



KOBE REPORT draft
Report of Session 3.4, Thematic Cluster 3

Creating a culture of prevention: gender balanced public awareness initiatives

1. Summary of the sessions

Cheryl Anderson from the Climate, and Environment Program Director Social Science Research Institute University of Hawaii shared the experience related to Building on the Gender and Disaster Network---a virtual space for sharing best practices and resources in gender disaster risk management---and the ideas that emerged from the Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop in August 2004 in Honolulu Hawaii, an international team has been formed to collect best practices and develop the *Gender and Disaster Sourcebook*. need to document and widely distribute best practices in a format readily available to community organizations, government agencies, and the media. With funding provided by the Public Entity Risk Institute and the Pacific Disaster Center, the Sourcebook team expects to distribute the first edition online through the Gender and Disaster Network website IN December 2005.

Madhavi Ariyabandu, Programme Team Leader- Reducing Vulnerability ITDG South Asia refers to the active engagement of all stakeholders is an essential factor for reaching effective disaster reduction. The public is a key stakeholder in disaster reduction. Hitherto, the image of public has been that of recipients and victims, while the disaster management responsibilities were identified with the governments and charities. Paradigm shift from 'emergency management' to 'disaster risk management' essentially demands the engagement of the public in the entire process. A change in the role of media is a crucial factor, given that media often sensationalise disaster events instead of highlighting the processes and issues leading to them, and depict women as helpless victims ignoring their capacities deployed throughout the disaster management process.

Ramiro Batzin. Indigenous Council of Central America shared the cosmovision of the Mayan communities related to disaster risk reduction and the development of the "Great Snake" Mayan version of the Riskland Game. As part of his presentation he made reference to importance on promoting a balance between the nature, the human behavior and the implementation of models of development in native and traditional communities that are not in line with the cultural heritage and wisdom of communities. in many occasions rather than build alternative solutions, become models of exploitation in the indigenous communities and also the environment.

"In the region (making reference to Central America and more particularly Guatemala) there is an increase identity crisis that take us apart from of consensual solutions within the different actors involved on the matter of natural disasters". The experience of developing riskland game in indigenous communities, where 15 schools participate in the process, community leaders and elderly wisdom in the creation of a game board to educate and increase the knowledge of children on vulnerabilities and disaster risk reduction was highly well accepted and great part of that was possible because the three basic elements of Mayan relationship: Respect, consensus and participation. As importantly was the adaptation of a great tool to a Mayan culture and language.

Ana María Bejar from Save the Children shared the experience in one of region of Cuba where different education, informational and learning process were developed to increase the knowledge and practices on disaster risk reduction matters.

Gender equity is important as it involves the understanding of social circumstances that may require different ways in working with communities and specific groups in preventing disasters. Gender awareness is also extremely important trying to understand and try to help alleviate and prevent problems in many regions in the world where women are still very much discriminated in areas such as education, health and so on.

Community motivated to adopt best practice in relation to risks of flooding, earthquakes and forest fires through an educational campaign designed, implemented and evaluated by boys, girls and young people, based on a former KAP study with gender perspective.

New knowledge can be incorporated with fun ways of learning, and using different vehicles of conveying that new knowledge, then is it much easier for people of all ages to really feel that new knowledge is of use, that it will help them to create a community that is more prepared in dealing with hazards. As per example, Cuba has incorporated into their educational system the use of computers as part of the curriculum and as a result, Save the Children UK developed jointly with the authorities an innovative version of the risk land game in electronic version was introduced where students can play and learn by using an interactive CD ROM.

Xavier Castellanos from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies refer to the role of media before a disaster strikes. His first statement was that Media contributes to save lives and to do that, it requires better understanding of their social role to mitigate the impact of any type of disaster. Mass media capacities to mobilize people: financially, physically, socially, and emotionally is well known, what is required from the media is to be more proactive on this matter to avoid human suffering, but also, from disaster related agencies, to also be proactive to advocate issues when people are at risk. The question then is how to make risk reduction an important issue into the mass media agenda. Sadly many risk reduction issues do not have the qualifications of been: a. Spectacular, b. Unexpected, c. Extraordinary

Millions of people are in serious danger of a particular hazard, thousand of people die everyday of AIDS, or are dying for starvation which are no longer frontline of the news. At some point in time, it seems that it was decided that human suffering requires too be spectacular, unexpected, extraordinary to grasp the attention of local, national authorities, mass media, and civil society.

