



Statement of Commitments
of the UNDRR Asia-Pacific Stakeholder Group of Individuals and Organisations concerned with Gender (Gender Stakeholder Group) to the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
Brisbane, Australia, 19-22 September 2022

Prevailing socio-economic inequalities and ecological realities determine how disasters impact people, their levels of preparedness, capacities and ability to cope with adversities and recover stronger and more resilient. Women, children, older people, people with disabilities, people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, indigenous women and girls and other marginalised groups can often be more vulnerable due to a combination of factors including those of social, economic, cultural, geographical remoteness and institutional nature. At the same time, people within these groups have developed specific skills and capabilities in managing and coping with disaster risk. Disparities in vulnerabilities, exposures and capacities are decisive factors in the ability of different people to recover. Approaches that integrate socio-economic, ecological and climate justice are important, for no-one to be left behind.

Gender-based differences are observed in all aspects of disasters and cut across all social, economic and age groups, as in development processes, rooted in the unevenness of the economic, social, and educational status between women and men and between various social groups. This continues, despite global commitments and treaty obligations to protect and promote human rights, gender equality and social, economic and ecological inclusion.

The multiple and intersecting impacts of pandemics, such as COVID-19, the climate and ecological crisis and intensifying disasters, enhance further these challenges to live a life valued, with hope, and free from discrimination, fear and violence. For instance, COVID-19 resulted in i. loss of employment, livelihoods and resulting poverty, particularly for those in the precarious, informal sector, on wage labour and at the margins; ii. mobility restrictions making care arrangements more complex, and limiting access to health and other support services, with repercussions such as increased maternal mortality, lack of access to SRHR and iii. increased intimate partner violence and sexual violence, and even an increase in suicides, to name a few. Further, increasing threats and realities of climate change highlight increasing exposures, vulnerabilities and can weaken coping capacities. The APMCDRR must focus on proposed: gender transformative solutions to these challenges, and the commitments coming out of the current APMCDRR and their implementation, must address our shared aspirations for resilience, safety and protection.

The APMCDRR and the ongoing mid-term review of the Sendai Framework compel us to accelerate investment, inclusion and accountability of outcomes on gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership in building resilience and coping capacities in our region; through ambitious resourcing of local, Indigenous and majority South women into the midterm review process, and in all areas of DRR and climate change response.

Key challenges & opportunities identified

Although seven years have passed since Sendai, we are still behind on outcomes on gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership. The mid-term review of the Sendai Framework enables us to accelerate inclusion and accountability of outcomes, ensuring the overall approach is intersectional, interlinked and human rights based and ensuring coherence on social, economic and ecological justice in the following ways:

We must be able to measure, communicate and share progress of gender mainstreaming at local and national level against explicit indicators so that all stakeholders are accountable to the outcomes of the Sendai Framework on gender equality, women's rights, indigenous rights, empowerment and leadership as well as commitments to other international human rights treaties. This is important as despite the importance of sex, age and disability disaggregated data in informing intersectional, gender responsive and disability inclusive DRR strategies, it remains an optional and largely absent component within the national and local DRR strategies developed under the Sendai Framework Target E, as a recent study noted. A plan for monitoring progress on this needs to be put in place for the second part of implementing the framework. Accountability to women's rights and gender equality needs to be ensured, including in the CEDAW GR 37 legislative and policy reform for national and local action informed by the agreed conclusions of CSW66, as well as relevant regional intergovernmental commitments.

We need to ensure that government agencies have the basic information and tools as well as adequate resource allocations to make resilience and coping strategies inclusive. The need to revise and update formats for assessments, disaster loss and damage etc. to provide adequate guidance to other sectoral entities to collect disaggregated data, a recommendation in the Asia Regional Plan, continues. Governments need to improve their understanding of, and most importantly, commitment to gender, disability, social inclusion and intersectionality in DRR. Duty bearers must make use of qualitative data in decision making, including indigenous, local and traditional knowledge.

We need greater clarity on roles and functional coordination of all Disaster Risk Management institutions including with well-trained gender focal points, as well as the national and provincial Development Planning Institutions, Finance Ministries and women's machineries for effective realisation of the Sendai Framework outcomes on gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership. We still take NDMOs as the focal point, but that assumption is limiting, as coordination between NDMOs, planning, development and women's government agencies is needed for effective change. Women's machineries should be adequately resourced and capacitated to engage in DRR.

We need clear and well-resourced strategies to ensure that women, especially those from marginalised groups, are equally represented in political and decision making spaces. We need to ensure the voices of diverse women in recovery task forces and decision-making bodies at all levels. National and local governments need to collaborate with locally-led organisations working on women's rights and the rights of marginalised groups, including indigenous people, and be accountable to them. We need to engage traditional and faith leaders and other key stakeholders to enable women's participation, decision-making and leadership within DRR and emergency responses. There must be dedicated resources and support for cross-regional learning across women's coalitions and networks; this includes dedicated resources for women of all diversities (building on existing women-led models).

