

特集

論文

「ジェンダーと災害」という視点 —災害リスク軽減におけるジェンダー的側面の理解に向けて—

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*Did You Say Gender and Disaster?:
Understanding Gender Dimensions in Reducing Disaster Risks*

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要旨

本稿では、ジェンダーと災害の意味とその影響、また国際・国内・地域の各レベルにおけるプログラムと政策を通じていかにこの問題が取り扱われてきたかを考察する。ジェンダー問題は日常生活における相互関係の中に存在するものであり、ジェンダーは諸関係における権力の格差を生じさせる。災害は社会に現存する社会的、経済的、政治的諸問題を増幅させる。社会的不平等と不公正は災害時において拡大する。それゆえ、災害リスク管理におけるジェンダー的側面を理解することは、リスク軽減に有効な一定の認識を喚起することとなる。

近年の災害は、災害時にジェンダーがどのように機能するかを理解する為のコンテキストを提供してくれる。これらの状況は災害時に起こりうる多くのジェンダー問題を明らかにしている。例えば、公的・非公的なリスク管理部門におけるジェンダーによる分業、暴力の発生と被害体験、リスク軽減に役立つ回復力強化に向けた社会的援助に対する認識と支援の欠如といった問題である。

本稿はその後、ジェンダーと災害リスク軽減を扱った近年の国際的な努力と先駆的試みについての議論に移る。10年近くにわたり、研究者やフィールドワーカーらは、災害リスクに関する議論をジェンダー問題を含めるところまで拡大することに努めてきた。「ジェンダーと災害ネットワーク (Gender and Disaster Network)」として知られているこのコミュニティの自発的取り組みは、意思決定者や災害リスク管理担当者に影響を与え続けている。最近の取り組みとしては、災害リスク軽減計画およびプログラムの改善のためにインターネットを通じて利用可能な資料の特定を行っている。

キーワード：ジェンダー、災害、リスク軽減、脆弱性

When we talk about the subject of gender and disaster in groups of disaster managers, we see blank stares on faces as if we were speaking a foreign

language. How can one possibly speak of these two subjects in the same sentence? How could consideration of gender shape the way that we think

about disasters or risk reduction? For the growing community of risk reduction experts thinking about gender issues, there is an obvious connection: gender informs every aspect of human society and interaction. Given that disasters exacerbate tensions in these interactions, understanding the ways that gender works helps to expose social problems and vulnerabilities, and can ultimately help design and plan better risk management programs in all phases of a disaster cycle.

In this article, we will explore the meanings and effects of gender and disaster and how these have been articulated through programs and policies at international, national, and local levels. We will then look at international initiatives focus on gender and disaster risk reduction. For nearly a decade, researchers and field workers have tried to expand the discussion of disaster risk to include gender issues. The voluntary efforts of this community, known as the “Gender and Disaster Network,” continue to influence decision makers and disaster risk managers. The most recent work has been to identify resource materials that can be made readily available using the internet to improve disaster risk reduction plans and programs.

Seeing Gender Issues in Disaster

The past two years have unfortunately provided numerous examples for understanding gender in disaster. Images from the South Asia tsunami and Hurricane Katrina provide some visual examples of gender issues in disaster; yet, these are only two recent experiences highlighting the importance of gender in disaster situations.

On December 26, 2004, a tsunami in the Indian Ocean devastated many coastal and island communities in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Maldives, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania, and Kenya (with greater impacts closer to the epicenter near Aceh in Indonesia). Because of the magnitude of the disaster

and the fact that it was a regional event rather than a disaster that occurred in a single nation, worldwide attention focused on the natural hazard and ways to provide assistance to a degree and in ways that had not previously occurred. Within a few days, a great international humanitarian effort began to provide support and assistance for response and recovery operations. Media featured stories centered on human experience and reported these stories to build and sustain international interest in the relief efforts. We heard stories of immense personal tragedies and heroism — displaced children who had lost families, parents desperately searching for their children, grief stricken communities, and people from many distant locations traveling to help search for victims of the disaster. Cries for water, food, medicine, shelter, and all types of assistance were heard around the world.

Amidst all of these pleas for assistance, new types of crisis stories began to emerge — if you listened for them. While the death toll rose, initial estimates revealed that female deaths represented seventy-five to eighty percent of the victims in villages in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India [BBC News 3/26/2005; Oxfam 2005:2]. Requests through women’s online networks called for sanitary napkins, feminine hygiene products, and sanitary kits for childbirth to accommodate pregnant survivors because these products were not included in the relief packages of food, water, and medicines. Emergency camp relief workers reported cases of rape, sexual harassment, and forced marriages [BBC News 3/26/2005]. Reports of children kidnapped from hospitals by human traffickers reminded us not only of the established networks of these traffickers in the region but also of the social and economic instability in the region. These reports seem diverse, but they can be analyzed from a common theme of gender and they all emerge from situations of socioeconomic vulnerability already in existence prior to the disaster.