In Central America, the Red Cross promoted a University program on Disaster Information Management addressed to teachers of the faculty of Communication. As a result of it, three universities participated and the year after, a number of selected teachers and Red Cross Members organized a similar training addressed to journalist. In other words, it is also the role of organizations such as the Red Cross to promote initiatives that enroll not only the education sector but also the media as key actors to contribute on disaster risk reduction to build opinion building when a potential risk increase or is identify. In conclusion, media's role is disaster reduction is significant bigger when the knowledge and understanding of the matter, the willingness for networking and the participation of the most vulnerable one's is in place for the single purpose: Save lives!

Pedro Ferradas, *Gerente del Programa de Prevención de Desastres y Gobernabilidad Local ITDG* mentioned that in Peru, the institutional agreement (between IDFG, Save the Children, MPDL, OIKOS, LWR and Oxfam America) has facilitated the development of risk management experiences at communities traditionally excluded from official policies. The systematization of such experiences has resulted in methodological and technological proposals that haven been disseminated through publications and seminars and partially incorporated by governmental institutions.

Focus has been placed on information rights, on the importance that authorities take into account these communities and on the participation of these same communities in the process of risk management. The creation of emergent networks has been possible through the participation of teachers, students and parents in school protection practices and in the process of reducing vulnerability in their environment; the incorporation of risk prevention strategies in the municipal plans; the participation of organized groups of women and young people into activities for reducing risk in their communities.

Historical knowledge and heritage constitutes an important and useful information to better understand the process of risk building and the knowledge and experiences on mitigation and response to disasters. The oral history becomes the core tool to transmit knowledge, wisdom and information from one generation to another. This basic and simple tool needs to be potentialized.

Armine Mikayelyan, President of Women for Development, Armenia. Dissemination Branch,NDNSS,Armenia mentioned that the socio-economic problems typical of a transition period for the former Soviet Union countries were aggravated in Armenia as a result of the 1988 earthquake and the Karabagh conflict. The consequences of the reforms and disaster hit became the hardest for the women.

This combination allowed to obtain great experience in disaster mitigation during 15 years after the disastrous earthquake and provided all this knowledge through a gender prism.

1. School education. 600 teachers and 11,000 pupils of primary and middle classes from 56 schools in Gyumri and Shirak region on seismic protection skills. And 20.000 parents and relatives were indirectly involved in the project

2. Seismic risk management of government structure. In two “Methods of compiling plans for operative and effective actions of municipal services in the case of destructive earthquake”
3. Mass Media. Through Mass Media the wide society gained a new positive type of woman, who is not only silently carrying the heavy results of the disaster, but is also ready to provide her knowledge and ability for disasters mitigation.
4. Direct talks/trainings All our experience and recommendations in the sphere of earthquake mitigation from a gender perspective will be an opportunity to build the resilience of nation and communities to disasters, in support of sustainable development.

E R Hay From South Africa focus on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in her presentation she concentrated on Governance – Human Rights and DRR. Why adopt a gender specific approach?, Resilience, Way Forward.

It was mentioned about the importance and the need to ensure that all Mellenium Development Goals require DRR legislation on Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, Recovery, Rehabilitation, Early warning. It has also mentioned that it is necessary to Mainstream gender at national level to be able to achieve the MDG.

By promoting and adopting gender specific approach the participation of the women, their voice and action, access to decisions, access to law, empowerment, economic security, education and training, food security, secure land tenure, it will be possible to reduce the vulnerabilities of this communities and will increase their resilience and will reduce the results in economic and physical insecurity and loss of self esteem.

“African Women in general need to know that it is OK for them to be the way they are ... to see the way they are as a strength, and to be liberated from fear and from silence.”
Maathai, 2004

Therefore it is important to integrate gender and DRR into Primary and High School curriculum
Response, Recovery and Rehabilitation: initiate gender mainstreaming at this time
Ensure governance in place to integrate gender into all Phases of Disaster Risk Reduction & supporting legislation

Ricardo Perez from Paho share thee ISDR/PAHO experience with the Radio Soap opera, as he referred the use of radio as one of the tools to reach rural communities which normally do not have access to other information sources as television and newspapers has shown to be of extremely value to send across the message on disaster risk reduction.