We need to prioritise and resource prevention and response to gender-based violence in every stage of disaster and crisis management, by enabling women-led initiatives and

providing funds and human resource support to government agencies and women's rights organisations that are engaging in preventative action, protection and response. Including by building leadership and providing essential and lifesaving multisectoral services (health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, mental health and psychosocial support, safe shelters, economic support, legal etc.) as well as supporting greater understanding on the application of a peace-development-humanitarian nexus approach including women's roles in participation, protection, response and recovery (in line with women peace and security commitments).

We need to dedicate direct resources to sustain and enhance women's coping strategies and resilience to disasters, in the form of capacity strengthening, equal access to information and infrastructure, livelihood support, targeted actions to address unpaid care work, direct financing and logistics, and inclusive policies and practices, social protection and services, education, leveraging science, technology as well as innovative applications of information and communication technology with a dedicated focus on building diverse young women's leadership. We need to ensure that we are inclusive of women in all their diversity, including women with disabilities and people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

We need to ensure that commitments for gender equality and women's rights continue through our collective efforts especially promoting different platforms for gender and DRR and climate resilience and ensure resource allocation for related capacity building aspects;; work with government to enable them to understand the gender and DRR aspects with the inclusion of feminist, local, Indigenous, traditional and non-traditional data sources to form policies; as well strengthen women's network at all levels for related advocacy to understand related gender dimension of Gender and DRR and climate resilience

Commitments by the Gender Stakeholder Group

The Gender Stakeholder Group has worked intensely in the past years to address gender equality and social inclusion in disaster risk reduction. In the next two to three years, **we commit to undertake** the following actions in support of the Mid Term Review and the Asia Pacific Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework and report back at the next APMCDRR:

Provide inputs to the Mid Term Review at national and regional level

Ensure a gender-transformative and inclusive Sendai Framework midterm review process, including the creation and resourcing of a gender action plan, in line with the CSW agreed conclusions. This must ensure that women-led local, indigenous and traditional knowledge as well as innovation with appropriate and accessible technology are recognised and integrated in all disaster management including multi hazard early warning systems.

Provide guidance for governments on application

Increase capacity of national and local government on DRR, gender equality and social inclusion, on implementing gender-responsive strategies, plans, budgets, policies, and programmes. We commit to carry out training for government officials under UNDRR oversight. The Gender Stakeholder Group together with UNDRR welcomes all governments and other stakeholders to take advantage of this training in the coming years. Support South-South exchange between regional intergovernmental bodies to share and replicate experiences where multilateral, international cooperation catalysed both strategic and operational commitments to gender equality, sexual and reproductive

health and rights and addressing gender-based violence in disasters, for example in ASEAN.

Improving disaggregated data collection plus intersectional gender analysis

Institutionalise gender-responsive processes such as the systematic and sustained capacity development of key gender, DRR and resilience stakeholders, as well as the systematic collection, use, and reporting of sex, age and disability disaggregated data, and the sharing of good practice, guidance, tools and lessons. Recognizing the importance of scaling up DRR in fragile contexts, this includes common gender analyses to support the application of a peace-development-humanitarian nexus approach. Supporting governments on strengthening utilisation of data generated from a range of stakeholders, including from local, faith based and women's groups.

Strengthening networking

Strengthening networking among organisations and alliances working on gender equality and social inclusion, especially local women's networks, collecting their stories of success and leveraging women's voice, agency and leadership for disaster and climate resilience. Foster greater alliances with men's groups. Additionally, cooperation and partnership for gender equality and women's leadership in DRR should continue to be fostered by leveraging recent progress made during CSW66, the Bali Agenda for Resilience and beyond.

The Gender Stakeholder Group is composed of representatives of national governments, bilateral agencies, United Nations agencies, and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's regional working group on Gender in Humanitarian Action, civil society organisations, and individuals in the region who are promoting gender-responsive disaster risk reduction.

Contributing to this statement are ActionAid, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), Australasian Women in Emergencies (AWE), CARE, Creative Recovery Network, DIVA for Equality, Duryog Nivaran, Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO) Nepal, GPS India, Humanitarian and Development Consulting Pty Ltd, Indonesia Women Network on DRR, Indonesian Society for Disaster Management, International Planned Parenthood Federation, JWNDRR, Ministry of Justice and Community Services - Vanuatu Child Desk, Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC) Indonesia, National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal (NIDWAN), National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia (BRIN), Participatory Development Action Program Bangladesh, Plan India, Plan Indonesia, PREDIKT Indonesia, Shifting the Power Coalition, U-INSPIRE Alliance, UN Women, UNDRR, UNFPA, Yayasan Plan International Indonesia

Addendum: Contributions made by the gender stakeholder group through its organisations over the past four years:

The key contributions made by the Gender Stakeholder Group as a collective, or as individual organisations are listed below:

1) Reviews

Reviews form a major part of the contribution of stakeholder groups.

