



Towards Gender Equality and Women's Leadership for Resilience to Disaster Risks in Latin America and the Caribbean



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TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE TO DISASTER RISKS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Regional Consultation prior to the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women - Priority theme *“Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”*

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Acronyms

AC	Andean Community
ARISE	Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies
CAPRADE	Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEPREDENAC	Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic
CIFs	Climate Investment Funds
CREWS	Climate Risk Early Warning Systems
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CSW66	66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness Programme of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
EA	Environmental Agency
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EWS	Early Warning System
GAR	Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction

GBV	Gender-based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GR-DRR	Gender-Responsive Disaster Risk Reduction
GSMA	Global System for Mobile Communications
HVR	Hazards, Vulnerability and Risks Assessments
IDDRR	International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
IGWG	Interagency Gender Working Group
ISA REP	Energy Network of Peru
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MHEWS	Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIEWG	Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology Related to Disaster Risk Reduction
PCGIR	Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management
PRGIRD	Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Regional Plan
RAP	Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas
RAR	Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk in Latin America and the Caribbean
REDULAC	Latin America and the Caribbean University Network for Disaster Risk Reduction

RMAGIR	Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management
SADDD	Sex, Age and Disability Disaggregated Data
SCA/ECLAC	Statistical Conference of the Americas / Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
SFM	Sendai Framework Monitor
SICA	Central American Integration System
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
STAG	Science and Technology Advisory Group
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNJS GEWEL	United Nations Joint Study on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and Leadership
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
VC	Sendai Framework Voluntary Commitments



1. Introduction

The impact of disasters is experienced differently by different people. Factors such as gender, age, life in an urban or rural context, belonging to a native or Afrodescendant people, access to education or social protection mechanisms significantly influence people's knowledge and ability to prepare and respond to disaster risk. This, in turn, impacts the ability of individuals to mitigate their vulnerability to a potential disaster, take action to prevent it, or learn how to react to an actual disaster.

The ability of individuals to mitigate their vulnerability to a potential disaster, take action to prevent it, or learn how to respond to an actual disaster is also related to their gender, age, socioeconomic level, belonging to a native or Afrodescendant people, disabilities and access to education or social protection mechanisms. Therefore, the impact of disasters is also heterogeneous depending on the above-mentioned factors.

This close relationship between inequality, disasters, and development clearly shows the need to formulate DRR strategies to increase resilience to disaster risk without leaving anyone behind and, thus, respond to the different realities, particularly those of vulnerable populations, such as persons with disabilities, indigenous or Afrodescendant people, migrants, displaced persons or refugees or rural communities. It is important to consider the existence of social, economic, cultural, and environmental variables that, combined with institutional and political factors, lead to gender inequalities that affect women and girls, including limitations to their physical, political, and economic autonomy and barriers to decision-making. This has a negative impact on their ability to deal with, and recover from, disasters. The design and planning of disaster risk reduction policies usually take gender dynamics for granted, which only contributes to perpetuating and exacerbating those inequalities and barriers.

Despite encouraging achievements in the fight for gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean, including promising initiatives for the integration of the gender approach into DRR, there is still a long way to go to make it a systematic practice in the region. It is still necessary to develop and implement more representative, fair and equitable DRR processes that, from an intersectional human rights perspective, integrate a gender perspective and the autonomy of women and girls to advance towards sustainable development.

This reference document was developed in preparation for the 66th period of sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which will be held in March 2022 with the priority theme "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes". The objective of the document is to inform intergovernmental discussions that will take place during the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Consultation prior to the holding of CSW66, around the following topics:

- Identify the scope of inclusion of the gender approach and the empowerment of women in the context of DRR in the region;
- Analyze the current situation, achievements, and challenges in the region regarding:

- a. The knowledge necessary to develop policies and programmes to promote gender equality and the full participation and autonomy of women and girls in disaster risk-informed development processes (including sex-disaggregated data);
- b. Existing DRR governance and accountability mechanisms to analyze proposals to strengthen them with a gender perspective;
- c. The state of investments in DRR policies and actions with a gender perspective and the full participation of feminist and women's organizations; and
- d. Develop guiding principles and evidence-based action-oriented recommendations based on good practices and lessons learned in the region, to achieve gender equality and the full participation and autonomy of all women and girls.

To this end, the first section of the document provides background information on DRR in the region, including disaster risk manifestations, and brings attention to gender-based social inequalities as a driver of disaster risk. Then, taking the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030 as a starting point,

as well as progress made in its implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean, the second section provides a brief overview of agendas and commitments in the areas of DRR, women's rights and the gender perspective, with a focus on their interrelationship. The third section includes a review of achievements and challenges in the inclusion of the gender perspective in DRR in the region based on the four priorities of the SFDRR: (i) Understanding disaster risk; (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience and, (iv) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "build back better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. The fourth section includes our main findings and conclusions. Finally, we suggest six guiding principles and make a series of recommendations to advance towards gender equality and the full autonomy of women and girls in the context of DRR policies and programmes in the region.

While the authors have made every effort possible to include a wide variety of references and experiences of women and populations whose rights are particularly violated, the examples provided are illustrative, and the reality and richness of the region exceed by far the content of this document.

2. Background

According to ECLAC's statistical databases and publications,¹ by mid-2022, the Latin America and the Caribbean region will have a population of little more than 665 million people, of which approximately 338 million (51%) will be women. This population mainly lives in urban areas (81% in Latin America and 73% in the Caribbean), and the men to women ratio both in urban and rural areas remains constant, with women accounting for approximately 50% of the population. However, the limitations faced by women and girls, such as the low level of participation in family and community decision-making, limited access to the management of household finances and bank or credit services, or limited access to health care or education, among others, are exacerbated in rural areas, further limiting the disaster preparedness and response capacity of rural women and girls.²

The issue is compounded by the situation of poverty and extreme poverty that affects more than 287 million people (46% of the population).³ One of the main reasons for this is the lack of women's economic autonomy, which is often exacerbated in households with more children.⁴ After the economic crisis created by movement restriction measures imposed to control the spread of COVID-19, an economic recovery period began in the whole region. However, women and other historically marginalized groups continue to be affected by unequal access to decent work, with young women being a particularly vulnerable group.⁵

Another important aspect is insecurity, considering Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the regions with the highest crime

rates in the world. In 2020, at least 4,091 women were victims of femicide in 26 countries in the region (17 in Latin America and 9 in the Caribbean), according to data from ECLAC's Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean.⁶

The situation of violence faced by women environmental defenders, many of whom are actively involved in protecting territories and nature, deserves special attention. Latin America and the Caribbean is now the deadliest place in the world for environmental defenders, a phenomenon that is growing and is taking a heavy toll on women environmental defenders.⁷ For example, in Mesoamerica, between 2015 and 2016, there were 2,197 attacks on women defenders recorded, 37% of which had a specific

1 [CEPALSTAT ECLAC Statistical databases and publications](#), last accessed on January 5 2022.

