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# Gender Aspects of Natural Catastrophes/Disasters[1]

**Abstract**

During recent decades, international humanitarian organizations and the governments of countries affected by natural catastrophes/disasters and climate change have highlighted the fact that more women lose their lives and suffer other effects of such events than men. This disparity in victim numbers is a phenomenon that is caused by – and inherently linked with – the unequal socioeconomic status of women. In alleviating disaster risks, women and men are limited to the roles and responsibilities they are afforded at home and in society. Gender roles constructed in an exclusive manner result in different personal and group identities and potentials, social responsibilities, behaviours and expectations. Thus, gender-based differentiation leads to gender inequality in all socio-economic processes, including different roles and opportunities: reductions in vulnerability and disaster risks, improved disaster management, anticipation of possible damages, and recovery from these. Due to all these differences, it is clear that women and men must participate equally in determining ways to reduce the risks of a disaster at the community level (national, regional and international) without discrimination and exclusion. The inclusion of gender experts (and aspects) in the development of gender-sensitive policies and program guidelines should be ensured. This creates a valid prerequisite for gender equality while reducing the risk of catastrophes/disasters and climate change and making community-based adaptation more effective. It is necessary to integrate gender sensitive aspects/criteria into the initiatives and processes of planning, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating risk reduction programs and projects. In order to adapt to climate change and mitigate the consequences

stemming from this, but also to reduce the risk of catastrophes/disasters, parameters must be established pertaining to the needs and interests of women. These needs are a prerequisite for supporting women's independent initiatives and for the financing of environmentally-friendly technologies for the sustainable use of natural resources.

*Keywords:* natural catastrophes/disasters, climate change, gender roles, gender responsibility, prevention, recovery, building resistance.

## Introduction

▬▬ Natural catastrophes and disasters stem from geological, meteorological, biological and technological sources. However, their results and effects also heavily call on the competences and skills of the social sciences. In developing a social perspective on catastrophes/disasters, the main factor to take into consideration is that catastrophes/disasters have significant effects upon human communities (Öcal, 2018: 51-61).

Catastrophes and disasters are frequent phenomena in certain parts of the world, ranging from devastating floods to cyclones, tornadoes, storms/tidal surges, river bank erosion, drought, salinity intrusion and expansion, arsenic contamination in ground water, and many more. There is also risk of earthquakes, as well as human induced catastrophes and disasters, and hazards such as infrastructural collapse and many more. Catastrophes/disasters, whether they be natural in origin or induced by human action, interrupt the process of social and economic development of a country. Many factors contribute to catastrophes and disasters, including geographical and topographical features; confluences of the major rivers; high monsoon rainfall; climate change; low mean sea level; rise of sea level; siltation of rivers; flood control measures; deforestation; earthquakes; use of chemical fertilizers; excessive consumption of ground water; over fishing shrimp cultivation and unplanned urbanization and industrialization (AMCDRR, 2014: 11).[2]

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[2]  Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Since it is not possible to escape catastrophes/disasters, it is necessary to learn to live with them and to manage their effects to as great an extent as possible. There are lots of types of hazards in the world, and around 15 of them can affect Serbia. There are approximately 15 different types of hazards in the world – which may also affect Serbia – including fires, earthquakes, chemical and radioactive hazards, epidemics and terrorism, while one of the most common occurrences is flooding. Primarily for this reason, from September 2019 a new warning system for earthquakes, floods, heavy rainfall and many other dangers will become active in the Serbian capital, Belgrade. This new system will be modelled on those of the world's major cities, such as Rome and Moscow. The Mayor of Belgrade stressed that natural catastrophes/disasters, which are becoming increasingly common in Serbia due to climate change, cannot be predicted, but preventative measures can be developed and improved. These preventative measures will significantly mitigate the effects of natural catastrophes/disasters (RTS, 2019).[3]

While the origins an onset of catastrophes/disasters are generally described by science, they need to also be addressed by the social sciences in terms of their consequences, social impacts and processes of social recovery and resilience building. Catastrophes/disasters have sociological, psychological, economic, legal, gender, and other aspects. There are e.g. necessity for various types of care, that needs to be handled by the related social sciences. It is impossible for any disaster management plan to be realistic without considering the social consequences of catastrophes/disasters. The approach of current social research on catastrophes/disasters should by all means be made from a primarily gender-sensitive perspective.

