



ACTION NOT WORDS

Confronting Gender Inequality through Climate Change
Action and Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia

An overview of progress in Asia with evidence from
Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam

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Foreword

Vulnerability to climate change and disasters largely results from inequalities and failures of human rights. Population groups that are denied rights to education, food, land, and information, among others, have less capacity to cope with climatic changes or recover from disasters. Groups with unequal access to resources are less able to build assets and resilience. When people are excluded from decision-making, their needs and priorities become invisible. This results in adaptive strategies and relief and recovery services that do not serve them, and can even exacerbate their vulnerability to future climate change impacts.

Women and girls in Asia region do not have the same rights as men and boys and are disproportionately affected by disasters. The subordinate position of women and girls in households, communities, workplaces and professions increases the impact of disasters and undermines their capacities and resources to respond. As the frequency and severity of storms, floods, drought and other climatic hazards continue to increase in the Asia region, empowering women and girls is not just a development imperative in its own right, but essential for effective disaster preparedness and response.



This overview report presents evidence from the current literature and from primary data collection on the gender dimensions of climate change and disasters in the Asia region. It analyses existing efforts to address gender equality in climate change and disasters in Asia and makes evidence-based recommendations for policy and programming. The report includes three case study locations: Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam. This report is linked to a sister report, in the same format, on the Pacific which includes case studies in the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu. A third report provides a summary of the two reports.

The participation and leadership of women are critical to building the resilience of families, communities and nations. Realising gender equality and the empowerment of women is therefore paramount to sustainable human development.



Miwa Kato

Regional Director UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific



Acronyms

ADB:	Asia Development Bank
ADRC:	Asia Disaster Reduction Centre
APAN:	Asia Pacific Adaptation Partnership
APLWD:	Asian-Pacific forum on Law, Women and Development
ASEAN:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BCAS:	Bangladesh Center for Advanced Studies
BCCT:	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust
BCCTF:	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund
BCCSAP:	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
BPfA:	Beijing Platform for Action
CBA:	Community-based adaptation
CC:	Climate change
CCA:	Climate change adaptation
CCCA:	Cambodia Climate Change Alliance
CCFSC:	Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control
ccGAP:	Climate Change Gender Action Plan
CFSC:	Committee for Flood and Storm Control
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CERF:	United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
COP:	Conference of the Parties
CSO:	Civil society organisations
DM:	Disaster management
DMA:	Disaster management authority
DRM:	Disaster risk management
DRR:	Disaster risk reduction
ECOSOC:	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EM-DAT:	Emergency events database
FHHH:	Female-headed household
GBV:	Gender-based violence
GCCA:	Gender Climate Change Alliance
GCF:	Green Climate Fund
GEF:	Global Environment Facility
GRIP:	Global Risk Identification Programme
GIZ:	Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation)
HFA:	Hyogo Framework for Action
IAP:	ISDR-Asia Partnership
IASC:	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICIMOD:	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IFAD:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC:	International Finance Corporation

IFRC:	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IPCC:	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISDR:	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
IUCN:	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MoEF:	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
LDCs:	Least developed countries
MDF:	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MNRE:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MoWA:	Ministry of Women Affairs
MWCS D:	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development
NAB:	National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction
NACCC:	National Advisory Council on Climate Change
NAPA:	National Adaptation Programme of Actions
NAPCC:	National Plan of Action on Climate Change
NC:	National communications
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency/Authority
NDMO:	National Disaster Management Office
PDNA:	Post-disaster needs assessment
PNPM:	Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Mandiri- National Program for Community Empowerment
REDD:	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
SAARC:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SADD:	Sex and disaggregated data
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SFDRR:	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
SGBV:	Sexual and gender-based violence
SNC:	Second national communication
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
UNISDR:	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNOCHA:	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
VAW:	Violence against women
VRA:	Vulnerability risk assessment
VWU:	Viet Nam Women's Union
WEDO:	Women's Environment and Development Organisation
WID:	Women in Development
WHO:	World Health Organization

Executive Summary



The Asia-Pacific region is the most disaster-prone in the world, and is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of disasters and climate change. Asia is the continent that was most frequently affected by disasters during the period 2004-2013, with 41 percent of all disasters worldwide. Women and girls, though often invisible and unacknowledged, are at the frontline of climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR). This report presents the findings of Gender, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCDRR) research in Asia. The purpose of the study was to provide evidence-based information on the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters in Asia, and to identify how gender equality and women's empowerment is currently taken into consideration and how this can be strengthened across CCDRR policies, institutions and projects.

Women in Asia continue to be subjected to discrimination and gender inequalities, despite commitments from Asian countries to international norms and treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Gender inequalities are contributing factors to why women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change and disasters. Furthermore, these gender inequalities can be exacerbated if gender issues are not adequately assessed or incorporated into CCDRR efforts.

Documented evidence from around the world demonstrates that climate change and disaster impacts are not gender neutral. This also applies to Asia where available evidence shows there are differences in how men and women are affected by, cope with, and respond to the effects of climate change and disasters. Females, as a social group, are the most adversely affected by climate change and disaster impacts. Women and children in Asia are more likely to be killed by disasters than men. The gendered division of labour and women's reliance on natural resources, compounded by women's lack of ownership and control over such resources exacerbates their vulnerability. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against women and girls, child or early marriage and trafficking are all evidenced

to escalate in the aftermath of a disaster, but how these are effected by climate change is less understood. That said, time is now ripe to depart from the traditional views of women and girls as inherently vulnerable and passive recipients of development and humanitarian assistance. In Asia, the capacities and knowledge of women and girls play an important, and largely, unsung part in individual as well as community resilience.

The report presents an analytical framework to explore and interpret evidence on the status of **policy; institutional arrangements; implementation; advocacy, knowledge generation and management; and women's leadership** in efforts to address gender equality in CCDRR. Findings reveal that while gender issues are addressed in some policies across the region, much of the focus is on women as victims and vulnerability rather than as equal citizens and rights holders. Institutional barriers to the inclusion of gender equality in CCDRR also exist, with little ownership of gender equality issues in the context of CCDRR, a lack of technical capacity in women's ministries, and a need for further coordination in a whole-of-government commitment to the issue.

At a **legislative and policy level**, integration of gender equality varies across the region. However, there is a growing awareness among national CCDRR law and policy makers and development agencies of the importance of integrating gender equality into these thematic areas. This is evidenced by a substantive mention of the word 'gender' or 'women' in CCDRR laws, policies and strategies that have been developed over the past five years. However, 'gender' is still largely understood as meaning 'women' and in many cases women are portrayed as helpless victims of climate change and disasters that must be protected rather than as able contributors to address CCDRR in their communities. This occurs simultaneously with a lack of acknowledgement of women's demonstrable actions, most often at the local level. Furthermore, commonly absent in CCDRR policies are gender equality strategies and actions needed to systematically make this a reality in practice. The adoption

of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offers a unique opportunity for Asian countries to address gender equality as they realign their DRR strategies within the new frameworks.

While there is notable progress in the general acknowledgement of differential impacts of climate change and disasters in CCDRR policies in the region, the **institutional arrangements** needed to support the translation of these policies into practice, are lacking. Most technical ministries with mandates on CCDRR have only basic knowledge of why gender should be addressed in these thematic areas. However, they lack the technical knowledge to facilitate truly gender-responsive and transformative change. On the other hand, ministries with the mandates to address gender equality lack the technical knowledge of CCDRR needed to make substantive contributions to CCDRR policy design and implementation. This is further exacerbated by the absence of platforms or mechanisms to bring these ministries together throughout policy formulation and implementation. Similarly, mechanisms that would allow civil society organisations (CSOs) to feed their community and practice knowledge of CCDRR into national policy development processes are also missing.

The ability to address and promote gender equality and women's empowerment in CCDRR programmes, projects and activities varies across Asia. Existing frameworks for governments reporting on their progress on **implementing of CCDRR policies and programmes** do not make it mandatory to report on gender equality. Climate finance geared towards strengthening climate change adaptation in agriculture and water resources management, and investments in renewable energy – areas that are predominantly under women's responsibility in Asia – are not translating into gender equality and women's empowerment. An analysis of Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects in south and south-east Asia, a main fund for climate change adaptation, shows that approximately US\$6.7 billion has been invested in this field between

2010 and 2015. The analysis shows that only 12 percent of approved GEF projects made a concerted effort to address gender equality. For the rest of GEF projects, gender equality is mentioned as tokenism or merely refers to women's equal presence in project meetings. However, there are notable efforts from CSOs calling for mechanisms, including climate change financial mechanisms, to be in place to ensure gender equality is translated from policy into practice.

Evidence indicates that **knowledge generation and management** of the nexus between gender equality, climate change and disasters remain key barriers to the meaningful inclusion of gender equality in CCDRR. While there is general awareness within the region that women and girls are more adversely affected by disasters and climate change, the capacities and skills that women employ in responding to disasters and climate change are less understood and consequently women's capacities are underutilised in national CCDRR efforts. The lack of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) at the community, national and regional levels is a significant roadblock to the creation of a robust evidence base and a deeper understanding of the issues. Confusion remains between CCDRR ministries and the bureaus of statistics over who is responsible for collecting SADD. There must also be due attention to gender analysis in addition to collection of SADD. Gender analysis of risk, as an integral part of national climate and disaster risk assessments, is also key. There is need to further understand the interplay between disaster risks, gender equality, and impact on productive sectors, which are key for women's livelihoods such agriculture, water and marine resources, the informal sector, etc. More research is needed to shed more light into the emerging complexities brought about by the uncertainties of climate change and gender rights to equality, female migration, sexual and gender-based violence, and early/child marriage.

Finally, **women's participation and leadership** is essential in addressing gender equality in CCDRR; this is acknowledged in the Sendai Framework, for example. The general low female participation in CCDRR reflects

the severe under-representation of women in political participation in Asia. CSOs advancing women's rights seem to have a greater engagement and say in regional CCDRR fora. However, women's participation and leadership in CCDRR national decision-making processes remains dismal. Most countries in Asia report that women organisations are not represented in their national DRR platforms and policy making processes. The lack of institutional mechanisms that would enable effective collaboration between women's organisations and the government machineries responsible for climate change, DRR and gender equality contributes to this challenge. This is further exacerbated by the fact that gender machineries tend to be under-resourced with limited political influence. More needs to

be done to empower women to voice their issues and needs, and to enhance their influence in decision-making. In some countries, women are already leading, initiating and implementing community CCDRR projects. Although women's rights often go unmet in CCDRR practice, their commitment to changing behaviours and supporting their communities is evident. However, to more radically shift existing gender norms, and to recognise and empower women as agents of change and equal citizens in building climate change and disaster resilience, there must be more widespread awareness raising, education and advocacy by governments, donors and CSOs. This measures must be further strengthened with the appropriate financial, technical and human resources.



Women farmers are taught new techniques in vegetable pickle-making, Sindh Province, Pakistan.



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Savitri Boyan, 32 carrying a bundle of sticks. She is a tribal woman living in a remote hill top Village, Gajapati District, Odhisa in India

Section 1: Introduction

Table 1 Reconstructed World Risk Index 2016¹

World Risk Index		
Rank	Country	Risk (%)
1	Vanuatu	36.50
2	Philippines	28.25
3	Tonga	28.23
4	Guatemala	20.68
5	Bangladesh	19.37
6	Solomon Islands	19.18
7	Costa Rica	17.55
8	El Salvador	17.12
9	Cambodia	17.12
10	Papua New Guinea	16.74
11	Timor-Leste	16.41
12	Brunei Darussalam	16.23
13	Nicaragua	14.87
14	Mauritius	14.78
15	Guinea-Bissau	13.75

The Asia and the Pacific region is recognised as one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change and disaster impacts globally. While Asian economies are growing, so are the levels of temperature, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The retreat of glaciers, rising temperatures and permafrost in Asia is occurring at an unprecedented rate. Climate change is no longer a concern just for the distant future. As a consequence, every country in Asia is facing the impact of climate change. According to the World Risk Report,² five of the 15 most at-risk countries are located in Asia (see Table 1).³ Asia hosts 60 percent of the world's population (over four billion people), it's not surprising that the region accounts for over 90 percent of all global deaths from disasters. Furthermore, Asia experiences almost 50 percent of total global damage, due to disasters and climate change.⁴

1 Reconstructed from World Risk Report 2016. Available on http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:5763/WorldRiskReport2016_small.pdf
 2 World Risk Report 2016: http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:5763/WorldRiskReport2016_small.pdf
 3 These include Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste.
 4 German Watch 2014: Climate Risk Index Report 2014.

The impact of rising temperatures, increasing extreme weather events (including floods, droughts, tropical storms, and extreme heat), melting of glaciers and rising sea levels are today felt across the region and will continue to intensify. The region combines high exposure to frequent and damaging natural hazards with low capacity to manage the resulting risks. The consequences of this interplay between climatic and disasters risks, exposure and low capacity is impacting on people's abilities to secure food and water, shelter among others. The changes in weather are already having major impacts on Asian countries and on the lives of millions of people in Asia.

While no country in Asia is spared the impact of climate change and its related disasters, the impact is experienced differently among different social groups. Due to the prevailing social, cultural, economic and political factors that contribute to the low status of women and girls in Asia, they are known to be disproportionately affected by climate change and disaster impacts. Yet, despite these barriers, women possess invaluable knowledge and skills that are indispensable to resilience building of families, communities and nations. The empowerment and engagement of women and girls is critical, as the frequency and severity of storms, floods, drought and other climatic hazards increase.

Asia

5 of the most at risk countries are from the region

90% of the global deaths from disasters come from Asia

50% of the world's total damage due to disasters and climate change come from Asia

This report makes an important contribution to the current state of knowledge and practice on addressing gender inequalities in the climate change action and DRR sectors in the region. It is intended to inform national governments, the UN system, civil society organisations (CSOs), communities and other stakeholders as they contextualise and develop national and regional mechanisms for implementing the new international frameworks addressing the post-2015 development agenda. The latter include: the Sustainable



Post-earthquake Street Art Kathmandu.
'Yesterday-Tomorrow'.

Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Action for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Paris Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These frameworks include strong messages regarding the need to work towards gender equality and targets for enhancing the engagement of key stakeholders, specifically women.

Report objective

The objective of the report is twofold. Firstly, to present the current literature and findings from primary data collection on the gendered dimensions of climate change and disasters. Secondly, to analyse existing efforts to address gender equality in climate change and disasters in Asia and make evidence based recommendations for policy and programming.

Methodology and scope

The study method combined a literature review for the desk study on the situation in Asia in general, and for the country case studies in the respective countries. The countries for the case studies were selected by UN Women, which include Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam. Focus group discussions (FGDs) and meetings with larger audiences were conducted for the case study countries and

of these meetings reports were made. The primary data was analysed and reports were completed for the desk study, three case studies and the final report based on all the material. This final report summarises the main results and findings. Regional information (from the desk study) and country specific information (from the case studies) is included. Based on these findings, recommendations are formulated.

Logistical arrangements for the fieldwork and the identification of relevant stakeholders to be consulted were carried out by the research consultant who worked closely with the UN Women offices in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam. In each country, fieldwork comprised face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The interviews were on average 60 minutes in duration. Fieldwork was undertaken in 2015: from 6-13 March in Vietnam; 14-20 March in Cambodia; and 16-22 May in Bangladesh. The three core objectives of the research were: (1) to gather evidence-based information on the impacts of climate change and disasters on gender, that is credible, reliable, useful and owned by key climate change and disaster risk reduction (CCDRR) actors; (2) to provide policy recommendations on how gender equality and women's empowerment can be strengthened through climate change and DRR policies, strategies and measures



An earthquake survivor is drawing water from the village well. The village population has no choice but try to get their life back to the routine, even amongst the ruins.

for the region; and (3) to identify an entry point for partners working in the field of climate change, disaster risk reduction and gender equality to engage effectively in CCDRR efforts in Asia.

Limitations

The overall study has several limitations. The study focused on and emphasised climate change and climate-induced disasters as well as climate change adaptation. Very limited information is available on climate change mitigation and gender equality in Asia currently. The report focused more on south and south-East Asia mainly due to the location of the case study countries. No information is included for central or west Asia. In the desk study, emphasis was on literature from 2002-2015; before that period only scattered resources are available and where relevant these sources have been included.

Fieldwork for the three country case studies, which included interviews with stakeholders and meetings, had to be executed within one week each, and were limited to the capital cities. As such, project site visits were not possible and there was no scope to conduct face-to-face interviews or focus groups with women directly affected by

climate change and disasters. Finally, there was limited time available to complete the full study, with nine weeks work over a period of seven months, including accommodating minor changes to field visits due to political tensions in case study countries.

Structure of the report

This report is structured into four sections. Following the introductory section, section two is an analysis of gender vulnerabilities in climate change and disasters, with a specific focus on gender inequality, women's differentiated impacts of climate change and disasters, and adaptation and resilience-building strategies of women across the region. Section three provides an analysis of current efforts to address gender equality in climate change⁵ and disaster risk reduction. The section is organised around a framework⁶ of analysis, which includes the policy environment; institutional arrangements; implementation and practice; advocacy, knowledge generation, and management; and women's participation and leadership. Section four presents the conclusions and recommendations.

⁵ The report largely focuses on climate change adaptation.

⁶ The Framework is adapted from a UNDP Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development at the National Level: a Practical Framework' (2010).



Victim of the earthquake, stands in her doorway.

Section 2:

Vulnerabilities and Capacities to Adaptation and Resilience: A Gendered Perspective

This section of the report begins by identifying existing gender inequalities in Asia and highlights women's differentiated impacts of climate change and disasters compared to men. The section also points to the subordinate status of women in society and specific gender inequalities that are exacerbated by climate change and disasters. Finally, coping strategies, adaptation and resilience-building tactics are discussed, demonstrating that, while gender norms reinforce stereotypical and limiting attitudes to the role and place of women, and rights and needs often go unaddressed in policy and practice, nevertheless, women are changing behaviour patterns and mobilising themselves and their communities to cope and adapt in the changing climate.