2 See: [UN Women Learn the facts: Rural women and girls](#).

3 OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Review 2022](#), website, last accessed on January 5 2022.

4 According to ECLAC's [Gender Equality Observatory](#), in 2019, for every 100 men living in poor households in Latin America, there were 112.7 women in a similar situation.

5 [ECLAC Social Panorama of Latin America 2020](#).

6 [ECLAC: At least 4,091 women were victims of femicide in 2020 in Latin America and the Caribbean, despite greater visibility and social condemnation](#).

7 [Women, the first line of defense against climate change, but also the hardest hit](#).

gender component.⁸ Women defending their right to land and a healthy environment face specific threats in addition to those faced by men. Smear campaigns often focus on their private life, with sexist or sexually explicit content. Sexual violence, which goes largely unreported, is also used as a tactic to silence them. According to the report, Last Line of Defence: The industries causing the climate crisis and attacks against land and environmental defenders, released by Global Witness, 3 out of 4 attacks on environmental defenders⁹ recorded took place in the Americas. 7 of the 10 countries with the largest number of attacks reported worldwide are in Latin America.

In the case of attacks on persons based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, the figures are significantly high. According to a report of the Regional Information Network on LGBTI Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean and its *Sin Violencia LGBTI* (“Without LGBTI Violence”) Observatory,¹⁰ between 2014 and 2020, at least 3,599 LGTBI persons were killed in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1,401 (39%) of them for reasons related to biases towards their sexual orientations or gender identity.

THE KEY ROLE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Indigenous peoples have been historically subjected to marginalization and discrimination, in addition to practices of assimilation, land dispossession, and denial of their rights. This has resulted in significant social, economic, and rights gaps among indigenous peoples and the rest of the population that disproportionately affect women. In the report “The impact of COVID-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean”,¹¹ the Secretary-General highlights how indigenous peoples, and indigenous women, in particular, are disproportionately affected due to the socioeconomic conditions in which they live.

Indigenous women and their organizations have played an active role and maintained the defense of their individual and collective rights over time, with the right to land being one of the most important. Indigenous women’s connection to their territory and the defense of water and nature are key to environmental conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction. The resilience of indigenous women and their ancestral knowledge about natural resource management and disaster risk reduction can be considered innovative practices that can positively contribute to the circular economy, ecological transition, and the consolidation of clean and safe energies. In addition, indigenous women are responsible for the food security of their communities, which is a vital element both for climate change adaptation mitigation and disaster risk reduction, considering access to food, water, and energy sources is crucial to support the populations affected.

8 “Cuerpos, territorios y movimientos en resistencia en Mesoamérica” - Informe de Agresiones a Defensoras 2015-2016.

9 The report reports the murder of 227 women environmental and land defenders in 2020. Although the number of women is lower than that of men (1 in 10), violence against women environmental defenders includes not only murder but also sexual violence.

10 SinViolencia LGBTI (2021). *Des-Cifrando la Violencia en Tiempos de Cuarentena: Homicidios de lesbianas, gays, bisexuales, trans e intersex en América Latina y el Caribe 2019-2020*.

11 Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean.

2.1. Manifestations of disaster risk in Latin America and the Caribbean

During the 1998-2017 period, there were 1,786 disasters in the region, the vast majority (93%) were climate-related, and the rest were of geological origin.¹² As far as their impact is concerned, more than 277 million people were directly or indirectly affected in the region mainly by climate-related events,¹³ with 312,000 reported deaths, approximately 30% were caused by earthquakes (geologic events).

However, it is impossible to determine which of these figures correspond to women or girls, persons with disabilities or LGBTIQ persons, or

how many of them died due to these events. All of this is mainly due to the lack of sex, age, and disability disaggregated data, which in part is the result of the use of data collection tools designed for other purposes (for example, accounting for populations affected –number of people injured and deaths– or measuring economic losses) and the decision to make the collection of disaggregated data optional¹⁴ in the current monitoring and reporting process of the Sendai indicators and relevant SDG targets.

DISASTERS ARE NOT NATURAL

“We must associate disaster with our everyday life: vulnerability, poverty, marginalization. Disasters are not something fortuitous that falls from the sky” – ALAN LAVELL

Disasters are not natural; disasters are events resulting from poor development practices. Therefore, the severity of their impact lies on social factors such as inadequate urbanization processes, lack of planning, unsafe conditions, insalubrity, social inequalities and poverty.

While threats such as earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions have a natural origin, they evolve into disasters because there are vulnerable persons and communities exposed to them. Other types of disasters, such as floods, droughts and landslides, are climate-related and have been exacerbated as a result of human activities.

Therefore, it is essential to stop thinking about disasters as natural events over which we have no control and start seeing them as a social construction. From there that we must promote the prevention approach that is at the center of all disaster risk reduction actions.

¹² *Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk in Latin America and the Caribbean. (RAR) 2021*

¹³ Storms 50%, droughts 22% and floods 20%.

¹⁴ See *OIEWG*: “While the global targets of the Sendai Framework do not explicitly call for data disaggregation, paragraph 19 (g) of the Sendai Framework does call for specific attention to factors such as income, sex, age and disability in disaster risk reduction. The collection of disaggregated data should be considered instrumental to the effective implementation of the Sendai Framework and relevant disaster risk-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.”