"Catastrophes and disasters impact different groups of people in different ways, based on their unique socio-economic and environmental contexts. Without giving voice and agency to vulnerable groups particularly hit by all catastrophes and disasters, it is difficult to determine specific impacts of hazards on such groups. The speechlessness of these groups hinders planning for disaster risk reduction's ability to address their specific vulnerabilities. Therefore, assessing and

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[3] The new system will be completed soon, and will significantly prevent and reduce the effects of natural disasters. Sirens are to be erected at 316 locations in the city, initially in suburban municipalities.

addressing vulnerability to hazards should be contextualised to local conditions using participatory and inclusive approaches that will facilitate vocalization by local communities of their challenges, priorities and needs, while also enhancing their agencies to act to address these challenges" (Pincha, 2019).

## Gendered Impact of Catastrophes

It is a well-known fact that catastrophes/disasters in our world have increased quantitatively, and their effects have influenced wider masses, more and more women, too. For example, during a major 2014 flood event, women were found to be particularly affected but they were weakly represented in the flood-planning response and overall decision-making processes (Cvetković, 2018: 2).

In the context of gender inequalities, women now have limited impact and control, regardless of the fact that they possess the skills and capacities for responding to crisis and recovery (Mršević & Janković, 2019: 66). Experiences of recent infamous catastrophes/disasters that caused significant human and material losses shows that women are more vulnerable to and more likely to become victims of natural catastrophes/disasters than men. Women also have to bear the main workload of rehabilitation, especially within the household and family. It is presumed that this is related to socio-cultural and socio-economic factors. Socio-cultural factors include pre-existing traditional ethical and behavioural standards that define the role and status of women in society and in the family. According to these standards, a woman should take care of the house and be responsible for serving all members of the family, especially men and seniors.

"The gender evidence base recommends that women (and men) should not be considered a homogenous group when assessing the impacts of development activities, as factors such as age, sex, race, and ethnicity intersect to influence a person's vulnerability, which in turn influences the overall benefits of activities. Nor should all women as a whole, automatically and necessarily be considered more vulnerable than men. Full characterization of costs and benefits requires an understanding of vulnerability in a given population, and characterization of structural barriers. Gender-blind approach to risk reduction

management can further promote gender inequalities, while potentially providing economic benefits to service-providers, funders, banks, etc., so it is necessary to question the perspective from which benefits are assessed." (Shreve, 2016: 4).

Risk of catastrophes and disasters as a separate factor, together with other social and economic factors (unemployment, social insecurity, labour migration, gender and racial inequality), has led to a decline in living conditions of the majority of the population. This decline impacts mainly women, as they have limited material, physical, mental and moral recourses to change the existing situation. In recent decades, the risk of catastrophes, together with other social-economic factors (unemployment, social vulnerability, gender and racial inequality, seasonal migration of men outside of their district, region, or even country) has brought a deterioration of living conditions to the main population of the regions, which mostly affect women. Due to gender traditions at family and community levels, women are often thought – by both themselves and others – to be unable to change the existing situation (Kasymova, 2008).

Fundamental principles and practical lessons from gender, disaster and development literature have been used to identify the primary areas for distributive concerns (i.e., heterogeneity and diversity, agency, formal and informal rights, displacement, and 'active' representation). Additionally, evidence on disaster impacts, disaster responses, and lessons identified for planning, which are useful in helping to prioritize women's empowerment concerns, are highlighted. "Women are reported to have better skills in organization of essential supplies and emergency amenities, saving important documents, and dealing with the financial matters of the household" (Cvetković, 2018: 15). This should be perceived not only as an advantage, but also perhaps as a proxy for a more embedded sense of prioritizing the security of the household, which gives women greater motivation for arranging household and family concerns. This includes emphasizing their role in emergency management messaging for preparing the family for a possible hazard situation. Men appeared to be more confident in managing an emergency situation, including the perception that they were better prepared to take action, including physical preparedness and response. Additionally, women had fewer opportunities to maintain a high level of social networking in the community, which may lead to

them being less informed. This might then underpin women expressing TV programs as the main channel of flood hazard information and education (Cvetković, 2018: 16).

Based on the current quantitative research, there is an increasing need for further gender-focused mixed methods research, in order to contextualize gender discrepancies in greater depth and at a local scale. Doing so can better target and tailor disaster management planning and preparedness, response, and recovery education campaigns. Such work could result, perhaps even quite significantly, in fewer victims of events such as floods, lessening economic losses, and reducing other consequences. Thus, actions to develop strategies to empower women, educate men, and promote the synergistic cooperation of both genders in effective preparation, while also perhaps, at the same time, overcoming gender stereotypes.