Regional vulnerability to disasters and climate change: Setting the scene

Research evidence also shows that certain social groups within the region experience more severe impacts of disasters and climate change than others. Because of widespread gender inequality and discrimination against women, women and girls are typically more likely to be negatively affected by the impacts of climate change and disasters than men and face greater barriers to influence, participate in and benefit from disaster risk reduction, recovery and climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Gender inequality in Asia

Although there have been important areas of progress in enhancing gender equality, such as in the increased percentage of girls enrolled in primary schools, gender inequalities are still amongst the most pervasive inequalities in many countries and regions in Asia. Diverse forms of gendered discrimination persist. Although there is a general lack of gender-specific information, data and statistics, some of the available information gives an idea about forms of discrimination faced by many women and girls in Asian countries. Women and girls across Asia are denied their basic human rights and are discriminated against. In China, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Viet Nam discrimination against girls starts even before birth, where female foetuses are aborted in preference for sons.⁷ As they grow up, women and girls can be denied the right to education and other life choices through early and forced marriage. Women have no or limited rights to own or access productive resources and they are often denied the privilege of making decisions which affect their lives. All these factors combine to determine their lives and livelihoods. More than one third of adult women in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan are underweight, negatively impacting their health (Von Grebmer *et al* 2013). Violence against women (VAW) remains one of the most pervasive expressions of inequality in Asia. A World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Review of available data showed that in 2013, 35 percent of women worldwide had experienced either physical and/or sexual violence (WHO 2013).⁸ In Delhi alone, a 2010 study found that 66 percent of women reported being sexually harassed between two to five times during the previous year.⁹

Women are responsible for most of the unpaid household chores, and form the majority of those working in the informal sector, mainly in agriculture and domestic employment. Furthermore, most rural women in Asia are often directly dependent on natural resources, for agriculture, collection of non-timber forest products, water and energy provision, and for their engagement in the informal sector. The proportion of women in the agricultural

7 UNICEF Joint Press Release: "Son preference" perpetuates discrimination and violations of women's rights – it must and can end, Geneva, 14 June 2011. Available: http://www.unicef.org/media/media_58924.html

8 For individual country information, see full compilation of data in UN Women, 2012, Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country - See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#sthash.eCOvGOnX.dpuf>

9 UN Women, 2014. Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women. Factsheet UN Women, New York.



A woman fetching safe drinking water, Srinagar, Dacope, khulna, Bangladesh. This area was badly affected by a salinity during cyclone Aila in 2009

In 2013, **35%** of women worldwide reported experiencing physical or sexual violence

60% of the agricultural labour force in Nepal are women

And yet only **19.7%** of landownership belongs to women

workforce has been growing over recent decades: the further feminisation of agriculture took place worldwide, except in Europe. In Asia, women now form 43 percent of the agricultural workforce (UN Women 2014, p.65). Of the total work force in 2008, 57 percent of women in Asia were active in work related to agriculture (Agarwal 2012). Most of these women engage in subsistence farming, which tends to have low-productivity and is sensitive to the changing climate (Agarwal 2014). Despite their large contribution to agricultural labour, most women do not have rights to own, access, or control land and other resources. For example, in Nepal, women contribute to 60 percent of the agricultural labour, yet female ownership of land only stands at 19.7 percent.¹⁰

Women contribute, as with men, to a country's economy. In formal employment, in the cities of Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and other countries, many women are breaking gender barriers by working in export-oriented industries, in road construction and in trading and services jobs. However, unlike men, they often work under unsafe conditions. Women's participation in Bangladesh's economy, for example, is clouded with issues of illegal migration, vulnerable employment, tenure, discrimination and lack of proper reintegration programmes for returning female migrants. Although a lot of progress has been made, discrimination against women and girls is embedded in culture, norms and attitudes.

¹⁰ Nepal Post Disaster Needs Assessment 2015: PDNA Volume B.



Today is my day. International Day of the Girl Child in Pakistan.

19.2% of parliamentarians are women across Asia; the third lowest region

Women in Asia are also denied the privilege of making decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods both at the local and national levels. Women's political participation across the region is low¹¹ compared to other regions, with only 19.2 percent women among parliamentarians across all chambers (UN Women, 2015). The absence of women in the political and public spheres means that decisions that shape the direction and development of national priorities are skewed towards male priorities. Despite the introduction of gender quotas in some countries to increase women's participation, in most sub-regions within Asia and the Pacific, there is a strong resistance to women's political participation. Cultural and social norms and practices are often used as excuses and barriers to women's participation in politics (True, 2012).

Prevalent gender inequalities and power differences in Asia limit women's ability to respond and adapt to disasters and climate change impacts. It is the inequities in the everyday, and not just in times of disaster, that create greater risk and reduce life chances for women and girls (Bradshaw and Fordham, 2013). Women and girls tend to have less access to or control over assets compared to men, including the resources necessary to cope with and respond to hazardous events, and adapt to climate change. This includes access to information, education, health and assets. Their vulnerability is therefore relatively greater than men's.

¹¹ Only the Arab States and the Pacific are lower.

Box 1. Gender issues in Viet Nam

There have been major achievements in women's lives in Viet Nam during the past decades, including in school enrolment, and in relation to women living in poverty. According to a recent UN Women report, women in Viet Nam are less likely than men to live in poor households. However, gender inequalities are still visible in the growing number of female-headed households; women work longer hours than men and for less pay (according to the 2009 Labour Force Survey about 75 percent of men's pay); women's limited access to and control over resources, such as land, property and formal credit and job training; and poor representation of women in decision-making positions, particularly at local levels.

Although overall the health situation of women has improved, HIV and AIDS form a significant problem. Gender violence is a major challenge to married and unmarried women and girls: the National Study of Domestic Violence Against Women in Viet Nam (2010) reported that 34 percent of married women had experienced physical or sexual violence from their husbands. The boy preference in Viet Nam is reflected in imbalanced sex ratios at birth (SRB), from 106 male births for every 100 female births in 1999, to 111 in 2009. Imbalanced SRBs are highest for higher income groups with better access to ultrasound techniques and sex selected abortions. This is clearly linked to a culturally based preference for boys. Thus, the major challenge for Viet Nam, as elsewhere in the world, is to change prevailing stereotypical gender norms and the underpinning gender ideology which privileges one over the other(s).

Women's differentiated impacts from climate change

This section explores how disasters and climate change impact women differently from men and demonstrate how inequality is directly linked to, and exacerbates women's vulnerability.

Table 2 Sex disaggregated mortality rates from major disasters in Asia

Year	Disaster/ Country	Female Mortality
1991	Cyclone OB2- Bangladesh	90%
2004	Tsunami- Aceh-Indonesia	77%
2004	Tsunami- Tamil Nadu India	73%
2008	Cyclone Nargis - Myanmar	61%
2015	Nepal Earthquake	55%
2015	Floods - Myanmar	42%

Higher mortality among women and girls

Overall, women and girls make up the largest social group negatively affected by disasters. Global statistics indicate that women and girls are more likely to die from disasters than men and boys (Neumayer and Plümpner 2007). However, much of this information is anecdotal due to lack of collection of sex and age disaggregated (SADD) disaster mortality figures. However, where it has been collected - as the figures in Table 2 indicate,¹² disasters disfavour women and girls. Even where SADD information is not collected, indications show higher female mortalities. Consultations for this study show that during the floods of 2011 in Cambodia, 250 people were killed, mostly women and children. Similar observations were made of the floods in 2013, in which there were 218 fatalities.

Women make up the largest proportion of the dead due to a multiplicity of factors expressed through their gender roles. During disasters, such as tsunamis and earthquakes, women, girls, and children are more likely to be around or working in their homes; these homes are often poorly constructed and lack protection against disasters. While men are more likely to be in open spaces, fields, markets, or in more secure or strongly built structures such as offices. Women also have limited access to information and are therefore less likely to receive disaster early warning information in time. Women and girls, unlike men and boys, due to what is acceptable in society, are far less likely to learn to swim or climb trees and therefore are unable to escape floods. For example, in their 2009 study on gender variability in Gujarat, India, Ahmed and Fajber concluded that most women could not swim while 40 percent of men could; only women from traditional fishing communities could sometimes keep

¹² With the exception of Nepal and Myanmar, the data is indicative only because the sources are rarely robust enough to claim full accuracy. However, the general principle has widespread validation.



Impact of Climate Change- Suvarna Amrutappa Alkatti in her field hoping the rains would come soon. Dharwad district in India

themselves afloat. Moreover, women are also responsible for taking care of homes and home assets and often stay behind to take care of them when they should escape.

In the 2015 Nepal earthquake, for example, more women died because they were lingering or running back into falling buildings to collect their jewellery, the only assets they bring into a marriage. In Viet Nam, anecdotal evidence suggests men may be more likely to be killed during disasters based on occupational segregation; fishermen for example, and men making risky decisions in times of disaster and during search and rescue operations, as has been found elsewhere in the world.¹³ Far from undermining the central claim of women's greater vulnerability and marginalization, this example points to the highly-contextualised nature of gendered disaster impacts, which is the case across scales and cultures. What all this diverse array of information and research accentuates is a need for accurate collection and dissemination of sex disaggregated data to be able to better understand the gendered impacts of the change in climate.

Exclusion from relief and recovery efforts

In addition to high mortality, women also experience more negative consequences of disasters than men do. In the immediate aftermath of disasters, women are often denied access to emergency relief items and shelter. Socio-cultural

norms can be a serious hindrance to women's mobility, thereby reinforcing disempowerment and increasing vulnerability. In several societies, practices of *purdah* (seclusion) dictate to what extent women and girls can leave the house to seek shelter, or be involved in any disaster planning (Sultana, 2012). In the 2015 Nepal earthquake, widows who had lost their spouses in the earthquake faced social exclusion, which prevented them from accessing much-needed relief items; this was in addition to dealing with the trauma of losing a partner. In other countries, the consequences of widowhood are exacerbated through the diminished socio-economic support available and the reduction of social status which is conferred on a woman by her husband and other male relatives. Hence in the absence of her husband, a woman becomes a non-entity and suffers both a social and an economic death (Arat Poudel, 2015).

Only 4% of humanitarian funding in Nepal was allocated to gender equality and protection issues

Despite increasing attention to cross-cutting issues such as gender equality,¹⁴ humanitarian and post-disaster needs assessments (PDNAs) are often devoid of gender analysis, which means that the humanitarian and recovery needs and priorities of women, and girls are missed. Furthermore, the gender and protection needs under humanitarian

13 For example, see Delaney and Shrader's work on Hurricane Mitch in Latin America. [Delaney, P. L. and Shrader, E. (2000). 'Gender and Post-Disaster Reconstruction: The Case of Hurricane Mitch in Honduras and Nicaragua'. Decision Review Draft. LCSPG/LAC Gender Team. The World Bank: <http://gdnonline.org/resources/reviewdraft.doc>. Accessed 6 November 2016.]

14 See GFDRR PDNA Guidelines Volume B, Gender, Global Facility for Disaster reduction and recovery https://www.gfdr.org/sites/gfdr/files/WB_UNDP_PDNA_Gender_SP_FINAL.pdf



A journey of dislocation and survival. Afghan Sikh women narrate their journey from Afghan to Pakistan with loss of their land, houses and businesses, and share how they have rebuilt their lives and their fears of abduction if they return home.

cluster systems are extremely underfunded in comparison to other sectors. For example, in Nepal, only 4 percent of the humanitarian funding received under the Flash Appeal¹⁵ was allocated to gender and protection cluster activities.¹⁶ In terms of recovery and reconstruction, women often lose out relatively to men. Rehabilitation and reconstruction of destroyed homes is often based on home ownership, which means women who often have no ownership rights are unable to benefit from post-disaster recovery measures. Distribution of seed and agricultural inputs is also often allocated to the men who own the land, even though women contribute extensively to agriculture and often have considerable indigenous knowledge of which crops to grow in relation to weather changes.

Loss of livelihoods

The slow-onset and sudden impacts of climate change and disaster on women's livelihoods are severe and often

long-term. Men and women in rural areas largely depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, however, women depend more on these resources than men. In Nepal, for example, 60 percent of agricultural labour is undertaken by women. This is a sector that is often adversely affected by climate change and disasters. Any negative impact in this sector is likely to have huge implications for women's ability to realise their livelihoods, food security and nutrition. In Nepal, women control smaller livestock, which is given to them by their parents to start a new family. It was noted that in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake, stress-selling of assets to cope with the disaster tended to concentrate on smaller livestock, such as goats and chickens, owned and controlled by women. This practice inevitably erodes their livelihoods and ability to cope with future stresses.

In the 2015 Myanmar floods, women – who often own and control smaller livestock such as chickens and ducks – lost 80 percent of all animals killed in the floods,¹⁷ while men lost 20 percent in terms of buffaloes, cattle and pigs. It is also important to note that while women are more

15 An advocacy tool for humanitarian financing, in which projects managed by the United Nations, NGOs and other stakeholders come together to approach the donor community, funding international development activities.

16 See the Funding by Cluster Nepal Earthquake 2015 Flash Appeal: <http://www.unocha.org/nepal>

17 Gender Chapter of the Myanmar National Flood Needs Assessment, 2015.

dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods and contribute extensively to agricultural labour, their lack of control and ownership of these resources make them less able to respond to, and recover from disasters, and adapt to climate change. Destruction of domestic buildings can mean not just a loss of home but an end to a home-based livelihood for women. While men often use homes for resting and sleeping, homes and kitchens have a different function for many rural women. They play a critical role in enabling women to pursue economic activities, such as weaving, pottery, food-vending and other home-based income-generating activities.

Women's reproductive roles, compounded by time poverty, also limit their options for alternative livelihoods after disasters or in response to climate change. Reproductive roles restrict mobility, a limitation that men do not face. After the 2015 Myanmar floods, rural women who relied on paid agricultural labour as a main source of income were left without alternate livelihoods. While men had options to move and find work further afield.

37% of all households in Gorkha are female-headed due to high male labour migration

Evidence suggests that male labour migration from rural areas of Bangladesh and Nepal is being increased by climate changes, giving rise to an expansion of female headed households (FHHs). As agriculture becomes less productive – compounded by diminishing land resources – men are moving to other more productive and less climate-exposed work (for example day labour or migration in Bangladesh and Nepal), leaving women behind to assume the full responsibility for the family livelihood, thereby increasing the feminisation of agriculture. In Gorkha, Nepal, FHHs account for 37 percent¹⁸ due to male labour migration. A study by Islam *et al* (2014) in the Sirajgang's floodplains of Bangladesh showed that unemployment had risen alarmingly and that the jobless left their villages to find work in cities; women were left behind, and the increasing number of FHHs were pressured to take on unfamiliar roles. Many poor and destitute women remain unemployed during and after floods. While female migration is on the

increase in Bangladesh, China, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam (Sujapati, 2015), this option is usually only available for women who are single or have able parents who can take care of their children. Furthermore, while migration remains a livelihood option for many women escaping poverty, such mass movement is not without its difficulties. The gendered perception of female migrant workers, that they are “young, needy, pliable, portable and disposable labour force”, has meant that their demand is primarily in the domestic, hospitality, health and care, garment and entertainment sectors (UN Women, 2013).

Time poverty

One of the biggest challenges for many women and girls in rural areas in Asia is an increase in working hours due to disaster and climate change. Women and girls spend twice as much time as men on unpaid domestic work.¹⁹ Time poverty is broadly understood as the burden of competing claims on individuals' time that reduces their ability to make unconstrained choices on how they allocate their time, leading, in many instances, to increased work intensity and to trade-offs among various tasks. After a disaster, working hours escalate and reproductive tasks such as care-giving to the injured and sick and productive activities such as agriculture become more burdensome and time-consuming. In times of drought, women and girls, have to walk long distances in order to fetch clean water for household use. Also, extra tasks such as reconstruction work in the community are often added to this already unequal burden. (Bradshaw and Linneker 2014) (Nellemann *et al* 2011). In the context of a disaster, time poverty means women are unable to generate income at a time when income is needed the most (see Box 2 for an example from Nepal). The invisibility of time poverty (for example, women seen to be doing the same chores as fetching water, even though the task now takes twice as long to do) makes it difficult for humanitarian and DRR specialists to understand and address. Furthermore, less understood are the specific impacts of climate change on time poverty in the long-term. However, the recurrence of disasters can make the situation even more dire for women and they can spiral into a vicious cycle of disasters, time poverty and poverty increase.

19 The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics: on CCTers is another challengesf recognition of the social context in which women are more vulnerberle due to inequalities bet Available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/Executive%20summary.htm>

18 The national average is about 26.2 percent

In Bangladesh, UN Women and BCAS, 2014 noted that "...climate [change] is wreaking havoc with the livelihood of vulnerable women. From floods, to droughts, cyclones, increased salinity, erosion and water logging, women's days are dictated by their access to natural resources and they rely on these to care for their families and communities. Almost all climatic changes lead to women's increased labour, especially as it relates to the access to clean and safe water, fuel and food."

Box 2. Increase in time poverty in Nepal after the 2015 earthquake

In the aftermath of the Nepal disaster in 2015, women in Kavre and Sindhulpachowk reported a high increase in working hours, which included salvaging building materials from house rubble. Women in Kavre had to spend three hours longer per day drawing clean water due to the drying-up of the villages' wells due to shifts in geology after the earthquake. Loss of electricity and cooking utensils also meant that total cooking time was an hour longer than normal and women were spending about three hours per week fetching firewood. The longest time was spent in intensive childcare. The closure of schools and the condemnation of homes that were still standing meant that women had always to ensure that children did not go into the damaged houses. In some areas, women were spending as much as 12 hours per day doing emergency-related work and this resulted in a reduction in the time allocated for resting but also in the time spent on agricultural work. A PDNA analysis of the impact of the earthquake on employment and livelihoods indicates that more women than men (50.63 million and 44.19 million work days respectively) lost work days in commerce, tourism and agriculture. Women in affected provinces in Nepal lost a potential income of about NPR8 billion due to the increased work burden.

