

Policies and Actions for Gender and Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction

– Building Back Better with Participation of Women and High Risk Groups –

The Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on 11 March 2011 caused serious damages in terms of people's lives, daily living activities and livelihood, astonishing not only Japan but rest of the world. It marked a major turning point for the reevaluation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and recovery measures in Japan. Afterwards, as recovery and reconstruction of the affected areas in East Japan progressed, emerging issues with a gender¹ and diversity perspective for DRR came to light. We need to share and reflect on the knowledge and lessons gained in Japan on our international cooperation efforts as well.

Differentiated effects from disasters

A difference in the degree of severity and type of harm caused by natural disasters depending on age, gender, the existence or non-existence of a disability, etc. has been observed in past disasters, indicating a close connection between disasters and gender and diverse groups of people. For example, in terms of deaths (adjusted per-capita) due to a natural disaster, in both developed and developing countries, it is common for the number of female deaths to be greater than that of males. Also in the Great East Japan Earthquake, the death rate of persons with disabilities was more than double that of persons without disabilities (adjusted per-capita). Furthermore, the higher unemployment rates among women than men was observed and an increase in violence against women occurred in the post-disaster period. These facts indicated that post-disaster effects varied by gender and diversity, thus there is a need to support not only women but high risk groups of people in post-disaster.²

2004 Sumatra Island Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami (Sri Lanka) : Women made up 65% of deaths and missing persons of which 79% were 19 to 29 years of age.³

2008 Cyclone Nargis (Myanmar) : Women made up 61% of death and the death rate of those aged 18 to 60 for women was more than twice that of men.⁴

2011 The Great East Japan Earthquake (Miyagi Prefecture, Minamisanriku Town) : While 4.5% of the whole population was killed, the death rate for persons with disabilities was 13%.⁵

Factors causing differentiated effects from disasters

The following pre-disaster socio-economic and gender situations may contribute to the differentiated effects from disasters:



- ▶ **Social and economic situations :** During 'normal' times women may have a lower social and economic standing with limited access to education and information in some societies, leading to a lack of knowledge regarding evacuation routes, facilities and other DRR information. This leads to an inability to appropriately react when disasters occur. Also, since men commonly hold decision-making power, women are unable to make timely decisions, which may delay their evacuation. Additionally, there is a tendency for increased violence and sexual abuse, and human trafficking involving women and children post-disaster.
- ▶ **Gender norms :** The inability to relocate to evacuation centers / points without the accompaniment of one's husband or other male family member, the limited mobility of female attire such as a sari, and other particular gender norms or patterns of behavior may be influential in a disaster. For example, in Sri Lanka only males are taught to swim or climb trees which is reported to have led to a great number of female and child flood victims.⁶
- ▶ **Stereotyped gender roles:** Generally, women spend more time at home than men, and carry the responsibility of caring for infants, children and the elderly. Also, their role as livestock minders leads to cases of delayed evacuation (on the other hand there are cases of delayed evacuations for men in the Philippines where they are expected to protect household properties). Additionally it is reported that the burden of household chores greatly increases post-disaster due to the difficulty in securing energy sources, food, and water.

1 : Gender is not just the biological difference between sexes, but the differences formed from cultures and societies. It refers to in characteristics that words like feminine and masculine may represent in society, the difference in roles held by men and women in a society or culture and the relationship between men and women.

2 : Statistics are from the Japanese Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office's "Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Society Perspective" from the "White Paper on Gender Equality 2012"

3 : ESCAP (2013), "Who is vulnerable during Tsunami? Experiences from the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011 and the Indian Ocean Tsunami 2004" by Mari Sawai

4 : Caritas Internationalis (2008) "Caritas making a difference three months after Myanmar cyclone" by Tim O'Connor

5 : Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, "Annual Report on Government Measures for Persons with Disabilities (Summary) 2012"

6 : Oxfam International (2005) "The Tsunami's impact on women"

Women as Agents for Disaster Risk Reduction and Relief / Rehabilitation

Support for the specific needs of women and **high risk groups of the society** (persons with disabilities, children, the elderly, the poor, foreign residents, mothers with infants, etc.) is a necessity. At the same time, through women's roles as family care givers and active community members who are local relationship builders, their essential human networks can be useful for in evacuation procedures, recovery and rebuilding. However, traditionally DRR planning has been centered around men, and in many cases does not reflect the needs and voices of women and other high risk groups. It is important to rank women and high risk groups as key participants (concerned parties) in DRR and recovery efforts. Effectively including the voices of women and a diverse group of people in DRR and recovery processes helps to build more disaster resilient communities.

