

Designing Gender Responsive Disaster Risk Management Interventions

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Key Messages

Women and men are raised with gender-specific roles and responsibilities in their families and communities. But women's capacity to prepare and ability to cope with disasters is at times inadequate because of the limited control that they have over resources and their limited decision-making power, both within the household and public sphere.

Participation in decision making by both men and women is crucial in promoting the important goal of DRM interventions, i.e. of building a climate resilient community.

The unique knowledge held by women should be respected and effectively utilised in responding to and managing climate and disaster risks.

Adopting gender-responsive approaches is essential in achieving cost-efficient adaptation measures, disaster risk reduction and management and sustainable development for Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste faces a range of risks from climate induced threats, natural disasters and human made hazards. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was a turning point for the Timorese Government to take a pro-active approach to manage negative impacts of disaster in response to the community's concerns for their security. Extended periods of drought and destruction caused by extreme weather events such as strong winds, heavy rains and frequent earthquakes highlight the necessity of enhancing preparedness and responses to disasters through effective management.

There is a growing realization that vulnerabilities to disasters are different for males and females and that the scale of vulnerabilities varies by gender. Thus, over the past decade, climate change and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) practitioners have made gender mainstreaming a crucial part of their programming approaches, with the aim of making DRM and DRR measures effective and equitable.

It is critical that DRM interventions are gender responsive and rights-based to reduce disaster risks for women and men, girls and boys and vulnerable population groups. Such inclusive approaches will ensure the effective implementation of DRM interventions and positive results.

This policy brief provides some key recommendations on designing gender responsive DRM processes.



MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN DRM INTERVENTIONS



Over the past decade, climate change and DRM practitioners have made mainstreaming gender a crucial part of their programming approaches.

There is a growing realization that vulnerabilities to disasters are different for males and females and the scale of vulnerabilities varies by the cultural construction of sex. This shift has coincided with a greater awareness of the gendered aspects of disaster risk and vulnerability, heightened by major disasters of the recent past.

Hyogo Framework of action (2005-2015)

- *A gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management and education and training*

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

- *A gender, age, disability and cultural perspective should be integrated in all policies and practices, and women and youth leadership should be promoted*

The Government of Timor-Leste is a signatory to the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) and has endorsed the Sendai Framework on DRR, which has a 15-year time frame ending in 2030.

The Government's commitment to gender issues is reflected in a range of national and international policy frameworks and agreements and is enshrined in the country's constitution and its Strategic Development Plan (SDP) (2011–2030).

CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTER RISKS AND GENDER IN TIMOR-LESTE

Disaster Risk Management (DRM)

The systematic process of using administrative directives, organization, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies, and improved coping capacities to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster.

Source: OXFAM 2011

In 2007, the National Disaster Management Directorate (NDMD) was established and placed within the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) to elevate the DRM agenda in Timor-Leste. The NDMD was assigned responsibilities including the key task of developing and implementing programmes and activities aimed at both **responding** to disaster impact as well as **reducing the risk** of disasters indicating a comprehensive approach. The draft National Disaster Risk Management Policy (NDRMP) 2015 is guided by the objectives and priorities of the HFA, the outcomes document of the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) held in Kobe, Japan, and the Sendai Framework.

The policy highlights the importance of women and vulnerable groups. It underlines that DRM should be gender sensitive and that women's needs be placed at the centre of resilience building, commensurate with their responsibilities within the community. Throughout the implementation of DRM in Timor-Leste, activities that promote gender balance should be emphasised, and address and identify the specific needs of the elderly, youth and disabled. However, there currently is no law in place to operationalize DRM policies into actions.

Valuing women's participation

Capacity to mainstream DRM/CCA and gender needs

Gender needs assessment

The boxes indicate the key elements of climate change, disaster risks and gender.



A recent gender assessment (Climate Change Resilience Unit, UNDP Timor-Leste, 2017), showed that government authorities from national to local levels were generally aware of the need to address existing gender inequality to mainstream gender in CCA and DRR initiatives/measures.