Source: Gender Chapter of the Nepal PDNA Report Volume B

Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Early Marriage, and Human Trafficking

Women and girls in the aftermath of a disaster may:

- Lose their lives
- Lose their livelihoods,
- get trafficked,
- forced into early marriage,
- face physical and sexual violence
- get pulled out of school

Women and girls also suffer devastating secondary impacts, such as an increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and human trafficking. Violence has many different forms and manifestations: subordination, exploitation, sexual violence and mental abuse, and can be caused by an intimate partner or by an unknown person. Several studies focus on the increase of violence against women and girls specifically post disaster-event, although information is patchy and in some cases unreliable. There is a general understanding that situations of stress and insecurity, such as disasters, can exacerbate violence against women (Enarson and Chakrabarti 2009) (Bradshaw and Fordham 2013). Violence against women and girls tends to increase after disasters due to a number of factors: displaced women and girls are often forced to sleep in insecure homes and shelters. For example, FHHs in Kavre, Nepal, after the 2015 earthquake reported that they felt unsafe sleeping in makeshift tents which could not be locked; especially considering an increase in alcohol consumption among men. Shelters that do not offer separate sleeping arrangements for men and women, unlit

and insecure bathing and washing facilities can all increase the risk of SGBV for women and girls. Women and girls also face elevated levels of violence if they must travel long distances to fetch water, firewood or food after a disaster.²⁰ Increased stress and feelings of powerlessness – due to bereavement, loss of property and loss of livelihood, mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, the scarcity of basic provisions, and other factors leading to hegemonic masculinity crises – contribute to pre-existing levels of violence among men. This is often compounded by loss of protection from family members who have died or migrated, as well as a break-down in the rule of law.

The Bangladesh Government Guidebook on Gender and Social Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction states: “women are often vulnerable to sexual harassment in pre and post disaster situations”. (Rashid and Shafie 2009). It was documented that after the 1991 cyclone, young women were abducted and abused, and it has been reported that there has been harassment in shelters, especially where there is not a separate safe space for women to use the toilet, shower and sleep. Many women reject the calls to go to shelters as they experience these as unsafe and not gender-friendly spaces. They face sexual and reproductive health problems, and they report cases of sexual harassment. Many parents consider cyclone shelters to be unsafe for girls and prefer to leave them at home rather than exposing them to potential harm from shared sleeping quarters and lack of adequate and private sanitary facilities (Plan International 2011).

As families living in poverty struggle to survive due to slow-onset and sudden climate-induced disasters, there is also emerging evidence of a rise in early and forced marriage among underage girls. Marriage of an underage daughter could mean one less person to feed; for the family of the groom it means bringing a new family member and additional ‘working hands’, particularly in rural agricultural contexts. In cultures where the girl’s family provides a dowry, marriages are arranged through a broker who will negotiate a price. In effect, a growing number of girls are being sold to their future husbands (Donahue 2011). Child marriage is an epidemic in Bangladesh, and has recently been linked with climate change and the increased numbers of natural disasters (see Box 3).

Box 3. Child marriage in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has the fourth-highest rate of child marriage in the world after Niger, the Central African Republic, and Chad (UNICEF 2013). In the period 2005 to 2013, a total of 29 percent of girls in Bangladesh married before the age of 15 and 65 percent married before the age of 18. Presently there is discussion in Bangladesh to lower the legal age for marriage for boys to 18 years (currently 21) and for girls from 18 to 16 years. Child marriage around the world is associated with many harmful consequences, including health dangers associated with early pregnancy, lower educational achievement, a higher incidence of spousal violence, and an increased likelihood of poverty. The latest Human Rights Watch Report (2015) entitled *Marry before your house is swept away*, highlights that one of the major factors pushing an increasing number of families in Bangladesh into desperate poverty is natural disasters. Bangladesh’s extreme vulnerability to natural disasters, exacerbated by climate change, means that for many poor families their livelihoods, homes, and land are under threat from flooding, river erosion, cyclones, and other disasters. Some of the families interviewed by Human Rights Watch said they had made decisions about marriage for reasons directly related to natural disasters: for example, a rush to marry off a daughter in anticipation of losing their home to river erosion. Other families described natural disasters as a recurring stress factor, taking food from the family’s mouth and making child marriage seem the best option for a girl and the family. Boys are also victims of child marriage in Bangladesh, though it is estimated that the rate of child marriage is 11 times higher for girls than for boys.

Source: Human Rights Watch, 9 June 2015. *Marry before your house is swept away*. HRW, London.

²⁰ Plan International, 2011. *Weathering the Storm: Adolescent Girls and Climate Change*. Plan, London.

Women and children are also at greatest risk of being trafficked in times of disasters, and they face the greatest risk of becoming targets for exploitation, resulting in slavery and sex labour. (Hodge and Lietz 2007) (Bartlett 2008). Although no statistical data are available, employment in sex work and begging are risk factors in times of environmental and climate crises. (IFRC 2012). Systematic studies on this gendered impact of climatic change, however, are not currently available. A report from Nepal suggests: *“Great uncertainty exists regarding the possible elevated levels of exploitation during political conflicts or climate-related disasters. Estimates based on emerging data from anti-trafficking organisations such as Maiti Nepal suggest that trafficking may have increased from an estimated 3,000-5,000 in the 1990s to current levels of 12,000-20,000 per year. The data also suggests that trafficking may have increased by 20-30% during disasters.”* (Nelleman *et al* 2011). After the 2015 earthquake, reports indicated that in Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk and Nuwakot, human traffickers were entering temporary shelters disguised as relief workers.²¹

In West Bengal, India, there is an observed pattern between human trafficking of women and girls, and annual flooding.²² There is a yearly increase in human traffickers who follow annual inundation, when targeted families become destitute and desperate for livelihoods. Some evidence following typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in November 2013 also supports the claim that trafficking is a major concern. The typhoon left 6,000 dead and more than 4 million displaced. The coordinator of the Haiyan Relief Effort (sub-cluster Gender Based Violence), Devanna De La Puente, warned: *“Even before Haiyan, the provinces of Leyte and Samar were identified as trafficking hotspots. Women and girls would be trafficked to Manila or abroad for domestic work”*. Lack of livelihood opportunities months after the typhoon, and the mass exodus of people leaving for Manila, often without documentation as this was washed away by the waters, seriously increase the risk of violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking.²³

A less extensively studied issue on women’s differentiated vulnerability is the position of women and girls in (peri) urban areas, and in particular in urban slums and poor neighbourhoods. Several of the factors play a role in urban contexts, for example, the issue of (the absence of) land and housing rights, access to energy or other economic resources, poor water quality, and environmental insecurity. Gendered roles and responsibilities, social norms and customs define women’s and men’s vulnerabilities and resilience in urban contexts as well as rural contexts and these less understood impacts merit further investigation.

Women’s differential disaster vulnerability is highly correlated with gendered social relations and gendered roles. Gender inequalities and pervasive discrimination against women and girls in Asia are issues of human rights. Women’s and girls’ unequal control over their own lives and their unequal access to basic services are issues of rights. Evidence strongly supports the conclusion that these inequalities compromise women’s and girls’ capacities to respond to and cope with disasters. Pre-existing inequalities can be exacerbated during and after disasters and in the face of a changing climate, further eroding women’s and girls’ resilience to future disasters. Issues of increased violence against women, child or early marriage and trafficking, are serious offences against human rights that require further investigation and protection strategies to be put in place alongside unfettered recourse to the law. The lack of recognition of these social realities permits ongoing gender-blind attempts to address the adverse impacts of climate change on undifferentiated populations. Protecting human rights, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment must therefore be central to resilience building.

Further efforts to change the social norms and practices in society that allow this discrimination against women are needed as a longer-term, but critical, strategy for change.

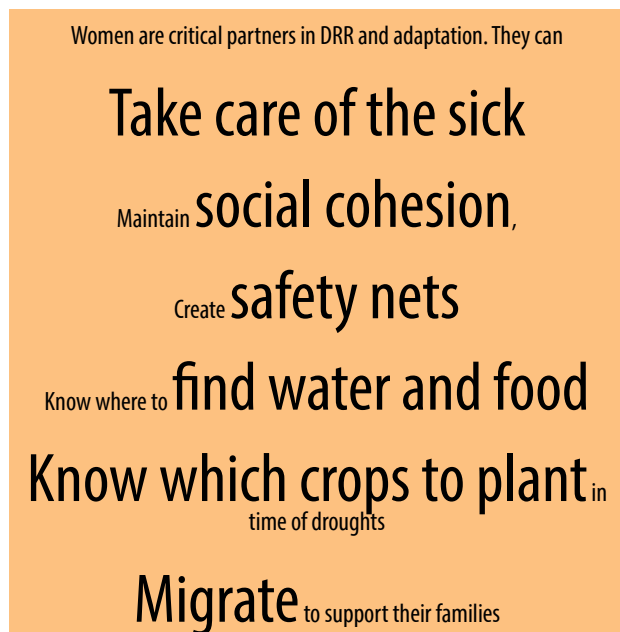
21 Based on information gathered from the Gender Equality Bulletin No. 1 - Response to the Nepal Earthquake –20 May 2015.

22 Human Security and Vulnerability *in* Human Development Report 2009. Available at <http://wbplan.gov.in/HumanDev/DHDR/24%20pgsSouth/Chapter%2007.pdf>

23 IRIN News (Integrated Regional Information Networks), 16 December 2013. “Typhoon Haiyan heightens protection concerns.” Link: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/99339/typhoon-haiyan-protection-concerns>. (Retrieved 30 January 2015).

Capacities and resilience building

Building resilience is a means of countering vulnerability: the more resilient a person, community or system is to climate change and disasters, the less vulnerable they are to their impacts. As we have seen, women and children are generally more marginalised by and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and disasters than men. This could indicate that their resilience is compromised. This is not because of biology, but because of socially constructed gender inequalities which increase their vulnerabilities and hinder their ability to build resilience. But women are not merely victims, caretakers or passive actors in the face of disaster and climate change; they are also rights holders, actors – singly and in organised groups – and knowledge carriers, who have capabilities to cope with and adapt to climatic change and disasters. The capacity and knowledge of women and girls play an important and unsung part in individual as well as community resilience. This is an important departure from traditional views of women and girls as inherently vulnerable and passive recipients of development and humanitarian assistance. It is encouraging to see that the Sendai Framework adopts the same stance concerning gender and DRR.



Women across the region play a critical role in disaster preparedness. Women and girls also play important roles in taking care of the sick and injured within their communities. They also possess unique knowledge on where to find water and treat contaminated water. For example, when the water level rises in Bangladesh, some women move to the nearest

high locations and make temporary shelters to ensure their safety and that of their families. Others find refuge in the houses of relatives or friends on higher ground. Those who have the necessary resources increase the plinth level of their houses or their homestead. To protect their assets and livelihoods, women try to store seeds in high places before floods come, which allows them to replant quickly after the floods have receded. Livestock is sometimes taken to higher ground, but safe places for cattle are often hard to find. In Viet Nam, women – through the Viet Nam Women’s Union – plan and organise information sessions for other women at the commune level. They perform plays on DRR, disease prevention and organise awareness-raising activities in their community. Women also play a critical role in fortifying their homes against storms.²⁴ In Cambodia, women reported that in time of droughts, they borrow money from women’s savings groups, which they give to their sons so that they can find work in the capital, Phnom Penh, or on farm plantations. Many studies reveal that women express greater concern about climatic-induced calamities than men do about environmental problems (Ali, 2013). Therefore, women can play a very constructive role in preventive and coping strategies in disaster, something that has often been overlooked.

Women also play a critical role in climate change adaptation. They perform infrastructural measures to conserve the soil and water, and to avoid flooding by building embankments. Women also adapt their agricultural patterns, including intensifying efforts in homestead production and seeking non-farm production options. Some female farmers have switched to cultivating crops that can be harvested before the flood season, or to varieties of rice that grow high enough to remain above water when the floods arrive. In the Philippines, indigenous women play significant roles in sustaining and managing forests, which are critical for climate change mitigation, adaptation and disaster mitigation, as women are the traditional-knowledge holders on how to manage forests sustainably (Naganan 2014).

There are also some negative coping strategies being employed in Asia, which can erode the overall resilience of communities. Stress selling of assets owned by women, such as jewellery and small livestock can leave women even

²⁴ United Nations Viet Nam and Oxfam, March 2012. Gender Equality in Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction in Viet Nam: Stories from Viet Nam http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/recognise_strength_en.pdf .

more vulnerable to future disasters. The increased burden of work also means that girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys (who are valued more) to help with family chores such as childcare and other reproductive work. To reduce the burden of feeding many family members after the loss of livelihoods to disasters, young girls are often married off or sold to human traffickers. Such coping mechanisms curtail the girls' education and often seals their fate with regard to the types of lives and livelihoods they can have in future.

Another commonly used coping or adaptation strategy is migration, where disaster impacts and climate changes force families to migrate to look for economic opportunities. An example of this can be seen through the gender analysis of climate change adaptation in India (see Box 4). In this case, both women and men play a role in adaptation and migration.

However, migration is often more challenging for women as it has the potential to put them in unsafe situations, with exposure to SGBV. This is a global phenomenon that was reported in all three case study countries, but has been studied most extensively in Viet Nam (UN Viet Nam 2014). In Bangladesh migration was identified, primarily by male members of households, but also by young women moving to cities to work in the garment industry (UN Women Bangladesh and BCAS, 2014a). In Cambodia, migration, especially among young economically active women takes place (Adaptation Knowledge Platform 2010). While migration is an option for some women and men, the emergence of community-based networks and groups for support and coping is also an option in dealing with the changing climate.

Research by Mitchell *et al.* (2007) found evidence of emerging community-based networks in Nepal, which are strengthening the capacity of the community to take collective action, create safety nets and support the livelihoods of poor women to reduce their financial risks. This also included the emergence of group savings in the context of social solidarity (*ibid*). A series of case studies of grassroots women-led DRR and resilience-building initiatives worldwide showed close community ties and the (socially constructed) altruistic behaviours which women display even at the most basic subsistence levels. Organised grassroots women – in Asia and globally – are engaged in rescuing, rebuilding, planning and recovery efforts, and in

developing enterprises and strengthening social capital. (Fordham and Gupta 2011).

Box 4. Diversification and migration in the changing climate: A gendered analysis from India

In India farmers rely on timely and sufficient rainfall during the monsoon. A team from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) undertook a study in six villages in two drought-prone districts in Andhra Pradesh: Mahbubnagar and Anantapur. Findings confirm that there is a strong gender dimension to the way in which climate variability is experienced and expressed by farmers in their coping strategies to ensure their food security and livelihoods. The availability of coping strategies for women and men differ. To ensure food security – and overall well-being – under the difficult conditions of farming in these drought-prone areas, smallholder farmers diversify their livelihoods. It was found that a common strategy to earn additional income for women more than men was through working as day labourers. Further to this, migration appeared to be a coping strategy for both women and men, and while the decision to migrate was made by both, men made decisions about where to migrate. In some instances, only men migrate and they purchase a mobile phone for their wives to be able to keep in contact and provide inputs on remaining on-farm activities. These findings demonstrate that gender analysis enhances our understanding of what women and men farmers perceive as options and coping solutions and how they respond to climatic changes. Such findings, disaggregated by sex, are essential for informing adequate policy decisions.

Source: Lambrou, Yianna and Sibyl Nelson, 2010. Farmers in a Changing Climate: does gender matter? Food security in Andhra Pradesh, India. Food and Agriculture Organisation UN (FAO), Rome. p. 8, p.12



Durdana, a once landless women farmer, proudly shows off 'her' land and Land Tenancy Agreement in Dadu District, Sindh Province, Pakistan.

What is lacking in efforts to cope with and adapt to climate change and disasters is the political will and commitment to support women's specific rights and needs. For example, male migration in Bangladesh is uncoordinated and is not recognised in policy. Few support services are offered to those who migrate or those who remain behind, often leaving women in villages with little opportunity for waged labour, a lack of extension services and increased exposure to GBV. NGOs are often involved in supporting and mobilising women, and women are inspired to take their own initiatives, including to change behaviour patterns, to cope and adapt. Investment in adaptation projects across Asia is growing but little evidence exists of the real benefits to women. A lack of gender awareness and responsiveness in design, implementation and reporting of climate change adaptation projects from government and development partners suggest much advocacy is needed to highlight the gendered dimension of adaptation and gender equality.

There is a continuum between simply coping with, and actively adapting to, changing circumstances. Diverse strategies, if well supported, can lead to effective, gender-responsive adaptation, and increased resilience of women and their families in the longer-term. When women are empowered and the institutional context is positive, climate change and disaster policies and actions even have the potential to transform gender roles. While individual efforts by women and community mobilisation among women themselves is noteworthy, much of the effort in Asia suggests a lack of political commitment to gendered rights and needs in adaptation, and thus women continue to be forced into passive roles as mere recipients of projects, programmes and policy. A shift in focus towards a rights-

based, gender-responsive approach to adaptation and resilience-building would be a positive step. This has the potential not just to empower women but to ensure equal benefit, to both women and men, from efforts to address the impacts of climate change and disasters. This is a step on the path to gender equality.

Section two has provided a detailed review of Asia's vulnerability to climate change and disasters through a gendered lens. The evidence presented articulates the link between women's unequal position in society and women's increased disaster vulnerability. This inequality is manifested in the denial of women's and girls' basic human rights, such as rights to education, water, food, shelter, and having control over their lives. Consequently, women and girls face greater challenges than men and boys expressed through higher mortality, and greater loss of livelihoods and assets to disasters and climate change. They also face secondary impacts such as an increased burden of work and time poverty, sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking, and early and child marriage. These challenges are often exacerbated by pervasive discriminatory practices such as social exclusion from relief and recovery efforts. However, far from being passive victims, this section has demonstrated that women are at the forefront in supporting themselves, their families and communities in responding to disasters and adapting to climate change. However, to improve resilience for all, evidence suggests that more effort and political commitment is required from governments and development partners to step up and address the underlying inequalities that cause differentiated impacts on women across the region.