Though this may be the first time that these messages have been so strongly apparent in

mainstream media, these types of stories are ever-present in disasters. In fact, disasters amplify social, economic, and political realities as it exposes the underlying societal vulnerabilities. The social vulnerabilities, however, are the least considered and incorporated into plans to reduce impacts of natural hazards. The requests for assistance following the initial response phases called for installing an early warning buoy system similar to the one that has been developed in the Pacific Ocean to alert people of an impending tsunami hazard. An early warning system is important, but the infrastructure has to also be in place to use the information. When one hears sirens, one must know how to react. Expensive, technical solutions will only reduce the impact of the hazard by the capacity of the responders to hear the warnings and make rapid decisions. The mere fact that many women and children never learned how to swim limited their ability to respond to flooding, but swimming lessons would have been an inexpensive endeavor in reducing casualties from the event. Women's traditional clothing in some of the affected areas restricted movement and prevented quick escapes from the floodwaters. Incorporating the social components of disaster risk reduction are every bit as important as the costly technical measures.

Turning to the disaster following Hurricane Katrina in the United States in 2005, it did not seem to matter that the event occurred in a “developed” country, the images of victims remained the same — those people with the lowest socioeconomic status in their society. Media reported sexual assaults and violence in the stadium that became last minute shelter for many of the residents of New Orleans who were unable to evacuate [Burnett 2005; Women's E-News 2005]. Days after the levees broke, the people we saw rescued from rooftops were primarily women who seemed to be caretakers of children and elderly — those who were poor. The face of disaster tended to be non-Caucasian women. Following the disaster, analysts discussed issues of race, which were definitely apparent; yet, very few

mentioned gender issues, even though these issues coincided with the stereotypes cast for men as either violent looters or rescuers and for women as victims.

Weeks after the disaster, reporters claimed not to have confirmed the reports of rape from the shelters and dismissed these accounts because of the lack of evidence. Similarly, discussions following the tsunami claimed that there was not sufficient evidence to indicate that more women had been killed than men. Fortunately, a few organizations were collecting data. Often in the midst of crisis, the focus is directed on survival, not on data collection or concern about proving the impacts of the disaster. Therefore, it is easy to dismiss some gender issues.

Defining Gender — Not Just a Reference to Women

The term gender has several meanings, one of which includes a part of grammar in some languages where language is determined masculine, feminine, or neuter. Another definition is “the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex” [Merriam-Webster, Incorporated 1994:484]. Beyond these simple definitions, the term gender has been debated and critiqued from different perspectives and becomes a complex basis for analysis. While sex is biologically determined, gender is socially constructed. “What makes the study of gender both controversial and of consequence is not that the attributes of men and women are widely believed to be different; rather, it is because these different attributes are differentially valued” [Berscheid 1993:ix]. Berscheid also points out that “not only is our society not gender-free, gender in our society is neither value-free nor value-equal” [Berscheid 1993:ix].

International organizations have evolved from considering women and development issues to gender and development. “Gender refers to the social differences and relations between men and women which are learned, vary widely among societies and cultures, and change over time”

[UNESCO 2000]. Gender refers to “culturally and historically specific concepts of femininity and masculinity, and the power relations between men and women” [Homborgh 1993:15]. The terminology used by organizations has changed to reflect the reality that Berscheid describes, as the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women set policies to achieve “gender equality” [DAW 2001; UNESCO 2000]. Focus on gender and disaster risk reduction evolved in part from the considerations of “gender and” issues, such as gender and development and gender and the environment. In this discussion, gender is considered in its broadest definitions, looking at social construction and at the way that gender reveals power in social relationships.

We examine systems in terms of gender to understand power associated with privilege and challenge conceptions of the production of knowledge [Naples 2003]. Gender as an analytical tool does not stand on its own, but causes us to look at other aspects such as class, race, ethnicity, and poverty [Hartmann 1987:109-134; McCann and Kim 2003]. As the examples above indicate, gender analysis applied to disaster risk management reveals other social issues related to race, ethnicity, class, and poverty.

Gender Analysis in Disasters

In a gender analysis of disaster risk management, it is important to ask where women are, just as Cynthia Enloe did in trying to understand international politics [Enloe 1989:7-11, 200]. This is necessary because women are not seen frequently in formal disaster risk reduction institutions but are frequently visible in humanitarian relief organizations, such as the Red Cross. Work that women engage in to reduce disasters is noteworthy, and needs to be incorporated in the framework of risk reduction. Just “adding women,” however, does not promise to reduce the impact of disasters. One of the problems with this approach has been that women do not

represent a universal category of shared experience, and the assumptions associated with adding women to disaster risk reduction programs is that there will be a universal positive outcome by centering women. The location of women geographically and socially provides different ways of looking at and conceptualizing “disaster” and different experiences in dealing with these crises.