Global Initiatives for Gender and DRR

Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)

The "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 - 2015", adopted at the 2005 UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction, (Kobe) states that "A gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes" and that "cultural diversity, age, and vulnerable groups should be taken into account when planning for disaster risk reduction, as appropriate" and refers to all women, children, the lower class, persons with disabilities no matter where they are. However, in every country with DRR measures based on HFA, the gender-perspective is developing the slowest and requires further efforts.

Japanese Government's "Initiative for Disaster through ODA"

At the 2005 UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Japanese government's assistance policy, "Initiative for Disaster through ODA", was announced. It declared the basic policy from the perspective of human security was that, "in promoting cooperation on disaster reduction, it is crucial to protect individuals from disaster and to empower individuals and local communities based on the perspective of human security that puts people at the center of concerns. Japan will assist the empowerment of local communities and give due consideration to those who are particularly vulnerable to disasters such as children and the poor." From a gender perspective the policy is that, "due to the existence of gender disparities in various aspects such as participation in political decision-making and socio-economic activities and access to information, women are particularly susceptible to damage from disaster. Therefore, Japan will provide assistance based on a gender perspective in respect of all aspects of cooperation on disaster reduction."

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) "Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural Disasters" Resolution

At the 56th Commission on the Status of Women held in 2014, the Japanese Government delegation submitted the "Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural Disasters" resolution that brought up the necessity of gender-sensitive policy making throughout the phases of disaster prevention, disaster management, and recovery/reconstruction. The resolution also stressed the importance in securing women's participation in decision-making during rehabilitation from a disaster. Including Japan, the resolution was co-sponsored by 50 countries and was adopted. This was a continuation of the disaster and gender resolution proposed by Japan at the 55th CSW in 2013, which was adopted unanimously.

[JICA's Overall Gender and Development Cooperation Policy]

JICA envisions "Inclusive and Dynamic Development" in its efforts for promoting human and to provide timely, comprehensive support to those in developing countries. JICA recognizes women as a key agent for change in development, and ensures that women have an equal voice and leadership in decision-making in all its interventions. JICA will also enhance women's participation in leadership roles in all stages of natural disasters from DRR, to emergency relief and to reconstruction. It will also facilitate the formation of policies from a gender and diverse group perspective. JICA's work will be responsive to the different needs and priorities of women and diverse groups as well as their security as it actively provides support in building societies full of hope and dignity.

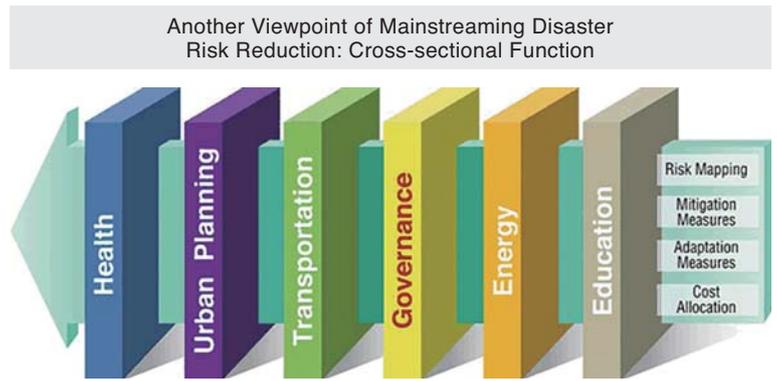
JICA Strategy and Action: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Development Goal	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment				
Strategic Goal	Expand Participation and Leadership				
Priority Areas	I Women's Economic Empowerment	II Women's Rights and Security	III Women's Education and lifetime Health	IV Gender Responsive Governance	V Gender Responsive Infrastructure
	Promote women's Livelihood, employment, entrepreneurship and business development	Ensure women's rights and security in conflict, natural disasters and other crisis including Trafficking in persons and Gender based Violence	Promote women's lifetime health and education to enhance their autonomy	Promote gender equal policies, strategies and institutions	Promote infrastructure to enhance women's mobility, economic opportunities and well-being

● Strengthening Women's Capabilities ● Eliminating Discrimination ● Improving Basic Infrastructure

[Effort to Mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction(DRR)]

Although there is no universal definition for mainstreaming DRR, it has been summarized through past discussions into the following three points: (i) A government positions DRR as a priority issue of the country; (ii) A perspective of DRR is to be taken into every development sector; (iii) Prior investment for DRR should be increased. Recently, due to the increasing occurrence of disasters in the world, people's awareness of "DRR" is rising, and the importance of the investment for DRR has been recognized. It is expected that the amount of the investment for DRR will be increased accordingly. However, JICA considers that there is a limit for building a disaster-resilient society by independently implementing a project for DRR alone or a project focusing only on DRR. Under these circumstances, to protect lives of the people from disasters and to minimize economic losses, JICA regards it necessary to cooperate and communicate interactively with other sectors, which requires perspectives to promote DRR and integrate the viewpoint of DRR into the socioeconomic development sectors, based on risk assessment, or to implement highly sustainable project in consideration of sectors' situations.



