

TECHNICAL SESSION

South Asia - Where Resilience and Inclusion Meet

Monday, May 13, 2019 | 16.00 – 17.30hrs | Room3, CICG, Geneva

Background paper

- i. Introduction
- ii. Background / Concepts
- iii. Issues related to the topic
- iv. Questions/Challenges to be discussed
- v. Conclusions
- vi. References/Reading material

Introduction/Background

1. **South Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions to the impacts of natural hazards**, particularly climate-induced extremes. Monsoon rains in 2017 brought devastating floods to South Asia region, and the increased frequency of the occurrence of climate-induced hazards have been witnessed in the region over the last few years. In the recent publication by the World Bank: [Shock Waves \(2016\)](#), South Asia is seen as the most vulnerable to climate-induced consequences such as increases in poverty, agricultural prices, diseases and child mortality rate, alongside of Sub-Saharan Africa. The World Bank's DRM portfolio in South Asia increased nearly fourfold from FY12 to reach US\$ 2.1 billion by FY15¹, responding to evolving risk in the region². The Bank's support is not limited to structural mitigation measures, but also seeks to help governments invest in preparedness actions, improving institutional arrangements, establishment of safety net to mitigate the disaster impacts particularly on the poor and marginalized (e.g. [Disaster linked social protection in Nepal](#)).
2. **World Bank research shows that poor people are disproportionately affected by the impacts of hazard events. Not only because they are often more exposed and invariably more vulnerable to climate-related shocks but also because they have fewer resources and receive less support from family, community, the financial system, and even social safety nets to prevent, cope, and adapt³** (World Bank, 2016). While governments strive for preventive actions, natural hazard events cannot be prevented, and poor and marginalized communities are invariably more vulnerable to their impacts⁴. The marginalized communities have various dimensions: economic status, gender,

¹ [Progress Report on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management in World Bank Group Operations. Development Committee](#) (Joint Ministerial Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries), 2016

² "The number of disasters per year (in South Asia) has quadrupled over the past four decades. Resulting damages have accumulated to over US\$25 billion in the past five years alone", [Disaster Risk Management in South Asia: A Regional Overview, World Bank, 2012](#)

³ [Unbreakable, World Bank, 2016](#)

⁴ "Poor people are disproportionately affected—not only because they are often more exposed and invariably more vulnerable to climate-related shocks but also because they have fewer resources and receive less support from family, community, the financial system, and even social safety nets to prevent, cope, and adapt.", [Shock Waves, World Bank, 2016](#)

disabilities, origin of birth, cultural background such as caste in South Asia. For instance, a case from Orissa, India⁵, showed the complex interplay of caste, class, and gender in surviving disasters, particularly where recurrent disasters hit.

3. **Social exclusion remains a significant challenge for development in South Asia, and natural hazards can affect marginalized groups more severely. And this makes South Asia's economic growth and wide development agenda fall behind.** As data and studies over decades shows⁶, resilience is not the only area, and social exclusion remains as a major barrier to achieve growth that provide prosperity for all. Climate-related shocks and stresses is already a major obstacle to poverty reduction⁷, and natural hazards would impact the socially excluded groups more severely, with the evolving phenomena of climate change. This trend can be significant during post-disaster recovery and reconstruction period,⁸ and may even hamper the region's ability to continue marking the record of the world's fastest-growing region⁹.

Concepts

4. **A key step to addressing the aforementioned challenges is to understand effective approaches in the region and initiate actionable interventions through the DRM portfolio managed by the Governments as well as development partners.** This session will share the World Bank South Asia team's pioneering approaches that aim to identify entry points for inclusive actions under the ongoing and planned investments on disaster resilience. This initiative has been piloted in close coordination with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)'s Inclusive Community Resilience (ICR) Program, capitalizing on the learning and guidance already developed by ICR and operationalizing key initiatives, including the Gender Action Plan (endorsed by the GFDRR Consultative Group in 2016),¹⁰ citizen engagement action plan, and disability-inclusion action plan.