2.2. Gender-based social inequalities as a factor in increasing disaster risk

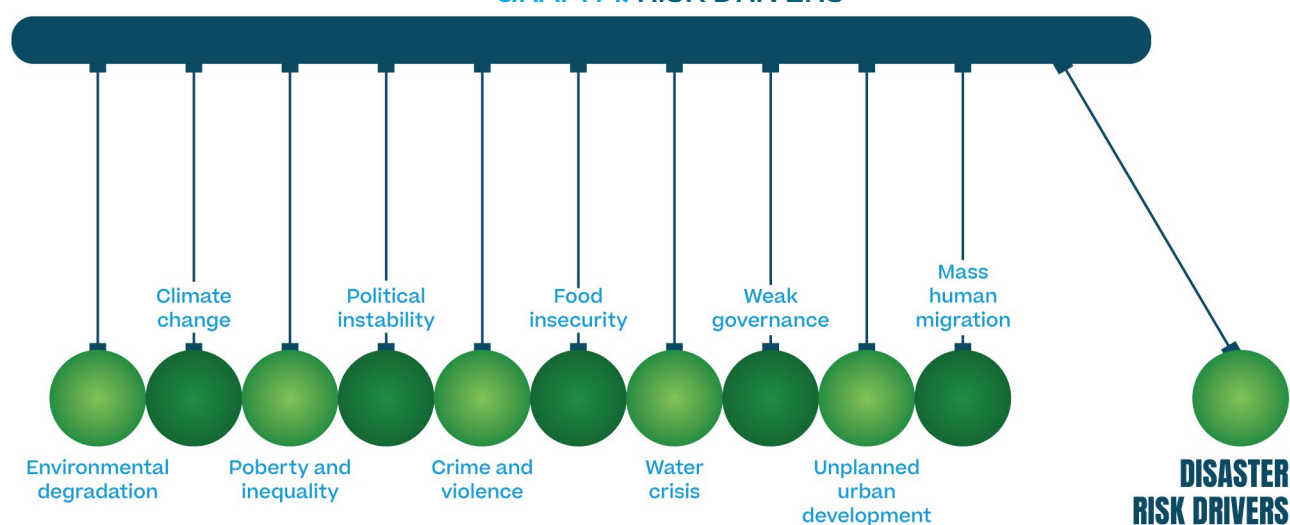
Disaster risk is the *likelihood* of loss of life, injury or destruction, and damage from a disaster in a given period of time, and it consists of four basic variables: (i) hazard, (ii) exposure, (iii) vulnerability, and (iv) capacity.¹⁵ In an evolution of this concept, it has been recognized that, in addition to these variables, there are underlying factors that intensify risk, for example, the way of occupying a territory, production and development models or social norms and behaviors that can intensify or reduce the impact of a particular event. These factors that increase or accentuate risk are referred to as “risk drivers” (see Graph 1).

It is essential to bear in mind that, in disaster and emergency contexts, and particularly in the aftermath thereof, previously existing inequalities are exacerbated. This includes the different forms of inequality between women

and men and, therefore, it is crucial to counter them in all the phases of emergencies, taking into consideration, in particular:¹⁶

- Violence prevention and support services: Emergencies and disasters significantly increase the levels of vulnerability of women and girls of all ages, placing them in situations of high risk and exposure to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and human smuggling. In these contexts, the risk of becoming victims of sexual violence and abuse for girls and adolescent girls increases because the functioning of many protection factors, such as schools, caregivers, and specialized authorities, is affected.

GRAPH 1. RISK DRIVERS



Source: UNDRR (2021) *Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

15 According to the OIEWG (2021) *Recommendations of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction*, disasters are serious disruptions of the functioning of communities or societies, in any scale, resulting from hazardous phenomena (threats) that interact with conditions of exposure and vulnerability and the capacity of such communities or societies to cope. Exposure refers to the situation of people, infrastructure, housing and other human assets located in hazard-prone areas; vulnerability and capacity refer to the conditions of a person or community, goods and systems that are determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors.

16 *Respuesta humanitaria con enfoque de igualdad de género: Liderazgo y participación de las mujeres como elementos clave para una acción integral y efectiva en desastres y emergencias.*

- An increased unpaid work burden: Emergencies and disasters result in an additional burden for women and girls, among other reasons, because the burden of domestic work and unpaid care work typically falls on them. This situation has a particular impact on female heads of household and poor women caring for family members, which increases their levels of exposure to violence and vulnerability.
- Availability of disaggregated information: Gather information disaggregated by sex, age, and other relevant factors depending on the context (mothers heads of households, disability or reduced mobility, chronic disease, ethnicity, sexual orientation, migratory status, religion, etc.) to be able to assess the needs, priorities, and capacities of women and girls affected by a disaster. The lack of this information can hinder the differentiated assessment of the situation of populations affected, reduce the possibility of designing appropriate measures and slow down the recovery.
- Availability of disaggregated data: The lack of sex, age, and diversity disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators or analyses affects needs assessments and the design, formulation, and implementation of the response and reduces the impact of actions. This, in turn, hinders the differentiated assessment of populations affected, reduces the possibility of implementing measures adapted to their needs, limits their possibility of access and benefiting from reconstruction, and slows down recovery.
- Equal participation in negotiation and decision-making: The development of a comprehensive emergency and disaster response also requires ensuring the voices, experiences, and leadership of all the populations affected are heard. This, as in any other public or private sphere, requires shared decision-making between women and men and, in particular, recognizing the leadership of women and their organizations to include them as active participants in the formulation and implementation of measures in all the phases of disasters and emergencies, including recovery initiatives.

Thanks to the progress made in global¹⁷ and regional¹⁸ DRR gender studies, we are beginning to have a better understanding of the level of influence of gender-based social inequalities on disaster outcomes. And there are two main reasons for this: (i) the gender bias in the use of language and production of knowledge (including statistical data), and (ii) structural gender inequalities that exist in our societies.

Concerning the gender bias in the use of language and production of knowledge,¹⁹ despite increased awareness of the existence of such biases and their deep influence on development processes and patterns in recent times, particularly for vulnerable women, girls, and other vulnerable populations, systematic changes in different policy instruments and the tools to implement those policies have not yet been incorporated in practice. Language and knowledge both describe and create the world and, therefore, a particularly important aspect here is the structural bias that considers white, heterosexual and middle-high income men as “the norm” because that which is not named or counted tends to be ignored.

17 To see a guide of bibliographic references on the topic, see: [Gender and Disaster Reference Guide](#), University College London.

18 UNDRR (2020). [Review of gender-responsiveness and disability-inclusion in disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific](#).

19 See also UN Women's Searchable Gender Inclusive Lexicon [GenderTerm](#).

In the case of DRR management, this issue is expressed in multiple forms. In the case of early warning systems (EWS), for example, there are still opportunities to gain a better understanding of differences in the way of accessing, processing, and responding to information. EWSs tend to prioritize men's way of doing things, for example, by prioritizing mobile devices, which are more accessible for men than women.²⁰ In addition, communications on evacuation procedures, among other warnings, tend to ignore women's double or triple care burden, especially if they take care of children, persons with disabilities or older people, which undoubtedly affects their capacity to react to a warning.²¹

Structural gender inequalities that exist in our societies and have a negative impact on women and girls increase women's risk vulnerability and limit their ability to react to hazards. This can lead to a downward spiral of poverty after the disaster that will have a more significant impact on women and girls. It has been widely documented that female-headed households are overrepresented among poor households, which increases their vulnerability to disasters and makes it more difficult for them to recover later on.²²

These structural gender inequalities include the gap in participation in negotiation and decision-making processes. Women and girls tend to be excluded from decision-making spaces, ignoring or underestimating their agency and capacities for the full development and wellbeing of more resilient communities. One example of this is the registration of household assets, usually in the name of the man of the household, which means records of losses, damages, and needs continue to underestimate the direct and indirect impact on women. Also, in countries with diverse indigenous peoples, the lack of information in local languages imposes additional barriers to access to key information²³ that affect women who do not speak or understand the predominant language.