[JICA's Projects and Activities on Gender and Diversity in DRR]

Case1. The Strengthening Community Disaster Risk Management Project in Pacific Region

Along with the large number of natural disasters such as typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions etc., Pacific region is an area easily effected by rising ocean levels and abnormal weather thought to be caused by climate change. Additionally there are many countries with territories spread across wide areas with inadequate transportation and telecommunication systems, which makes quick and reliable dissemination of disaster information to the people of rural regions and isolated islands difficult.

For a 3 year period starting in 2010, JICA conducted a pilot program in Fiji and Solomon Islands to strengthen the central governments' DRR abilities as well as to help communities form suitable evacuation systems for local people (men and women) in cases of flooding. The pilot program held by the region's Womens Affairs Office was to education women, who have little opportunities to participate in drills etc., about DRR measures. First, a training session for female representatives of community-based women's groups was held regarding basic DRR knowledge. These representatives then became facilitators that held workshops for women of the local communities. An effort to form youth groups to aid in the evacuation of the elderly and persons with disabilities was also started. It's hoped this will allow women and persons with disabilities to become active agents in helping to further build disaster resilient communities.

Gender-responsive Activities



Case 2. The Urgent Development Study on the Project on Rehabilitation and Recovery from Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines

Typhoon Yolanda hit the Philippines in November 2013 and caused more than 6,000 deaths, destroyed over 1,000,000 houses, and affected over 4,000,000 people. The rebuilding of houses and public facilities as well as revitalizing people's lives and livelihood is very important in the affected areas. For that reason JICA commenced quick impact projects (QIP) with the goal of swift results through rehabilitation and recovery efforts. This promoted the production and sale of agricultural, marine and manufactured goods by women and supported easily accessible children's daycare centers for them. The support given by women's groups and women workers of local governments etc. before the disaster played an important role in understanding the needs of local women and providing support.

Gender-responsive Activities



Women's Group for Livelihood Improvement: Quick Impact Project



Case 3. International Disaster Relief Efforts

Around the world, it is a reality that self-sufficient relief cannot be secured when disasters strike. In response to this, Japan provides international disaster relief. This includes dispatch of personnel or relief team, provision of relief supplies, and financial support, which may be given in only one form or in multiple forms depending on the disaster and the affected country's needs.

Medical treatment especially is influenced by the cultural and social situations of each country and region. Lack of this understanding may lead to negligence of high risk groups of the society needing the medical services. Accordingly, the Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) medical teams organized by JICA have carried out the following gender-responsive activities:

- (1) In pre-dispatch training courses, participants discuss issues such as "Why were 80% of patients men in certain disaster relief situations?" and gain an understanding of the difference in medical service usage between men and women. Also in simulated medical treatment trainings, a mock female patient is positioned who refuses to be examined by a male medical staff to help further the understanding of cultures where it is customary difficult for women to interact with men. These are conducive to more appropriate treatment when a team is dispatched.
- (2) As many female doctors as possible are included in the team. Midwives are also recruited to provide advice on breastfeeding and prenatal checkups when necessary.
- (3) Through mobile medical services in disaster areas, care is given to women and persons with disabilities who have limited access to medical services. Various methods for informing women in areas of high illiteracy are also prepared and provided. Easy-to-use medical services for women are provided with women-only consultations, waiting rooms, and assistance from local female volunteers.

Gender-responsive activities during emergency disaster relief to areas of the Philippines affected by typhoon

- Immediately after the typhoon in November 2013, JICA dispatched three JDR medical teams (1st to 3rd batch) to the most affected area. Provided medical services at a temporary medical tent and through mobile clinics for a month
- Taking into consideration the psychological burden of female patients and pregnant women, female doctors and nurses were deployed. Males nurses were also deployed for a mindful balance of gender
- Deployed locally recruited female interpreters.
- Arranged for female patients to see a female doctor or nurse.

Case 4. Active Involvement in Community DRR Planning by Persons with Disabilities

The city of Iloilo in the Philippines was badly affected by Typhoon Yolanda in November 2013. The damage was enormous, however, the disaster victims with disabilities could manage to go through the difficult time, supported by Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) that had improved their capacity during 'ordinary' times. There were two JICA's efforts underlying this successful operation: 1) "Community Project for Disaster Risk Reduction in Iloilo" a JICA partnership Program, strengthened , the coordination between citizens and governments as well as their DRR systems; 2) Japan Cooperation Overseas Volunteers dispatched to the DPOs in this area motivated persons with disabilities to actively engage in such activities.