The gender analysis of risk management highlights differentiated power structures and the inherent inequalities that produce gendered disasters. In the most basic conceptualization of disasters, the greatest tragedies occur in places that lack financial resources and the power to determine policies affecting land and structural management and overall safety. The populations considered most vulnerable to disaster risks are women, primarily because of their socioeconomic positions. Power held by governance systems and in institutions determines knowledge used in planning and access to information and resources to reduce disaster risks.

“Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized... Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation” [Foucault 1980:98, British spelling]. Application of this notion of power enables a conceptualization of an exercise of power throughout disaster risk management. It is not centralized, but may be exerted through response agencies at local and national levels, or through donor agencies and multinational organizations on regional and international levels.

Gender operates at multiple scales: international, national, and local. The local arena is where we experience the disaster, while the national and international arenas set the stage for policies, planning, and programs at all phases of the disaster cycle — but these scales intersect and overlap and do not provide neat categories for analysis. Gender issues appear in institutions, agencies, and organizations, and this influences the type of programs that are developed and implemented. The

culture of the society and communities in which people live have developed expectations for how men and women express their identity. These expectations often appear through stereotypes, but these can change over time and in different generations, just as culture is dynamic, so are these gender roles in society. To understand how gender can be incorporated into programs and plans, it is helpful to think about the expressions of masculinity and femininity in society, and to remember that context and place affect these roles as well.

Recently, disasters have been characterized as socially constructed events, as well as physical constructions, or “disasters by design” [Mileti 1999]. Administrative rules, regulations, and bureaucratic regimes form the formal disaster management sector. As the definitions for disaster management and hazard mitigation have become broader, recognizing associations with economic development and socioeconomic vulnerability, the framework for disaster management has shifted, and has incorporated social sciences and additional public agencies looking toward goals of sustainable development. As social landscapes for understanding the realities of disaster have expanded, new shifts have occurred in looking at physical landscapes.

Factors contributing to poverty and inequity change the design of the disaster by increasing government responsibility for safety costs of disasters and by expanding the magnitude and reach of disaster impacts. Inclusion and exclusion of knowledge, policies, and implementation of mitigation and preventive actions construct the disaster; yet, the disaster is further constructed by participation and voice in determining the framework, language, and guidance for reducing hazard impacts. This lack of attention and the exclusion of segments of the local population increase vulnerabilities to risks because inappropriate management networks have been overlaid on different geographic landscapes.

There are systematic disparities in the freedoms that men and women enjoy in different societies, and these disparities are often not reducible to differences in income or resources. While differential wages...constitute an important part of gender inequality in most societies, there are many other spheres of differential benefits, e.g. in the division of labor within the household, in the extent of care or education received, in liberties that different members are permitted to enjoy [Sen 1992:122].

The increased vulnerabilities to hazard risk align with inequities that exist in everyday life. “Location is about vulnerability” [Haraway 1988:590], and these places provide knowledge as well as pose the context for disaster vulnerability. The systems that have marginalized women and that do not validate local knowledge have increased societal inequities. These are no longer merely questions of wealth, but of access to resources and information. As people have become disconnected from cultural and traditional knowledge and access to these resources, they become more vulnerable to natural hazards and environmental threats.

Locating Women in Disaster Management

The evolution of the formal disaster management institutions happened without input from women. From the international down to the local island levels, disaster risk management becomes gendered in the images of disaster, in the programmatic designs for risk reduction strategies, in the language of disaster management, and in the marginalization of social benefits and justice for economic values.

Despite the evolution of disaster risk research to consider socio-economic issues in reducing disasters, the field has been slow to incorporate aspects of gender in disaster policies and practice. The number of women working in this field and the number of women with leadership positions

are drastically lower than the number of men [Anderson 2005]. The numbers of women impacted by disasters, however, are higher. Even in the language used in formal policies and programs, issues of social inequality have been codified. The gendered and socio-cultural aspects of disaster risk management policies and programs are often subtle, and because of this, they go unnoticed. In this way, inequalities and injustices are perpetuated through disasters.

Gendered Images of Disaster

Gendered and cultural images form subtext for understanding how these work in disasters. For many of us, the term disaster evokes media images portraying women and children as victims of disaster. We recall women and children crying as they search for loved ones — in the rubble of earthquakes (in Turkey, Iran, Mexico, India), after the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center, in the aftermath of severe flooding (in Bangladesh, Viet Nam, the US Midwest). We may recall the harrowing story of the Mozambique woman giving birth in a tree as she clung to the upper branches awaiting rescue from the floodwaters rushing by below. “But only a partial truth is conveyed by media images of tearful and exhausted mothers struggling to get a bucket of fresh water for their children or standing passively in relief lines. These images may be cynically exploited by agencies to stimulate donations; they also reinforce dualistic notions of women’s subordination and male power” [Enarson and Morrow 1998: 6].