Karma Sonam conducts a titration analysis in quality control to check the acidity of an agro product. A Bachelor in Science, Karma works as a trainee chemist at Bhutan Fruit Products Private Limited (BFPL), Samtse, Bhutan. She is responsible for the final checking of the products.

Section 3: The Current Status: Addressing Gender Equality in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

This section of the report is structured around an analysis of how gender equality and women’s empowerment are addressed through five key areas: the policy environment; institutional arrangements; implementation and practice; advocacy, knowledge generation and management; and women’s participation and leadership. This framework²⁵ is designed to guide an analysis of current efforts to address gender equality in CC/DRR and their effectiveness in addressing and reducing the inequalities and differential impacts discussed above.

Policy environment



A conducive gendered CCDRR policy and legislative environment is necessary to lay the foundation to comprehensively address gender equality in CCDRR practice. The following analysis examines the development of a comprehensive policy and legislative framework for CCDRR with: a) explicit high-level political commitment and support for gender equality; b); evidence of gender mainstreaming into regional CCDRR policies; c) clearly outlined gender equality strategies and plans in CCDRR policies and how these are addressed through obligatory national progress reporting d) backed by strong legislation and regulations. This section of the report presents policy examples from several Asian countries and finds that the policies on CCDRR are somewhat gendered ‘on paper’, however each varies in its ability to adequately address gender equality in the context of the changing climate. The goal of gender equality requires a socially transformative approach that goes beyond simply addressing women’s short-term needs.

There is a growing recognition at the global level that addressing gender equality and promoting women’s leadership and participation are critical factors in confronting the impacts of climate change and disasters. The Sendai Framework, a new global framework for DRR, which was adopted by 187 countries (including Asian countries), recognises the importance of, not only women’s participation, but also their leadership, for effective DRR. This focus is particularly important as there was only limited

²⁵ The framework is adapted from the UNDP Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development at the National Level: A Practical Framework (2010)

progress in addressing gender equality in Sendai's forerunner, the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework, some notable progress has been made at the regional level. In May 2016, UN Women, the Governments of Japan and Viet Nam, and UNISDR held an Asia-Pacific regional conference in Hanoi, which specifically sought to identify key priorities for action on gender equality and DRR. The Hanoi Recommendations for Action on Gender and DRR²⁶ were intended to keep gender high on the Asia Ministerial Conference on DRR (AMCDRR) agenda and to provide guidance to member states across the region in their implementation of the Sendai Framework. Indeed, the AMCDRR adopted the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030²⁷, which takes cognisance of gender as does the Delhi Declaration²⁸. The Regional Plan embraces the leadership of persons with disability, women, children and youth and the significant contribution of the business sector. It further calls on 'all countries to have established methodologies to collect disaster loss data and risk profiles, with gender, age, disability disaggregated data' by 2020. Furthermore, the ISDR-Asia Partnership (IAP) promotes the engagement of CSOs and other partners to influence the regional DRR decision-making processes. And as a result, a Gender Guidance Note²⁹ was also developed to support member states in implementing the Asia Regional Plan.

At the national level, national disaster management laws do recognise the differential impact of disaster on different gender groups³⁰ and include gender as a guiding principle for DRR policy formulation and practice (as is the case with the Viet Nam and Cambodia Disaster Management Laws). The same trend is also emerging at the policy level. More than half (54 percent) of national DRR policies are said

to be gender-responsive based on the national progress reports on the implementation of the HFA.³¹ In Pakistan for example, the Gender and Child Cell has formulated National Policy Guidelines on addressing the needs and concerns of vulnerable groups in the light of the lessons learned from the post-floods environment of 2010, 2011 and 2012.³²

However, it worth noting that specific reference to 'gender equality'³³ in the Sendai Framework, Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and other national disaster management legislation, remains absent or limited. Specifically, there is a lack of recognition of the social context in which women are made more vulnerable due to inequalities between women and men. This makes it a rights and justice issue and not just an issue of addressing need. Furthermore, women in disaster management laws and policies are seen as vulnerable, rather than agents of change. For example, the Bangladesh DM Act 2012 declares women as the most vulnerable group during disasters, along with children, older persons, and persons with disabilities.³⁴ Furthermore, the Pakistan National Policy Guidelines discussed above also depicts women as among vulnerable groups, which has the underlying connotation that women are helpless victims with very little capacity to contribute to DRR.

Some notable progress is starting to emerge at the global level on gendering climate change. Some of the policy changes include the Doha United Nations Climate Change Conference, November/December 2012: Gama *et al* 2016 notes that:

26 See: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/07/ha-noi-recommendations-for-action-on-gender-and-drr>

27 http://www.unisdr.org/files/50912_finalasiaregionalplanforimplemenat.pdf

28 See: http://www.unisdr.org/files/50912_finalnewdelhideclaration05november2.pdf

29 This was led by Duryog Nivaran, a lead of the IAP stakeholder group on gender equality and women issues

30 Based on a review of disaster laws database available on <http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/idrl-database/?t=&fr=&to=&oc=&l=&z=&c=238&cat=&au=&doctype=&content=&dt=1>

31 This is based on the analysis of 13 countries in Asia that submitted national reporting obligations on the HFA between 2014 and 2015 (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam (see Annex B).

32 Based on Pakistan 2015 National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2013-2015).

33 Many policy documents refer to gender and in fact mean 'women'. However, reference to gender equality, being the relations between women and men and the relative power, equality or inequality that exists between the sexes, brings new issues into the forefront and recognises that women and men are unequal in all social contexts.

34 Based on Bangladesh 2014 National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2013-2015).



Participants of a Regional Asia-Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction in Hanoi Viet Nam.

"...but perhaps most importantly, the Doha decision institutionalised gender and climate by ensuring it became a standing item for all subsequent COP sessions. This constituted a strong entry point for future discussion on gender issues and further elaboration of the gender equality and climate change agenda in the UNFCCC".

The UNFCCC COP18 adopted decision 23/CP.18 on promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. More recently, at the Lima United Nations Climate Change Conference, December 2014: at COP20 in Lima a new decision on gender equality under the COP Standing Agenda Item on Gender and Climate Change (SBI 16) was adopted. Since that decision, Parties have worked alongside civil society to outline the elements of a new decision to take forward action and implementation, not simply on gender balance in the negotiations, but on gender equality and gender-responsive climate policy. This work led to the launch of the 'Lima Work Programme on Gender', which aims to advance implementation of gender-responsive climate policies and mandates across all areas of the negotiations.

At national level, countries have developed a diversity of climate change-related policies, including national climate

change policies, strategies and plans, and in least-developed countries (LDCs), National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs). The NAPAs play an important role in identifying priority areas for climate change adaptation. The NAPA guidelines stress that the process should be participatory and they highlight the importance of gender equality. NAPA preparation and implementation is primarily funded by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LCDF) of the UNFCCC, which is administered by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). NAPAs have been developed for the following countries in Asia: Afghanistan (2009), Bangladesh (2005; updated 2009), Bhutan (2006), Cambodia (2007), Lao PDR (2009), Maldives (2008), Myanmar (2013), Nepal (2010), Timor-Leste (2011). (see UNFPA and WEDO, 2009)

Almost all NAPAs acknowledge the immediate and dangerous impacts of climatic changes on health and sanitation, water and food security, and even on access to literacy and education, and many stress that women are among the most vulnerable. But few NAPAs (Bangladesh and Nepal), look at how these aspects specifically relate to women's social, economic and political status, and even fewer incorporate women as key stakeholders in NAPA activities.

An assessment of the Asian Hindu-Kush region, by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), of existing policies produced the following narrative regarding the status of gender mainstreaming in climate change policy documents (see Table 3 below).

Table 3 Gender Mainstreaming in CCDRR policy documents in Asia³⁵

Country	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Bhutan	China	India	Nepal
Addresses gender-specific vulnerabilities	-Addressed very briefly – statement that climate change affects women differently, but no specificities	-Integrated into the policy and project design -Extensively discussed within the document with specific vulnerabilities or capacities identified	-Limited recognition of gender specific vulnerabilities and capacities -Most projects are aimed at infrastructure and reducing exposure so limited attention to human dimensions	-No discussion of gender specific vulnerabilities and capacities	-Differentiated impact of climate change on women recognised, but not discussed within NAPCC main document	-Addressed gender specific vulnerabilities and capacities – crosscutting issue throughout the policy -Gender specific vulnerabilities study conducted as part of the policy process

While Asia as a region shows progress in integrating gender equality at the policy level within the CCDRR discourse, many strategies and policies depict women as vulnerable victims and in need of saving, rather than able and equal citizens with equal rights to men. There is a lack of recognition that women have a role to play and are able to meaningfully contribute to addressing the impacts of climate change and disasters. The NAPAs, which pre-date many of the existing CCDRR policies in Asia which are discussed in this report, are an example of such a vulnerability discourse. For example, neither the NAPA for Bangladesh³⁶ nor for Cambodia³⁷ include women as stakeholders or actors or pay specific attention to the position of women and girls in the context of climate change. Rather, women are identified as the most vulnerable and in need of protection. Viet Nam’s National Strategy on Climate Change 2011 is another example of such discourse.

There is a similar discourse continuing in Bangladesh, with numerous national policies and strategies relegating women to the category of ‘vulnerable’. The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) is one such example, with the statement: “the needs of the poor

and vulnerable, including women and children, will be prioritized in all activities under the Action Plan”. However, given the size of the CCDRR landscape in Bangladesh, and the country’s relative vulnerability to climate change and disasters, development partners and international organisations are playing a key role in supporting more gender sensitive policy reform (see Box 5).

BOX 5. Bangladesh climate change strategy and action plan (BCCSAP)

The BCCSAP came into force in 2009 and is the only officially endorsed government strategy on climate change at government cabinet meetings (ActionAid Bangladesh, 2010). Principally, it is the extended version of its NAPA (2009), with long-term strategies, and takes into account the country’s development priorities, covering the period 2009-2018. The BCCSAP guides all the projects funded from the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) in the following six thematic areas: (1) Food security, social protection and health; (2) Comprehensive disaster management; (3) Infrastructure; (4) Research and knowledge management; (5) Mitigation and low carbon development production; and (6) Capacity building and institutional strengthening for climate funding. BCCSAP says: “*The needs of the poor and vulnerable, including women and children, will be prioritized in all activities under the Action Plan*”. There are two specific areas in which gender plays a main role: T1P9: Livelihood protection of vulnerable socio-economic groups (incl. women); T6P4: Mainstreaming gender considerations in climate change

35 For this study the following documents have been analysed: Afghanistan: NAPA (2009), National Development Strategy (2008-2013); Bangladesh: Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2008), National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (2009-2011); Bhutan: NAPA (2006), 10th Year Plan (2008-2013); China: National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) (2006), 11th Five Year Plan (2006-2010); India: National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) (2008), 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012); Nepal: NAPA (2010), Three Year Interim Plan (2007-2010); Pakistan: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II (2008-2011).

36 UNFCCC NAPA Database: http://unfccc.int/adaptation/workstreams/national_adaptation_programmes_of_action/items/4585.php

37 CDRI & SIDA, 2014. Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change: Gender and Inclusive Growth: Provincial Consultation Workshop. (prepared by Nang Phirun).

management. Of the 44 programmes under the BCCSAP, 22 highlight *gender* as an important aspect. Originally the BCCSAP did not adequately address gender and gender was not integrated or mainstreamed into the strategy. To address this, in 2013 the Bangladesh Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (ccGAP) was developed by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), with the support of IUCN. The plan provides guidance on policy issues and initiatives that need to be taken into consideration by government and development practitioners, in collaboration with different institutions to address climate change in a gender-sensitive manner. It establishes clear objectives, outlines substantive activities that are accompanied by reachable indicators, and highlights the specific contribution women do and can make within each of these, as well as the required interventions necessary to incorporate the role of women effectively over a timeframe of five years, from 2013/14-2018/19. Currently there has been no implementation of the ccGAP.

One of the better examples from a gender equality perspective is the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (2014 - 2030), which identifies gender equality as one of the guiding principles for reducing vulnerability and identifies gender and climate change strategic objectives. From this, a Gender and Climate Change Action Plan (2014-2018) was developed to operationalise the strategic plan, demonstrating vision and commitment from the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Ministry of Environment. The main objectives of this action plan are to promote gender mainstreaming and strategic pilot interventions. Core elements of this plan that could also be applied in other Asian country contexts are:

- Promote women in decision-making on climate change adaptation and mitigation, and natural disaster management, at all levels and domains;
- Increase the level of awareness on gender and climate change, including natural disasters, within the Ministry of Women's Affairs and its decentralised offices and stakeholders;

- Increase the level of capacity of Ministry of Women's Affairs and its decentralised offices and stakeholders on gender-integrated vulnerability and capacity assessment, planning methods for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and natural disaster management;
- Deliver targeted interventions for women with a high level of vulnerability, to strengthen their climate change adaptation and mitigation capacities, and their empowerment (e.g. food security, nutrition, sustainable access to clean water, urban and rural livelihoods, waste management, access to information, and support group formation);
- Conduct research and development to increase the availability of data and information on gender and climate change;
- Elicit best practices and lessons on gender and climate change for scaling-up, learning and sharing across the country and the region.

These specific and measurable elements are a positive step to developing a deeper understanding of the issues women face and potential solutions that will assist women in the face of the changing climate. The effectiveness of these relatively new policies and reforms in Cambodia remain unknown: review and in-depth research will be needed to understand if and how these policies are positively influencing and changing the condition and position of women.

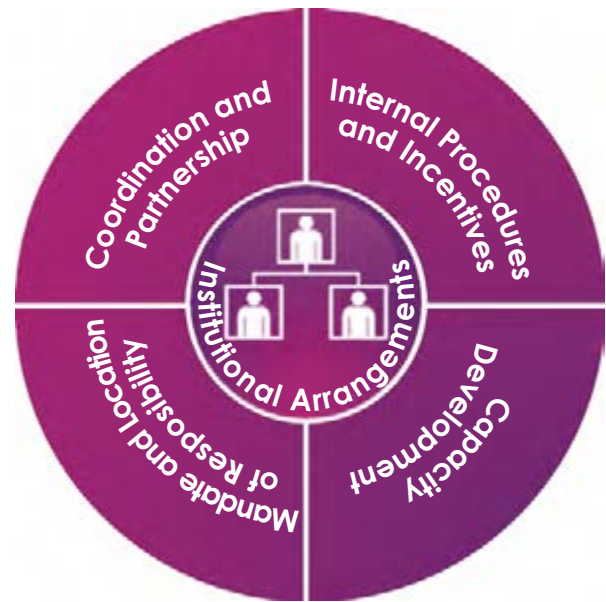
Decentralised approaches to tackling CCDRR from a policy perspective have also been made in several Asian countries but with mixed results. Bangladesh, for example, has had a decentralised disaster management policy for several years, including reform in 2010 that mandated women's participation in disaster management committees at the local/union, district and regional levels. In Cambodia, the Strategic Framework for Decentralisation and Deconcentration Reforms (2005) reaffirms the importance of gender mainstreaming in its processes and outcomes, including systems and procedures that ensure that people, especially women, vulnerable groups and indigenous minorities, can participate in decision-making at provincial/municipal, district/*khan* and commune/*sangkat* levels. Yet, despite these decentralised policy reforms, reports from

the community level suggest that women’s meaningful participation in decision-making remains minimal and often absent altogether.

A major concern across the region is the implementation of existing policies and planned actions at local level. In Bangladesh, the trickling down of national policies to the district, *Upazila* and Union levels is not yet clear, and the level of gender mainstreaming at those levels is still limited. With several policies currently under review in Bangladesh, there is momentum and an opportunity to mainstream gender and bring a specific gender-responsive focus to implementation.

It should be noted that across the region, efforts are being made to bring the gender dimensions of CCDRR into policy. However, evidence suggests that these efforts can, with some exceptions, be quite superficial. Despite such policy reforms, simply paying ‘lip service’ or the addition of ‘women as vulnerable’ fail to make meaningful change in the lives of women in the face of the changing climate. More work is needed to translate the gender equality rhetoric from national policy into action and implementation, and in building understanding for its relevance in (implementing) the existing policy frameworks. There is much room for improvement and a genuine shift in paradigm away from women as vulnerable victims towards women and men as equal rights holders and beneficiaries in CCDRR policy and action. The fact that the Sendai Framework for Action deliberately does not associate women with disaster vulnerability is a step in the right direction. The alignment of national DRR policies with the Sendai framework and the formulation of disaster management laws, provide a unique opportunity for the countries that do not address gender equality to rectify this and even go a step further to provide specific actions to make gender equality a reality in DRR.

Institutional Arrangements



To effectively address gender equality in CCDRR, the institutions with CCDRR mandates must have the capabilities and knowledge or have mechanisms in place to make this a reality. This sphere deals with organisational and institutional aspects of gender, climate change and DRR mainstreaming processes. This includes: a) a clear location of responsibility for gender mainstreaming in CCDRR within relevant ministries or organisations; b) internal procedures and incentives to ensure a sustainable integration of gender equality into a department’s activities; c) strengthened capacities to effectively carry out the outlined roles and responsibilities; and d) coordination and strong partnerships within and outside an organisation- particularly looking at CSO space and ability to effectively engage national government and to influence CCDRR.

Across Asia, the institutional arrangements in place to address CCDRR are extensive; in many countries, multiple layers of administration are involved across entire government structures. The policy sphere above indicates that while Asia has taken positive steps in integrating gender equality in CCDRR, limited progress has been observed in CCDRR implementation. This is partly due to a lack of strong institutional arrangements to support gender mainstreaming. There is a lack of effective communication, coordination, and strategic collaboration between institutions, which reduces opportunities for the full integration of gender perspectives into CCDRR processes.