In Iloilo, the representatives of the local DPOs participated in the development of the city's DRR plan, gave their opinions to the evacuation center's operations and created maps to help identifying where persons with disabilities lived. When the Typhoon Yolanda struck, owing to the fact that the leaders of DPOs had the contact information of members, it was possible to distribute emergency relief supplies to them without fail. Besides persons with disabilities, the supplies were also provided to other persons vulnerable to disasters such as single mothers.



The effective coordination between the local DPOs and local government enabled the smooth distribution of emergency relief supplies

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The CRPD that came into force in 2008 requires States Parties to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk including the occurrence of natural disasters.

Case 5. Disaster and Gender / Diversity Training

JICA provides Training and Dialogue Programs and carries out more than 400 courses per year in Japan for governments, private sectors, NGOs etc. from developing countries. These courses meet various needs that developing countries have by covering a wide variety of subject areas and aim to share Japan's knowledge and experiences. Training and Dialogue Programs on "Community Based Disaster Risk Management", "Strategy for Resilient Societies to natural disasters (including consideration to high risk people's human rights, gender and evacuation management)" and others are conducted.

In developing countries, JICA is seeking to further efforts to build disaster-resilient societies. To promote DRR planning from a gender and diversity perspective and strengthen women's leadership roles, a disaster prevention training session called "Disaster and Gender / Diversity" (tentative title) is planned based on the lessons learned from Japan's experiences in earthquakes and tsunami in East Japan, Hanshin-Awaji, Niigata, etc.



Participants in "Community DRR" participate in local disaster drills

Aiming for Enhanced Disaster Resilience⁷ from a Gender and Diversity Perspective

Whether in developed countries or developing countries, gender is not an issue only for women but an issue that requires men and women to go beyond stereotyped gender roles and work together sharing responsibilities, roles and tasks, and to take part in community activities and decision making equally. In disaster risk reduction, proper preparation is required before a disaster occurs. It is important to decide the division of roles in families and the community not only in daily life but also in cases of emergencies by, for example, making hazard maps or evacuation maps to decide who, when, where and how to evacuate and how to contact other family members. It is also necessary to discuss and decide how much drinking water and medication or food should be prepared. In developing countries, emergency evacuation shelters are often inadequate. Designating relatively safe buildings such as schools and hospitals as evacuation shelters and coordinating with the building owner or management is indispensable. Preparing and practicing evacuation routes and methods for the elderly, persons with disabilities, pregnant mothers and mothers with infants before a disaster occurs is also essential. Any other issues, such as restrictions within society for women and gender-responsive issues need to be understood by men and women, the community and local governments. This is why the planning and execution of training and orientation with a gender and diversity perspective by both domestic and overseas emergency support efforts is essential.

7 : The ability to handle every type of disaster or emergency situation through the reduction of one's own weaknesses.

[JICA's Direction of Future Efforts]

Participation of Women and Diverse Groups

For the purpose of DRR central and local governments need to create plans that fully recognize the abilities and roles of women and other high risk groups in the disaster prevention and recovery plan decision-making processes. Plans should reflect the opinions and needs of a wide age of people and the diverse lives that they lead.

Early Warning and Evacuation Mechanisms

It is essential to develop early warning systems that are people centered. In particular, systems whose warnings are timely and understandable to those at risk, which take into account the demographic, gender, cultural and livelihood characteristics of the target groups, including guidance on how to react to warnings so they can be prepared and evacuate on their own initiative.

Promotion for Economic Empowerment of Women

In order to build disaster-resilient communities that have the power to revitalize after a disaster, it is important to make use of women's knowledge and networks as women support communities through their jobs, household work, child rearing, and elderly care. Since there is a high correlation between poverty and disaster resilience, economic empowerment of women and the high risk groups should especially be promoted.

Responding to Specific Needs of Women and Gender Related Violence

Listening to the needs of women and high risk groups of society who may have difficulty having their voices heard after a disaster and support these needs during the relief and recovery / reconstruction process will be supported. Providing emotional support and care to the victims and taking quick measures to prevent any violence or sexual abuse against women, children or people with disabilities will also be performed.

Disaster Prevention Training and Education

Making sure that women and high risk groups of society take part in disaster training and education exercises will be stressed. At the same time training sessions for female leaders to learn disaster prevention knowledge will be conducted. Disaster prevention training from a gender and diversity perspective will be held for support providers both domestic and from overseas.

Research on Disasters and Gender

Through "Disaster and Gender" related research, knowledge and lessons will be acquired to formulate guidelines and instructions for future disaster management, emergency relief and disaster recovery / reconstruction measures. This will be done by working closely with and forming / strengthening ties with researchers and women's group in and outside Japan throughout the process.

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