More often than naught, stories of heroism are reserved for men — male firefighters valiant exertions to combat the 9/11 destruction and rescue few survivors, men in helicopters and boats braving storms to whisk the helpless women from the perilous floodwaters, soldiers in Peacekeeping Forces securing and distributing food relief supplies to starving victims of drought, famine, and conflict (or rather, a complex humanitarian emergency). Because these gendered images have become so

entrenched in our conceptualizations of disaster, they emerge unconsciously and subtly in disaster programs and policies.

The portrayal of women as victim serves to undermine women’s participation in recovery efforts or in the mitigation planning aspects that prevented the disaster from being worse by saving her family or household from injury or death. Use of the “victim” imagery further underscores women’s vulnerability. Although these places in crisis desperately need funding for recovery, the images portrayed strategically appeal to emotions. Yet, we do not see many of the ways that women are victimized through violence during and following disasters. In case studies and anecdotal information following hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes, there were reports of increased domestic violence in the aftermath of the disasters [Morrow and Enarson 1996; Wilson, Phillips, and Neal 1998]. As mentioned in the introduction, the stories in the aftermath of the South Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina exposed cases of rape and sexual violence against women. Because these cases occurred by rescuers, by one’s own countrymen, these stories were less popularized than the same images of sexual abuse that are used to marshal support for military interventions through political rhetoric and media images of wars abroad.

Disasters often run parallel to experiences of war, with images of militarization running as themes alongside catastrophe. The South Asian tsunami story was told worldwide with very little, if anything, appearing publicly about how the tsunami uncovered land mines, decreased inhabitable areas, increased contamination and environmental degradation from weaponry, and exposed people harm from ongoing conflicts in Sri Lanka and in Aceh, Indonesia. Complex humanitarian emergencies involve conflict situations and military. The disasters utilize privileged male organizations to distribute relief, and ultimately set in place a power dynamic. The power of those with resources over those without everything has the potential to result

in misuse and exploitation. The imagery of disaster layers complex political and social interactions and produces situations where these images can be used for exploitation or influence action.

In disasters, women frequently become fronted as victims; yet, women in formal disaster risk management organizations or women working in communities to prevent disasters are rarely seen. Furthermore, these gendered images serve political and economic objectives. Just as militarization promotes hierarchy, rivalry, and privileging of masculinity [Enloe 2000: 289], images set forth in disaster may use gender to gain similar advantage and to assist in financial gain for disaster recovery. Funding that comes in from the images of disasters may bring some economic support for the women in the photographs through an extended relief program. Rarely does it solve the woman's day-to-day economic plight (with noted exception as Mozambique President Chissano organized national educational and health funding for the baby born in the tree during the floods, because "the baby and her mother, Sophia, had become the symbol of suffering for all women and children in Mozambique" [Associated Press 2000]. The women and children used as images for gaining funding in disaster relief programs do not see the funding from the selling of their images for cover stories gained by photographers or from the sales of magazines and newspapers displaying their images. Image is transformed to commodity by industry and to a good to leverage resources by government.

The images of women and their portrayals in disaster often, but not always, depict women as victims; however, the actions of women in disaster and the reality of women in disaster correspond to the many subject positionalities of women. "Stereotypical framing of women as victims and/or heroines are merely constructions...At times women will sometimes adopt positions of victimhood, presumably because there is something in the short or longer term to be gained by doing so. These subject positions can co-exist with behavior which

could also be seen as resilient or heroic" [DAW 2001: Cupples]. In Cupples experience, she observes that women choose to represent certain images in disasters that provide some advantage to them personally. Some women become complicit in the choice to be portrayed as victims, not just re-victimized by the media or government seeking funding.

Government agencies and organizations use women's bodies as symbols to build momentum and support for achieving various agendas, especially in the militarization of women [Enloe 2000]. In the process of militarization, rape and beauty pageants have been marshaled to build support and empathy. In disasters, women "often are deployed as the 'reproducers.' Images of birth are put forward to show that the culture has survived the disaster, and is still producing and reproducing... Hope descends on women's ability to keep reproducing [DAW 2001: Larabee]. The messages embedded in images we see following disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies become tools for presenting certain visions of the world, often "privileging masculinity."

It seems that we often see depicted in the media women as being distraught and not able to take control. We see men as coordinators in bringing safety to those affected. This depiction does not really coincide with life in general where women naturally take on the role of care-takers [sic]. Women are experienced planners because of the nature of family and home responsibilities. They bring about order in their families lives daily [DAW 2001: Diehl].