The Gender Stakeholder Group carried out its periodic update to the Asia Pacific Partnership of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in 2020, led by Duryog Nivaran and ADPC, together with other members of the GSHG and UNDRR. The review found that: institutional coordination and interrelationships between the mandated institutions for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and women/gender in development in many countries are far below optimal levels. It also found that many of the national gender/women and development strategies do not consider DRM aspects, and women's rights work rarely capture access to information (early warning and other), displacement and post disaster recovery aspects. The review found that there is an absence of a whole of government approach, with institutions working in compartments, and the incorrect assumption that NDMOs can bring about gender equality, inclusion and women's empowerment and leadership in DRM. It asks for greater clarity on roles and responsibilities, of the mandate and expectations of various branches of government including related authorities, and other supportive structures, to enable the effective realisation of the Sendai Framework outcomes on gender equality. This way, gender equality and social inclusion outcomes in DRM become co-benefits of the broader gender equality and development commitments of the governments in the national development priorities, SDGs, and the commitments to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

In addition, a 'Review of Gender-Responsiveness and Disability-Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific', assessing national DRR strategies and action plans of 26 countries in the region, and identifying main barriers and corresponding recommendations for inclusive DRR was carried out by UN Women. According to the Women's Resilience to Disasters Policy Tracker, which was part of this review, there are now more than 32 national and regional gender-inclusive legal and policy frameworks in place in Asia and the Pacific. However, despite this progress, only a fraction of countries in the region have been collecting and using sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADDD) to monitor the implementation of the Sendai Framework, and even fewer countries have been able to mainstream gender and social inclusion in Target E.

Earlier this year, this stakeholder group developed a gender guidance note to support Member States on mainstreaming gender in their midterm review processes. The document identifies key recommendations for closing gender gaps and ensuring a gender-responsive and inclusive Midterm Review process and shares gender for Member States to consider when preparing voluntary national reports for the Midterm Review.

2) Projects

All organisations within the Gender Stakeholder Group place gender, human rights and social, economic and ecological justice and inclusion at the heart of its work in DRR, recognising that effective DRR is inclusive of all members of the community that experience the risks to, and impact of, disasters. Some examples are listed below:

CARE's DRR programmes are underpinned by a gender equality, disability and social inclusion analysis which informs the design of interventions to address the different capacities and needs of diverse genders. These projects in Timor Leste, Fiji, and PNG together with local women's NGOs, local organisations working on diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics concerns, or local Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, range from supporting women's leadership in CBDRM and during emergencies, capacity building to emergency responders deliver GBV prevention and response, increasing meaningful engagement in DRR, and providing spaces for local organisations to function from.

The Women's Resilience to Disasters Programme and the EmPower: Women for Climate Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific managed by UNWomen provide another example to advance the resilience of lives and livelihoods of women and girls to disasters and threats, and to support local women leaders in climate and disaster resilience to participate and advocate in global and regional normative processes.

In Australia and New Zealand, the Australasian Women in Emergencies Network (AWE) continues to advocate for, promote and celebrate inclusive representation of women in DRR, both those employed or volunteering in the DRR sector, and those impacted, directly or indirectly, by disasters. AWE has over 1,600 members in Australia, NZ and more broadly, and shares knowledge, information and resources to support the emergency management and disaster resilience sector to strengthen the voice of women in all aspects of disasters. There is a growing movement within the Australasian Women in Emergencies Network to strengthen the voice of women in climate change (through the Women in Emergencies for Climate Action chapter) and for inclusion of indigenous and First Nations voices.

