



Name of Event: [Roundtable] Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Sensitive

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Panellists:

- Ms. Lorena Aguilar, Senior Global Gender Adviser, IUCN (Chair)
- Ms. Margareta Wahlstrom, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Dr. Lily Caravantes, Presidential Secretary for Food Safety and Nutrition, Guatemala
- Dr. P.G. Dar Chakrabarti, Executive Director of the National Institute of Disaster Management of India, and Director of the SAARC Disaster Management Centre at New Delhi, India
- Ms. Laura Gurza, General Coordinator of Civil Protection of the Ministry of Interior, Mexico
- Ms. Poloto Fakafanua-Paunga, Deputy Director and Head of Women Affairs and Culture, Ministry of Education, Women's Affairs and Culture, Tonga
- Hon. Ms. Saumura Tioulong, International Parliament Union Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, Cambodia

1. Outline

The panel discussed the pressing issues on gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction as well as the challenges and opportunities to make disaster risk reduction gender sensitive at the local, national, regional and international levels. Among the relevant key issues discussed were: (1) accelerating HFA implementation, particularly in mainstreaming of gender and disaster risk reduction into development processes; (2) considering women as leaders and catalysts of change; (3) building and accessing information and knowledge on gender and disaster risk reduction to support decision-making; (4) institutionalising the many positive social changes at the local level; (5) developing public policy and accountability mechanisms that ensure gender and disaster risk reduction consideration; and (6) sustaining gender as a major agenda in the Global Platform for DRR.

2. Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

- Women are leaders and catalysts of change and solutions, and not merely a vulnerable group or passive victims of disasters. Efforts must be enhanced and sustained in raising awareness for mindset change and building capacity for mainstreaming gender and disaster risk reduction into development.
- Integrating a gender-perspective into disaster risk reduction increases efficiency and effectiveness in building resilience of countries and communities to disasters;
- The twin gender and disaster risk reduction issue cut across all the development sectors. Making disaster risk reduction gender sensitive is an integral component and important prerequisite of sustainable development.
- Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and gender is a collective challenge that calls for building alliances and multi-partnerships, and transcending political affiliations. It should remain as a major Global Platform agenda.
- Addressing gender imbalance and differentiation needs to consider access to information, knowledge and decision-making tools as well as to strategies for adapting to climate change, among others.
- Government accountability in mainstreaming gender perspective should be addressed with the active role of parliamentarians and civil societies, requesting governments to report HFA progress in accordance with UNISDR guidelines and indicators.

3. Conclusions

- Integrating gender into DRR remains an on-going challenge, however progress is being made, albeit slowly.
- In advancing gender issues, the creation of alliances and synergies amongst all stakeholders will be imperative, if maximum benefit is to be derived.
- Taking a gender perspective in DRR has less to do with political correctness and more to do with effective development, preventing and mitigating the effects of disasters on the most vulnerable and the equitable sharing of benefits.
- Women are leaders and agents of change and solutions, vital and indispensable holders of valuable knowledge and skills, and able leaders from community to global level.
- Gender is a mission-critical development component and tool that should be recognised as such in order to scale up the impact and effectiveness of DRR across the globe.