



Key Demands for the 2022 Global Platform on DRR

By the Women Major Group (WMG) of the UN Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism

The world continues to be ravaged by disasters—with their economic, human and environmental costs rising across the world. The least developed countries and communities at the periphery of power—with limited or no resources to respond to and recover from disasters—carry the disproportionate burden of the impacts. Disaster robs dignity, erodes development gains and pushes people and communities into systemic cycles of poverty. Disasters exacerbate the systemic inequalities and human rights violations faced by women and girls. Yet, according to the [GP2019 co-chair summary report](#), “the commitments towards the inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction have not yet sufficiently translated into action.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that chronic underfunding of adequate public provision in social infrastructure led women, especially the most marginalized, to fill the gaps with unpaid and underpaid work. At the same time, for the past two years, we have seen the exponential rise of extreme gender-based violence. Inequalities in the distribution in vaccines remained a driver of global inequality, alongside insufficient access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights.

According to the [6th IPCC Assessment report](#) on climate impacts, adaptation and vulnerability, an estimated one half of humanity is in the danger zone. Extreme weather events caused by climate change are becoming intense and more frequent, destroying lives, infrastructures, economies and cultures. Reducing disaster risks in this case means addressing and uprooting the root causes of the climate crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic—which for the last two years has claimed more than 6 millions lives, shut down economies, and laid bare intersecting inequalities and vaccine apartheid—has also robbed countries and communities of resources to adequately and effectively respond to disasters. Thus, effective and inclusive DRR needs to center the intersecting vulnerability of women, communities and nations.

Recognizing that the upcoming Global Platform is being hosted against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, endless wars and conflicts, and many other intersecting crises—and ahead of midterm review of the Sendai framework—the Women and Gender Stakeholder group is setting forward the key demands below.

We call upon the United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction and its member states to:

- A. Ensure the meaningful engagement and leadership of women at all levels of DRR, especially of grassroots and young women:** Women, girls and gender-diverse people continue to be those most impacted by disasters, and simultaneously, they are leading disaster-risk reduction efforts across the world. In other words, women and girls hold the solutions. However, the commitments made by national governments and UN agencies to have inclusive DRR policies and programmes are yet to be realized. It is the human right of women, girls and gender-diverse people to claim their place at the decision-making table, and governments have the responsibility to create conducive and safe spaces for our meaningful engagement. Despite this, the humanitarian systems and other multilateral policy processes continue to create numerous barriers. We are deeply concerned that gender equality continues to be tokenized and deprioritized. We urge governments and all other stakeholders to prioritize and invest in the meaningful engagement and leadership of women at all levels and to recognize this as our human right. Accountability processes must ensure that decisions of women's collective decision-making bodies are implemented for DRR. Resilient communities and nations can never be achieved if half of the population is deliberately and structurally excluded. In particular, grassroots women and young women and girls are among those most marginalized and left behind by DRR governance structures, despite their crucial role as human rights and environmental defenders.
- B. Realize commitments on localization:** Women, communities, Indigenous Peoples and local institutions are the first responders to disasters. Therefore, it is critical to build on their existing capacities and knowledge and ensure that systems, procedures and resources are made available to implement their decisions and strengthen their capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters in a way that builds resilience. 'Capacity gaps' or implementation failures should no longer be an excuse by the Global North to derail the localization agenda. We demand that resources and aid are channeled to communities to realize the localized agendas. Incorporation of gender equality and social inclusion measures into the national and local disaster risk reduction strategies should be mandatory.
- C. Eliminate gender-based violence and promote SRHR:** With an increased number of hazards turning into disasters, we are experiencing increased gender-based violence and disruption of sexual and reproductive health services and rights across the world. It is therefore critical that special emphasis is given to implementing women-led initiatives to eliminate GBV and promote SRHR at the GPDRR with firm policies, programmes and resource commitments from governments and UN agencies.

- D. **Increase feminist financing for disaster risk reduction:** It is well recognized that investing in reducing risk saves the need for finance to respond to crises. Yet, governments and donors continue to respond to immediate needs and invest in development models that are unsustainable, with less consideration of long-term scenarios of disasters, climate change impacts and conflicts. The situation is far worse when we look at DRR financing that is truly gender-just. Funding for and to women's rights organizations at the forefront of disaster response is almost negligible. In this GPDRR, especially while the Sendai Framework is undergoing a review process, we demand real commitments and actions to increase overall funding for disaster risk reduction, and that funding to advance gender equality be channeled to women's rights organizations. One of the principal barriers for meaningful participation for women and their organizations is the lack of dedicated funding for women-led organizations, combined with short-term funding cycles. Thus, funding should meet the standards and criteria of women-driven organizations reducing disaster risk in accordance with the Common Agenda call to uphold UNCTOC, CEDAW and UNFCCC.
- E. **Promote an inclusive and equitable recovery:** While the Sendai framework calls for 'recovering back better' the reality is, those who are at the center of power are the only ones with privilege to recovery. For communities living in poverty, disaster means erosion of hope and possibilities of breaking the poverty chains. We call for gender-just and feminist recovery plans and strategies that are sustainable for the health of the planet and people. Recoveries should be taken as an opportunity to start a sustainable, equal, and just society.
- F. **Ensure policy coherence:** Acknowledging disasters are caused by a range of factors, it is critical that UNDRR efforts align, inform and reinforce commitments made in other relevant mechanisms and global and regional level, including those made at the CSW, HLPF, COP, UNEA, CBD and beyond. To advance gender equality in DRR, it is also imperative for gender machineries at the country level to be actively engaged and supported to provide structural implementation and capacity needed to achieve inclusive DRR.

For more information on the Women's Major Group of the UNDRR, contact the coordination team:

Mwanahamisi Singano, mwanahamisi@wedo.org

Tanjir Hossain, Tanjir.Hossain@actionaid.org

Ramona Miranda, ramo.miranda@yahoo.com