## Gendered Social Roles

Women are still in many places throughout the world, in Serbia too, controlled by family and community, which leads to their lower physical and professional/work mobility, which in turn limits their social mobility and capacities. Socio-economic factor influencing this include the following: because of the global economic crisis, the financial contribution of men to the family budget has decreased, which has burdened women with greater responsibility (Kasymova, 2008). Gender roles during and after natural catastrophes/disasters are identified based on the traditional status and social positions of women and men at family and community levels. As a rule, men are responsible for liquidating the source of the disaster and also reducing its destructive consequences on assets, property and people. Typically in Serbia, men were engaged in military service, during which they were trained to manage emergency situations, which helps in their engagement in overcoming catastrophes/disasters. Thus men are perhaps seen within a more generalized perception of being more proactive and ready when situations call for participation.

But gender is not a merely a variable that assesses the differences between men and women in the wake of catastrophes/disasters. It is also the manifested construct of living conditions, demographic

and economic attributes, behaviours and beliefs reflecting gender power relations in this context. Research shows that, before a disaster, many individuals of both genders usually perceive their own risk as sufficiently low, reflecting an 'it will not happen to me' set of beliefs. As a result, people do not feel the need to invest voluntarily in protective measures such as strengthening their house or buying insurance (Cvetković, 2018: 3). Women claimed that technological sources (television, press, and the Internet) and family informed them of possible risks, while their male counterparts reported being more reliant on colleagues, neighbours, friends and their professional networks for their information. This might be explained by the fact that women are typically confined to the house, for their work and child rearing, making them isolated from various sources of interpersonal communication apart from other family members. (Cvetković, 2018: 14). However, it may also be the case that women are just more realistic in evaluating personal and household preparedness. Women's many household, child-rearing, and related responsibilities may lead to a focus that allows them less time to consider the additional responsibility of being prepared for a possible natural hazard event. Women were largely responsible for preparing family members, and expressed a higher knowledge of stocking provisions and getting the household ready for a potential natural hazard event (Cvetković, 2018: 2). Being more practical and more oriented towards everyday's needs, much higher percentage of women are reported to having water storage and a higher proportion of food supplies then men (Cvetković, 2018: 10-11). Significantly more women also reported that they had secured copies of important personal, financial and insurance documents in a safe place.

After catastrophes/disasters, the survival of family members – including children and seniors – is seen to be the responsibility of the women. Women are also responsible for the integrity of the house and other property. They are responsible for the majority of household restoration works in the wake of a natural disaster. They participate in preparatory and construction work, serve all members of the family, and take care of the children, seniors, and ill members of the family. These responsibilities mostly keep women inside the house, isolating them from the outside world. All questions regarding the life of the community, including the lives of women exposed to the risk of natural catastrophes/disasters, are discussed at public meetings usually without

their participation (Kasymova, 2008). Gender roles within the household and community may have direct implications for the successful prevention, mitigation, and management of hazard situations.

One point of interest is the view of anthropologists of disaster who stress a need to challenge the assumed uniformity of disaster experiences in the same manner that feminist scholars argue for an intersectional analysis of vulnerabilities as shaped by racism and sexism. There appears to be a correlation between cultures where family marginalization and lower levels of involvement in community networks and less preferential treatment for women occur, and women being exposed to greater risk. Risks are likely to increase in magnitude and complexity when combined with other developmental challenges such as growing inequality and continuing environmental degradation. It is obvious that gender dynamics in the catastrophes/disaster context should be of interest to governmental, non-governmental and international organizations and projects, and not only at the policy level. When disaster risks are not effectively managed, their impact will continue to undermine efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable growth, and various types of social inequality will continue to grow. Addressing these risks will require investments that build resilience through initiatives that involve forming gender-equal partnerships within and with local communities as the cornerstone of solutions. These strategies serve to build more resilient communities and reduce the risks stemming from disasters. Policies addressing adaptation to climate change must also be aligned with the principles of good governance and gender equality, and communities should be perceived not merely as victims of climate change and catastrophes/disasters, but as actors and drivers of resilience (Huairou Commission, 2017: 4).