In recent events such as hurricanes Eta and Iota in the northern countries of Central America (2020), hurricane Elsa in the Caribbean, the volcanic eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, or the Haiti earthquake (2021), the erosion of women's social, economic and political autonomy, already exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the loss of hard-fought gains, prevented women from gaining equal access to life-saving information, protection and support after the crisis.²⁴

20 The *Global System Mobile Association (GSMA)* affirms that the gender gap in the use of mobile Internet in mid and low-income countries continues to be substantial. More than 300 million fewer women than men have access to the Internet on mobile devices.

21 *UN Women data*, shows that women perform at least 2.5 times more domestic and unpaid care work than men.

22 See *Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management, Strategy and Results Framework 2014-2024*, CDEMA.

23 See UN Women-CARE *Rapid Gender Assessment Guatemala (2020)* in *Eta and Iota Rapid Gender Analysis - Guatemala*, December 2020 - Guatemala | ReliefWeb.

24 See UN Women-CARE Rapid Gender Assessments from Guatemala (2020), Honduras (2020) and Haiti (2021).

THE SYSTEMIC NATURE OF RISK

Risks are systemic by nature. By “systemic risk” we understand “a risk that is endogenous to, or embedded in, a system that is not itself considered to be a risk and is therefore not generally tracked or managed. In an increasingly populated, interconnected and globalized society, nature itself and the scale of risk have changed, to the extent they go beyond institutions and established risk management approaches.” (GAR, 2019).

From this perspective, risks are becoming more difficult to compartmentalize and, therefore, it is necessary to explore the interaction between different variables: coordination at the global, regional, national, subnational, and local levels; the relationship between production and consumption mechanisms and changes in land use and occupation, and their impacts on the natural environment. It is also essential to take into account the conflicts between politics, economy, and society and, as emphasized throughout this document, the differentiated vulnerabilities of historically marginalized populations such as indigenous and Afrodescendant women and girls, LGBTIQ+ persons or persons with disabilities, among others.

2.3. Gender inequalities and the COVID-19 pandemic as an example of the systemic nature of risk

The COVID-19 pandemic²⁵ has clearly shown how existing factors can influence the impact of a disaster. The health crisis caused by the pandemic rapidly evolved into a social and economic crisis that affected all the sectors of societies worldwide. However, the impacts of this crisis have not been the same for all people and have led to the erosion of hard-fought gains in the areas of health, security, economy, and social protection for women and girls. Data available shows they are the ones who have been hit the hardest, not only because the disease has had a more significant impact on them but also because the measures taken to contain the disease (restricted mobility, closure of businesses and offices, online classes and caring for family members at home) have had a disproportionate

impact on them. Quarantine measures in many cases have also led to an increase in gender-based violence (GBV) and, in particular, domestic violence, because lockdowns often leave women trapped with their abusers in a context of limited access to protection services, leading to what has been called “a pandemic in the shadows”.²⁶

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has also been greater on women because approximately 60% of them work in the informal economy,²⁷ often without a contract and access to social protection systems linked to formal employment. This figure increases to 75% in the case of women in a situation of human mobility, who have even less protection because they often lack the documentation necessary to obtain a contract.²⁸ This precarious situation is an

25 This document was written almost one year after the World Health Organization (WHO) (March 11 2020) officially declared the coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic due to its spread all over the planet and its severity.

26 ECLAC (2021) *The pandemic in the shadows: femicides or feminicides in 2020 in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

27 For more information, see UN (2021) *COVID-19, Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*.

28 UN Women, *How migration is a gender equality issue*.

example of the magnitude of the negative effects disasters have on these women, considering they face crises amid multiple and interconnected forms of discrimination, racism, and xenophobia that pose a bigger threat to their livelihoods and wellbeing.

The pandemic recovery phase has posed a challenge for the Latin America and the Caribbean region because, despite accounting for only 8.4% of the world population, it has become the world's most affected region, with

18.5% of the world's COVID-19 cases and 30.3% of all deaths.²⁹ Despite its great impact, the pandemic is also an opportunity to implement transformative measures to raise awareness of inequalities present in numerous areas of the lives of women and girls,³⁰ as well as an opportunity to incorporate principles of gender equality and resilience into social and economic recovery actions,³¹ recognizing the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women and other historically marginalized populations.³²

29 Data as of October 2020 in [Global Humanitarian Overview 2022](#).

30 Several UN agencies have published guidelines on the inclusion of the gender perspective in the COVID-19 response. See, for example, the UN Secretary-General's policy brief: [The impact of COVID-19 on women and UNW publications on COVID-19](#).

31 For additional information, see: [UNDRR and ECLAC \(2021\) The coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic - an opportunity for a systemic approach to disaster risk for the Caribbean](#).

32 For example, UNDRR organized [a series of webinars on different aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic](#), including aspects related to youth and persons with disabilities. Also, the United Nations Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity produced a series of guidelines to assist States in the prevention and mitigation of the impact of the pandemic for a response and recovery free from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity: OHCHR (2020) [ASPIRE Guidelines on COVID-19 Response and Recovery Free from Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#).



3. International Agendas and Commitments

3.1. International DRR commitments and their relationship to the gender agenda

Despite different DRR instruments, agendas, and commitments, this document focuses on the status of DRR implementation since the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030. Adopted in March 2015, the Sendai Framework emphasizes concepts such as disaster risk reduction and resilience, which is an evolution from an essential disaster management approach to a vision of *disaster risk management*, with the understanding that risk in itself is a social construction and disasters can be prevented through social processes where, according to the Report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology relating to Disaster Risk Reduction (OIEWG), “Disaster risk reduction is the policy objective of disaster risk management, and its goals and objectives are defined in disaster risk reduction strategies and plans”.

The SFDRR seeks a global outcome: “The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods, and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries” and, to achieve it, it suggests three key areas of action: (i) reduction of existing risk, (ii) prevent the creation of risk, and (iii) build resilience to residual risk.³³

In addition, the SFDRR relies on a human rights-based approach, recognizes that DRR requires empowerment and inclusive, accessible, and non-discriminatory participation, and calls for the integration of the gender, age, disability, class and ethnicity perspectives in all policies and practices, in addition to promoting the leadership of women and youth as agents of change. Likewise, it considers women’s participation is

essential for the efficient management of disaster risk and calls for measures to empower women in disaster prevention and preparedness and build their capacities to ensure the resilience of the livelihoods of their families and communities in adverse or post-disaster scenarios.

This is complemented with an evolution in the understanding of disaster risk in recent years as a result of important follow-up and assessment exercises, such as the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR 2019) and documents such as the Resolution on the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 (A/RES/70/204) or, more recently, the Report of the Secretary General on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/75/226* 202) and the

33 It establishes 13 guiding principles (6 of which are considered structural), 7 global targets (Targets A to G) and 4 priority areas at the global, regional, national and local levels (see Graph 2).

