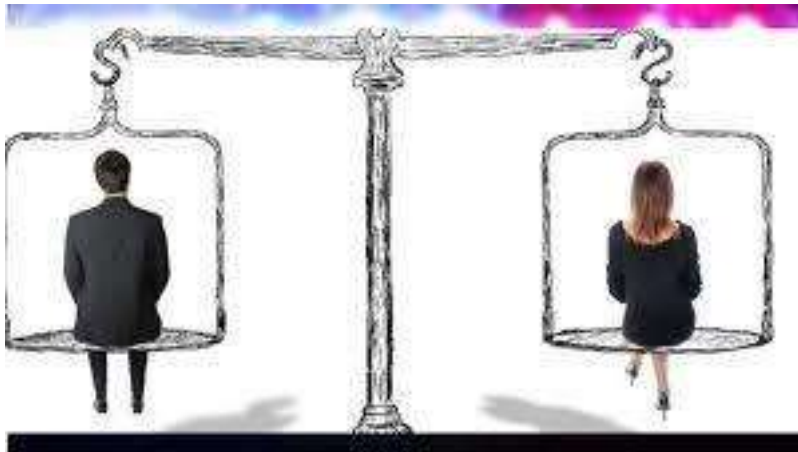


Webinar on Gender Sensitive Disaster Risk Management for effective DRR



**Date: 29th January 2021
Time: 1400 hrs to 1600 hrs**

Back Ground

Disasters and their aftermaths mirror the pre-existing social inequalities of caste, class, ethnicity, sexualities, disability and age, with gender cutting across in all of them. In the wake

of a disaster, gender relations and issues are generally considered to be irrelevant or as a luxury. The differential impact of disasters on men/boys and women/girls is not taken into account while responding to the needs of the affected community. Resource distribution in a post disaster scenario, which are intended for the entire population of a disaster-affected area, rely on the existing structures of distribution that reflect the patriarchal structure of society, and hence women/girls are marginalized in their access to such resources.

Meanwhile, the potential contributions that women can offer to disaster risk reduction around the world are often overlooked and their leadership in building community resilience to disasters is hardly highlighted. This is reflected in the lack of a platform for women in formal disaster management organizations for sharing their needs, experiences and priorities. Gender stereotypes also places stress on men to assume greater responsibilities on account of gendered norms and expectations. Masculinity norms may encourage risky and heroic action during the search and rescue period, debris removal, and reconstruction, and deter men from approaching agencies for assistance and or seeking counselling later.

Hence, the differential needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of men/boys and women/girls need to be taken into account while designing any intervention in the pre- as well as post disaster scenario. The post-disaster period opens a window of opportunities for advancing social justice, redressing inequalities and reducing vulnerabilities. It offers opportunities to break down old patterns of dominance and to restructure decision-making processes. Building on empowering experiences after a disaster can facilitate the breakdown of gender stereotypes that often impede women's advancement in the economic, political and social spheres. Post-disaster recovery should therefore be guided by the overall principle of contributing to a just and equitable society where in women and other previously marginalized groups become equal players in the re-development of the country.

In disasters, the needs of women, girls, boys and men are different and distinct. Scientific research demonstrates how women are disproportionately affected by natural disaster events. More marginalized populations, including women, tend to be disproportionately and negatively impacted when natural disasters happen. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), Agency for Humanity, and the Sustainable Development Goals, all commit to reaching the most vulnerable women, girls, boys, and men as well as work upon the needs of diverse and at-risk groups in situations of disaster vulnerability and risk. SFDRR also states that women and their participation are critical to effectively managing the disaster risk. The pledge to leave no one behind is the central theme of the 2030 Agenda and places a new

obligation on our commitment to reach and transform the lives of those who are at most risk of being left behind.

Challenges for gender mainstreaming in DRR

Poor understanding of gender in DRR linkages at the policy and practitioner levels. Gender equality in DRR does not mean merely addressing women's issues - it means addressing concerns of both men and women, the relations between them and the root causes of imbalances. Gender issues are often institutionally marginalized within organizations. Gender issues become perfunctorily treated as 'just women's issues', there is a notable absence of male champions, and gender 'expertise' is applied in isolation from development processes like DRR.

Gender continues to be identified as an 'add on' aspect, rather than an integral component. The development and DRR fields are now addressing relatively new priority programming issues such as climate change that compete with other programmes for donors. This means that gender and DRR can be de-prioritized when they are not understood to be cross-cutting issues. There is a lack of genuine political accountability and financial resources for global advocacy and action on gender and DRR. Commitment to the issue largely remains in the documentation alone. There have been no significant moves to translate words into actions in terms of concrete policies, finances, substantive programmes or accountability measures. Gender mainstreaming in DRR remains a free choice with no accountability, no checks and balances, no ownership, and no medium or long-term commitment.

Policy foundations

The Member States of the United Nations have demonstrated consistent political commitment to gender equality. Over the years this has been emphasized in the UN charter, UN Conventions, Declarations and Programmes of Action. These policy guidelines are mainly based on:

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948);
2. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979);
3. Agenda 21 (UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992);
4. The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (2005);

5. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2007).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms the equal rights of men and women, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are together commonly referred to as the international legal framework for the equal rights of women. Under this framework, governments are bound to guarantee men and women equal opportunities in terms of economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights. State Parties agree to incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their national constitutions and/or other appropriate legislation, and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle.

Chapter 24 of the Agenda 21 UN Conference on Environment and Development calls upon governments to make necessary constitutional, legal, administrative, cultural, social, and economic changes in order to eliminate all obstacles to women's full involvement in sustainable development and in public life. Agenda 21 is to be achieved through government policies, national guidelines, and plans to ensure equity in all aspects of society, including women's 'key involvement' in decision-making and environmental management.

The Hyogo Framework states that a gender perspective should be integrated into all DRR policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples specially prohibits discrimination against women, providing that all the rights and freedoms recognized in the Declaration be guaranteed equally to male and female indigenous people.

The above instruments have provided a comprehensive legal framework for policy guidelines for promoting gender equality in DRR, which is closely linked with human rights, equality, the environment, and socioeconomic development issues.

Objective:

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

1. To provide an overview of the basic concepts in gender,
2. To discuss the gendered and differential impact of disasters on women and men,
3. To illustrate case studies highlighting the specific impact of disasters on women,
4. To highlight the lessons learnt from past disasters from a gender perspective,

5. To discuss the role of women as effective responders, and;
6. To highlight the need to use disasters as an opportunity to empower women.

Target Audience: Gender Resource Centre: Women and Child Development Department, ASHA workers, Education Department, Tribal Development Department, Social Justice and Empowerment Department.