Box 6. Institutional arrangements for addressing gender equality in climate change in Cambodia

Cambodia has created specific institutions to work on issues of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in CCDRR. The Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) carries responsibility for gender mainstreaming throughout the line ministries, and particularly its Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) has made progress in advancing and promoting gender equality in climate change and disasters. This includes the formation of the Gender and Climate Change Committee (GCCC) in 2011, in which staff members meet every month, and with sub-committees for climate change, DRR, Green Growth, and the Mekong area. The committee has its own policy Masterplan 2014-2022. Despite some concrete achievements, MoWA faces some challenges which can impede its goals in gender mainstreaming and promoting gender equality in climate change. There is a danger that the mandate of reducing gender inequalities is solely regarded as a DWA mandate and not as a common governmental responsibility; the MoWA lacks political clout in the government structure; there is lack of clarity on its role and approach in the areas of climate change and disaster management; there is a lack of technical skills in gender mainstreaming in MoWA and in other ministries; and DWA is under-funded and vulnerable to budget cuts. The Inter-Ministerial Gender Working Group, in which different governmental agencies participate, acts as advising body and therefore is potentially important in the process of integrating gender issues in climate change and DRR/M.

The first major hurdle is location of responsibility for gender mainstreaming. Addressing climate change usually falls within the mandate of Ministries of Environment, for example, in Cambodia. DRR however, can be housed under different ministries, depending on the country, such as Ministries of Internal or Home Affairs (India), Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (Bangladesh), or Ministry

of Agriculture and Rural Development (Viet Nam). Gender equality and women's empowerment often falls under Ministries of Women's Affairs, as is the case in most countries in Asia.

While the women's ministries have the technical mandate for supporting other ministries in gender mainstreaming, most countries in Asia have no platforms or mechanisms that allow these ministries to collaborate in ensuring that gender equality is properly addressed in CCDRR policy formulation and implementation. Cambodia is making some progress, albeit with some challenges, on creating internal mechanisms for addressing gender equality in climate change (see Box 6).

The capacity to understand and comprehensively address the complex relationship between gender equality and climate change and disasters is another challenge facing institutions. Climate change, environment and disaster management ministries are often politically strong and well-resourced. However, women's ministries in Asia often lack financial and technical expertise to successfully advocate for the inclusion of gender equality dimensions of development in general, including CCDRR. They are often weaker ministries, lacking political power and technical knowledge to adequately mainstream and address issues of gender equality across other ministries (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2007). Where there is space for gender mainstreaming, they are often unable to speak the relevant gender technical language that would be easily digested and applied by technical ministries. The technical ministries on the other hand, have only a basic understanding that 'gender means women' hence the resultant policies and strategies that largely depict women as victims. In other cases, gender is understood as equal numbers of women and men participating in training workshops. Hence, technical knowledge to address gender equality beyond the basic rhetoric, is a challenge.

Gender mainstreaming is also often considered a priority of women's ministries alone, and not a 'whole of government' responsibility. This is common to Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam. Overall it seems that silos of responsibilities for mainstreaming gender, and for mainstreaming CCDRR hinder proper integration. To overcome this challenge, the establishment of focal points for gender mainstreaming are a common institutional arrangement across Asian countries. For example, in Bangladesh, each ministry has a



Trained by two experts from Technical University of Munich, Germany, Chhirimdevi Lalchan in Nepal has been making apple juice for five years. She also helps other farmers to make juice during apple harvest season. With the coming of the road, Lalchan can market juice bottles to nearby areas hitherto inaccessible.

climate change focal point and a Women in Development (WID or sometimes referred to as gender) focal point who is responsible for mainstreaming climate change and gender respectively into government processes and programmes. In Pakistan, the needs and concerns of vulnerable groups including women, children, people with age and disabilities, are addressed by a dedicated Gender and Child Cell, which has been established at the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) with provincial counterparts at the Provincial/Regional DMAs.³⁸ In Thailand, a Cabinet's Resolution of 31 July 2001, orders every ministry and department to have one of their executives designated as the Chief Gender Equality Officer, and its own resource as Gender Focal Point. This mechanism is aimed at promoting gender awareness into the organisation's works.³⁹

However, these focal points are often lower level government officials, who move between ministries often, and do not necessarily have the required capacity, skills or knowledge to adequately mainstream these issues. An innovative capacity building programme for these focal points, organised by UN Women Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund in 2015, focused on building awareness, knowledge and skills for focal points on the gender equality dimensions of climate change. It is currently unknown how successful such training programmes have been in creating change. However, the initiative was welcomed by government officials and demonstrates one possible path

for building technical expertise on gender mainstreaming in different government ministries.

An excess of institutional entities⁴⁰ dealing with similar issues on CCDRR without proper coordination, impedes progress in gender mainstreaming across the region. While some limited evidence exists on where gender mainstreaming has been applied, there is no sharing of this information for learning and improvement. The often-decentralised governance structure (in all three case study countries) poses further challenges for gender mainstreaming in CCDRR at the local level. This is further exacerbated when one considers non-government actors and institutions that are extremely active in gender and CCDRR across the region and do not necessarily have the space to engage with national governments.

Non-government actors are involved, dynamic and often well-resourced in addressing gender equality at the local level, and advocating for gender-specific rights at the national level. This is particularly true in India and Bangladesh where CSOs often have specific programmes/ projects to address climate change or DRR and gender equality. Their activities at the local level also mean that they have a wealth of information on the impact of climate change and disasters on different social groups. However, there are very few functional forums for strategically coordinating activities, communicating outcomes, or sharing data or best practices that integrate both gender equality and CCDRR. A lack of coordination among government and civil society

38 Based on 2015 Pakistan National Progress Reporting on the Implementation of the HFA and 2016 Pakistan county presentation at the Peer Learning Consultation in Nepal on 28-30 November 2016.

39 Based on 2014 Thailand National Progress Reporting on the Implementation of the HFA 2013- 2015.

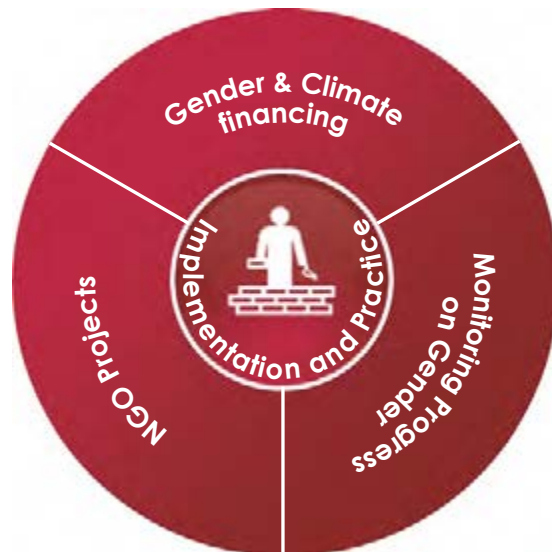
40 For example, the ministries of health, agriculture and forestry, water resources management, and education often implement large-scale adaptation projects.

actors working on CCDRR results in missed opportunities to consolidate community level data and evidence into a consolidated picture of human impacts of, and adaptation to, climate change and disasters.

In this domain, individual experts and United Nations agencies can play an important catalytic and capacity building role. Exchanges between different levels and diverse stakeholders can inform gendered policy development. Annual DRR platforms supported by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) can facilitate the integration of gender equality in DRR policy and practice by inviting women’s organisations and CSOs to share their experiences and policy implications. In Cambodia, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) manages the Cambodia Climate Change Alliance (CCCA), which was set up with support of the European Union’s (EU) Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA). It constitutes a multi-donor financial facility to provide resources for climate change capacity building at national and local government level. It also offers a mechanism for knowledge sharing and learning about climate change. Gender issues are integrated in different ways, such as technical support in conjunction with the MoWA to develop climate change strategies. Furthermore, UNDP has developed training tools, and UN Women also have plans to support this alliance through the development of guidelines and procedures for accessing information on adaptation and CCDRR, and gender.

The institutional arrangements to address gender equality and promote women’s empowerment in CCDRR are confused, overlapping and in many ways inadequate in many Asian countries. The lack of a mandate to work on gender equality in environment and CCDRR ministries needs to be addressed by capacitating women’s ministries. Coordination among ministries, facilitated initially by the United Nations and/or development partners would be an appropriate solution here, with a specific focus on building technical expertise and increasing the acceptance of the need to include a rights perspective to gender equality in CCDRR. Rather than considering gender equality and CCDRR as separate issues, mainstreaming and targeted initiatives that sit within existing institutions would represent a major advance. There is also a coordination role necessary to capture knowledge and facilitate project and programme learning from CSOs into government decision making.

Implementation and Practice



This sphere deals with measures that ensure and promote the conversion of policies into practice. Without thorough implementation of CCDRR strategies, programmes and projects that are gender-responsive, gendered CCDRR policies are of limited value. Components of the sphere include: a) how large-scale climate financing and investments in CCDRR address gender inequality and whether there is adequate resource allocation to address inequality; b) how CSO CCDRR programmes impact gender equality and build resilience; and c) effectiveness of current monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on CCDRR impact on gender equality.

Despite progress in CCDRR policies across Asia, implementation and the translation of policies into practice remains a concern across much of the region. While progress in policy reform, strategies and action plans that bring gender equality firmly into the discourse should not be undervalued, the lack of implementation means that those affected most by the changing climate still do not benefit. This section of the report discusses the implementation of CCDRR policies and practices, identifies the role and contribution of international and local organisations and highlights the role that financing instruments can play to improve the standards of gender-responsive CCDRR projects.

Implementation of gender equality in CCDRR policies is an ongoing challenge globally and in Asia. Existing reporting frameworks for national governments reporting progress on implementing climate change policies and programmes

do not make it mandatory to report on gender.⁴¹ For example, in the context of intended nationally determined contributions (INDC),⁴² a research paper by Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) 2016 notes that it is up to the discretion of governments to provide as much or as little information about their existing and planned climate change policies in their INDC in the context of gender. Despite efforts to recognise gender in CCDRR policies (albeit in the limited way discussed above), there are very few examples of government-led programmes and projects across Asia aimed specifically at reducing women's vulnerability. For example, in Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) has been in place since 2009, and the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) and Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) were established to operationalise the strategy. Financed by governmental budget, there are presently 340 projects being implemented; 63 by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the rest by the government and local authorities under the BCCTF. Between 2010-2014, the BCCTF received US\$ 340 million from the revenue budget of the Government of Bangladesh. With the strong focus on 'women as vulnerable' in the BCCSAP policy document, very few projects funded by the BCCT have focused on reducing the vulnerability of women, let alone a more radical gender equality agenda. Despite reports of a growing understanding in the BCCT that women should be included in project management teams and implementation committees, and that women-centred projects are needed, there is little evidence of these changes to date.

The implementation of gender priorities in disaster response is disappointing. An analysis of funds allocated to protection and gender issues in 'Flash Appeals' shows that addressing gender equality in disaster response is not a priority. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) financial tracking system – the Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2014 – a significant number of major donors dedicate **less than 1 percent of humanitarian funding**

to advancing gender equality in emergencies.⁴³ The trend is the same in the Asia. In response to Nepal's two earthquakes, only 4 percent of the humanitarian funding received under the 'Flash Appeal' was allocated to gender and protection cluster activities. Contributing to this challenge is that humanitarian actors often do not perceive the need to promote protection and gender equality in emergency setting as 'life-threatening'⁴⁴, which is the main criterion for qualifying for 'Flash Appeals' and United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Eight of the 13 countries (62 percent) that submitted their national progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) between 2014 and 2015, indicate that they take measures to address gender issues in recovery. However, data on how gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed in post-disaster recovery is not available as the assessment requires a 'yes/no' answer. This limitation is further compounded by the fact that only 46 percent of the same countries include gender guidance in their post-disaster needs assessments methodologies. Judging by the limited addressing of gender equality in post-disaster needs assessments, it can also be concluded that limited attention (if any) goes towards promoting gender equality. This implies that while recovery may be 'gendered', it is not informed by specific needs and priorities emerging from the assessments. For example, Thailand reports that while women are regarded as key players in DRR, when it comes to post-disaster recovery, the Government of Thailand assumes that women's and men's needs are the same and as a result still provides universal packages for disaster response and relief.⁴⁵ Yet the recovery period is a unique opportunity to 'build back better', including addressing the core issues that make certain social groups particularly vulnerable and equipping women and men with new skills that will make them more resilient to future disasters. One such example worth noting is the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDF) for Aceh and Nias, which included the titling of land to women and joint ownership for reconstructed houses, as well as the development of masonry skills for women to participate in home building (see Box 7).

41 See for example the guidelines on the Fifth National Communications to the UNFCCC, which are available on http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_natcom/application/pdf/nc5outline.pdf

42 INDCs are a critically important tool for the advancement of the ultimate objective of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is to stabilise greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous climate change (WEDO 2016).

43 http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Gender-briefing_humanitarian_19092014.pdf.

44 One of the criteria for accessing CERF funding is that the proposed emergency interventions have to be 'life-saving' such as access to food and water.

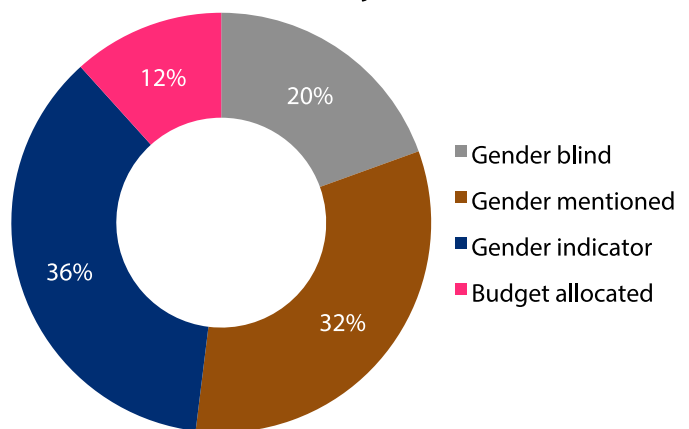
45 See Page 35 of 2014 Thailand National Progress Report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2013-2015).

Box 7. Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDF): Aceh and Nias, 2005-2012

The Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDF) was a partnership between the international community, the Government of Indonesia, and civil society to support recovery efforts in Aceh and Nias following the 2004 earthquake and tsunami. Women's empowerment was incorporated into each of the MDF's community recovery projects. The projects piloted efforts not only to increase women's participation in community planning activities and to find ways to ensure that women's voices were heard, but also to provide the opportunity to address gender and other social inequalities. The piloted activities included enhancement of women's empowerment by setting aside specific funds for activities selected by women. The projects also supported women's empowerment through providing microfinance opportunities specifically for women. They played an important role in raising awareness of women's land rights and by supporting joint land titling. Almost 30 percent of the land titles that were issued under the project were joint titles or in women's names. The project promoted women's access to employment in the reconstruction, and has opened up new opportunities for women's participation in the labour market in non-traditional areas such as construction. Women have also benefitted from MDF livelihood support in their roles as farmers, traders and small entrepreneurs, and from capacity building and training across a range of sectors. These projects offer an interesting model of how greater equality in labour force participation can be encouraged through reconstruction programmes such as the MDF. Lessons from integrating gender into community-driven projects and disaster preparedness programmes in Aceh and Nias have fed into the ongoing national Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Mandiri (PNPM) (National Program for Community Empowerment) and other programming in Aceh and Nias and across Indonesia.

Source: Multi Donor Fund 2012 Final Report Sustainable Futures: A Legacy of Reconstruction Volume 1: Main Report. http://www.multidonorfund.org/doc/pdf/MDF_report_vol_01_ENG.pdf

Gender in GEF Projects in Asia



Funding mechanisms also play a part in the ability of policies and strategies to be implemented in a gender-responsive way, as the example from Bangladesh describes. International funding options such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), operate across Asia and are actively financing climate change, mitigation and DRR projects. However, the ability of Asian nations to secure funding specifically for gender and CCDRR projects is weak and the willingness of financial instruments to prioritise gender-responsive projects is not promising (with the potential exception of the Green Climate Fund [GCF], described later in the section). The GEF financially supports projects and initiatives concerning the area of environment, biodiversity and climate change in a wide range of countries.

Analysis⁴⁶ by UN Women of GEF projects – worth over US\$6.7 billion in the past five years in fourteen countries in south and south-east Asia – shows that addressing gender equality in practice is a major challenge (see Annex A). Of the 92 projects analysed, only nine included financial and technical resources for actioning gender equality. This means that **88 percent of the GEF projects do not go beyond merely referring to gender equality, to actually implementing activities that can be monitored, measured against, and budgeted.** Twenty percent of these projects are completely gender-blind.

⁴⁶ It should be noted that the analysis was based on the review of project documents, rather than an assessment of how the projects were implemented in reality. This means that projects that appear to be largely gender-blind could have strengthened the gender dimensions in practice later (and not reported this) or *vice versa*. The assessment is not restricted to climate change, and also included biodiversity projects.

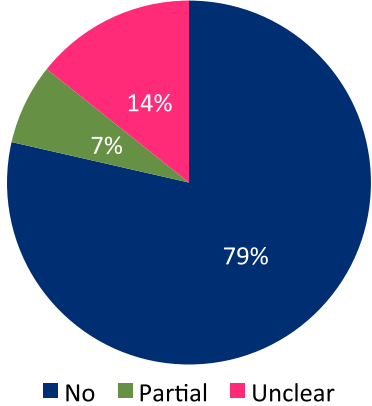


Right to livelihoods. Women working at a construction site, Dacope, khulna, Bangladesh

This is despite 76 percent of projects focusing on energy, agriculture, water resources, promotion of community resilience, and coastal zone management; areas that are either within the domain of women’s activities, roles and responsibilities or directly impact women and girls. Almost half (46 percent) of the analysed projects focus on access to renewable energy alone.

