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SESSION SUMMARY

Session Title: Addressing the Inequality of Risk and Promoting Women's Leadership in Recovery

Session Type: Thematic session

Date and Time: Tuesday, May 14, 2019. 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Key Speakers and Agencies:

Co-organized by:

UN Women, UNICEF, UN Environment and UNDP

Opening remarks:

- **HE Hans Brattskar;** Ambassador/ Permanent Representative to the UN, Norway (opening remarks)

Speakers:

- **Ms. Dolores Devesi;** Country Director, Oxfam, Solomon Islands
- **Ms. Ferina Futboe;** Youth Activist, Indonesia
- **Ms. Midori Hirano;** Chairperson of Japan National Assembly of Disabled People's International

Moderated by:

- **Ms. Hiba Qasas;** Chief, HACRO, UN Women

HE Hans Brattskar, Ambassador of Norway, opened the session by highlighting how hazards can turn into disasters depending on the vulnerability of the affected country, region or community. This session addressed the vulnerabilities and challenges of women, children, youth and persons with disabilities. It recognized their role as key contributors to effective disaster recovery and resilience building by examining cases from



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Indonesia, Japan, and the Solomon Islands. These contexts showed how the intersectionality of gender, age and disability lead to an inequality of risk faced by women, youth, children and persons with disabilities. Gender and disability were identified as key factors which led to double exclusion during the Kumamoto Earthquake in Japan in 2016. The distinct needs of persons with disabilities were not adequately considered in disaster response and recovery. The experience from the earthquake highlighted the need for the participation of persons with disabilities in local disaster management committees. Furthermore, greater cooperation was recommended between the private sector and the public sector, to support and achieve inclusive recovery. Disasters can exacerbate existing gender inequality in political participation, decision making and access to resources and information. In the Solomon Islands, there is evidence of locally driven response by women, addressing the root causes of inequality by strengthening partnerships and localizing interventions. Through the Womanitarian Initiative of Oxfam Solomon Islands, funded by UN Women, women develop capacities and tools to support their families and communities in DRR. The case from Indonesia solidified the comments from the Solomon Islands by painting an accurate picture of the burden on youth, particularly adolescent girls who had to travel up to 2 hours daily to reach available water sources, due to drought. In Indonesia, youth are becoming change agents by strengthening their collective capacity through an Adolescent Toolkit, emphasizing community outreach and training strategies. Youth are active participants in the DRR process by engaging in village government.

The audience highlighted the importance of private sector engagement, and UN Environment called for greater integration of international policies, programming and investments across the fields of gender equality, DRR, peace and security and development to better address complex multi-dimensional risks, such as the nexus of climate change and security. Although women are often on the frontlines of these crises, as evidenced by a recent pilot project on gender, climate and security in Sudan, there is still very little programming targeting women as leaders in recovery, risk reduction and peacebuilding.

The key points of this session were summarized in the screening of a short film by UNICEF and UN Women which highlighted the need for increased investment in resilience that is sensitive to gender and age, and diversity,



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collection of sex, age and disability disaggregated data and most of all, the recognition of the roles of women and other groups in recovery and resilience, making the invisible, visible. The panelists concluded that the international community needs to move from commitment to action, issuing a strong call for the promotion of women's leadership and engagements for investment in resilience that is sensitive to the identities inherent within communities.

Despite evidence that DRR, recovery, reconstruction and peace building plans are more effective if women engage, we see inherent challenges in translating these commitments and words into action. The session concluded with the following actions to promote women's leadership and engagements for more effective and efficient recovery and resilience building;

1. Promote recognition of the roles of women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in recovery and resilience, creating safe spaces for their participation to realize their potential,
2. Promote the collection of sex, age and disability disaggregated data,
3. Strengthen investment in gender-responsive disaster recovery and resilience building.



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Photograph from the session:



Panelists at the Session; Addressing Women's Leadership in Recovery