Purpose

The update aims to review the status of progress against the main recommendations and agreed actions in the ‘Guidance Note - Gender Inclusion & Women’s Empowerment at the Centre of Resilience Building’ for the implementation of the Asia Regional Plan 2016-2018.

The Evidence

Progress achieved in the last two years (2016-2018) on gender equality and social inclusion in DRM

- Six out of ten countries reported initiating new policies and/or revisions on gender and social inclusion in DRM.
- Increased focus on capacity development on gender and social inclusion in local level planning, humanitarian action and school safety.
- Increased focus on developing guidelines and assessment tools on disaggregation of data, and collecting and analyzing disaggregated data in the Post Disaster Needs Assessments.
- Increased recognition of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in disaster emergency response.
- Increased evidence and documentation on good practice and learning on gender and social inclusion in post-disaster recovery and emergency response.
- Increased partnerships between governments and stakeholder agencies on issues such as disaster data and protection.
- Opportunities for discussion on gender inclusion as well as representation of women’s organisations in the National Coordination mechanisms/Platforms for DRR.

The red flags

- Continuous focus of vulnerability and servicing instead of capacitating and empowering marginalized groups.
- Interventions not geared towards addressing structural issues, underlying risk factors, root causes of inequalities and exclusion.
- Social inclusion agenda is not clearly understood and poorly addressed.
- Limited awareness on gender equality and social inclusion among key government officials for DRR.
- Inadequate systems and capacities for systematic collection, analysis and use of SADD data for planning and reporting.
- Limited efforts towards building coherence and strengthening coordination between DRR planning and implementation with the SDGs and Climate Change action.
- The scope for achieving the Sendai Target ‘e’: ‘Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020’ with gender equality and social inclusion measures is limited.
Key Recommendations

Key areas requiring concrete commitment and actions

While noting the progress listed above, there is a "business as usual" tendency which will not achieve the transformation committed to in 2015. Implementation of inclusion aspects in the Asia Regional Plan must be supported and facilitated taking into account that the SDGs and the Sendai Framework targets cannot be reached without achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and social inclusion.

The following thus, are several critical areas requiring concrete action for achieving Sendai commitments in the region:

- Set SADD data collection and use, followed by gender and social diversity analysis, as a minimum standard for all aspects of DRR planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting.
- In order to increase women's participation leadership and decision making in DRR policy and actions we recommend:
  - Establishing of or strengthening institutional mechanisms and platforms,
  - A minimum of 30% women in DRR decision making roles,
  - Investing in developing women's leadership capabilities and skills as part of strengthening risk governance.
- Increase investment for resilience building of ‘at risk’ populations particularly through a targeted approach to increase access to information, skills and services as well as control over resources.
- Review and amend national and local disaster risk reduction legislation, policies, strategies, guidelines, plans and actions to ensure inclusion of minimum requirements on gender equality and social inclusion.
- Base disaster preparedness, response, recovery and reconstruction actions on build-back better principles addressing the root causes of inequalities to ensure equitable socio-economic, health and cultural resilience of all ‘at risk’ groups.
- Strengthen cooperation and coordination for improved governance, policy coherence, targeted action and consistency in advancing gender equality and social inclusion agendas in DRR.
- Ensure that rigorous monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms are in place with sufficient budget and personnel allocation to assess implementation measures and impact.
- Define and agree on a framework for social inclusion agendas in context of DRR, particularly through the IAP and AMCDRR platforms.

Understanding disaster risk, vulnerabilities and capacities

1. Develop a common understanding for empowerment based approaches in DRR, and increase awareness among government focal persons and stakeholder organisations on the same.
2. Develop methodologies/formats for coordinated use by government statistical and DM institutions for SADD collection, storage and wider sharing.
3. Systemize SADD collection and the updating of data management (DM) systems for effective planning.
4. Develop the capacities for SADD analysis for gender and social inclusion analysis at the key DRM planning institutes (including those relating to SDGs and CC).
5. Provide a better understanding on what social inclusion is, "how" to address the key issues of inclusion, how to approach planning and implementation, and develop indicators of progress.
6. Develop and share good practices and lessons learnt on women’s empowerment and leadership, and social inclusion.

Inclusive Risk Governance

1. Revive national coordination mechanisms for DRR as a way for establishing better coordination between DRM, SDG and CC planning processes as well as data management.
2. Increase support to Governments to ensure that measures on gender equality and social inclusion are part of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (to meet Sendai Target ‘e’).
3. Leverage existing coordination mechanisms on disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action for greater advocacy and partnerships for advancing gender equality and social inclusion.
4. In the implementation of the Asia Regional plan include focused activities for transformative change towards capacities, empowerment and resilience.
5. Use of Sendai and SDG national monitoring indicators and systems to promote effectiveness and coordination of interventions.
6. Ensure that monitoring indicators cover aspects that build coping capacities and resilience such as participation, leadership, and livelihoods, as well as effective contribution to decision making processes by the at risk groups.

Strengthening capacities of women and at risk groups

1. Enhance the participation of women and girls in DRR at the local level in systematic ways, and by replicating good practices.
2. Explore approaches and mechanisms to address root causes and structural barriers for women’s participation and leadership.
3. Provide more information, examples, good practices on what social inclusion means in the context of DRR in its entirety, focusing on capacities.
4. Increase investments to strengthen and develop capacities of women, women’s organisations and other ‘at risk’ groups.
5. Increase focus and support towards addressing structural inequalities women face as part of risk governance.
6. Ensure specific needs of women and girls, including prevention and response to gender based violence, sexual and reproductive health are prioritised in all responses leveraging Building Back Better (BBB) principles.
7. Utilise post disaster response to capacitate and empower women.

Institutional and coordination arrangements

1. Seek ways for better complementarity between government efforts and stakeholder actions, and explore more active use of existing institutional mechanisms and partnerships.
2. Increase coordination for technical support, capacity development and financial support to operationalise commitments into action.
3. Foster greater understanding and utilisation of evidence on what works to inform planning.
4. Explore possibilities for joint and scaled up programming on gender and social inclusion through partnerships – specifically involving the governments.
5. Develop strategies for more effective use of IAP and AMCDRR platforms for providing guidance, building technical capacities, obtaining commitments and defining accountabilities for effective gender and social inclusion.
6. Consider including a Road Map with milestones and indicators of progress on gender equality and social inclusion in the Gender Guidance Note.