Issues related to the topic

5. **Some of the issues that the session will address include the following, considering social challenges specific to SAR region:**

a. Gender:

Disaster loss data shows that the casualty figures among women typically outnumber men, often due to cultural norms and behavioral patterns that affect women's mobility and roles (e.g. caring for children, elders or sick household members, and rescuing them during disaster

⁵ [The influence of caste, class and gender in surviving multiple disasters: A case study from Orissa, India, RAY-BENNETT, 2009](#)

⁶ [Fiscal Year 2016 Review 2016, the World Bank; Existing approaches to promote social integration/social inclusion and lessons learned, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(DESA\), 2008 ; Social Exclusion and South Asia, International Institute for Labour Studies Geneva](#)

⁷ "Climate-related shocks and stresses, already a major obstacle to poverty reduction, will worsen with climate change", [Shock Waves, World Bank, 2016](#)

⁸ Arnold M., Burton C., Protecting and Empowering Vulnerable Groups in Disaster Recovery

⁹ [Fiscal Year 2016 Review 2016, the World Bank](#)

¹⁰ [Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction, and Inclusive Growth: Gender Strategy 2016-2023, World Bank Group, 2016](#)

events)¹¹. In Bangladesh, when Cyclone Gorky hit in 1991, women outnumbered men by 14:1 among those dying as a result of cyclone-induced flooding. In Indonesia, where the devastating tsunami hit in 2004, three to four times more female lost their lives than male¹². On the other hand, a study showed a delayed increase of male suicide cases in Miyagi Prefecture, after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (GEJE)¹³. Therefore, disaster impacts on gender requires further analysis, and risk mitigation actions need to address the different needs of the different genders.

Numerous global studies also show an increase in sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) following disaster events¹⁴. Some of these also show that disaster-induced displacement can increase the incidence of GBV, both in initial temporary shelters and during the phase of prolonged displacement. Increases in human trafficking in the aftermath of disasters in the past indicates the greater vulnerability of women and children specifically¹⁵. The economic shock triggered by disasters can also lead to transactional sex as a negative coping mechanism for the lower income status groups. This kind of violence could further affect victims from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities¹⁶; however, facts, data and analyses around this particular group can barely be found. A rare existing sample is “Rainbow Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Guide”¹⁷, developed in Japan after the GEJE.

Research has identified women’s empowerment, both economically and socially, as an important approach to building broader community resilience. GFDRR’s ICR program shows cases where grassroots women have led the change leads to strengthened community resilience¹⁸. In India, rural women are becoming change-makers through risk mapping and risk communication to improve the community resilience¹⁹. In Guatemala, community hazard mapping is empowering indigenous group of women who are trained to use GPS and other relevant technologies, and now working in partnerships with their local and national governments to map and monitor risk.²⁰

¹¹ [Gender Action Plan 2016-2021, GFDRR, 2016](#)

¹² [The tsunami’s impact on women, Oxfam, 2005](#)

¹³ [Delayed increase in male suicide rates in tsunami disaster-stricken areas following the great east japan earthquake: a three-year follow-up study in Miyagi Prefecture, Orui and others, 2015](#)

¹⁴ [Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters Global study, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, 2015](#)

¹⁵ [Natural Disasters and Human Trafficking, Human Trafficking Indicators, 2013](#)

¹⁶ [The Impact of Earthquake, and Relief and Recovery Programs on Haitian LGBT People, International Gay AND Lesbian Human Rights Commission](#)

¹⁷ [Rainbow Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Guide, Iwate Rainbow Network, 2016](#)

¹⁸ [Community-led Partnership for Resilience, GFDRR, 2015](#)

¹⁹ [Women Groups as change makers: Grassroots approach for Community Risk Mapping, presentation at the session organized by the DRM Hub Tokyo at the Understanding Risk in Venice, Italy, 2016](#)

²⁰ [Empowering Indigenous Women Groups through Community Hazard Mapping, presentation at the session organized by the DRM Hub Tokyo at the Understanding Risk in Venice, Italy, 2016](#)

b. Disability:

The needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities (PwD) are not often addressed in DRM policies and practices. Persons with disabilities include people with a wide range of disabilities, including physical disabilities, vision impairments, hearing and speech disabilities, cognitive disabilities, and psychosocial disabilities. In the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (2011), the mortality rate of people with disability was 2.06%, compared to 1.03% for the total population.²¹ An assessment done after the 2015 Nepal earthquake discovered substantial challenges faced by PwD compared to other marginalized group²². Barriers that should be pro-actively addressed through active consultation with persons with disabilities. In this regard, DRM activities include: physical; information and communication; legislative/regulatory; policy; and attitudinal barriers. The experience of barriers and social marginalization is also dynamic and affected by the intersection of disability with other identities, including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, indigeneity, caste, etc.

