

Gender and Protection Checklist | Disaster Response

Why does gender and protection matter in disaster preparedness?

- Natural disasters don't affect everyone in the same way. Social structures, customs and roles mean that people are affected differently, some worse than others. More vulnerable people may include women, girls and boys, people with disability and older people.
- Disaster preparation can keep community members safe, help maintain their dignity and provide protection (i.e. prevent and respond to exploitation, abuse, violence and injury).
- Past disasters have shown that when disaster plans and arrangements have not been developed, agreed to, and understood by everyone, the result is more casualties and suffering. So it is important that everyone, including vulnerable people, is included in disaster plans and preparations.
- Involving women, children/youth and people with disability in disaster preparation helps the whole community to plan for disasters and build resilience.

Establishing Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees

- Step 1 |** Make sure women, girls and boys, and people with disabilities are aware of and engaged in Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) before they are set up.
- Women, girls and boys, and people with disability need to be involved in discussions about CDCCCs from the beginning, otherwise it will be more difficult to engage them on the committee.
 - As women, children and people with disability are less likely than able-bodied men to hold leadership positions, discussions about CDCCCs should not only take place at the community leadership level. Information about CDCCCs should be distributed through community networks and house-to-house.
 - Women, children and people with disability need to be aware of the role and responsibilities of CDCCCs before membership selection takes place.
- Step 2 |** Make sure women and men are equally represented on CDCCCs.
- Recruit equal numbers of women and men, girls and boys to CDCs. Having equal numbers of women and men on a committee helps women to feel confident to speak up and present their views. Women on committees can support each other to voice their concerns.
 - Make sure both women and men are represented as executive members.
- Step 3 |** Make sure all CDCCC members participate equally.
- Provide information and training to CDC members on ways to participate and contribute.
 - It is important that both women and men understand the importance and benefits of having equal participation on the CDC; e.g. equal participation helps identify risks to diverse community members and also their capacities.
 - All CDC members are responsible for ensuring everyone participates equally.

Developing Community Disaster Plans

- Step 1 |** Involve women, girls and boys, and people with disability in the development of Community Disaster Plans (CDP).
- Women, girls and boys, and people with disability should be engaged at every stage of development of community disaster plans, as they each have a unique perspective on disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.
 - If women, girls and boys, and people with disability are involved in the development of plans, it is more likely that they will benefit.
- Step 2 |** Communicate plans to everyone in the community.
- After developing a CDP, the plan should be discussed and communicated to the whole community, not just the community leadership.
 - Separate meetings for women and children should be held to discuss the CDP, particularly if they are unable to attend meetings at the same time as other community members.
 - House-to-house awareness or informal meetings should be completed in places where women, children and other vulnerable people gather, to make sure they participate actively and equally.
- Step 3 |** Have women responsible for key parts of the plan.
- Allocating responsibility for parts of the plan to women fosters their ownership and accountability for it.
 - By identifying and allocating responsibilities based on group and individual strengths, the plan will reflect the unique resources of the community.

Raising Awareness with Communities

- Step 1 |** Make sure awareness raising materials are relevant to the context.
- Awareness materials should communicate information about disaster preparedness to everyone in the community equally. Communicate through different methods (e.g., radio, posters, newsletters, television or loudspeaker), so that the information reaches everyone (e.g. literate, illiterate, deaf or blind).
- Step 2 |** Make sure everyone in the community participates.
- Awareness raising activities should provide information to everyone equally. If vulnerable people (e.g. women, children, people with disability) cannot attend general information meetings, schedule separate meeting times, house-to-house awareness activities or informal meetings to promote their active participation.