Resolution approved by the General Assembly in 2020. (A/RES/75/216). The latter documents call for governments to promote the full participation and leadership of women, as well as persons with disabilities, in the design, management,

resource allocation, and implementation of DRR policies, plans, and programmes, and recognize that disasters and the consequent disruption to their support networks disproportionately affect women and girls.

GRAPH 2. SENDAI FRAMEWORK CONTENTS



* Part of the 13 guiding principles

TARGETS

- 1** Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030, aiming to lower average per 100,000 global mortality between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015.
- 2** Substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030, aiming to lower the average global figure per 100,000 between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015.
- 3** Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to the global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030.
- 4** Substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030.
- 5** Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2030.
- 6** Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of this framework by 2030.
- 7** Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to people by 2030.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Priority 1 → Understanding disaster risk.

Priority 2 → Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.

Priority 3 → Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.

Priority 4 → Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to “build back better” in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

GROUPS OF INTEREST

- Public and private sector, civil society, organized volunteer organizations and community-based organizations.
- Women, children, young people, persons with disabilities, older adults, indigenous peoples, and migrants.
- Academia, companies, and media outlets.

LEVELS

- Local
- National
- Regional
- Global

Source: Prepared by the authors with data from SFDRR.

In this same regard, in the LAC region, the Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk in Latin America and the Caribbean (RAR) 2021 proposes an understanding of these correlations with the aim of having more comprehensive risk-informed development processes and policies as a paradigm-shifting strategy. Likewise, during the 7th Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the Americas and the Caribbean, held in November 2021, Member States from the region reviewed and updated the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas and the Caribbean (RAP) and issued a Ministerial Declaration³⁴ that, among other things, expresses the countries' commitment to engage multiple stakeholders: women, older adults, persons with disabilities, children, young people, rural communities, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and other historically marginalized groups.

The Regional Action Plan, on the other hand, was updated with the aim of integrating lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in connection with the systemic nature of risk, which has highlighted the urgency to build resilience in a cross-cutting manner in all sectors of development. One aspect worth noting is the innovative inclusion of two specific initiatives related to gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership:

- Regional initiative 5, which recommends incorporating knowledge on hazards, including information on the differentiated needs of

women and other historically marginalized populations, such as youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and older persons; and

- Regional initiative 14, which recognizes the need to promote inclusive governance across disaster risk governance frameworks, integrating the active participation of populations with differentiated needs.

Another innovation in this updated version of the RAP is the renewed regional commitment towards coherence and the clear intention of coordinating efforts, actions, and resources with climate change adaptation, mitigation, and sustainable development agendas and actions. Both the RAP and the Ministerial Declaration stress the importance of a more representative and inclusive language, as well as the need to identify and address differentiated impacts, needs, knowledge, and inputs.

At the subregional level, the Latin America and Caribbean region also has DRR strategies and policies adapted to the different territories. It is worth noting that these instruments are usually binding and, therefore, establish specific commitments for signatory countries. In this context, these tools provide great opportunities to produce concrete guidelines for including the gender perspective in DRR as an obligation for States. Table 1 shows DRR subregional strategies and their level of inclusion of the gender perspective.

34 DRRM government agencies and bodies, civil society and young people contributed to this Declaration.

TABLE 1. SUBREGIONAL DRR STRATEGIES AND LEVEL OF INCLUSION OF GENDER PERSPECTIVE

STRATEGIES AND POLICIES	LEVEL OF INCLUSION OF THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE
<u>Andean Strategy for Disaster Risk Management (2017)</u>	It states that women and people with disabilities should lead and publicly promote universally accessible approaches based on gender equity during the phases of response and reconstruction. The Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance of the Andean Community of Nations (CAPRADE/CAN) leads its formulation and coordination.
<u>Disaster Risk Management Strategy of the MERCOSUR Countries 2019 -2030 (in Spanish)</u>	It includes specific considerations on gender and the advancement of women only in reference to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), without addressing their role or involvement in the design of the strategy. The Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management of the Common Market of the South (RMAGIR/MERCOSUR) leads its formulation and coordination.
<u>Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy of the Caribbean Subregion 2014-2024</u>	It makes reference to gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting element for the analysis of differences in vulnerability between men and women, girls and boys, and how these vulnerabilities must be taken into account in the design of DRR policies, strategies, and programmes, as well as in recovery and reconstruction processes. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leads the formulation and coordination of this strategy which, for the first time, has a female Executive Director. CDEMA also has a gender working group that provides technical guidance and has developed <u>practical manuals for mainstreaming gender into disaster risk reduction and management</u> .
<u>Plan Regional de Gestión Integral de Riesgo de Desastres (PRGIRD) 2019-2023 Centroamérica and Central American Policy on Comprehensive Risk Management (PCGIR) 2017-2030</u>	Their principles include gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men, with a balance between participation and treatment. It brings attention to the differentiated form in which women and men are affected by disasters and the different roles assigned to them in risk management and development processes. The Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic of the Central American Integration System (CEPRENAC/SICA) lead their formulation and coordination. Like CDEMA, this intergovernmental agency is currently headed, for the first time, by a woman holding the position of Executive Secretary.

Source: Prepared by the authors

3.2. International Commitments on Women's Rights and their Relationship to DRR

The *2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* provide a comprehensive link between sustainable development, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls and have resulted in an agenda to address environmental and climate challenges and disaster risk.³⁵ Thus, of the 38 country indicators defined to measure progress on the 7 SFDRR targets, those that correspond to the targets related to reducing the impact of damage and loss (targets A, B, C, and D) and national and local strategies and planning processes (target E) were also adopted as 11 indicators for 4 targets under SDGs 1, 11 and 13. However, it is important to note that, upon defining the SFDRR indicators, countries

decided the collection of sex, age or disability disaggregated data would be optional. These disaggregated data are important to gain a better understanding and gather evidence-based information, as well as for the formulation of public policies and programmes to bridge gaps.

In addition to the international commitments established in the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, there are other documents that are part of the global roadmap to promote the rights of women and girls, as well as the substantial inclusion of the gender perspective in development actions and policies. Table 2 shows some of the main documents in this regard and their relationship to disaster risk reduction.