Once recognized, catastrophes/disasters and disaster preparedness can also be seen as opportunities to facilitate or provide openings for the empowerment of traditionally marginalized groups. Successful community-based management actions depend on public authorities' approaches to mainstreaming of the preparedness and recovery of women and men after disaster events, and how well gender-different realities are identified and dealt with. Thus, to assist public authorities in organizing gender-sensitive management plans, it is necessary to know how people prepare for and react to catastrophic events in different ways from a gender perspective. This should also be a priority

for researchers and emergency management practitioners, who need – through both research and practice – to contribute more to identifying gender differentiation in how women and men perceive, prepare for, experience, and react to natural catastrophes/disasters, also factoring in different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. For this, it is necessary to promote gender-sensitive preparedness by using networks that appeal to and advocate for women, including those that have a long history of assessing and addressing public health issues (e.g., women's social, educational and healthcare providers). Bearing in mind the typical risk situations in Serbia, it would be good to include flood hazard education in children's school curricula (e.g. education on gender empowerment and cooperation in the context of creating a current and future population that has resilience and risk management knowledge and skills) with the purpose of being prepared for and overcoming problems related to risk scenarios; not just flooding, but also other natural hazards.

**Recovery in the Make: Community Based Examples**

The protection of human rights and the promotion of gender equality must lie at the heart of reducing the risk of disasters and building a society's resilience to them (Čović, 2015: 8). The author of the paper does not give ready answers, but promotes a mindset of encouraging non-discriminatory, creative collaboration both of and within all social groups, including both genders in confronting catastrophes/disasters. One pathway for learning and integrating gender relationships in emergency management practices includes the promotion of success stories. For example, in Bangladesh, the introduction of improved gender-responsive disaster management is credited with a lower loss of female lives from Cyclone Sidr in 2007 when compared to catastrophes/disasters that occurred before implementation of this policy (Cvetković, 2018: 15).

Each year, the commemorations of the anniversary of the 2004 twin disaster (earthquake with tsunami) that devastated many communities in Southeast and South Asia is used to raise awareness of the necessity of improving the levels of local communities' resilience. The catastrophe challenged and overwhelmed the capacity of governments,

non-governmental responders and communities in affected countries. However, it also provided them with a great opportunity to serve the affected population, enhance their capacities, and learn many lessons to improve their organizations' abilities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster's damaging impact (AMCDRR, 2014: 7). The international community also reacted to the catastrophe by adopting firstly the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 -2015, and subsequently the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, both documents with clear inclusion of women and men in all acting and decision-making roles. The Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA) is the first plan to explain, describe and detail the work that is required from all different sectors and actors for reducing disaster losses with the goal of substantially reducing disaster losses by 2015 by building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. Gender aspects are present in all five of its outlined priorities for action, as well as the guiding principles and practical means for achieving disaster resilience that are proposed. The Sendai Framework is a 15-year voluntary non-binding agreement which recognizes that the state bears the primary role in reducing disaster risk, but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders. It aims for the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses to lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries as the expected outcomes. Under the Sendai priority, Improving disaster preparedness for effective immediate disaster response mandates the need to empower women and people with disabilities to conduct public affairs. The promotion of gender equality and universally available response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction stand out as its crucial elements.

In March 2011, Japan was hit by the devastating Tohoku earthquake of magnitude 9 according to the Richter Scale. In addition to the tremendous damage in the area affected by the earthquake, the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant also suffered damage. The waves of the Pacific Ocean left the communist of Fukushima in ruins. That afternoon, a massive tsunami was triggered along the Japanese coast, killing nearly 19,000 people. The earthquake itself did not cause much damage to the power plant, but the tsunami

which followed flooded fuel depots and diesel generators intended for electricity production in the event of an accident. While Japan worked to commemorate the eighth anniversary of the catastrophe, the community of Fukushima campaigned to highlight why many considered it the best surfing spot in Japan. Surfers from other parts of Japan began appearing at the events in solidarity. A surfers' tourism campaign began in summer 2019, as a way for the heavily affected community to not only overcome the catastrophe, but to provide an optimistic recovery. Thus Fukushima is a special place, which dealt with an earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster at the same time, demonstrating how people's equality and diversity might be utilized as vital to organizational success. The sea in Fukushima is a part of life for both genders, and will continue to be so (Portal Novilist.hr, 2019).