Access to energy is one area that can not only contribute to reducing the work burden for women and in-house smoke pollution, but also impact and broaden women’s livelihoods and economic empowerment. A total of 36 percent of the projects included analysis of gender equality and some activities in the resource and results frameworks, although most related simply to the equal participation of women in project meetings. However, as the chart below shows, almost 80 percent of all analysed energy projects did not address gender equality in a comprehensive manner by allocating resources to these issues. A similar trend is also observed in rural electrification projects such as ‘Building Adaptive Capacity through the Scaling-up of Renewable Energy Technologies in Rural Cambodia (S-RET)’ or the project ‘Scale Up of Access to Clean Energy for Rural Productive and Domestic Uses’ in India, where such interventions could spur socio-economic benefits for women. Similar gender gaps were noted within the agriculture sector, where only three of nine analysed agriculture projects allocated resources to address gender inequality.

Gender in Energy Projects under GEF



One factor contributing to the poor integration of gender equality in climate change projects stems from the fact that there are no mechanisms for ensuring that GEF accredited agencies, such as the World Bank, UNDP, Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), etc., together with national governments, are compliant or held accountable for addressing gender equality in their CCDRR activities. However, some agencies are taking initiatives to begin to address gender equality in climate change. One regional initiative from the ADB focuses on assistance to countries in accessing climate finance. The ADB launched a regional technical assistance project on climate finance and gender with a grant from the Nordic Development Fund, demonstrating how countries can be supported to voice a demand for inclusive mitigation action. The technical assistance aims to create a gender-sensitive enabling environment in Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), and Viet Nam, using measures such as:



Himani Roy (38), a victim of cyclone Aila talking on her mobile phone by using solar power, Srinagar, Dacope, khulna, Bangladesh

(1) creating a policy dialogue partnership among policy-makers faced with climate change issues, and women's organisations charged with mainstreaming gender; (2) developing the capacity of key stakeholders to mainstream gender into climate policies and access climate finance; and (3) proactively affecting country-level pipeline projects and supporting replication and scaling-up of gender-responsive climate finance projects. Another initiative is Adapt Asia-Pacific funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which focuses on supporting national governments and development partners in integrating gender equality at the design phase of the project, to ensure effective gender mainstreaming and allocation of a gender budget to the project. The effectiveness of such initiatives is yet to be seen, however they show potential in building capacities in Asian countries to develop more gender-sensitive proposals for climate financing instruments.

There is scope for developing or adapting financial instruments to mandate and create concrete policies and protocols that specifically address gender equality and the differential rights and needs of women and men in CCDRR project proposals. The GCF of the UNFCCC is poised to become an important financial mechanism for monitoring gender mainstreaming in climate change mitigation and adaptation. In 2011, government parties to the UNFCCC made history by establishing the GCF with a 'gender-sensitive approach'. They also agreed to gender balance among the fund's Board and Secretariat staff, and in 2015, a Gender Policy was agreed to operationalise modalities that address gender issues, and to incorporate the participation

of women as stakeholders. As of November 2015, the first eight investments (including three in the Asia-Pacific region, and one in Bangladesh) were approved for funding by the GCF. An analysis of these⁴⁷ show that while gender considerations are required to be articulated as part of the proposal, only superficial reference to gender exists. For example, in the case of the first GCF project in Bangladesh, the assumption is made that as 51 percent of the community is female, that both boys and girls will equally benefit from new infrastructure, which will double as a school and a cyclone shelter. Other references to contributing to gender equality refer to segregated toilets in cyclone shelters and equal participation of women in community groups. One promising sign from this project is the goal of collecting gender disaggregated data, this is also articulated in the GCF project in the Maldives. In that project, which aims to support communities in managing water shortages, a gender analysis informs the understanding of how/who uses and manages water in the affected communities. The final GCF-approved project to be rolled out in Asia-Pacific is another water management project in Fiji. This project includes key findings from a gender analysis and proposes a gender mainstreaming approach to the entire project. This includes the establishment of a Gender Action Plan for the project to ensure women's needs are met, that there is an increase in women's participation, and a proportion of the workers hired for the project are women (at least 20-30 percent). While the first GCF projects appear not to contribute significantly to addressing gender equality in

⁴⁷ Based on the analysis of approved GCF project posted on the GCF website. See: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/browse-projects>

Box 8. Oxfam's Participatory Disaster Preparation and Mitigation Project, Viet Nam

The main objectives of the project were: building of knowledge and resources to mitigate, prepare for and respond to floods; building Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CCFSC) capacities; reducing flood-related diseases; and improving food security and incomes of affected poor and vulnerable households. The project supported local communities (in 24 communes in five districts, with a population of approximately 265,000 people) to be better prepared for an emergency by organising interactive Living with Floods Information, Education and Communication Clubs. The sharing of responsibilities between women and men became a central focus. During the project, women were encouraged to participate in all activities; with a criterion of at least 30 percent women's participation in each activity. More than numbers, it encouraged women to make their voices heard and build their capacities. There was specific training on gender equality for both men and women at commune, district and provincial levels. Although gender equality is still an issue in the area, the active participation of women was highly appreciated by the provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CFSC), Women's Union and communities, and it changed women's lives and the stereotyping they experience; as the couple, Son and Tuyen, mentioned: "Laundry is not only women's work". The latter now openly share responsibilities, presenting their experiences publicly as an example of challenging stereotypes and changing behaviour through a gender-sensitive disaster risk management (DRM) project. The outcome of the project more gender equality and sharing of unpaid work. The project has also built a good level of institutional knowledge and capacity.

Source: Oxfam, 2012. Promoting Gender Equality in Disaster Risk Reduction: Oxfam's experiences in Southeast Asia. Oxfam GB, Oxford; pp. 25-30

the context of climate change, the GCF policy and proposal format does require specific reference to gender. As per some of the examples here, there is a basis for improved articulation of gender equality targets in GCF projects that could work towards substantive efforts to address underlying inequalities.

United Nations agencies, international NGOs and donors play an important role in promoting gender mainstreaming in CCDRR, and there are some positive examples from Asian countries. United Nations agencies in Viet Nam, such as UN Women and UNDP, are promoting gender mainstreaming and gender equality in their CCDRR projects. They have incorporated quotas to increase women's participation and are active in building the capacity of national and local authorities. As already mentioned, UNDP Cambodia plays a significant role in implementation of gender equality in CCDRR through coordination and support to the CCCA. In Bangladesh, however, and similarly in Viet Nam, while FAO and other United Nations agencies have significant funds for implementing CCDRR projects, the extent to which these projects integrate gender equality remains minimal or unknown in many cases. Non-governmental organisations are strong and vocal in various Asian countries; many of which have specific gender and climate change or gender and DRR projects being implemented. CARE, Oxfam, Action Aid, and Plan International are among the international NGOs which are working across Asia on issues of gender and CCDRR. A project by Oxfam GB in Viet Nam is a very positive example of the unique position of NGOs and the role they can play in not only improving the condition of women affected by climate change and disasters, but also working more fundamentally towards changing the position and traditional roles of women in society (see Box 8).

What remains unclear, however, is the degree of effectiveness of large and small climate change adaptation projects in creating a broader base for livelihood security and gender-responsive resilience-building against future disasters and climate change. Most gendered climate change adaptation projects tend to focus on agriculture, a sector highly exposed to climate change. Increased agricultural productivity is often not matched by the necessary market access, a reason why many sound agricultural production projects are not replicated and up-scaled by farmers. Adaptation for women is further constrained by low-value traditional livelihoods such as chicken raising, home-gardening, mushroom growing, etc. (which are just

as exposed to disasters and climate change as traditional agriculture), without necessarily addressing systemic issues such as access to land, extension services, farm inputs, etc.⁴⁸ There is no solid evidence to indicate that climate change adaptation projects are effective in lifting women out of agriculture to non-farm livelihoods that are less exposed to disasters, such as non-farm, small- and medium-scale enterprises, safe migration as a means of adaptation, or economic empowerment of women through clean energy technologies.

While some projects across the region may appear gender-responsive in terms of their design, this is not necessarily the case in practice (see review of gender and climate change finance from the Philippines in Box 9 above). Constraints such as the absence of a clear organisational or project intent, or dedicated budgets towards gender activities, hinder the implementation of gender activities. A lack of enforcing mechanisms, to ensure both climate change financing and implementation institutions are gender compliant and accountable, means that climate change projects will remain largely gender blind. Notable exceptions are projects managed by INGOs and NGOs, which appear to better incorporate gender considerations into their design and implementation. Their design is also informed by gender and/or gendered vulnerability assessments. However, the climate finance invested by NGOs is very small when compared to national climate change projects, implemented by United Nations agencies and the development banks. Evidence is lacking on the extent to which these projects are effective in addressing the systemic issues that make women vulnerable to climate change and disasters or how effective they are in developing the capacities that women inherently have in challenging the balance of power at household and community level, to bring transformative change. Notable examples are work being done by Women Organising for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN) and Energia in advancing gender equality and bringing transformative change through innovative agricultural development and sustainable energy respectively. Greater collaboration and information-sharing between governments, donors, NGOs, and other stakeholders could improve gender mainstreaming in CCDRR projects.

48 See for example gender adaptation examples under Care: http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/CC-2010-ARE_Gender_Brief.pdf and Gender and climate change – iconic stories from South Asia; http://cdkn.org/2012/08/gender-and-climate-change-iconic-stories-from-south-asia/?loclang=en_gb

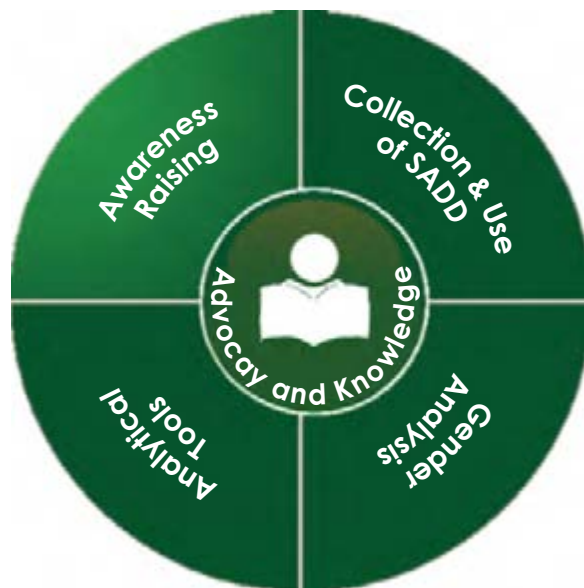
Box 9. Gender and Climate Change Finance: A Case Study from the Philippines

In 2008, an assessment was conducted of the gender-sensitivity of climate funding in the Philippines. The study found that the financing policy framework had a limited focus on women's concerns and minimal women's participation. For example, in assessing the Philippines national financial regime, the study found a lack of recognition of links between climate change and the financing of overall development goals, including gender equality; a strong reliance on market-based solutions that do not account for gender issues and feminised poverty; and a lack of consultation and participation of women and women's organisations. The study argues that: "A just and sustainable financing framework for mitigation and adaptation must guarantee that the financial burdens of coping with climate change risks are not transferred to those who contribute minimally to greenhouse gas emissions. Financing policies for climate change mitigation and adaptation must explicitly consider, as well as respond to, the different experiences and needs of women, especially those women who are on the socio-economic margins of society" (p.4). The study provides some recommendations for climate financing policies, programmes and frameworks to be gender-sensitive:

- Create mechanisms that guarantee women's equal access to negotiating, developing, managing and implementing adaptation and mitigation financing;
- Include disaggregated indicators on mitigation and adaptation funds for targeting and monitoring benefits to women;
- Develop principles and procedures to protect and encourage women's access to national adaptation programmes and projects;
- Conduct gender impact assessments of adaptation and mitigation strategies

Source: Paralta, Athena, 2008. Gender and Climate Change Finance: a case study from the Philippines. Heinrich Boll Foundation and WEDO, New York

Advocacy, knowledge generation and management



The advocacy, knowledge generation and management sphere is at the heart of the mainstreaming framework as it is an integral part of all spheres. It applies to reforming CCDRR policy, seeking organisational change, implementing pilot CCDRR projects, and supporting communities in vulnerability, capacity and risk assessments. Increasing awareness of the gendered impacts of climate change among all members of society, as well as increasing substantiated knowledge on how to address gender equality in these thematic areas, is fundamental in promoting and sustaining equitable resilience for all. Advocacy comprises influencing people, policies, structures and systems in order to bring about change. Knowledge is more an outcome of education, in which stakeholders recognise and understand disaster risks and the interventions that contribute to their reduction. The sphere includes the analysis of the following components: a) collection, use and management of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD); b) gender analysis in all aspects of CCDRR action; c) existence of methods and gender analytical tools; and d) information sharing and promotion of good practice.

In order to effectively tackle gender equality in CCDRR, the region needs to develop evidence-based analysis of how climate change impacts different gender groups and how effectively gender equality is addressed through policy and practice. One of the key pieces of evidence that can support a greater understanding of the gendered impacts of CCDRR is collection, application and management of SADD.

UNISDR 2015 notes that one of the overarching constraints to designing, planning and implementing an inclusive DRR strategy is the lack of disaggregated data. The lack of disaggregated data constrains the ability to develop targets and indicators for more inclusive disaster risk reduction, to monitor progress and to engender accountability. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) report (UNISDR 2011) points out that gender disaggregated data were available in only 14 percent (eight out of 70 countries) of all reporting countries and some reported a total absence of gender disaggregated data. Furthermore, the analysis of reports from 13 countries in Asia that submitted their national progress reporting obligations on the HFA shows that only eight percent (only one country out of the thirteen) reported the collection of SADD in disaster vulnerability and capacity assessments (see Annex B for more details).

UNISDR 2015 further notes that the lack of gender disaggregated data on disasters serves to keep female mortality, injuries and violence invisible. This means that the complex gender dimensions of disasters are not well understood across the region and, without this data, they are unlikely to be. As a result, the specific needs and priorities of different gender groups are not properly addressed in DRR or disaster response. The lack of SADD in global and regional disaster information systems is confirmed by a brief review, executed as part of this desk study, of the following databases: EM-DAT (emergency events database), Gripweb (Global Risk Information Platform), Glidenumber (Global Disaster Identifier Number) and data from ADRC (Asian Disaster Reduction Centre). Over the past four decades our understanding of disasters globally and within the region has expanded as evidenced by declining mortality rates (Goklany 2007). However, although all these databases give information about the number of fatalities, injured, and affected people, displacement, crop damage and economic loss, none of these disaggregate any of the data based on gender or age. As such, over the same period of time, our grasp of the interplay between disaster risks, vulnerability and gender equality is still limited.

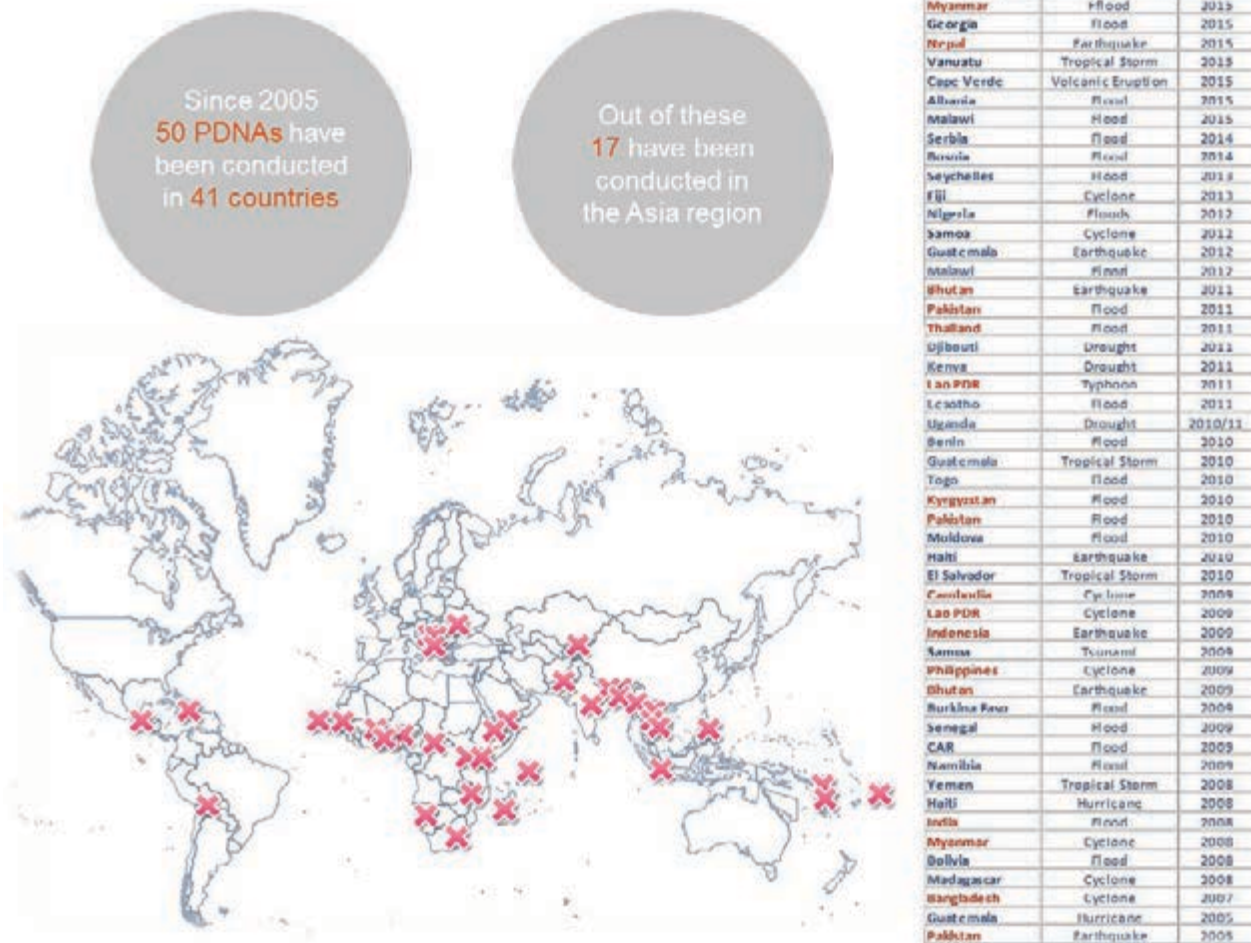
Section Two shows that over the decades, a number of countries have collected SADD, however the collection is not systematic, not accessible to the public, and as the national progress reporting from the Philippines shows, where its collected, it is not necessarily utilised in national

DRR planning and implementation processes.⁴⁹ On the occasions where countries in Asia have collected, analysed and reported SADD after disasters (for example, post-disaster needs assessments (PDNAs) after the 2015 Nepal earthquakes, 2015 Myanmar floods and 2016 Sri Lanka floods and landslides in 2016).⁵⁰ For the major disasters in Nepal, Myanmar and Sri Lanka data were collected and the mortality rates among females and males reported. The countries included SADD and gender analysis of the disaster data to inform the recovery and reconstruction strategy. This data can also go further and assist DRR technical specialists in understanding why certain age or sex groups are more affected and how this can be addressed. For example, in Nepal, it was reported that more women died because

they were rushing back into collapsing homes to collect their jewellery, which represents their major asset. This knowledge can influence how future earthquake education is addressed. Yet, there is a need to ensure SADD is available, not only for mortality rates but across a number of variables for which processes and guidelines are not generally in place.