TABLE 2. RELEVANT COMMITMENTS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO DRR

COMMITMENT	DESCRIPTION AND RELATIONSHIP TO DRR
<u>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</u>	It calls for State Parties to enforce the rights of rural women to land and natural resources, health, education, employment, housing, water, sanitation, energy, and participation. (General Recommendation 34, 2016). It highlights the disproportionate impact disasters have on women and girls and calls on States to protect and promote their rights in relation to DRR through measures such as integrating gender-related dimensions in programmes and projects, in addition to access to resources, knowledge, and technology to promote the DRR capacity of women and girls (General Recommendation 37, 2018).
<u>Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women - "Belem do Pará Convention"</u>	The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women, Belém do Pará, establishes women's right to live a life free of violence and describes different forms of violence. It has led to the adoption of laws and policies on prevention, eradication, and punishment of violence against women in the States Parties to the Convention, the formulation of national plans, ↓

35 For additional information on gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, see UN Women (2018). *Turning Promises to Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

organization of campaigns, and implementation of protocols and support services, among other initiatives. The scope of this convention extends to the public and private spheres, including women's participation in DRR processes and mechanisms, in their role as first responders and in response to disasters, including, among other things, the conditions necessary to protect them in shelters.

[Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#)

An outcome of the 4th World Conference on Women, it is to date the most comprehensive and ambitious international instrument to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. It states that environmental degradation affects all people, especially women and girls and, in particular, rural and indigenous women. Its 2000 review (E/CN.6/2020/3) already called for gender-sensitive policies and financing for effective DRRM, as well as the effective management of natural resources, environmental governance, and climate action, in the context of a fair transition towards climate stabilization with decent work, social protection and investments in the care economy.

[Montevideo Strategy](#)

The Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 was approved at the 13th regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. The aim of the Montevideo Strategy is to guide the implementation of the Regional gender agenda as a roadmap to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region from the perspective of gender equality and women's autonomy and human rights. It identifies four structural challenges that hinder the full exercise of the rights of women and girls and, therefore, their capacity to decide and take action with regard to their own development, including DRR: a) socioeconomic inequality and poverty; b) discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of a culture of privilege; c) the sexual division of labour and the unfair social organization of care, and d) the concentration of power and hierarchical relationships in the public sphere. It proposes 74 measures under 10 implementation pillars.

[Santiago Commitment](#)

This agreement was an outcome of the 14th Regional Conference on Women. It is a regional tool to address the structural causes of gender inequality and promote policies to respond to all types of crisis, including that created by the COVID-19 pandemic, in the short, medium, and long-term. Biological hazards, including epidemics and pandemics, are also acknowledged and addressed by the SFDRR as part of DRR.

Source: Prepared by the authors

These commitments include a diversity of national policies, plans, programmes, and actions undertaken by countries in the region to implement the SFDRR guidelines in their territories. This includes national and local DRR policies, strategies and plans, the incorporation of DRR into development or sectoral strategies and plans, intersectoral mechanisms such as national disaster risk reduction and management systems, and the importance of linking them to Machineries for the Advancement of Women (MAWs), which describe the status conferred by countries to institutions leading and coordinating gender equality policies through laws, decrees and other official measures, and that, in Latin America and the Caribbean, were created more than 30 years ago as entities with different levels of institutionality and hierarchy.³⁶

Gender mainstreaming in country reports on the Sendai Framework submitted by countries in the region is still limited. While some countries are making efforts to mainstream gender in all their public policies, including those related to disaster risk reduction, there is still room for improvement in this area. In this regard, initiatives such as those to build national capacities, the production of disaggregated data, or the incorporation of machineries for the advancement of women into disaster risk reduction planning processes, among others, can be of great help. This would help States ensure that the inclusion of the gender perspective and the real and effective participation of women are integrated into public DRR policies, enhancing their capacity to respond to any contingency.

36 For additional information, see *Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean. Level within governmental hierarchy of national Machineries for the Advancement of Women (MAM)*

4. Achievements, Opportunities and Challenges to the Inclusion of the Gender Perspective in Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean

The agenda for the advancement of gender equality and the leadership of women and girls in DRR in the region has made progress in recent years, including the development of strategies, programmes, and projects, the publication of documents and relevant experiences, and the implementation of training, among other initiatives with different territorial reach. Nevertheless, there are still significant challenges, many of them related to the inclusion of the gender perspective in the four priorities of the SFDRR and described in the commitments of the Regional Action Plan for its implementation in the Americas and the Caribbean: develop knowledge on disaster risk, strengthen disaster risk governance, increase levels of investment, and promote a better response, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

In this context, the priority theme of CSW66, “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and programmes,” represents a unique opportunity to advance

this critical agenda. To facilitate the discussion and agreements on a common regional position, this document suggests the analysis of the DRR component considering the above-mentioned priorities from a human rights and intersectionality perspective.

4.1. Priority 1: Knowledge on Disaster Risk with a Gender Perspective

As already explained, vulnerability is not an intrinsic characteristic of populations, including women and girls, who are not inherently ‘vulnerable’; their rights are systematically violated due to a series of social, economic, cultural, environmental, institutional, and political structural conditions. A real and in-depth knowledge of how these factors lead to barriers to gender equality and women’s autonomy in disaster risk reduction is key to advancing policies and practices that are more inclusive and contribute to sustainable development.

This knowledge is informed, at least in part, by the production of statistical data. We know that, in general, that which is not measured does not count, and in the case of disaggregated data on the effects and impact of disasters, the limitations are more than evident. This makes it even more difficult to establish connections between structural conditions that increase vulnerability and the increased risk and impact of disasters.

LACK OF SEX, AGE, AND DISABILITY DISAGGREGATED DATA

The lack of sex, age, and disability disaggregated data (SADDD) continues to be a barrier to understanding differentiated impacts and formulating more inclusive and gender-sensitive DRR policies and programmes. According to the online national monitoring and reporting system (the global Sendai Framework Monitor - SFM), of the 149 countries currently in the process of monitoring and reporting through the SFM, only 44 (30%) include sex-disaggregated data. The OIEWG acknowledged the importance of having this disaggregation and encouraged Member States to build capacities in this area.³⁷ In this regard, the collection and use of disaggregated data should no longer be optional, especially considering its importance for the understanding and formulation of DRR policies and programmes.

An analysis of data from different reports on disasters in 141 countries found that the highest mortality rates, which are often reported among women, were directly related to their level of economic and social rights compared to men. However, no significant differences in the number of deaths based on sex were found in societies where women and men enjoy equal rights. Gender roles have had a significant impact on death and injury rates among men and women in different contexts.³⁸

In the Latin America and the Caribbean region, despite recognition of the importance of incorporating knowledge based on data on the different populations affected by disasters, significant challenges still remain. Of the 35 countries of the Americas and the Caribbean region, 28 (80%) have an SMF monitoring and reporting process with different levels of use, but only 14%, or 4 of the LAC countries that are using the online SFM, are including sex-disaggregated data (Antigua and Barbuda, Chile, Costa Rica, and Ecuador). Some of the factors that may explain this situation include the low level of women's

participation in the design of indicators,³⁹ the decision to make a disaggregation of data by sex optional for national reports, and the fact that the majority of the tools to collect data for national reports were designed with a focus on response and recovery. In addition, currently, only 20% of the SFDRR national focal points in the region are women.