The gathering and publishing of survival testimonies of women in local communities in Southeast Asia hit by Typhoon Yolanda worked as an act of resistance to the chronic crises of everyday poverty and gender based inequality (Ocampo Go, 2016). These stories showed how the destruction of Super Typhoon Yolanda that devastated the Philippines and neighbouring countries increased the level of everyday violence and poverty, but also the inequality of power holders. While it is a fact that men hold dominate positions of governance in existing political structures in the Philippines as well as all across the world, the erasure of women from positions of leadership, the neglect of their roles in community and participatory development processes, the gendered violence acted on their bodies, and their heightened vulnerabilities during catastrophes/disasters, are not a natural process. Legal provisions remain weak, and continue to overlook the role of civil society organizations and community members themselves, particularly women in both disaster preparedness and broader development efforts in the country (Oxfam International, 2014: 19-21). There is also a persisting lack of prioritization of the realities and needs of the most vulnerable segments of society, including "the elderly, women and children, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, informal settler families, internally displaced peoples in conflict or insurgency areas, and communities that are in small islands or geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas" (Ocampo Go, 2016: 95).

**Gendered Disaster Risk Management**

A brief conclusion to this paper is that both women and men should be seen as valuable resources that are able to combine complementary strengths to maximize preparedness, response, and recovery. They both comprise so-called subjective factors of security who are responsible for achievement, preservation and development of security who are differentieted of the subjects of endangerment (Ivanović, 2018: 176-203). For this reason, greater promotion of gender-related dialogue that aims to leverage the respective strengths of women and men requires women to be increasingly empowered to take on leading roles in building disaster resilience, in the wider scope of security development. One response to this stems civil society organizations dealing with gender equality issues, which underline the necessity of understanding disaster risk, strengthening the disaster risk management system, investment in disaster risk reduction in order to strengthen resilience, improvement of readiness for effective response, and (re-)building a social gender relationship "better than it was" (Đukić and Petronijević, 2019: 7).

Resilience of a community, a country, a region and a continent starts from the so-called Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, which usually includes response, recovery and rehabilitation in the wake of a disaster. Current approaches to disaster management also include preparedness, prevention and mitigation phases. Key action points relating to planning, organizing, capacity building, systematizing communications are, along with others, neatly categorized under the phases of 'Before Disaster', 'During Disaster' and 'After Disaster'. The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks are put through systematic efforts to analyse and manage causal factors, including through reduced exposures to hazards, decreased vulnerability of people and property, intuitive management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events (Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010).

To expand on this, there should be comprehensive land use plans, hazard maps, local disaster risk reduction management (DRRM) plans, training programs, and warning systems in place. All these activities are currently predominantly led by men, with little formal participation of women, or with rare recognition of their existing roles in local DRRM systems. In the absence of the establishment of clear

connections between disaster preparedness and the chronic crises of poverty, development challenges and gender equality, these drop-down checklists with insufficient capital resources for implementation do little for disaster preparedness (Ocampo Go. 2016: 96).

The purposes of a DRRM plan might be to guide national government to allocate 5% of the local government budget to DRR, to help the community access funding from national government, to strengthen local government's technical capacity in disaster management, to identify infrastructure priorities and action plans in anticipation of severe hazard events, to train local actors of both sexes in preparing for catastrophes/disasters, and to promote safe, gender equal and resilient communities. Elements included in a disaster risk reduction plan are identification of hazards, vulnerabilities and risks to be managed, disaster risk reduction and management approaches/strategies, agency roles, responsibilities and lines of authority, coordination in pre-disaster and post-disaster phases, budgetary resources. Identification of measures should include steps and actions needed to address vulnerabilities and gaps; examples of this include expansion of social security coverage, improving access to loan and credit facilities, installation of early warning devices, implementation of standard operating procedures for evacuation of communities to safe areas, roll-out of information and education campaigns, fostering institutional arrangements, partnerships, linkages and networks. Actors involved in this include civic society organisations (particularly including women's organizations), academic and research institutions, neighbouring local government units, national and regional government agencies.

"The analysis of the findings from the field has highlighted the need to create an enabling environment for women's voices and agency to emerge and expand. Creation of such an enabling environment will mean instituting dialogues in which women can participate and speak without fear and inhibition and explore multiple strategies – at times facilitated – within the constraints (or expanses) of existing socio-cultural spaces. This will help them to place their priorities and choices, needs and interests, at the centre of project activities – i.e. have their voices heard – and affect outcomes of importance to themselves and their families – i.e. exercise their agencies" (Pincha, 2019).

Many authors agree whith this. "Women affected by catastrophes/disasters must be involved in preparedness decisions that affect

their lives. These women have a right to participate in the decisions that affect their lives: women have specific needs during catastrophes/disasters and including them in decisions is crucial in ensuring these needs are catered for. Women's participation in decision-making is enshrined in international human rights policies and frameworks. However, it is not enough to recruit only – or mainly – women leaders and assume they will address women's specific needs, as it is not certain they will have an understanding of the particular context. Women from local communities should be involved rather, because it is necessary to create and adhere to policies that advocate for the participation of disaster affected women in programme design" (Tanner, Markek and Komuhangi, 2018: 4).