One of the global tools for understanding the socio-economic impacts of disasters is the PDNA mentioned above. Between 2005 and 2015, over 50 PDNAs were conducted in 41 countries across the globe, with 17 of these conducted in Asia (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Countries that have conducted PDNAs in the last 10 years



Source: 2015 ASEAN PDNA Training - Bangkok

49 See the 2015 Philippines National Progress Reporting on the Implementation of the HFA (2013- 2015).

50 Refer to 2015 Nepal, 2015 Myanmar and 2016 Sri Lanka PDNAs.

A more detailed analysis of these PDNA reports shows that although more than half of the PDNAs in Asia paid specific attention to gender issues, only the three countries mentioned above went beyond reporting SADD and included a strong analysis of the gendered impacts of disasters, including recovery budgets, and recovery priorities and recommendations for addressing gender needs. In other cases, gendered impacts are only reflected in a protection context in which women need protection against gender-based violence and the impact of their reproductive roles (for example the 2011 Bhutan and Laos PDR PDNAs). They included far less analysis of the socio-economic impacts of disaster and how recovery can be used as a springboard to start addressing some of the inequalities that make women vulnerable. It is also noted that where PDNAs have a strong gender analysis, agencies with gender mandates (UN Women and UNFPA) were involved in the PDNAs, as was the case with Nepal, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. The weak analysis of gender impacts is exacerbated by the fact that both humanitarian needs assessments and PDNAs do not delve into the socio-economic impacts on women. For example, the 2015 Nepal earthquake indicated that the analysis of household asset loss did not include assets lost by women such as rice cookers, cooking stoves and jewellery among others.

While PDNAs can provide crucial information on how to address gender equality issues and promote women's empowerment through recovery and reconstruction, the designs of most CCDRR policies, programmes and projects are informed by climate or disaster risk assessments. These assessments are important in aiding national governments in understanding the type of hazards that most countries are exposed to, the geographical areas most at risk, as well as the most vulnerable socio-economic sectors. While disaster risk is expressed as a function of hazard exposure and vulnerability/capacity (coping and adaptive capacity); the analysis of vulnerability tends to be limited to major formal economic sectors such as agriculture, water resources, health, and infrastructure, and without analysis of human, gendered-capacity and vulnerability. As a result, climate and disaster risk assessments highlight the exposed productive sectors and infrastructure without an understanding of who is affected within these sectors and why. This in turn influences how CCDRR policies and programmes are designed and implemented.

Box 9. Cambodia National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) and Community Vulnerabilities

The Cambodian National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) highlights rice production as the top priority area for reducing vulnerability against current and future climate change. As part of the GEF Project 'Promoting Climate Resilient Water Resource Management and Agricultural Practices in Rural Cambodia' (a NAPA follow-up project) Inception Phase, UNDP conducted a vulnerability reduction assessment in its target areas of Preah Vihear and Kratie. In these provinces both women and men identified livestock management as the topmost priority for both floods and droughts because livestock are assets that take more than three years to accrue and a loss of a buffalo or a cow is a major blow to the family. Food security (rice) was the third priority because the families felt they could borrow rice from neighbours to keep them through the hungry month. These findings were also verified by other NGOs such as OXFAM and Save Cambodia Wildlife. However, although livestock is extremely important for communities in Cambodia, livestock management is not mentioned at all in the NAPA, nor in the Cambodia Climate Change Strategy.

Source: Government of Cambodia and UNDP 2010: Listen to Villagers on Climate Change Vulnerability Reduction Assessment (VRA)

Screening of climate and disaster risk assessments via UNISDR and UNDP/Global Risk Identification Programme (GRIP) websources was carried out a part of this study. The number of assessments included in the databases is limited, and although most of the related guidelines recommended gender-specific information and involvement of women in the assessment process, in the actual assessments for Asian countries almost no gender-specific data and data-analysis were reflected.



Nepal: A year after the earthquakes: Through the women's multi-purpose centre in Sindhupalchowk, Bishnu and her husband received new senior citizen's cards, which had been lost in the earthquake when their house collapsed. Since then the couple has been getting Rs 500 (USD 5) each, every month. That's not much, but enough to buy basic supplies like sugar, salt, oil and medicine.

However there are some indications that efforts across Asia are now starting to focus on vulnerability and loss of livelihoods, yet not necessarily from a gender lens. In Cambodia for example, the GEF Small Grants Programmes has successfully promoted the use of a Vulnerability Reduction Assessment tool to inform climate change adaptation project development, to specifically address the specific vulnerabilities faced by communities. The Provincial Ministries of Agriculture have adopted this tool for the same purpose. There is a proliferation of tools globally and regionally that focus on mainstreaming gender equality into humanitarian response, post-disaster needs assessments, DRR, climate change action, and community-based disaster risk management, etc.⁵¹ These have been largely developed by NGOs, and the United Nations system. A new guideline is the Integrating Gender in Climate Change Adaptation

Proposals by the USAID Climate Change Adaptation Preparation Facility for Asia and the Pacific (USAID ADAPT ASIA-PACIFIC).⁵² This on-line resource focuses on how to effectively address gender equality right from the start of project proposal design. It has been used in substantially mainstreaming gender equality in Samoa⁵³ and Cambodia. Furthermore, organisations such as WOCAN, OXFAM, Plan International, Care International and local NGOs do use these tools to conduct extensive vulnerability assessments that often include substantial analysis of gender equality. Large-scale projects by bilateral donors, the United Nations and the development banks still lack this type of analysis and the mainstreaming tools are largely ignored. Furthermore, the profusion of gender mainstreaming guides only partially addresses the problem. It is important that existing contextualised tools for risk assessments, humanitarian and

51 See for example, Gender and Humanitarian Guidelines: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/IASC%20guidelines%20flyer%20-%20smaller%20version.pdf>
Gender PDNA Guideline Volume B: https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/gfdrr/files/WB_UNDP_PDNA_Gender_SP_FINAL.pdf
Overview of linkages between gender and climate change: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender%20and%20Environment/TM1_AsiaPacific_Capacity.pdf

52 See <http://asiapacificadapt.net/gender-sourcebook/>

53 Adapt Asia-Pacific worked with UNDP and The Samoa Tourism Authority to ensure that gender considerations were mainstreamed and to design a specific gender component within a climate change adaptation proposal. It also brought on board a gender specialist to support the project formulation team. A similar undertaking was also done in Cambodia

post-disaster needs assessment be gendered themselves and the practitioners be trained to understand why it is important to address gender in these fields.

Another challenge contributing to the lack of use of SADD and gender analysis is the lack of a data repository and data management. In most cases, there are no systematic procedures within government agencies for gathering SADD on climate change and disaster impacts. Gender data is collected as a requirement of some donor-funded projects but the type of data and the depth of analysis vary. This information is also rarely shared with the wider community. Consultations carried out for this study demonstrated that in all three case study countries, there is no common data repository where vulnerability and risk assessment data can be accessed. In Bangladesh and Cambodia, central data-collection takes place through the Bureaus (or Divisions) of Statistics, but only in a few areas is the information gender-disaggregated. For example, the recent Disaster Report 2013 of the Department of Disaster Management in Bangladesh (Government of Bangladesh, 2013), although informative and with a lot of statistics, does not include any sex-disaggregated data and information. In Viet Nam, it was the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Directorate of Water Sources) to collect data on disaster impacts, but these were not gender disaggregated. With the establishment of its new department for Disaster Prevention and Control, the mandate for data collection is still not completely clear (UN Vietnam and Oxfam 2012).

Data on disaster and climate change impacts should feed from from local level sources, but coordination and data management between local-provincial-national levels is still a major challenge. When the Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU) became a member of the Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CCFSC), they asked provincial sections for reports on damage and losses incurred by women and for gender-disaggregated data and statistics, but this is not available at the central level (some is available at local level, but it is not aggregated at the central level). Moreover, much data and analysis is anecdotal.

Most national women's machineries, ministries responsible for CCDRR and NGOs lack the knowledge and skills to construe the data and apply it appropriately to policy, advocacy and programming work. Even if SADD is gathered by government agencies and NGOs, there are no practices



Rita Dhakal, a social mobiliser speaks at a programme in the UN Women supported multi-purpose women's centre in Kavre

of inter-agency or cross-organisational sharing of such data and information. This limits opportunities for SADD to be fully utilised and analysed for improving policy and programming work. These challenges and lack of documentation of best practices on gender and CCDRR also in turn constrain regional learning and adoption of gender and CCDRR best practices. It was noted, for example, that while all SAARC⁵⁴ countries presenting at the Gender and Disaster Response Peer Learning for South Asia Consultation understood the linkages between gender equality and disasters and had appropriate policies to support this, they faced challenges in sharing specific good practices that had been achieved in the past 10 years.⁵⁵

The collection of SADD must become a requirement of climate and disaster risk assessments, humanitarian needs assessments, and PDNAs across the region. It can be used to build evidence of the differentiated impacts of disasters on women and men, and make appropriate and equal decisions about resource allocations, relief distribution and recovery efforts. As long as evidence and knowledge on the gendered impacts of CCDRR remain unknown, efforts to address these impacts are likely to remain gender-blind, and even do harm by increasing existing gender inequalities.

⁵⁴ All SAARC countries except for India.

⁵⁵ Upcoming report on the Consultation Workshop on Gender and Disaster Response Peer Learning held during 28-30 November 2015, in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Women's participation and leadership



If building resilience is about strengthening people's capacities to cope, respond, and adapt to current and future disasters and climate change, it is only logical that people's voices should inform and shape that resilience. This sphere therefore focuses on ensuring that CCDRR meets, reflects and addresses the voices and needs of different social groups within communities and facilitates their contributions to the CCDRR processes. Only through participation and representation of women, men, youth and other social groups will efforts to address climate change and disasters have a sustainable and long-term impact. The sphere includes the following components: a) participation of women and women's representation; b) social expectations; c) regional advocacy; and d) representative civil society.

"Increasing the presence of women in climate negotiations may make the processes more effective, and increasing the presence and substantive participation of women in policy making may lead to more credible and legitimate policy instruments. Importantly, the participation of women can also act as a catalyst for changes in existing unequal gender power relations in a society where climate change policy will be implemented. In short, we need more women in climate change science and we need a greater valuing of the sciences [e.g. social sciences] that women tend to favour, as well as greater support

for pioneering women in male-dominated scientific and engineering fields. We need more women in climate change negotiations giving their voices to the policy decision-making processes. We need women at the frontlines of a new climate science and new forms of climate politics." Dr. Asuncion Lera St. Clair⁵⁶ (Nellemann et al 2011)

The participation and leadership of women and women's groups in CCDRR needs to be strengthened across the region. In the three case study countries, there is only modest women's participation in formal CCDRR policies and practices, and their decision-making power is limited. Despite their obvious vulnerability and the capacities of women to effectively address climate change and disasters, their participation and influence is extremely limited at all levels of the government. The HFA national progress report also indicates that there is poor representation and participation of women's groups in national DRR fora. Analysis of 13 countries in Asia showed that only 38 percent⁵⁷ of these countries reported women's participation in national DRR platforms, with many citing the low participation of women groups as a key challenge. It is hoped that the Sendai Framework, which calls for stronger women's participation and leadership in DRR, will motivate member states to improve women's leadership in DRR.

From a climate change perspective, evidence suggests that there is a more concerted effort at the global level to improve women's participation within the climate change global arena. While there are no similar mechanisms that would enable comparison of women's engagement in global decision-making processes, women's participation in climate change fora, particularly Conference of the Parties (COPs), is much lower than men; and even lower at the leadership level. The general low female participation in climate change reflects the severe under-representation of women in political participation. According to UN Women, the average proportion of women parliamentarians in each region (as of August 2015) were: Nordic countries, 41.1 percent; Americas, 25.5 percent; Europe (excluding Nordic countries), 24.4 percent; sub-Saharan Africa, 23 percent; Asia, 18.4 percent; the Middle East and North Africa, 17.1 percent; and the Pacific, 15.7 percent.⁵⁸

56 Dr. Asuncion Lera St. Clair, Lead Author, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report, Working Group II.

57 See Annex B

58 see <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures#tshash.pUVG0u1R.dpuf>

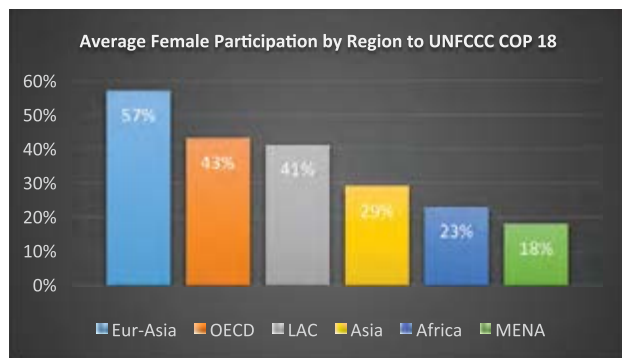


Women's Groups come together to pack women's dignity kits for distribution to female earthquake survivors.

The 'Doha United Nations Climate Change Conference Nov/Dec 2012: the UNFCCC COP18 adopted decision 23/CP.18' called for gender balance and improvements in the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. The Doha decision has sometimes been criticised for focusing primarily on promoting gender balance rather than on issuing a stronger call for gender equality. However, Gama *et al* (2016) notes that increasing women's participation and having a balanced representation of women and men in the negotiations allows women's voices to be heard on an equal basis with men's, which can bring a greater variety of views and more representative perspectives of society to the negotiating table. This, in turn, can facilitate the adoption of climate policy that addresses the needs and interests of populations more comprehensively.

However, translating this global policy into practice, even at the global climate change level, engagement has been slow. One method used by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for ascertaining women's participation in climate change decision-making is to analyse whether countries are assigning women to the UNFCCC conference delegations. An example of such research was focused on women's participation in UNFCCC government delegations to COPs and inter-sessional meetings undertaken by WEDO. The findings from WEDO's research, covering the years 2008-2012, indicate a global average of about 30 percent women's participation over five years, and a global average of 19 percent women serving as heads of delegation over the same period. Subsequent UNFCCC Gender Composition Reports show that the participation of women has not changed much since 2012.

Figure 2: Women's Participation in UNFCCC COP 18



The UNFCCC Gender Composition Report of 19 September 2016 (FCCC/CP/2016/4)⁵⁹ states that during COP21 (Paris, 2015) there were 32 percent female delegates, which is 4 percent lower than at COP 19 (2013) and COP21 (2014) – when it was 36 percent.

At a regional level, recent data is not available. However, a snapshot of COP18 shows that Asia, when compared to other regions, is trailing far behind Euro-Asia, OECD and Latin America as per figure 2.⁶⁰ However, despite this low representation, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, and Thailand constituted part of the top 15 countries with the largest female delegation, with Thailand having the highest female delegation of 58 percent. It is also worth noting that among the notable global gender and climate change champions, the Asia region is highly represented by Achala Abeyesinghe, the legal and technical adviser to the Chair of the least developed countries (LDCs) in the United Nations.⁶¹ Most of the LDCs have been empowered to negotiate by her.

At the national level, women's participation in CCDRR decision-making processes remains a challenge. However, some countries are making some strides in the inclusion of women in CCDRR processes. In Cambodia, the MOWA formed a Gender and Climate Change Committee in 2011 in which staff members meet with subcommittees of climate change, DRR and Green Growth. These meetings form a platform, which enables them to influence the climate change discourse from a gender perspective. In Viet Nam, the Women's Union has a seat in the national and sub-

Box 10. Viet Nam: Female participation in international negotiations.

The participation of women in Viet Nam's delegation to UNFCCC negotiations is promoted by ASEAN, and at COP20 in Lima there were 25 percent women. Also in the context of the ASEAN Regional Dialogue on Climate Change, gender issues were put on the agenda. During the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan (March 2015), three out of the eleven delegates were female, and the lead of the delegation, the vice-president of Viet Nam, was a woman. This was the first time that a leader of the Women's Union took part in the government delegation to an international conference on DRR, and this was the result of committed advocacy of UN Women and others (and funded by the government). A challenge is to make the voices of women in the delegation stronger and better heard during the negotiations. In the context of the UNFCCC negotiations, a woman delegate from Viet Nam was trained through the Women's Delegate Fund.

national disaster risk management structures, which gives it a foothold to influence DRR policy and practice.