However, progress has been made in the incorporation of gender considerations in statistics. In our region, the working group for DRR of ECLAC's Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA) produced a document with institutional and

37 Paragraph 23 of their document states that, *"While data disaggregation might be highly desirable, it was noted that it might not be immediately feasible across all Member States, and therefore could not be considered a requirement in relevant indicators. The working group encourages Member States to commence or, as appropriate, further enhance the collection of data on disaster loss disaggregated by income, sex, age and disability"*

38 UNDRR (2021) *Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes. Implementing the SFDRR. and CSW66 Expert Group Meeting Documents.*

39 More than 300 national delegates from 114 countries participated in the definition of the SFDRR indicators. 20% of them were from LAC, with a participation of 58% men and 42% women. Of the 7 delegates from the 4 non-Spanish speaking Caribbean participating, only one was a woman. For additional information, see: OIEWG (2021) *Recommendations of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction.*

methodological recommendations to measure the SFDRR indicators. The main ones include:

- “11. Understand that statistics with a gender approach contribute to the elimination of stereotypes, the formulation of inclusive policies, and follow-up on agreements, especially regarding gender equality (target 5 of the SDGs) and,
- 12. Use inclusive language in the design of DRR indicators. Collect sex, age and disability disaggregated data to generate indicators with a gender approach that recognize historically marginalized populations [and] the different needs and capacities of these populations, as well as the differentiated impact of disasters, which will help decision-makers in the formulation of inclusive risk management strategies”.⁴⁰

Progress has also been made in incorporating elements of the gender perspective into vulnerability and risk studies in the region. In Cuba, for example, from 2015 to 2017, the project to Strengthen the Hydrometeorological Early Warning System (FORSAT) initiated a process to improve a set of tools by incorporating the gender perspective⁴¹. Pilot actions were implemented with the participation of the National HVR group

of Cuba’s Environmental Agency (AMA) and the Federation of Cuban Women to facilitate the subsequent incorporation of the approach into the national methodology.⁴² Also, in Cuba, the initiative *PNUD Genera Igualdad*⁴³ has been implementing the project *Resiliencia Costera* (“Coastal Resilience”),⁴⁴ which promotes gender equality through an integrated DRR and CCA approach in territorial development planning.

The implementation of gender markers in the region is another achievement in the incorporation of elements to understand risk with a gender perspective. In addition to global examples,⁴⁵ there are examples specific to the LAC region, such as the *UN Women’s Gender with Age Marker*, which acknowledges that, in every society, individuals have different gender roles that change with age and affect their access to and their level of utilization of resources, as well as the way they use those resources. Understanding this facilitates the localization of humanitarian responses and provides more detailed knowledge of disaster risk.

Regarding knowledge sharing and global partnerships to promote gender mainstreaming in DRRM in the region, one relevant case is that of the project *Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice (GRRIPP)*.⁴⁶ The actions of the GRRIPP networks include supporting gender equality initiatives such as

40 CEA-CEPAL (2021) *Recomendaciones institucionales y metodológicas para la medición de indicadores ODS relacionados con desastres y con el Marco de Sendai para la Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres*.

41 These actions included the Population Risk Perception Survey –a tool of their Hazard, Vulnerability and Risk (HVR) Assessments– and a Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) questionnaire administered by the Red Cross as part of its disaster preparedness efforts.

42 *Percepción de riesgos en Cuba con Enfoque de Género* (2015) and PNUD (2017) *La Integración del Enfoque de Género en los Proyectos de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres*.

43 *PNUD Genera Igualdad* is UNDP’s strategy to accelerate the gender equality process in all the programmes or institutions with which UNDP partners. It has several lines of work and, in the case of DRR, it implements actions related to climate change, urban and rural environments, and disaster risk management.

44 The implementation of this project is being led by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA) through the Environment Agency (AMA) and its National Risk Assessment Group.

45 See the *OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Gender equality policy marker*; that of the *European Union (EU/ECHO)* or that of the *Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), in the context of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)*.

46 GRRIPP is a knowledge-sharing and collaboration project implemented by a group of universities whose aim is to combine theory, policy and practice to promote a gender-responsive disaster risk approach.

the project for gender equality and integration of the LGBTI+ population in local disaster risk management from an intersectional perspective in the province of Chacabuco, in the Chile Metropolitan Region.

Despite this type of achievement, and while numerous documents refer to the availability of and access to information and knowledge for women as a priority, especially for those that belong to historically excluded groups, in practice, this is still a pending task. The region still lacks formal and detailed studies on access to DRR information (including statistical data) by women and other marginalized populations, and it must still reflect on their participation in the

process of producing that knowledge beyond being a “target population” of data collection, and whether they participate in their management in some form. In other words, women are not fully participating in negotiations and decision-making processes related to their present and future in the area of DRR. States and other stakeholders must still ask themselves structural questions such as: who participates in the generation of DRR knowledge, who manages that knowledge, and with what objectives. In summary, we still have a long way to go not only in terms of *about whom* we are generating knowledge but also *with who* and *for whom*.

4.2. Priority 2: Governance for disaster risk reduction with a gender perspective

“Disaster reduction” and “disaster risk reduction” are different processes. This difference involves a significant change in focus and also in the forms of governance necessary to achieve it (RAR 2021). This paradigm shift translates into a structural change: moving from responding to emergencies caused by a disaster to planning the actions necessary for disaster risk reduction by reducing vulnerability and developing coordinated strategies with the participation of all the sectors of society at all levels. It means moving from looking at disaster risk as an issue of exclusive interest for the sector dealing with emergencies to seeing it as a structural strategy for development, with multidisciplinary and intersectoral implications for all sectors of society.

The discussion around the status of inclusion of the gender perspective in disaster risk governance requires an assessment of the level of participation of women’s organizations and women themselves, in addition to their leadership in these processes. Even though

women’s participation in decision-making is clearly established in international human rights frameworks, there is still a significant gender disparity that has a negative impact on the number of women playing a leadership role in DRR. For example, currently, only 20% of the SFDRR national focal points in the region are women. This has to do with institutional and socioeconomic factors that limit women’s role in DRR governance. Added to this are sociocultural factors such as the patriarchal culture, religious beliefs, women’s level of education, or the domestic work burden.⁴⁷ For example, the *Rapid Gender Analysis* (RGA) developed by UN Women and CARE in the context of the *Situation Report of the Haiti Earthquake (2021)* revealed that, although 79% of the respondents perceived that women participated in the humanitarian response, their influence in decision-making was limited compared to men (22% vs. 52%).