Aware of the importance of radio and also of the need to reach those communities with high level of vulnerability, ISDR, PAHO, UNDP, IOM and CEPREDENAC (Coordination Centre for the prevention of Disasters in Central America) promoted the development of the Radio Soap opera is a series of really very interesting and attractive episodes of radio pieces that relate to mostly everyday situations that most people can relate to, and that focus on using those every experiences as ways of learning new things about possible) hazards, of ways of learning to cope with risks, or to work together in identifying future solutions.

As a result f this experience the audio material has helped to complement the educational training on disaster reduction and by using an innovative way on learning the results have being extremely valuable by communities and different organizations.

2. Primary issues

- It is important to implement gender awareness training with stakeholders at any time incorporating participatory and game techniques and Decision making of the programme should be gender balanced. Include gender issues and social equity in assessment, design and implementation and monitoring as a compulsory element for all development projects;
- Recognize the community based education on disaster risk reduction as social practice that allows the respect of the rights as citizens within a framework of values, where local knowledge and wisdom are integral part of the educative process. The State and Civil Society should

considered into their training materials the multicultural, social and ethnical conditions of the target groups and also their participation on the construction of those materials.

- Institutions that work on the risk management subject should give priority to appropriate and timely generation of information in order to facilitate the job of communication media, with a proactive attitude.
- Ensure governance in place to integrate gender into all Phases of Disaster Risk Reduction & supporting legislation and also, to have an accessible resource for government, NGOs, communities, practitioners, activists, journalists, funders, researchers, and planners on gender & disaster risk reduction.
- The use practical, simple and innovative ways of educate and communicate, such audio soap opera, risk land game boards, drawing context help to increase the awareness on risk reduction measures related to existing vulnerabilities.

3. Suggested targets and indicators to measure accomplishments

By 2005, the Millenium Development Goals have included Disaster Risk Reduction measures into the indicators and in 2015 countries will have an specific legislation on it.

By 2015, countries have educational programs and projects with risk reduction approach, according to the realities, needs and cultural traditions.

By 2007, 100% of the projects will include gender different practices regarding to disaster risk reduction and with an experience of an educational campaigns to face particular hazards.

By 2015 countries of the region will count for a public policy, information and communication plans, resources and indicators that measure the impact of risk management communication actions, taking into consideration cultural diversity, genre, age and educative level.

By 2015 international cooperation, governments and civil society will have had negotiated and allocated necessary resources for the implementation of risk management, education, awareness campaigns, information and communication processes.

4. Name, affiliation and contacts of presenters and titles of presentations

Cheryl Anderson. Gender and Disaster network

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Theme: Gender and Disasters resource book; best practices in a format readily available to community organizations, government agencies, and the media.

Madhavi Ariyabandu. Sri Lanka.

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Theme: Experiences from South Asia related to gender aspects in community education, awareness, media. Examples of initiatives and good practices on approaching media,

government institutions and other development entities for achieving gender sensitive disaster reduction engaging the communities.

Ramiro Batzin. Indigenous Council of Central America.

Theme: Presentation of The Mayan Cosmvision and its relation with disaster reduction by using the Feathered Snake – Mayan version of the Riskland Game.

Ana Maria Bejar. Save the children UK.

Theme: Project experiences and best practices in Cuba.

Xavier Castellaños. IFRC.

Theme: Media's role in getting the message out and raising awareness on disaster reduction, before disaster strikes.

Pedro Ferradas: ITDG.

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de Desastres y Gobernabilidad Local
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Theme: Innovative experiences of community education on risk reduction from Peru. Reducing risk in communities; the development of campaigns in local radio stations with different actors, especially school teachers and professors.

Armine Mikayelyan.

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Theme: Experiences and recommendations in the sphere of earthquake mitigation from a gender perspective, in Armenia.

Ricardo Pérez. PAHO/ISDR.

Theme: Radio soap opera as a gender balanced tool in raising awareness on disaster risk reduction at the community level.

5. Name, affiliation and contact of person filling in the form

Xavier Castellanos.

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