Unlike other thematic areas, there are few women's organisations in Asia working on gender equality and climate change and even fewer on gender and DRR. Organisations such as WOCAN, WEDO, Asia Pacific Forum on Women and Law and Development (APWLD), Energeia, Duryog Nivaran, among others, are active at either the global and regional policy level or practice at the community level, but less so at the national level. For example, they are actively engaged in fora such as the Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction [(ISDR)-Asia Partnership (IAP)], and regional conferences by bilateral donors and development agencies.

At the national level, often women's organisations and CSOs do not have access to government policy-makers, and the space to influence policy and programme development and implementation is often closed. Where gender and women's participation are discussed, in many cases they

59 See: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/cop22/eng/04.pdf>

60 Reconstructed based on information from the IUCN's Environment and Gender Index Report (2013).

61 Achala Abeyesinghe is a Sri Lankan national employed by the policy group International Institute for Environment and Development. Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/11/23/opinions/cop21-women-need-participate/>

refer to physical presence of women in training workshops. Examples provided by Afghanistan, Bhutan, Mongolia, and Pakistan national progress reports on HFA, show that addressing gender equality is largely understood as equal participation between women and men in training. However, efforts by some active civil society groups in countries such as India and Nepal demonstrate the ability of women's groups to challenge national governments and hold them accountable. Holding government accountable seems to be more effective when women's organisation come together and speak with one voice. For example, after the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, Women's Groups⁶² came together to draft the Common Charter of Demands⁶³ which was presented to the national government to ensure that gender was an integral part of humanitarian response. The Charter included demands in the area of women's representation and leadership; food security, shelter and sustainable livelihoods; prevention of violence against women and girls; and special programmes for women⁶⁴. In Cambodia, there is a strong forum for NGOs which works on CCDRR issues. The forum advocates strongly for equity and equality, and works to ensure that climate change funds are available for and accountable to communities. The forum, in conjunction with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) and Oxfam, have developed a gender mainstreaming tool regarding the use of hydro power. The forum is influential in and supportive of gender-mainstreaming in other CCDRR processes. Bangladesh has a Gender Working Group of INGOs and its work extends to advocacy and some specific interventions in DRR and recovery. However, much of the lessons learned and community-based knowledge gained through NGO projects is not being translated and used more widely at policy- and decision-making levels.

The involvement of women, especially from the community level, in developing policies and strategies at either the national or sub-national levels has not been satisfactory either. Local NGO and community-based-organisation also noted that they often lack advocacy skills and capacities to engage with government in formal CCDRR processes. Funding is another critical area that can enable or hinder their engagement in these thematic areas. The 2015 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report notes

that of total international humanitarian assistance, only 0.2% went directly to local and national NGOs and 3.1% to the governments of affected states (Development Initiatives 2015).

'Our engagement in DRR is neither strategic nor institutionalised. Its 'contractor' based. When there has been a major disaster, suddenly we have an influx of donors and larger NGO approaching us to support disaster response. In normal times, DRR is not a priority and our support on gender equality works is determined by the interest area of the donor.' (Huma Chughtai- Pakistan⁶⁵)

A combination of social attitudes towards the involvement of women in the public domain, lack of education and technical expertise, and the heavy burden of reproductive work, also means women often have neither the time to participate nor the confidence to voice their concerns on the occasions when they do. However, a few governments are making some progress on this front. The Government of Bangladesh reports (Government of Bangladesh, 2014) that female participation has increased in various disaster management committees at local and national levels. For example, the DMCs and other standing committees for response and DRR now include representation from women. Furthermore, some arrangements have been made to enhance the participation of women in local governance in Bangladesh: The local government, Union Parishad, Second Amendment Act, 1997, enables the reservation of three seats for women in the Union Parishad, comprising a chairperson, nine members (male or female) and three women. Union Parishad women members are automatically members of disaster management committees. However, the proportion of males to females in these is (at time of writing) six-to-one,⁶⁶ which means women who wish to have a voice and influence discussions on how climate change is addressed at the local level are not likely to be supported due to the dominance of their male counterparts. Social norms and practices in Bangladesh are also a barrier contributing to women's lack of voice in these local-level community meetings.

62 A coalition of eight women's organisations in Nepal

63 The Charter can be found on <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/nepal/document/common-charter-demands-women%E2%80%99s-groups-nepal-gender-equality-and>

64 See post-earthquake Gender Update No. 3 available at <http://www.unwomen.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Gender-Equality-Update-No-3.pdf.pdf>

65 A comment made by Huma Chughtai, a Gender and Police Reform Specialist representing CSO group from Pakistan during the SAARD Peer Learning Consultation on Gender and Disaster Preparedness help in Nepal in November 2016

66 UN Women and BCAS, 2014. Baseline Study on the Socio-Economic Conditions of Women in Three Eco-Zones of Bangladesh. UN Women, Dhaka.



Pungadevi Dangol, a determined 49-year-old mother, in front of her home, which was one of many devastated by the earthquake. Now she takes lead in clearing the debris, to enable them to start to re-build her own home.

In Cambodia, initiatives are being tried to compensate for the absence of women in local decision-making. A UNDP-GEF small grants-supported project on Community-Based Adaptation (CBA), entitled 'Community Initiative for Climate Change Adaptation through Water Conservation and Food Production', is being implemented in Kampong Speu Province. This project has been promoting women's participation from the early stages of the Vulnerability Risk Assessment (VRA) meetings to the formation of Farmer Water User Groups and Village Seed Credit. Women are encouraged to make their own decisions on their needs and interventions, supported by the Green Village Organization.⁶⁷

There remains a significant gap in decentralised processes and in feedback from the community level to national decision-makers. The relative lack of technical capacity and confidence within the gender machineries and women's organisations, from grassroots to national levels, also remain a barrier to influencing DRR policy and practice. Efforts to improve women's participation and leadership at all levels of decision-making is long awaited. Furthermore, significant advancements are needed to reduce gender inequalities and stereotypes at the local level, which prevent women from meaningful participation in community processes. This will require a radical change in gender norms which presently operate to prevent or limit interventions aimed at achieving gender equality.

⁶⁷ UNDP Cambodia, January.2013. Case Study in Cambodia Community Based Adaptation: two examples from rural affected communities. UNDP, Phnom Penh; p.14-15.



A Tibetan lady weaving

Section 4:

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study sought to provide a deeper understanding of the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters in Asia and investigate current efforts to address gender equality in CCDRR policy and action. This section of the report outlines the main conclusions from the study and presents key recommendations for the way forward.

Conclusion

The Asia-Pacific region is the most disaster-prone region in the world, and it is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and climate-related disasters. The report highlights that existing gender inequalities are exacerbated and compounded by climate change and disasters. Women and girls, though still less visible in many situations, are at the forefront of this changing climate, and at the same time important change agents for more equitable and sustainable societies. More work is required to bring women, as equal rights holders with men, into the debate and as part of efforts to address the adverse impacts of climate change. Enhancing women's rights and ensuring their active participation in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management are crucial for managing climate change and for improving the condition and position of women and girls across the region.

The findings show the embryonic state of gender equality in relation to climate change and DRR: It is recognised in rhetoric in many country contexts, but not supported by action and practice. Asian countries are yet to fully acknowledge the importance of gender equality issues in CCDRR in an integrated and systematic manner, and this will require further technical support and advocacy to create change.

The degree to which gender equality is addressed in CCDRR at national levels varies depending on the specific country and the institutions involved: National capacity, available expertise, governance culture and willingness,

and institutional settings all play a role. There is a general awareness and acknowledgement of the relevance of a gender approach in CCDRR, but less evidence of application and implementation. Practice-based examples from NGOs demonstrate potential, but coordination is lacking; while project-based and research findings remain anecdotal and fail to influence policy- and decision-makers.

Women and men in communities across Asia are addressing changing climate, and yet half of the population – women – face adverse impacts that stem from social norms and practices rendering them unequal. While women's 'needs' are in focus in many policies and projects, greater long-term national and regional effort is required to address fundamental gender inequalities and women's strategic interests. These everyday inequalities are manifested in the impacts from disasters and a changing climate.

Small steps are being taken by some countries in Asia to integrate gender equality in CCDRR policies and programmes, however, the lack of sex and age disaggregated data is a concern across the region. Nevertheless, lessons can be learned from countries such as Nepal, which have overcome some of these challenges. Some progress is also observed in national efforts to increase women's participation in platforms that shape the global and national CCDRR discourse. Efforts to consolidate, share and replicate these best practices should be made across the region and beyond.

Recommendations and the way forward

The final section of this report outlines recommendations under each thematic area of analysis to provide a path forward towards a region where gender is not a determinant of vulnerability and where gender equality is a central principle in efforts to address CCDRR.

Policy environment

1. Strengthen expertise and technical capacity in gender equality in CCDRR within women's ministries to improve the quality of their contribution towards CCDRR policy-making. A 'whole-of-government' approach is necessary to deal with CCDRR, and the commitment to address gender equality in CCDRR policy equally needs to be owned by all of government, and not siloed in women's ministries.

2. Continue and amplify technical support for mainstreaming gender equality into CCDRR policy-making. Additionally, develop specific actions to address gender equality priorities which go beyond a needs-based approach. The endorsement of the Sendai framework presents an opportunity to integrate gender equality in DRR in Asia, in which disaster management plans to align with the new framework will be reviewed. Support the contextualisation of the Sendai Framework, which should also include the disaggregation of Sendai global indicators by sex and age.
3. Mainstream gender into national, sub-national and community CCDRR plans and strategies, with an accompanying shift in rhetoric away from ‘women as vulnerable’ towards ‘women as rights-holders and citizens.’ Further, specific attention and consideration must be given to the drafting of such policies to recognise the unequal social context in which these policies will be translated and implemented.

Institutional arrangements

4. Capacity development must bring about transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within. Capacity development of women’s ministries and machineries at all levels, can be driven through the provision of specialist posts within government ministries, which are well-supported by technical advisors specialising in gender-responsive CCDRR, and who undergo ongoing training. As capacity develops, this support is likely to diminish as the mainstreaming process becomes self-sustaining. It is important to also consider the sustainability of these posts in the longer-term, particularly in the provincial and local governance arenas, which may have fewer resources than national ministries or departments.
5. While specialist posts are necessary, they are not sufficient. Core commitment to gender-responsive CCDRR must be evidenced throughout the institutional structures as part of a ‘whole-of-government’ approach.
6. Further coordination between ministries (horizontal integration) is crucial; with evidence from CSOs feeding-up to decision-makers and policy fora (vertical integration).
7. Establish gender-responsive accountability mechanisms at national and local level, enabling the measurement of progress on gender equality, and the participation, leadership and empowerment of women in CCDRR. This will involve inputs from different government institutions and CSOs.

Implementation and practice

8. Climate financing must be underpinned by gender-responsive budgeting and input-based expenditure, informed by SADD and gender analysis. Substantial and dedicated funding should be provided towards climate change adaptation measures in agriculture and water resources, together with the development of alternative livelihoods that are less dependent on natural resources, to foster climate resilience among women and the overall community. Support should be provided to community resilience efforts of grassroots women’s organisations, whose knowledge and expertise should be formally recognised and fully incorporated into CCDRR plans and activities at local and national levels.
9. CCDRR projects must be informed by gender analysis with the establishment of gender CCDRR baselines, indicators and targets. Accountability can be strengthened by making gender equality commitments in projects a condition for accessing climate change funds and conducting gender impact assessments.
10. Enhance women’s equal access to information, including early warning, training, education and capacity building to strengthen their self-reliance and ensure the implementation of gender-responsive public information and communication systems.
11. Given that it is the underlying inequalities that make women more vulnerable, prioritise social protection mechanisms, including: the advancement of women’s legal entitlements; practical access to assistance, services and resources in relation to CCDRR (including compensations, cash transfers, social security, credit and employment); prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (including in disasters); and ownership of resources.



12. Establish gender-responsive accountability mechanisms at national and local levels enabling the measurement of progress on gender equality and the participation, leadership and empowerment of women in CCDRR. This will involve the inputs of different government institutions and CSOs.

Advocacy, knowledge generation and management

13. Invest in the collection, analysis, application, and management of sex and age disaggregated data at regional, national and community levels. This will ensure that the use of SADD and gender analysis is systematically integrated in information management, assessment, planning and monitoring methodologies so that the differential impact of climate change and disasters on women and men is made visible, documented and used to inform future efforts. Without data, problem identification and accountability is superficial and perpetuates responses that are insensitive to gender differences.

14. Marry technical hazard analysis, GIS, climate and disaster risk assessments with vulnerability assessments and gender analysis to gain a holistic understanding of the interplay between hazards, vulnerability, capacity, gender equality and resilience. This aims to ensure that climate change and DRR policies and action address the needs and priorities of different gender groups.

15. Improve the collation, dissemination and sharing of information, best practice and lessons learned on gender, climate change and DRR among governments, donors, CSOs, gender experts and researchers in Asia-Pacific through south-south exchanges and development of an inclusive 'Community of Practice'. Women's ministries are well-placed to be key knowledge management agents: With technical support, this action could support the profile building and political standing of the ministry.



Right to livelihoods. Women working in a rice factory, Netrakona, Bangladesh

16. Advocate to change prevailing stereotypical gender norms and the underpinning gender ideology which privileges one gender over the other(s).

Women's participation and leadership

17. Position women and women's organisations as active stakeholders and decision-makers in CCDRR efforts. Women's leadership opportunities are facilitated when they are systematically included and informed, and when their participation is supported. This means removing barriers for women to voice their needs and priorities; to access and use information, capacity development opportunities and training; and prioritising formal and informal education on CCDRR.
18. Establish participatory decision-making and oversight mechanisms to facilitate the voices and influence of gender equality advocates, civil society and national women's machineries, in shaping public policy, making investment decisions, and monitoring the performance of DRR institutions.

19. Promote and create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships between women's and grassroots organisations, gender equality champions, and national and DRR institutions in the development, management, implementation and monitoring of national and local CCDRR efforts.

The path towards gender-responsive climate change and disaster risk reduction must begin with the acknowledgement that neither the impacts nor responses to climate change are gender-neutral. Climate change is not an environmental phenomenon that only requires technological solutions: This very real, development problem is being felt by women and men, girls and boys, in countries of the region and globally. The social context in which women and men live, i.e. the social norms and practices, dictate the impacts of, and responses to these environmental changes. Therefore, efforts to mitigate impacts and the responses to these challenges must recognise the social context in which they occur and strive to ensure that all women and men benefit.

Annex A:

The analysis of how gender has been addressed in GEF Projects

An analysis of GEF approved projects between 2010 and 2015, which are available on the GEF website, was conducted in 2015 by UN Women. The analysis focused on the following (also see the table below):

1. Whether the project document **mentions the word 'gender', 'gender equality' or 'women'**. Those without the mention of gender and women were categorised as gender-blind.
2. Whether the project went beyond mentioning the word gender or women to **analyse the gender issues** within the context of the project or the target sector.
3. Whether project had M&E and **indicators** within the project results framework on gender equality or related to women's participation and empowerment.
4. Whether the project **allocated budgetary and/or human resources** to implement the gender-related activities.
5. There were some projects where it was unclear whether the project has gender in it or not and these were classified as **'do not know'**

Table 4: Analysis of how gender has been addressed in GEF projects

Sector	No. of Projects
Energy	42
Agriculture	9
Transport	7
Mitigation	5
Governance	12
Biodiversity	3
Infrastructure	2
Forestry	2
Other	10
Total	92

Table 5: GEF projects by sector

TOTAL NUMBER OF PROJECTS ANALYSED	92
Gender blind	15
Gender mentioned	25
Gender indicator	28
Budget allocated	9
Do not know	15

In total, 92 projects were analysed, worth about US\$6.708 billion, for 14 countries in Asia.⁶⁸ The analysis presented in this paper excluded the projects where it was not possible to determine whether gender was addressed or not.

The analysis also categorised the projects based on the sector (e.g. agriculture, transport, energy, forestry, etc.). This analysis helped to determine whether the key sectors that women in rural areas depend on (e.g. agriculture) or can bring transformative change for women (e.g. energy sector), had addressed gender concerns. As investments in the energy sector are the largest, at 46 percent, focus was made on this sector, which showed that almost 80 percent of all energy projects did not allocated budgetary and human resources to address gender inequality. In fact, none of the projects clearly allocated both technical and financial resources towards gender equality. Similarly, on agriculture, only three out of nine projects allocated resources to address gender equality.

⁶⁸ These included Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor- Leste and Viet Nam.

Annex B

Table 6: Progress on gender reporting within national HFA progress reporting⁶⁹

Report Sections	Afghanistan (2015)	Bangladesh (2014)	Bhutan (2014)	India (2014)	Indonesia (2014)	Laos (2015)	Mongolia (2015)	Nepal (2015)	Pakistan (2015)	Philippines (2015)	Sri Lanka (2015)	Thailand (2014)	Vietnam (2015)	Yes	No	Total	% of yes
Core Indicator 2: Do gender concerns inform policy and programme conceptualisation & implementation in a meaningful & appropriate way	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	7	6	13	54%
Core Indicator 1: SADD in vulnerability and capacity assessments	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	1	12	13	8%
Core indicator 5: Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post-disaster recovery rehabilitation processes addressing gender in recovery	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	8	5	13	62%
Core indicator 4: Gender in PDNA Guidelines	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	6	7	13	46%
Core Indicator 4: Women's organisations participating in national platform	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	5	8	13	38%

⁶⁹ Data were collected from 13 countries in Asia which submitted their national progress reporting on the implementation of the HFA 2013-2015, which can be accessed from prevention web: http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/progress/reports/index.php?o=ent_title&o2=ASC

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Front Cover: Nepali Ladies walking through their fields in Khokana, returning to the make-shift tents, their new homes since the earthquake devastated most of the town. Photo: UN Women/Piyavit Thongsa-Ard

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