While some good practice exists, much more remains to be done to ensure that persons with disabilities are empowered to be active participants in all phases of DRM, and that proactive measures are taken to: incorporate disability into disaster risk analyses; facilitate the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities at all levels of disaster risk governance; build the resilience of persons with disabilities; and recover and rebuild in a way that is fully inclusive of persons with disabilities.²³

c. Aging:

Existing data confirms higher mortality rates of elderly than that of other adults as result of disasters. In Hurricane Katrina in the U.S. (2005), 75% of those who lost lives were over 60, while it accounted just 15% of the population in New Orleans. In the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (2011), 56% of those who died were 65 and over, even whilst they comprised just 23% of the population.²⁴ The affected includes those who were trapped at collapsed homes, and those who suffered from chronic illness and lost access to medications and necessary equipment during and post disaster events.

Many initiatives encourage communities to recognize the experience and knowledge that elders possess on DRM²⁵. The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) states “Older persons have years of knowledge, skills and wisdom, which are invaluable assets to reduce disaster risk, and they should be included in the design of policies, plans and mechanisms, including for early warning”. Ibasho Café in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture, is an example that

²¹ [The Great East Japan Earthquake and Disabled Persons - Background to Their High Mortality Rate - , Katsunori Fujii, 2012](#)

²² [Disaster, Disability, & Difference: A Study of the Challenges Faced by Persons with Disabilities in Post-Earthquake Nepal, UNDP, 2016](#)

²³ [Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Management: Promising practices and opportunities for enhanced engagement, GFDRR, 2017.](#)

²⁴ [Fighting ageism in disasters, UNISDR, 2016](#)

²⁵ [DISASTER PREPAREDNESS For Seniors By Seniors, American Red Cross](#)

strengthens community resilience by empowering elders to become active participants in the recovery process while at the same time challenging negative perceptions of aging²⁶. An ICR project is replicating the Ibasho approach in Nepal and the Philippines.

DRM policy making in South Asia is making progress. However, it requires deepening of efforts over different DRM cycles, implementation follow-ups, and coordination with other policies including aging policy. In India, the [National Disaster Management Plan](#) recognizes special attentions to elderly in the post-disaster situation. In Bangladesh, [National Plan for Disaster Management 2010-2015](#) pays good attention to the inclusion of elderly and other marginalized communities per strategic DRM goals, while in the [Bangladesh Population Policy 2012](#), the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, defines the role of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. Pakistan's [National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy](#) highlights the special attention to improve resilience of vulnerable group including elderly. In Sri Lanka, [National Policy on Disaster Management](#) acknowledges the importance of paying special attention to senior citizens under the section of "Equality, diversity and inclusion", and National Disaster Management Plan 2013-2017 defines the role of Disaster Management Center to promote inclusive resilience targeting elderly and other marginalized communities.

d. Culturally marginalized population (due to caste, religion and ethnicity):

Social exclusion linked to caste, religion and ethnicity are deeply rooted in many aspects of life in South Asia, and disasters can exacerbate these inequities. Research²⁷ shows unequal or denied access for lower caste people to clean water, shelter, health services and education, including in disaster related events. It also highlights the challenges in obtaining compensation or official assistance due to lack of official titles for land and properties²⁸.

One of many examples reported is that, in Sri Lanka after the Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004), displaced communities were refused food distribution in a camp due to 'low caste' status, and international humanitarian agencies' unequal assistance on livelihood recovery widened the gap and created tensions among different social groups. Another research indicates that the unequal distribution of post-tsunami assistance between Sinhalese and Tamil contributed to the increased tension between the tsunami-affected and the conflict-induced IDPs in Sri Lanka²⁹.

Questions/Challenges to be discussed

- 6. The speakers at the session will present project-specific social inclusion action plans developed for different DRM topics considering various user needs captured through consultation with different socially marginalized groups.** The speakers will also discuss the way forward to

²⁶ [Elders leading the way to resilience, GFDRR, 2015](#)

²⁷ [Equality in aid: Addressing Caste Discrimination in Humanitarian Response, International Dalit Solidarity Network, 2013](#)

²⁸ [ditto](#)

²⁹ [Natural disasters, Conflict, and Human Rights: Tracing the Connections, The Brookings Institution, 2010](#)

implement the actions and identify possible partners in countries and the region for collaboration. The discussion will be supplemented by lessons learnt from global and regional experience that provides additional perspective.

