GENDER-RELATED DIMENSIONS OF CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF BANGLADESH

Sixty third session of CEDAW organized by OHCHR
Geneva, 29 February 2016

Palash Mondal
CARE Bangladesh
Presentation structure

WOMEN’S VULNERABILITY TO SHOCKS & STRESSES

WHY AND HOW WOMEN ARE MORE VULNERABLE?

WHY WOMEN ARE CRITICAL FOR CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE, WHAT POTENTIALS THEY HAVE?

MOVING FROM GENDER SENSITIVE TO GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

WOMEN AS KEY ACTORS IN CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

LOOKING TO CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

WAY FORWARD AND CHALLENGES
WOMEN ARE MORE VULNERABLE TO SHOCKS & STRESSES

- Women and children are **14 times more likely than men** to die during a disaster (Global study)

- In the 1991 cyclone & flood that killed 140,000 in Bangladesh, **90 per cent of victims were women and girls** (IUCN)

- Women aged 20-44: death rate was 71 per 1000 while Men aged 20-44: death rate was 15 per 1000

- Women constitute up to **80% of refugee and displaced populations**

- In emergency situations women and children make up **70 to 80% of those needing assistance**

(IUCN)
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY DOUBLE INJUSTICE?

**Climate Change & disasters**
People living in poverty all over the world are worst affected by climate change and disaster impacts and also have the fewest resources to cope with extreme and erratic weather.

**Gender Inequality**
Gaps in life chances, opportunities, resources and rewards between women, men, girls and boys continue to exist worldwide.

Being a man or woman is often a **decisive factor in determining the levels of risk** from climatic shocks, and the resources and options people have to act on these shocks and changes/stresses.
WHY ARE WOMEN MORE VULNERABLE?

...mainly because of biological, social and economical differences

1. Being excluded of planning & decision making

2. Livelihoods rely on natural resources highly dependent on natural hazards

3. Less access to resources (Strong influence of cultural norms on unequal distribution and use of rights, resources and power which determine individuals’ livelihoods)

4. Not recognized as farmers, and deprived from govt. agricultural allocation
WHY ARE WOMEN MORE VULNERABLE? Contd.

5. **Victims of the gendered division of labour** Primarily responsible for domestic duties, are caregivers (They collect water, cook, clean & take care of the sick/kids and play vital role in agriculture)

6. **Early warning systems are oriented towards males**

7. **After a natural disaster, women are more likely to become victims of domestic and sexual violence**

8. **Migration of male member puts women and girls over burdened and insecure**

9. **Overwhelm or gender blind approach sometimes create extra burden on women**
Rainfall variability leads to low productivity, income, employment, food insecurity and resulted to out migration.

Mostly men migrate and women and adolescent girls suffer from the social consequences of migration.

Migration of male member puts extra-layer of burden of maintaining family & food insecurity.

In absence of capable men in house women’s potential of sexual abuse is high.

To avoid social derogation, migrant parents prefer post-puberty early marriage for the girls, which is contributing to quick rotation of generations and population growth.

“When we need rain - no rain, when we need sun – get too much of water which resulting crop failure and lead us to migrate elsewhere for livelihoods”

A female farmer of NW Bangladesh on erratic rainfall.
INITIATIVES TO REDUCE WOMEN’S VULNERABILITIES

Gendered approach to disaster resilience is adequately mentioned in all Govt. policies, plans, and programming...

7th FIVE YEAR PLAN
- Gender sensitivity is recognized as an important issue in climate change adaptation and
- Supported MoWCA to take initiative under the BCCTF to integrate gender sensitivity in their respective project designs
- Committed to implement a gendered approach to disaster resilience in all Government planning, policy frameworks and programming

BCCSAP 2009
Prioritized six strategic areas - A common theme throughout of all of these strategic areas is the focus on the poor and vulnerable and in particular women and children

NPDM 2010
One of the seven strategic goals of the plan is ‘Empowering at risk communities particularly women’

…but in practice it doesn’t reflect that much as should be.
WHY WOMEN ARE CRITICAL FOR CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE, WHAT POTENTIALS THEY HAVE?

Women play a paramount role in the management, conservation and use of natural resources.

Women’s primary responsibility for growing food and collecting water, firewood has made them keenly aware of their environments.

Women not only victims; well positioned to be agents of change through mitigation, management and adaptive activities in HHs, workplace, communities and institutions.

CARE evaluation found - Involvement of women in disaster and climate activities multiplies the benefits.
WOMEN AS KEY ACTORS IN CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

Can respond to disasters
- Building houses; digging wells and ditches; hauling water and building shelters and roads, considered as “male” tasks.
- Forming groups and networks which is essential in disaster preparedness and mitigation.