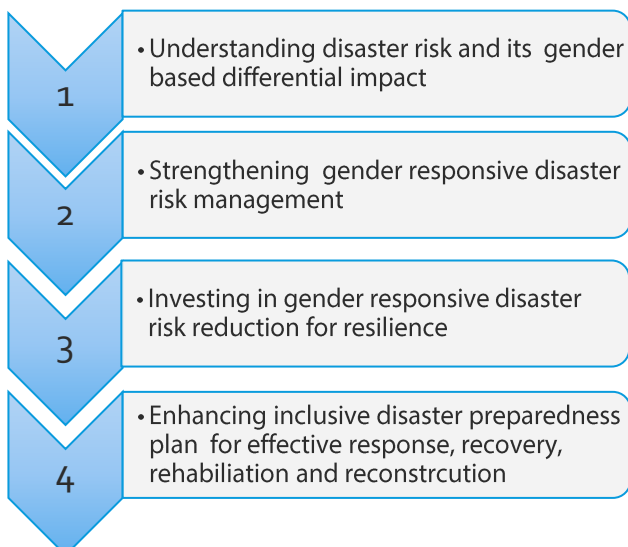
They were also aware of the existing National Gender Policy framework, which seeks to promote women's participation in decision making structures and the creation of an enabling environment where women

and men, boys and girls have equal access to opportunities and resources.

The assessment noted the limitations at all levels of technical capacity to mainstream gender in DRM interventions.

GENDER RESPONSIVE DRM INTERVENTIONS – PROCESS DESIGN

In designing gender responsive DRM interventions, four key steps and the suggested recommendations for actions at the national and local level are critical. The four priority actions are aligned with the Sendai Framework's four Priorities for Action.



DRM policies and practices must be based on sound evidence that can be leveraged for pre-disaster gender responsive risk assessment, risk prevention and reduction, and preparedness and effective response to disasters. The collection of sex, age and disability disaggregated information is a critical first step in generating a better understanding of how different population groups are differently exposed to disaster risks. Tools and methods for assessing gender specific disaster and hazard risk vulnerabilities at the local level must be developed and applied.

Local Level

National Level

Generate and use sex and age dis-aggregated information

- Develop methodologies, tools and formats for collection of sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADDD) and analysis of hazard risk vulnerability (HRV)
- At the institutional level, local governments/DRR committees should identify time bound/annual targets to collect/update this data
- Engage women's and other organizations on the needs of other diverse groups at all levels

- Establish a sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADDD) database and documentation center for gender and disaster information so that the differential impact of disasters on females and males can be made visible, is documented and informs efforts
- Enhance national capacities for collecting, analyzing, managing and using SADDD
- Increase awareness of the public and media on gender sensitive vulnerabilities and capacities in disasters, as well as gender specific needs and concerns in disaster risk reduction and management

Strengthen legal and institutional frameworks for DRR and enhance women's leadership roles

- Review the gender responsiveness of local plans including guidelines and monitoring indicators for local commitments to gender responsiveness and inclusivity
- Review and strengthen local mechanisms to enable the voices and concerns of diverse groups such as women, people with disabilities, minorities, etc.
- Expand opportunities for women to assume leadership roles

- Implement programmes that engender legal and institutional frameworks
- Ensure that gender responsive budgeting in DRR financing is informed by sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis
- Mainstream gender in the administrative disaster-management training curricula of the disaster management training and national administrative training institutes to enable gender mainstreaming across all development sectors
- Create an enabling environment to enhance the status of women in government structures pertinent to disaster management

Ensure public and private structural and non-structural investments include gender and social inclusion considerations

- Identify and invest in sustainable alternative livelihoods that empower women
- Develop women's leadership in the areas of planning, decision making and monitoring capacity to develop resilient livelihoods

- Improve social protection for women and marginalized groups through better access to productive resources, such as land, information, and finance
- Support affirmative action to promote the participation and representation of women and diverse groups in forums that decide on infrastructure developments

Enhance disaster preparedness for effective response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction

- Ensure allocation of gender-responsive budgets for Early Warning System (EWS), preparedness and recovery
- Engage in regular and participatory monitoring and analysis of protection standards
- Fully integrate gender concerns and women's participation in local disaster preparedness, response and recovery plan development and implementation

- Develop the capacity and representation of women in security and protection interventions at the national and local levels
- Facilitate access to early warning, response, evacuation, service and referral mechanisms and inclusion of the specific needs of women and other at-risk populations
- Carry out gender-responsive post-disaster needs assessments
- Develop and incorporate gender responsive accountability indicators for security and protection in the national monitoring and reporting system

Establish a system that targets gender sensitive indicators for DRM and DRR interventions, and in which mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and reporting at all levels include gender and age-disaggregated data



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