplement the indicators that can be selected based on a review of existing indexes and indicators, such as:
 - The index of the physical security of women and men, boys and girls
 - Indicators characterizing the access of women and men to public and municipal services for DRR
 - The share of public expenditure on the specific needs of men and women, boys and girls in the context of DRR
 - Proportion of reports on incidence of violence and discrimination in the total number of appeals, etc.



United Nations Population Fund



Бюро по сокращению риска бедствий ООН



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women