Feminist theorists have cautioned against generalizing all women in a universal image, such as caretakers and nurturers, because women have different life stages, different cultural aspects. "Women' should not be seen as one big group — women in communities affected by natural disasters have many different interests and therefore also

many different coping strategies. Simplifying women as one big group leads to simplified and useless stereotypes” [DAW 2001: Poulsen]. The point that Diehl makes, though, is that the contribution that some women could make because of their roles as caretakers and household planners does not get incorporated into the framework for risk management because we too often see women as helpless.

The “everyday acts of heroism” [DAW 2001: Anderson] that women develop in their lives to deal with discrimination, health challenges, poverty, and inequality for themselves and their families do not become the pronounced images of women in disasters. “Their creativities and strengths are not often discussed and learned because it is embedded in their daily lives” [DAW 2001: Ohara]. The invisible acts of strength that are not noticed may not be important for the reasons that images are constructed, used, and displayed. Beyond the sad eyes of the woman passively standing in a food distribution line staring at us from the front page of the newspaper may be another reality of a country using these images to encourage humanitarian aid and donor assistance.

Addressing Issues of Vulnerability

Research that demonstrates women as more vulnerable to disasters will cite lower incomes, greater household responsibilities, more women as head of single-parent households, less access to information, and less mobility [Kafi 1992; Schroeder 1987; Cutter 1996; Enarson and Morrow 1997], regardless of location in the world. Men, however, may be considered more vulnerable to war, conflict, complex humanitarian emergencies, and terrorism. Developing nations are said to be more vulnerable because of their less developed economies and their poverty. Assigning designations of vulnerability needs to look at the causes that consider aspects of specific exposure and sensitivity, and that factor in resilience. Why are these places more impoverished? What factors of resilience might exist? In the

generalized assumptions of many vulnerability claims, we may fail to see ways that we can take advantage of situations to reduce hazards, because we simply categorize these places or people as “vulnerable.” By grouping women into a single category as “vulnerable,” we fail to acknowledge strengths, such as household management skills or caretaking that may prove valuable assets in disaster and increase resiliency.

Many issue-oriented social organizations deal inadvertently with gendered realities as they address social issues in society, such as environmental issues, health, poverty, and human services. It can be argued that a safe, healthy environment can better sustain the needs of the people living there. The people with compounded social problems tend to be the most in poverty, and also tend to live in places of increased vulnerability. Generally, poorer housing areas may be located near industrial areas with greater potential for hazardous waste spills and environmental contamination. In areas with large population growth and demand for housing, the limited land suitable for building means that developments will occur in higher risk places. These factors combine to contribute to areas in society where greater impacts will be felt from disasters unless there are organizations and assistance to reduce and alleviate some of these problems. Organizations participating in reducing social vulnerabilities contribute to risk management. In addressing social risks related to women’s issues specifically, organizations also address the reasons why women appear in the “most vulnerable” categories for hazard risks. Since most disaster literature argues that poverty and poor social environments lead to the occurrence of disaster, it seems obvious that the organizations and structures that work to improve these conditions should become part of the disaster risk management structure; yet, in disaster risk management, the rare planning effort includes the informal sector to this extent. Whether by accident or intent, the exclusion of these “informal” organizations and structures adds

to the exclusion of women from the planning efforts to reduce hazards.

Locating Women in Risk Management

Women visibly participate in organizations characterized as the “informal” sector of risk management. In many community-based and non-profit organizations, women have attained leadership roles. A brief online review of 161 environmental, health, social welfare, and educational non-profit organizations in Hawaii reveals that about 80% of these organizations have women as executive directors or top-level staff [Anderson 2005, 203]. By comparison with the public sector, a review of women’s positions in the United States’ National Weather Service, which provides information to the public on a range of hazards, showed women represented only 7% of middle to upper management [Anderson and Enarson 2004].

In most of the disaster cases, women become leaders based on their own initiative and sense of urgency in dealing with issues ranging from community needs to environmental degradation. The “self-appointed expertise” by women has been particularly noticeable in dealing with crises. In the online international discussion forums about women in disasters, numerous stories emerged of women taking on leadership roles during crises [DAW 2001]. Women in rural Australia spent “most of their energy helping others,” which prevented them from being victims of floods and resulted in women becoming “predominantly responsible for disaster recovery” [Finlay 1998]. Even beyond disasters, however, there are numerous examples in the environmental arena of women organizing to secure safe water resources, eliminate pollution, or protect natural resources [Shiva 1994; Carson 1962; Omvedt 1994; Newman 1994].