Can play decision-making roles in disaster issues

Women and young girls play an important role in their families and communities (in health, education and childcare).
GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

CARE developed Disaster Volunteers for floods, 50% women (like Govt. CPP prog)

• Women volunteers can approach other women and access households more easily than males to provide guidance on disaster preparedness

• But, its being done in limited scale and needs to do at scale

Govt. initiated to sending flood alerts through mobile

• Some at risk people living on the bank of the Jamuna river getting alerts 5-10 days in advance which helps them to protect moveable assets

• But, mobile numbers of women are not in the system who needed the information the most
GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED, *Contd.*

- Victims women became change agents of for the promotion of adaptive variety and agricultural technologies (SuPER)
- At household level: increased men’s sensitivity which helps to increase women mobility and taking part in family decision.
- At authorities level: making sure women are recognized as farmers

CARE is facilitating women participation to Farmers Field School in NW, where 50% are women

- The communities worked to put forward the issue of potable water due to salinity and arsenic contamination as an immediate issue
- Over 32000 letters sent out to Prime Minister from communities
- The huge heap of letters moved the PM so much that she issued an order “…to take steps towards solving the issue on an emergency basis”.

CARE facilitated community led water movement in SW to solve out water crisis where women were forefront
GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED, Contd.

INTEGRATING DRR-CCA INTO DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis
- Climate Change Adaptation Plan
- Community Action Plan
- Union Disaster Management Plan
- Union Dev Plan
- Open budget plan
- Fiscal framework
GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED, Contd.

Support that goes directly to women brings better results.

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**Reaching New Heights**

Funded by USAID and implemented by CARE, the $126 million HOPEARDO project was designed to fight poverty and improve nutrition among more than 2 million of Bangladesh’s poorest people. Direct nutrition-focused interventions such as child feeding were combined with indirect interventions—most notably the empowerment of women and girls—to produce great impact, including an unusually large reduction in child stunting.

To see the full report go to: www.careinternational.org

**What:** Big Increase in Healthier, Taller Children

The number of children under five "severely" or "moderate" undernourished fell 26 percent under SDH3/RRD. But another 45.1 percent of children were stunted in February 2006, while just 40.4 percent were stunted by November 2005. The annual average reduction of 4.7 percentage points (p) lowered the rate of stunting from 43.3 percent to 38.6 percent. This translates to over 4,100 fewer children under five years old suffering from stunting in the SDH3/RRD project.

| Bangladesh Pre Project | USAID Project | SDH3/RRD
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<td>49.5%</td>
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**Why:** Women’s Empowerment

Being a critical element to "empower women and men," researchers found that women’s empowerment both grants girls and families greater control over their own health and nutrition decisions. While the method could not determine the direct cause and effect of improved nutrition, it showed some data to suggest the medical impact of women’s empowerment is contributed to a reduction in childhood stunting.

**How:** Substantial Gains in Women’s Decision-Making Power

The percentage of women reporting that they participate in various types of decisions has sharply risen since the project began in 1999. While the program created a new sense of empowerment, other changes opened opportunities by removing barriers to their children’s education and supported the creation of women’s groups to combat early marriage, violence against women and girls, and on their mobility.

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Support that goes directly to women brings better results.
MOVING FROM GENDER SENSITIVE TO GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

**Gender-sensitive**
- Taking into account the different effects of climate change on women, men, boys and girls

**Gender-responsive**
- Creating dialogue and platforms to critically evaluate the fairness and value of gender roles and norm

**Gender-transformative**
- Addressing structural barriers to gender equality in policies and practices
LOOKING TO CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

- Ensure women’s access to policy-making, information and knowledge on disaster reduction
- Respond to women's needs and concerns
- Increase efforts in promoting gender equalities
- Acknowledge women’s vulnerable status and potentials
- Gender-based approach to the study on natural disasters
- Assure women’s access to DRR/CCA resources
- Strengthen the dialogue within & between communities and the national government & capacity-building
- Increase efforts in promoting gender equalities
WAY FORWARD AND CHALLENGES
Towards women as a force in resilience building and gender equality in climate and disaster resilience

- Support communities in making gender smart adaptation plans based on climate science and local observation of climate change.
- Build the capacity of local civil society and government institutions to support communities’ adaptation efforts.
- Influence the policy and enabling environment to address the underlying causes of vulnerability, such as poor governance, and gender inequalities in resource use and access to basic services.
- Lead a strong boost in support for climate justice and gender equality in all post-2015 agreements (SFA, CoP21, SDG).
- Address climate change effectively at the local level
WAY FORWARD AND CHALLENGES, *Contd.*
Towards women as a force in resilience building and gender equality in climate and disaster resilience

- **Build resilience in agricultural livelihoods** and ensuring food and nutrition security for all
- **Boost women’s income** towards better economic security
- **Strengthening women and girls’ reproductive rights**
- **Ensure gender-equitable efforts build people’s resilience in the face of disasters** and address structural inequalities lying behind unequal risks
- **Develop DVs for floods like CPP** with men and women
WAY FORWARD AND CHALLENGES, Contd.
Towards women as a force in resilience building and gender equality in climate and disaster resilience
-Separating men-women is critical during prioritization of hazards and development actions.
“If men and women, during CVCA analysis, were asked separately to list the hazards affecting their community, women may have identified the need for better lighting.”
- Engaging men in household chores, i.e., fresh water management should take into account the needs and role both of men and women through an equitable approach
Thank You!