



UN Women Official Statement for the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022

UN Women is grateful to the Government of Australia and UNDRR for co-hosting the 2022 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) with the theme: “From Crisis to Resilience: Transforming the Asia-Pacific Region’s future through disaster risk reduction”.

Disaster risk is becoming increasingly complex, with risk drivers and consequences multiplying and colliding in unprecedented ways. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 underscores the cruciality of women's participation and leadership in effectively reducing disaster risk and designing, resourcing, and implementing gender-sensitive policies, plans, and programmes towards building resilience. Nevertheless, data consistently show that inadequate attention has been given to the ways in which gender inequality and social exclusion drives disaster risks and impacts. This disparity reinforces existing inequalities, risks, and impacts following a disaster or crisis, and makes it harder and sometimes simply impossible, for the most marginalised to recover.

According to the [Women’s Resilience to Disasters Policy Tracker](#), there are currently more than 32 national and regional gender-inclusive legal and policy frameworks in place in countries in [Asia](#) and the [Pacific](#), although implementation of concrete and focused measures have been limited. Despite this progress, only a fraction of Asian and Pacific countries have been collecting and using sex, age, and disability disaggregated data to monitor the implementation of the Sendai Framework, and even fewer countries have been able to mainstream gender and social inclusion in Target E – National and local strategies for DRR. As a result, targeted assistance and programming, as well as meaningful participation of marginalized groups, continue to be limited¹. The Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework therefore offers a unique opportunity to close critical gender gaps in disaster risk prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and recovery, both in policy and practice, especially at subnational and community levels.

UN Women recognises the gender dimensions of disasters including the disproportionate disaster and climate risks, as well as impacts, on women and girls, in all their diversity, the underlying root causes of unequal risk, such as gender roles, social norms, and discriminatory attitudes, and the structural barriers to women’s meaningful participation and leadership in DRR and resilience. Globally, UN Women developed a [gender guidance note](#) to support Member States on mainstreaming gender in their midterm review processes, and to this end continue to work with a network of gender experts and more than 500 women’s organizations working on disaster and climate resilience to help countries integrate gender considerations into their national Sendai Framework mid-term review processes. In Asia and the Pacific, we are implementing the [Women’s Resilience to Disasters Programme](#) and the [EmPower: Women for Climate Resilient Societies](#) where we advance the resilience of lives and livelihoods of women and girls to disasters and threats, and support local women leaders in climate and disaster resilience to participate and advocate in global and regional normative processes. We are also actively advancing gender equality and inclusion in the following initiatives:

- The [Asia-Pacific Action Plan 2021-2024 for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework](#), recognizes that disaster risk is complex and needs to be addressed across agenda, sectors, institutions, and borders via a coherent and systemic approach that is inclusive, gender-responsive, addresses intersectionality, and leaves no one behind;
- The [Ha Noi Recommendations for Action on Gender and DRR](#), which considers the complexities that the region is facing in addressing disaster risks including the impacts of

¹UN Women (2020) Review of Gender-Responsiveness and Disability-Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific, available at: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/10/ap-review-of-gender-responsiveness-and-disability-inclusion-in-drr>



climate change, and increasing inequalities between regions and/or population groups - disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation;

- The [ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response \(AADMER\) Work Programme 2021-2025](#) which recognizes the unique needs and key roles of those most affected by disasters, including women, children, youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities;
- The [ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management 2021 – 2025](#) which supports the implementation of AADMER and which presents a global example for how multilateral, international cooperation can catalyse both strategic and operational commitments to gender equality and address gender-based violence in disasters;
- The [Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific](#) where we are supporting the establishment of a regional technical working group on gender and inclusion in the Pacific Resilience Partnership;
- The [Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration](#) which emphasizes the need to implement specific national policy actions to increase women's participation in all levels of leadership and decision making, and must be consequently undertaken by legislative, governance reforms advocacy for women's leadership at all levels; and
- The [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\) General Recommendation 37 \(2018\)](#), which highlights the need to integrate and report on the gender-related dimensions of DRR in the context of climate change across the four priorities of the Regional Action Plan.

As a way forward, UN Women calls for increased commitment from all stakeholders to address the gender gaps in DRR and strengthen gender-responsive and inclusive DRR and recovery governance, which would only be possible through system-wide change. Specifically, UN Women calls for the following:

1. **Leverage women's voice, agency and leadership for disaster and climate resilience.** This should include increased flexible financing for local women's organizations working on DRR and resilience in Asia and the Pacific, and gender-balanced leadership and membership in disaster risk management committees and teams from national and subnational up to community level.
2. **Institutionalise gender-responsive processes** such as the systematic and sustained capacity development for all key gender, DRR and resilience stakeholders, the systematic collection, use, and reporting of gender data, and the sharing of good practice, guidance, tools and lessons, including learning from the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. **Ensure a gender-responsive and inclusive Sendai Framework midterm review process, including the creation of a gender action plan,** in line with the [CSW agreed conclusions](#), as well as by ensuring that national and local strategies for DRR integrate gender and social inclusion into planning and budgeting (Target E), particularly for social protection, livelihoods, infrastructure, and services.
4. **Strengthen gender-responsive risk governance, including through the development and implementation of coherent gender-responsive strategies, plans, budgets and policies such as we have experienced with the ASEAN** where multilateral, international cooperation catalysed both strategic and operational commitments to gender equality and addressing gender-based violence in disasters.
5. **Continue to foster cooperation and partnership for gender equality and women's leadership in DRR.** This includes leveraging the critical progress made during the recent CSW66 and the [Bali Agenda for Resilience](#) from the 7th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.