Integrating Gender into Humanitarian Action: Good Practices from Asia 1
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Statistics show that women are disproportionately negatively affected by disasters. As an example, the devastating Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 took the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in Asia, and over 70 percent of the victims were women. Women are often posed at risk when social and cultural norms limit their mobility – according to some studies, women are 14 times more likely to die during a disaster than men.

The humanitarian community has been taking steady steps to ensure an effective humanitarian system for all women, men, boys and girls affected by disasters. As stated in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the reduction of risks from disasters requires engagement and partnership from all in society.

On the following pages, you can read about successful initiatives that have been taken in Asia to ensure an equal treatment of all in society before, during and after disasters.

Sources:
UNFPA, WEDO (2009): Climate Change Connections: Women at the Forefront


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Persistent pre-disaster gender inequalities lead to differences in response and coping strategies and have different implications for recovery.

Apply gender equality to programming
DRR Gender Checklist as a Preparedness Tool in the Philippines

The ‘DRR Gender Checklist’ ensures the implementation of gender-inclusive and responsive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programs in the Philippines. Utilised by national line ministries, local government units, academia, and government-owned corporations, the checklist is a simple tool to address gender-related issues during the planning stage of DRR programs.

The Checklist was created by a working group, led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), with participation from UN agencies, INGOs and the Government of the Philippines, as part of the development of the Philippine Harmonized Gender Guidelines. The guidelines include a number of gender checklists covering several sectors, aiming to ensure integration of gender inclusiveness in programs related to disaster prevention and mitigation, disaster preparedness, disaster response, rehabilitation and recovery.

For further information and access to the checklist please contact Ms. Rowena Dacsig (dacsig@un.org).

Rowena Dacsig, UNOCHA
Shirkat Gah was initiated as a small voluntary collective in Pakistan in 1975, and has since evolved into a leading women’s rights organisation. Working in 44 districts across Pakistan’s four provinces, the organisation operates six Women Friendly Spaces set up in the aftermath of the devastating floods that hit Pakistan in 2010. These centres provide safe spaces for women affected by gender-based violence, providing psychosocial support as well as opportunities to participate in local support groups and receive information about gender-based violence.

The centres are springboards for empowerment, in which women feel safe to plan for a better future for themselves and their children. The skills learned at the centres help women and girls better negotiate their rights at home as well as demand better quality services and accountability.

Khadija Parveen, Shirkat Gah Pakistan
UN Women and OCHA in Pakistan and Afghanistan developed a gender emergency checklist for distribution among humanitarian partners in the immediate aftermath of the 2015 earthquake in northeast Afghanistan. This simple tool reminds all actors of the key gender issues to consider right in the immediate response.
Nepal Earthquake: Promoting Gender Equality in Disaster Response

Only five days after the devastating earthquake hit Nepal in April 2015, the Inter-Cluster Gender Working Group was in full operation, providing advice to the clusters to ensure gender equality was prioritised in the response. The Working Group, co-chaired by UNOCHA and UN Women, developed gender equality indicators to track women’s participation in decision-making committees and to understand women’s and men’s different perceptions of the adequacy, fairness and transparency of relief efforts. For the first time globally, gender indicators were included in the Flash Appeal Monitoring Framework, used to measure the overall effectiveness of the response.

Nepali women’s groups were actively involved in advocacy work, and together with UN Women, developed a common charter of demands for gender equality and the empowerment of women, which was later presented at the World Humanitarian Summit consultations.

The Humanitarian Country Team in Nepal will continue to advocate for gender equality recommending the establishment of a common information management framework for the collection of sex and age disaggregated data and the development of gender indicators to inform policy making.

Marie Pettersson, UN Women