The positions of women in the “informal” sector mean that they may not access information or have access into the discussions and processes that influence decision-making. As stated earlier in this research, the non-profit and community

organizations may not even be aware that their activities and efforts assist in risk management. Formal disaster risk managers may not be aware, and therefore, do not think it important to include these organizations in planning processes and public awareness programs. Even with women in positions of power in urban and rural organizations that minimize impacts of disasters through their daily actions and operations, women do not often appear in disaster risk management planning processes. Many of these planning processes now try to be inclusive and require multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral approaches. There remains, however, some disconnection between the formal and informal sectors. The separation of these areas of risk management may undermine the goals of risk reduction through ignorance of potential benefits from engaging in broad, participatory processes.

The inability to discretely assign place to these informal organizations within the formal disaster risk management construction challenges our organizational frameworks. The communication does not simply flow between formal and informal sectors, but requires a much more complex, layered interaction categorized by topic area (i.e., environment, public health, infrastructure), by hazard (i.e., tsunami, hurricane, drought, landslide, oil spill, hazardous materials leak), by knowledge and expertise (i.e., mapping and geographic analysis, engineering and architecture, agriculture), by socio-political geography (i.e., island size and group, political structure, governance system, affiliations), by scale (i.e., local, national, regional, international), and by demographics (i.e., men, women, children, elderly, ethnicity, race, age, poverty level). Engaging all of these overlapping and intersecting aspects into conversation to increase disaster resilience requires an understanding of the way that these dynamic processes work and a process framework that encompasses these types of interactions.

Incorporating Gender into Risk Reduction Measures

In order to reduce risks, lessons learned from decades of disasters indicate that attention to gender needs to be incorporated in disaster planning and mitigation policies. This can only happen when we build awareness and attention to gender issues at all levels. It is therefore critical to understand how gender operates in disasters in order to use this knowledge in developing measures to reduce risk.

Building a Gender and Disaster Network

Researchers at the Natural Hazards Center's annual disaster conference compared their findings from several disasters and realized that gender issues played an integral role in the impacts of disasters. The result of their discussions led to the establishment of the Gender and Disaster Network in 1998 with the hope that shared experiences could help to influence risk reduction policies and programs.

The Gender and Disaster Network (GDN) emerged as a virtual space for sharing best practices and resources in gender and disaster risk management. Efforts to develop a website and a listserv initially began with assistance from the Laboratory for Behavioural Research at Florida International University's International Hurricane Center and have since been transferred. Texas A&M University currently hosts the listserv. Dr. Maureen Fordham at Northumbria University in the United Kingdom continues to develop, improve, and maintain the website (www.gdnonline.org).

The GDN activities have been maintained through voluntary efforts, with some moderate institutional support. The website provides bibliographies and news of projects or workshops. The GDN listserv was used to discuss issues among members and prepare the Gender and Disaster Broadsheet following the South Asia tsunami, as well as to develop a quick "Hard Lessons Learned" list for relief workers. Both of these resources were

distributed to governmental and non-governmental organizations via the internet [Gender and Disaster Network 2005].

GDN (Gender and Disaster Network) - Home

<http://www.gdnonline.org>



GDN Basics

- Why Gender Matters
- Who Are We?
- What's Out There?
- What's Coming?
- Gender and Disaster Coursebook
- Practical Guides and Checklists
- The Henry Fran Myers Award
- Call for Nominations - Henry Fran Myers Award 2006

Welcome to the Gender and Disaster Network

The Gender and Disaster Network is an educational project initiated by women and men interested in gender relations in disaster contexts. It emerged from an early morning meeting during the July 1997 Natural Hazards Research and Applications Center workshop in Denver, Colorado. Understanding that communication technology is not fully accessible and that we work in many languages and contexts, we hope to utilize the Internet in the support of a global network of researchers and practitioners.

Broadly stated, our goals are to:

- document and analyze women's and men's experiences before, during, and after disaster, situating gender relations in broad political, economic, historical, and cultural context
- work across disciplinary and organizational boundaries in support of collaborative research and applied projects
- facilitate information sharing and resource building among network members
- build and sustain an active international community of scholars and activists

Toward this end, we will develop and maintain the Gender and Disaster Network Homepage as an international forum for discussion, networking, and information exchange. Our site will be maintained by the Northumbria University, Divisions of Geography and Environmental Management, webmaster [Maureen Fordham](mailto:Maureen.Fordham@nbn.ac.uk) (taking over from Nicole Dash of the International Hurricane Center, Florida International University). However, the content will be generated by the network members. There is also a discussion list managed by Texas A&M University. Go to the [Registration](#) page for help in joining.

We hope to use this webpage to access topical bibliographies and reports on applied projects or research in progress, book reviews, current information about relevant conferences and other events, a bulletin board for employment, scholarship or funding opportunities, and contact information for other network members. Upload, download, ask and answer questions -- this is YOUR network and YOUR homepage.

The Gender and Disaster Network is open to all those sharing its goals. Please complete the registration information [here](#).