While men appeared to be more confident in managing an emergency situation, including the perception that they were better prepared to take action, of which physical preparedness and response is a major component. Additionally, women had fewer opportunities to maintain a high level of social networking in the community, which may lead to them being less informed.

Based on the current research, there is an increasing need for more gender-focused mixed methods research to contextualize gender discrepancies in greater depth, and also with greater concentration at the local scale. Doing so can better target and tailor disaster management planning and preparedness, response, and recovery education campaigns. Such work could result, perhaps even quite significantly, in fewer victims of events such as floods, reduction of economic losses, and alleviation of other consequences. Thus, actions to develop strategies to empower women, educate men, and promote the working together of people of both genders synergistically to prepare effectively while also, perhaps, at the same time, overcoming gender stereotypes are necessary. The aim is to promote gender-sensitive preparedness by using networks that appeal to and advocate for women, including those that have a long history of assessing and addressing public health issues (e.g., women's social and healthcare providers). It is also necessary to use a range of communication channels for increasing hazard knowledge and preparedness, including gender-related scenarios or case studies that appeal to people and promote empowerment and working cooperatively together within households and communities.

The response to and prevention of catastrophes/disasters should not be diminished by existing inequalities at different levels.

Catastrophes/disasters, while causing immense damage, also have the capacity to reconcile self-interest and mutual interest. Bearing in mind the disagreement between the interests of individuals, social groups and nations on the one hand, and universal interest on the other, common efforts are necessary to confront catastrophes/disasters and to utilize this capacity. The confrontation of catastrophes/disasters should serve the common good, with the goal of making the world a safer and better place. Institutions and policies that will represent the general interest in the event of catastrophes/disasters should be recognized. When people of both sexes are involved in addressing catastrophes/disasters together, the pursuit of the common good and ways of achieving this develops.

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## RODNI ASPEKTI PRIRODNIH KATASTROFA/NEPOGODA

### Sažetak

Poslednjih decenija međunarodne humanitarne organizacije i vlasti zemalja pogođenih katastrofama/prirodnim nepogodama i klimatskim promenama, ukazuju na činjenicu da više žena u odnosu na muškarace gubi živote i trpi druge nepovoljne posledice takvih događaja. Ta disrprorcija viktimizacije je pojava uzrokovana i povezana sa nejednakim socio-ekonomskim statusom žena. U smanjenju rizika od katastrofa odnosi žena i muškaraca su uslovljeni ulogama i odgovornostima koje imaju i kod kuće i u društvu. Isključujuće rodno definisane uloge rezultiraju različitim ličnim i grupnim identitetima i potencijalima, društvenim odgovornostima, ponašanjima i očekivanjima. Rodno zasnovane razlike dovode do rodne neravnopravnosti u svim društveno-ekonomskim procesima, uključujući i različite uloge i mogućnosti: ranjivost i smanjenje rizika od katastrofa, upravljanja katastrofama, predviđanje moguće štete i oporavak nakon njih. Zbog svih tih razlika, jasno je da žene i muškarci, bez diskriminacije i isključivanja, moraju ravnopravno da učestvuju u odlučivanju i smanjivanju rizika od katastrofe na nivou zajednice (nacionale, regionalne i međunarodne). Mora se obezbediti uključivanje rodnih eksperata i aspekti u razvoju rodno senzitivne politike i programskih uputstava. Time se stvara validan preduslov rodne ravnopravnosti u toku smanjivanja rizika od katastrofa i klimatskih promena i vrši efikasnije prilagođavanje klimatskim promenama na nivou zajednice. Potrebno je da se integrišu rodno senzitivni aspekti/kriterijumi u inicijativu, planiranje, dizajniranje, implementaciju, nadzor i evaluaciju programa i projekata. Za prilagođavanje klimatskim promenama i ublažavanje njihovih posledica, ali i smanjivanje rizika od katastrofa/nepogoda, neophodni su parametri o potrebama i intresima žena. Te potrebe su nužan uslov za podršku ženskim nezavisnim inicijativama i radi finansiranja odgovarajućih i ekološki razumnih tehnologija u održivoj upotrebi prirodnih resursa.

*Ključne reči:* prirodne katastrofe/nepogode, klimatske promene, rodne uloge, rodne odgovornosti prevencija, oporavak, izgradnja otpornosti