7. Speakers will address the following questions in their presentations based on each country's experience:
 - What is the level of understanding among DRM practitioners on social exclusion issues in their respective contexts/countries?
 - What additional resources and support is required beyond the high level strategic documents for DRM practitioners to contextualize social exclusion issues into their project contexts?
 - What type/level of overarching guidance would DRM practitioners require to devise or advance relevant social inclusion activities in their projects?
 - Which DRM-related thematic areas (e.g., Early Warning, Community-based Disaster Risk Management, risk mitigation infrastructure) could be effective entry points, and why?
 - How can DRM practitioners work with social specialists to identify possible entry points for addressing social inclusion in their projects?
 - What are the resources available to DRM practitioners interested in incorporating social inclusion factors in typical DRM investments such as resilient infrastructure, hydromet, institutional capacity building, and post-disaster reconstruction.
 - Who are the likely partners or stakeholders that can assist in closing the gaps between DRM and inclusion? What are the necessary steps required to translate action plans into implementation?
 - Are there lessons to be learned from other contexts or settings? Are there opportunities for replicating these approaches to other region or countries?

8. The list of the speakers and moderators is provided as follows:
 - Mr. Sushil Gyawali, CEO, National Reconstruction Authority, Nepal
 - Dr. Mazhar Aziz, Department of Agriculture, Bangladesh
 - Mr. Syed Salman Shah, Director General of Provincial Disaster Management Authority Sindh, Pakistan
 - Mr. Chaminda Pathiraja, Director of Ministry of Public Administration and Disaster Management (Head of national Disaster Relief Services Center), Sri Lanka
 - TBC, India
 - Ms. Sasja Kamil, Coordinator Partners for Resilience, Cordaid International

 - Opening remarks: Christoph Pusch (Practice Manager, South Asia Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Unit, World Bank)
 - Moderators: Keiko Sakoda (Disaster Risk Management Specialist, World Bank); and Bandita Sijapati (Senior Social Development Specialist, World Bank)

Conclusions

9. The anticipated conclusions as follows:
 - Oftentimes, DRM projects are designed based on technical solutions, supported by scientific analysis but with limited interaction with social experts except for safeguard compliance.
 - DRM specialists generally have limited familiarity with the vectors of social exclusion and the possible approaches to addressing them in the project context.

- Project scope and context vary from project to project, and there is no readily available guidance for the DRM practitioners. This makes it challenging to address inclusion factors through DRM-specific interventions.
- Development of project-specific social inclusion action plans for DRM projects, the piloted approach by the World Bank South Asia team, was found useful by the DRM practitioners.
- At the same time, this pilot exercise identified the needs of integrated capacity building for DRM practitioners as well as Social Development practitioners to familiarize themselves with (i) areas of social inclusion for DRM practitioners and (ii) DRM solutions for Social Development practitioners. This would help two groups of experts work together at early stage of project design and ensure socially inclusive DRM project design.
- In terms of the implementation of the action plans, the Government stakeholder (mainly DRM agencies) need to identify appropriate partners, however, they usually do not have access to networks with organizations active in social inclusion area. It is critical to have institutional coordination between government stakeholders in charge of DRM and social development, as well as private organizations active in specific social exclusion-related topics (e.g. association of disability people, ethnic minority alliance etc).

References and Reading Materials

- Inclusion Matters – The Foundation for Shared Prosperity, The World Bank, 2013 (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/244362-1265299949041/6766328-1329943729735/8460924-1381272444276/InclusionMatters_AdvanceEdition.pdf)
- Gender Action Plan 2016-2021, GFDRR, 2016 (<https://www.gfdr.org/sites/default/files/gfdr-gender-action-plan.pdf>)
- Disaster, Disability, & Difference: A Study of the Challenges Faced by Persons with Disabilities in Post-Earthquake Nepal, UNDP, 2016 (http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/2016/Disaster-Disability-and-Difference_May2016_For-Accessible-PDF.pdf)
- Elders leading the way to resilience, GFDRR, 2015 (<https://www.gfdr.org/sites/gfdr/files/publication/Elders-Leading-the-Way-to-Resilience.pdf>)
- Equality in aid: Addressing Caste Discrimination in Humanitarian Response, International Dalit Solidarity Network, 2013 (http://idsn.org/wp-content/uploads/user_folder/pdf/New_files/Key_Issues/Disaster_response/EqualityInAid_web_version.pdf)