

Policy Brief, Series 3

Dec, 2020

“Strengthening GESI inclusive implementation of Disaster Risk Management Policies”.

Introduction

Nepal Government has different plans and policies in place. It is encouraging all mechanisms to ensure its effective implementation at all level. Province level, local level implementation guidelines also follow national instrument. Its DRR planning process adopts provisions and plans according to their context. Consultation with civil society, different groups is also considered during the planning however the participation of women and excluded group remains unaddressed; their voices are not inclusive in the plans and provisions. Efforts are being made from federal, province and local authorities to increase women's and vulnerable group participation, but is still nominal and challenging. Effective implementation is the responsibility of all stakeholders and coordination is happening but effective implementation still finds various GESI gaps in implementation. Gaps/challenges of their meaningful participation still remain unaddressed. More serious attentions/efforts is required to make Gender equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) as integral part of all the provisions, acts. GESI and its inter sectionalism in DRRM needs more importance.

Key GESI concerns

Ensure voice of women and excluded groups voices of PwDs, living with health issue, LGBTIQ considering age, sex, culture and diversity are heard on disaster management cycle.

Ensure access to information, basic relief and response services of state including health requirements.

Understand the barriers of meaningful participation of women and excluded groups to their full potentials and define GESI strategies at all level of interventions.

Key issues in GESI sensitive implementation of DRR policies and plans

- **Policy gap:** DRRM Act, 2074 has not well addressed women and inclusion in the policy structures, hence GESI gap is observed in DRRM policy localization and plan formulation process, hence implementation is poor as per GESI lens. Though policies have written the participation and engagement of women and vulnerable in every spectrum of DRRM, but the challenge is local government are not guided on how to integrate the GESI aspect in the local policies and plans. MoHA representatives also feel this gap in DRRM policies and optimistic to facilitate for the necessary amendment. DRRM model act for the local level developed by federal government has considered women and at-risk groups as victim of disaster but not an active agent of social change. Disaster management committees at local level have poor representation of women hence their voice is difficult to hear.

- **Inadequate consultation and meaningful participation:** Despite of the provision in the DRRM policies, women and at-risk groups are not often not consulted during policy making, disaster risk management plan development process as well as preparedness and response planning. Hence, policies and plans are not GESI sensitive and requirements of vulnerable are not well addressed increasing their vulnerabilities in disaster events. Inadequate capacity of women representatives and grass root level communities on hazards, disasters, risks and preparedness, they are not participated in discussions and consultations on meaningful way and contribute. Provincial level strategic action plan process does not seem emphasizing to have proper consultations with stakeholders, women groups, PwDs. (Province secretary of province 2 has ensured that he will review the draft plan and monitor the process). Experts/consultants are technically supporting to develop policies and action plans however the understanding and engagement of representatives is a challenge in this process and often the engagement of women, PwDs, Elderly, Children, Dalits and marginalized/excluded groups are missing (accountability in implementation might be challenging). During disaster preparedness and response planning phase, at-risk groups are not consulted and their needs are overlooked (this is why emergency stockpiles lack equipment required to meet diverse need of disabilities including women, girls and children).
- **Gap in policy understanding at local level:** The local level policy frameworks and action plans also less addressed gender and inclusion. Women and vulnerable groups are only considered as victim of disaster but not as a partner who can contribute in risk reduction and disaster management. For integrating GESI in all spectrum of Disaster Risk Management requires recognition, realization and capacity. Women representation in disaster management committees have inadequate knowledge and understanding DRRM especially in policy provisions. Ward level women representatives are far from the capacity development opportunities and they are yet not engaged and involved in DRR planning process of local level.
- **Lack of recognition and acknowledgement:** The socio-cultural norms and challenges prevents women to play leadership role in disaster management actions such as covid-19 response however the covid-19 quarantine centers managed by women leaders are successfully able to meet the challenges of women, girls and PwDs.
- **Lack of well-established Disaster Information Management System (DIMS):** Federal government disaster information system should have desegregated data bases from all over the districts in coordination with province and local government. For this purpose, local level government should establish Disaster Information System, with all the required information of hazards, vulnerability and risk including database of vulnerable population (representative from MoHA ensured that this is on the process and will be achieved sooner in coordination with province, district and local level). At present, NEOC is operating the emergency operation under MoHA. Data collection and data management system during disaster is not well managed hence reflecting its impact on need based relief support.

Federal Level Voices: Gaps in plans and guideline implementation is the key concern and common agenda of Nepal government. GESI consideration in effective implementation will be addressed along with SADD data collection. Federal government is optimistic to facilitate the required amendment in the DRRM policies that have less addressed women and at-risk groups in policy structures.

Province Level Voices: Plans are under formation, cluster group consultation is happening along with strategic Action plan is also under progress province 2. It is taken as serious issue in preparedness plans, much coordination is also a need. Adequate human resource should be capacitated for effective implementation of plans and its monitoring. Adequate resource allocation is also another important aspect to be ensured.

Local Authorities: Plans and guidelines are under preparation once the models are rolled out women friendly programs will be ensured, when plans are placed women representatives will ensure effective implementation. Further discussions might need to make all concerned stakeholders more accountable for the same. For effectively conduct duties capacity is a challenge. Women have successfully managed the quarantine centers during Covid-19, however their roles are less recognized and always in shadow.

Civil Society voices.

There is huge gap in women's meaningful participation, it has to be addressed by local authorities. More efforts and strategies required.

Much serious attention needs to be drawn towards People with Disabilities (PWD), it still remains as an attached, when it comes to access to relief.

Policy Recommendations

- DRRM policy review to ensure needful representation of women and at-risk groups in policy structures.
- Enhance policy understanding and DRRM capacity of women representatives at province and local level for GESI sensitive policy localization/implementation.
- Develop strategic action plans by local government to enhance the knowledge and understanding of grass-root women and at-risk groups on hazards, disaster, risk, risk reduction and preparedness.
- Local women representatives at municipal level should focus on enhancing the capacity of ward level women representatives, localizing to ground level.
- Coordination, partnership and collaboration with Civil Society Organizations including private sectors and media especially for capacity development, advocacy and emergency preparedness.
- Establish structures within NDRRMA to strongly monitor GESI sensitive implementation of policies & plans and localize the structure at province and local level.
- Disaster information Management System at local level to Federal level with age and sex desegregated data.

This policy brief is developed based on the policy dialogue conducted with Province 2 by CDMS/WHDRRP in collaboration with TSK/AFN/NDWA with support from UN Women on 24th Dec 2020.