The Gender and Disaster Network is grateful to Northumbria University for hosting this site (but please see the [Disclaimer](#)).

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In 2000, the Gender and Disaster Network (see background information online at www.gdnonline.org), with sponsorship from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Laboratory for Behavioural Research in the International Hurricane Center at Florida International University, hosted a conference called "Reaching Women and Children in Disaster" [Morrow and Enarson 2000]. Recommendations from the workshop encouraged gender awareness in the development of projects and improved the networking capabilities of participants. Recommended actions developed from past conferences in Costa Rica, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, and the United States also make the case for increasing gender awareness in disaster risk reduction, as did the Expert Working Group consultation conducted in November 2002 in Ankara, Turkey by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women [DAW 2002]. The results of these workshops stressed that mainstreaming gender equality is urgently needed, but implementation of even the most basic change strategies in education, policy and practice are lacking in most parts of the world, especially with respect to mitigation and the reduction of social vulnerability.

Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop

In August 2004, the Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop convened in Honolulu with generous support from workshop sponsors, including the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the Gender and Disaster Network, the East-West Center/Pacific Disaster Center (PDC), the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (COE-DMHA), the Public Entity Risk Institute, and several local organizations. The intent of the workshop was to build on previous workshops and recommendations.



Workshop participants gathered in Honolulu to discuss Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction in August 2004.

During the design of the workshop, the co-conveners kept asking the question about what outcomes were needed from the workshop. Workshop organizers did not want to produce another good list of recommendations that did not go anywhere. In each of the previous workshops, participants recommended developing ways to share case studies, methods, and actions to promote the inclusion of gender in disaster risk management. The same was true of recommended actions in August 2004, as participants recommended that

concrete mechanisms be developed to share knowledge in addition to the work of the Gender and Disaster Network.

Specific recommendations from the 2004 workshop focused on six thematic areas of discussion at the workshop, including: 1) building capacity in women's groups and community-based organizations; 2) improving communications, training, and education; 3) recognizing other forms of knowledge, including women's and indigenous knowledge, as contributions to science and technology used in disaster risk reduction; 4) engendering complex emergencies by recognizing gender issues embedded in these types of disasters; 5) enhancing gender sensitivity and gender-fair practices within organizational structures dealing with disasters; and 6) promoting participatory approaches to disaster risk reduction.



Participants worked in small groups to develop strategies in seven theme areas, which became part of the Honolulu Call to Action presented at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan in January 2005.

During the workshop, the men attending the workshop met briefly to discuss their roles in promoting gender equality in disaster risk reduction. They recognized that men often have higher positions and more influence in advocating gender equity within their institutions. As they discussed their roles and responsibilities, the men proposed the following statements of advocacy [Anderson and Enarson 2004]:

1. Men need to advocate for gender equality.
2. Men need to deliver gender mainstreaming messages to other men.
3. Men need to be full partners in gender sensitivity training.
4. Men as leaders need to be committed to bringing gender equity results within their own organizations.
5. Men need to confront gender stereotyping, and create opportunities for personal and institutional transformation.
6. Men need to recognize that women have lots of personal knowledge and skills in coping with disasters, and that more women need to be trained as first responders.
7. Tools and methodologies are needed to sensitize and empower men to implement gender equality.
8. A separate workshop on men's role in gender equality/gender mainstreaming is needed, and sessions should be held at upcoming meetings, such as the National Hazards Research Workshop, Sociology, disaster mitigation, and other forums.
9. The Gender and Disaster Network should be used to share ideas, tools, and best practices (e.g. examine gender sensitivity that was provided to troops who served in East Timor, which resulted in a major reduction in violent incidences against women).

Out of the working group discussions and the informal conversations throughout the workshop, participants renewed their individual commitments to influencing risk reduction policies through their ongoing work. Participants recognized the strength in having the education and message from a larger network in more areas, but that individual decisions would be made within each person's sphere of influence. For example, one member added women with social science backgrounds to post-disaster

assessment teams. With increased momentum from the working groups, participants determined that recommendations from this workshop should be used in the upcoming United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction's World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan in January 2005.

Honolulu Call to Action

Following the workshop, a voluntary group of participants met and then convened a working group online to develop the Honolulu Call to Action for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction [Anderson and Enarson 2004]. General recommendations encouraged those working 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.

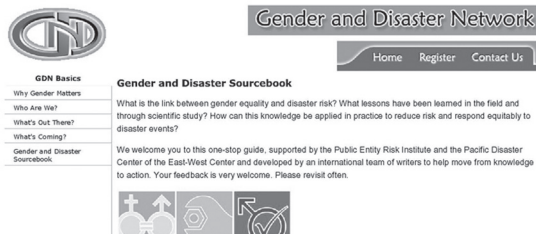
In the Call to Action (published on the 2004 workshop website, http://www.ssri.hawaii.edu/research/GDWwebsite/pdf/HonoluluCall_111504.pdf), participants expressed the need to document and widely distribute best practices in a format readily available to community organizations, government agencies, and the media. In addition to the resources available on the Gender and Disaster website, participants requested a compilation of resources that provided templates, research, and

guidance with tested and reviewed results.