In the Pacific Island region, the Shifting the Power Coalition which was established in 2016 in response to the exclusion of Pacific women's voices in regional and national decision-making spaces on disaster planning and response is the only regional feminist coalition focused on promoting diverse Pacific women's leadership in humanitarian action. With a reach that extends to more than 100,000 women in 7 Pacific Island Forum countries including Bougainville, Fiji, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, it comprises 13 women-led civil society organisations and the Pacific Disability Forum. With ActionAid Australia as the Secretariat and a regional hub in Suva it continues to drive an intersectional agenda focused on the leadership of women with disabilities and young women. The Coalition has been able to drive a feminist localisation agenda despite COVID-19, training 189 women, including 110 young women, in six Pacific Island countries trained to engage in national disaster coordination mechanisms and influence decision-making. With a Rapid Response Facility 11 rapid emergency response grants, totalling 180,000 AUD between 2019 and 2022 have supported partners to lead disaster response to address urgent humanitarian needs - in response to TC Harold, TC Yasa as well as in response to the Hunga volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga. The Coalition amplifies Pacific Island women's voice to the forefront through evidence building approaches in their publications such as 'Mobilising Women's Leadership: Solutions for Protection and Recovery in a Time of COVID-19 and TC Harold in 2020' & 'Inclusive and Accessible Multi-Hazard Early-Warning Systems: Learning From Women-Led Early-Warning Systems In The Pacific' as well as supporting members to participate in high-level regional forums contributing to growing recognition of the gendered impacts of disaster. A cross-coalition learning model is supporting Pacific Island women-led innovation for inclusive multi-hazard early warning systems such as Woman Weteam Weta and Meri Gat Infomesen as well as the regional Pacific Owned, Women-Led Early

Warning & Resilience Systems platform urban informal settlements, rural and maritime local women's autonomous organisers, grassroots, local and indigenous-led, including DIVA for Equality and Pacific Conference of Churches, among others.

ActionAid across Asia and Pacific supports women's leadership in disaster preparedness, response and recovery as a core part of its humanitarian signature. This includes commitments to ensure funding women's organisations in times of crisis and to ensure women's leadership in all humanitarian decision making spaces as well as the establishment of the Feminist Humanitarian Network.

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) is a locally owned, globally connected civil society movement that provides and enables services and champions sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, including during crisis. Across Asia and the Pacific, IPPF supports Member Associations and other local women-focused CSOs, building on existing local capacity and skills, amplifying women's voices and increasing capacity across the preparedness, response and recovery nexus.

3) Support to governments

The Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) has sought the assistance of UN Women to mainstream gender and social inclusion throughout its Work Programme 2021 – 2025. A Technical Working Group on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in disaster management was set up, and the ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management 2021 - 2025 was put in place.

ADPC works with governments and counterparts through its country programmes and places gender equality and a rights based approach at the centre and ensures gender and diversity as a focal cross cutting theme.

UNFPA Asia and the Pacific is partnering with CBM Global, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, the International Disability Alliance, and other key regional stakeholders to develop and implement the Disability Data Advocacy Training Package for Organisations of People with Disabilities, build awareness and technical capacity of national statistics offices, NGOs, donors, and related UN entities on disability data.

UNFPA supports the development, endorsement, dissemination and utilisation of policies, regulations, frameworks and strategies on prevention and management of gender-based violence as well as sexual and reproductive health across Asia and the Pacific, including in Indonesia and the Philippines.

4) Training programmes & guidelines

The Gender Stakeholder Group has in coordination with UNDRR developed a set of training modules focusing on an all of government approach to inclusive DRR, consisting of 4 modules. The modules take participants from concepts to practical suggestions and exercises on how to apply inclusive principles in DRR planning and programmes across key governmental agencies.

A gender guideline for programmes and projects has been developed by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre to ensure gender equality, disability and social inclusion mainstreaming in DRR and climate resilience programming, and online gender induction modules are developed to establish common understanding on gender.

UNFPA is leading a capacity building initiative with 14 government representatives in Asia and the Pacific to strengthen the capacity for coordination of gender-based violence response in disaster context.

5) Networking

As the Gender Stakeholder Group believes that networking encourages learning from others through the sharing of experiences, a few good practices of country based networks as well networks across borders have been developing.

In Australia, New Zealand and beyond, networking coordinated by the Australasian Women in Emergencies Network creates regular opportunities for women impacted by disasters, or involved in the DRR sector, to network and meet to share knowledge, information and resources, and encourage collaboration and shared stories to enable a supported, stronger and more powerful voice to DRR. Networking events are held within each of the chapters, monthly online guided conversations are facilitated, and opportunities to gather at DRR events, forums, workshops and conferences are created, and a mentoring program for women who work in emergency management and DRR is in place.

The Network of Youth and Young Professionals, such as U-INSPIRE Alliance, has brought together young women from 14 country chapters in Asia and the Pacific in various professional fields, to share their experiences and knowledge on science, technology, innovation, risk communication, socio-entrepreneurship and local level actions leading to science-policy nexus. The network has collaborated with UNESCO, UNDRR, and UNDP Accelerator Lab in organising the Futures Literacy Lab, bringing more than 100 youths, including 50% women, to gain new skills in futures literacy for disaster future thinking in 2045. The partnership has allowed sharing of expertise between UN experts, top researchers with young women

UN Women is working with a global network of gender experts and more than 500 women's organisations working on disaster and climate resilience to help countries integrate gender considerations into their national Sendai Framework mid term review processes.