Gender and Disaster Sourcebook

The development of the *Gender and Disaster Sourcebook* emerged from the needs expressed in numerous workshops to collect and distribute best practice guidelines with the intent of providing a low-cost, easily accessible resource on gender and disasters. The Gender and Disaster Network website would provide an already-proven mechanism for sharing these resources globally (www.gdonline.org). The website began serving the first publication of the Sourcebook online in April 2006.

GDN (Gender and Disaster Network) - Gender and Disaster Sourcebook file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/Chery%20Anderson/My%20...



With funding provided by the Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI) and the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) (and their managing partner, the East-West Center), an international team formed to collect best practices and develop the Sourcebook. Dr. Elaine Enarson served as the coordinator and editor. The initial phase of this project focused on gathering resources by region that fit into outlined subject areas. The first edition of the Sourcebook limited the collection to documents available in English or to those that could be translated by team members into English. Priority was given to documents and resources that can be easily accessed, especially through the internet. The guiding principle for inclusion of information was that these resources had to have gender as a primary concern in the scope of work. The disasters included in the Sourcebook focused primarily on environmental hazards, but related concerns such as armed conflict, migration, and HIV/AIDS were included.

The Sourcebook is divided into the following sections: 1) Gender Equality and Disaster Risk; 2)

Reduction Projects; 3) Planning and Practice Tools; 4) Good Practices; 5) Communication Strategies; 6) Cross-Cutting Issues; 7) Training and Education; 8) Case Studies and Analysis; and, 9) Gender and Disaster Outreach Modules. The target audience for using this resource includes: practitioners, humanitarian aid agencies, policy makers, technical specialists, government authorities, journalists, funders, activists, survivors, researchers, community organizers, and women's groups.

The intent is for these tools and resources to be used to improve disaster risk reduction prior to the occurrence of another disaster in order to prevent the catastrophes witnessed in the aftermath of the South Asia tsunami and Hurricane Katrina.

Conclusion

The gender perspective shows us that women are not absent from disaster risk management, but merely missing from the highest, most influential positions in risk management. In those positions that disaster managers rarely consider a part of risk management, but which are essential to reducing hazard risks and protecting local communities, women actively participate and appear in leadership roles. In the places where there is less overt power associated with risk management positions and the work performed is voluntary or severely underfunded, women can be found contributing to the reduction of hazards. These activities and actions may continue without support. When risk management activities remain voluntary activities that compete for time with family and work obligations, people make choices to invest their time in their children's development or earning income for daily survival. The informal risk management activities contribute to strengthening community, environment, and the social conditions that build resilience to disasters.

It is difficult to say that there would not be a disaster if we considered gender in the plans; yet,

doing so would allow us to account for and remove some of the most egregious aspects of the disasters. For example, most disaster plans and sheltering programs do not consider security issues. In Sri Lanka and New Orleans, media reported incidents of rape and violence against women, often occurring in the shelters [BBC News 2005; Burnett 2005; Women's E-News 2005]. Documented case studies of violence in these situations have been reported for nearly a decade [Enarson and Morrow 1998], but sheltering programs have not incorporated additional security measures into programs. Thinking about gender issues in structuring these programs brings the lessons to the forefront in planning, and allows us to consider alternatives. Such alternatives might include segregation for men and women inside shelters. There might be screening of people coming into the shelters and security services that become activated to monitor activities in shelters.

Gender analysis has implications for the world of disaster risk management because it allows us to pause to consider the details and find the areas of disconnection. It enables us to take another glance at the underlying structure of risk reduction and the operational details in practice. It allows us to see how responses are made, and consider who is involved. Gender analysis provides context for understanding the social, cultural, and political issues as it illuminates inequalities.

Those who work in the field of risk management see that gender issues are ever-present. The only way that we can begin to create equity within the system, however, is to build awareness of how and why gender matters in risk management. This will enable gender to help frame disaster mitigation planning and risk reduction policies. As gender becomes part of the process of risk management rather than an additional consideration, there will be shifts in the ways that disasters impact communities.

The tools and resources developed by the Gender and Disaster Network and researchers associated with the network will hopefully have an impact on how we frame problems and develop

solutions for risk reduction. In the end, the goal that we all share is a reduction in the devastation and impacts of hazards. Reducing disasters, however, requires us to shift our thinking to see the socioeconomic vulnerabilities present in everyday lives. We begin by addressing these issues and building resilience today — before the disaster happens.

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