Fortunately, there are initiatives that are working to eliminate these disparities in women’s

47 Hemachandra, K. et. al. 2018) *Role of Women In Disaster Risk Governance*.

participation in DRR. One of them is the Women's International Network on Disaster Risk Reduction (WIN DRR), a programme that receives support from the Australian Government and UNDRR.⁴⁸ Another is the initiative *Latin America and the Caribbean Network of Women for DRR*,⁴⁹ promoted by UN Women's Regional Offices, GNDR, and UNDRR, that was conceived as a space to share experiences, challenges, and opportunities, generate ideas and solutions, and, above all, to strengthen the position of women and girls in DRR in the region. It is also worth noting that at the recent 7th Regional Platform for DRR held in 2021, there was high participation of

women (53% participants were women, 46% men, and 1% self-identified with a different gender), as well as a total of 58 persons with some disability.

Another achievement worth noting in terms of enhancing the representation of women and other traditionally marginalized groups in DRR in Latin America and the Caribbean is the fact that, for the first time in their history, two intergovernmental DRR agencies (CEPREDENAC and CDEMA) are headed by women. These agencies also have gender working groups, manuals, and different mechanisms to provide technical advice in the field.⁵⁰

PARTICIPATION OF A DIVERSITY OF STAKEHOLDERS

UNDRR continues to support efforts to enhance the role of a wide range of sectors and stakeholders in DRR and facilitate their contributions, in line with the commitment to strengthen DRR governance and management. The Sendai Framework Voluntary Commitments (SFVC) online platform found⁵¹ that there are 94 commitments worldwide, 26 of which have a particular focus on gender-related actions. Of these, 4 commitments are in LAC (1 regional commitment, 1 in Guatemala, and 2 in Haiti), with 16 participating organizations and 11 deliverables:

- Documentary "Tsunami Ladies. Resilient Women from Chile and Japan, connected by the Sea". Scope: Americas, Asia. Status: Progress update needed. Regional scope.
- Building Community Resilience through Community-Based Disaster Risk Management. Scope: Afghanistan, Chad, Guatemala, Pakistan. Status: completed. Local scope.
- Localised Preparedness for More Effective Response with Affected Communities. Scope: Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, and the Philippines. Status: completed. Local scope.
- Intense Promotion of the Sendai Framework with the Haitian Communities. Scope: Haiti. Status: Progress update needed. Local scope.

48 WIN DRR has four specific objectives: i) building the evidence base for women's leadership in DRR (through research and knowledge generation); ii) strengthening leadership capacities (through training, mentorship and peer-to-peer support programmes); iii) recognizing women's DRR achievements through annual awards for women's leadership; and iv) supporting institutions to adopt strategies and policies to enhance women's leadership.

49 The Network was officially launched on October 13 2021 on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) with an initial high-level dialogue where the participants shared their ideas on challenges and progress in the field. The Network currently has more than 800 participants, mostly women.

50 See, for example, CDEMA's Manuals and Strategies for mainstreaming gender into disaster risk reduction and management and Campus Virtual de CEPREDENAC, which includes one area of training on Gender and Youth.

51 Search filtered with two criteria: geography and gender, performed on January 7 2022 on the Sendai Framework Voluntary Commitments online platform.

Another relevant example of DRR governance with a gender perspective at the subregional level is the Meeting on Gender-Responsiveness and Disaster Resilience during the COVID-19 Crisis organized in collaboration with UN Women's Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean (MCO) and the Saint Lucia Parliament. This meeting included a dialogue between parliamentarians, technical experts, and civil society organizations around gender inequality in the impacts and experiences of emergency situations caused by different hazards. The participants addressed how to integrate the gender perspective in prevention, response, and recovery measures to meet differentiated needs and build disaster resilience capacities.

Achievements have also been made at the national level. In Central America, for example, the Guatemala Disaster Risk Management National Plan 2018-2022 (in Spanish) explicitly refers to the need to achieve the empowerment and inclusive participation of people disproportionately affected by disasters. In the Caribbean, it is worth noting the plans and strategies of Guyana and Saint Lucia: the National Integrated Disaster Risk Management Plan and Implementation Strategy for Guyana, for example, establishes five DRR strategic objectives and the articulation of those aspects with gender, environment, and climate change aspects.

While States and organizations are now beginning to make this type of statement and to adopt inclusive language, there is still a disconnect in the way this language translates into a real participation of women and traditionally excluded groups.

In addition, when it comes to representation and coordination, access to knowledge, including data and statistics, is also essential for effective DRR governance. According to the

Gender-Responsive Disaster Preparedness and Recovery in the Caribbean: Desk Review of the Canada Caribbean Resilience Facility (CCRF), the majority of DRR policies in the Caribbean countries lack considerations regarding the specific needs of men, women, children, or older persons with disabilities or chronic diseases, as well as the needs of other historically marginalized populations.

To address this situation, UNDRR promotes the inclusion of gender equality in DRR planning through the use of disaggregated data, training, and strategic advice for the SFDRR national focal points, national statistical offices, and other stakeholders from national DRR, statistical, sustainable development, and climate change systems. As regards the production of statistical data to understand the differentiated impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls, in April 2020, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO) issued a declaration that clearly refers to the need to prioritize efforts to address the needs of women in the frontline of the response, without neglecting other issues such as gender-based violence, access to sexual and reproductive health services, and women's economic autonomy and participation in decision-making, among other things.⁵²

The capacities of decision-makers, on the other hand, are key to the implementation of DRR actions with a gender perspective in their areas of work. Also, in 2021, the UNDRR Global Education and Training Institute (UNDRR GETI) trained a total of 744 national and local government officials and representatives of other stakeholders from 40 countries and territories in the region, 49% of whom were women. However, the lack of resources and the weakness of local institutions⁵³ continue to be significant limitations.

52 [Declaration of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament on the differentiated impact of COVID-19 on women and girls.](#)

53 [FAO/UNDRR \(2017\) Guidelines and Recommendations for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Agriculture Sector and Nutrition and Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)

4.3. Priority 3: Investing in DRR for resilience with a Gender Perspective

Upon analyzing the challenges to gender mainstreaming in DRR investments, it is important to consider three aspects in particular: (i) the actions of the public sector, including the definition of policies and programmes, implementation of activities, use of resources, appointment of persons responsible, development of investment projects and direct or indirect financing; (ii) the decisions of the private sector regarding different DRR actions, such as investments, business partnerships and financial and insurance support, and (iii) international cooperation actions through Official Development Assistance (ODA) resources.

The first point to emphasize is the need to address the lack of specific information on DRR financing with a gender perspective, which seems to indicate the issue has not been prioritized.

In the case of the public sector, governments could increase DRR investments and resources with a gender and inclusion perspective, integrating it in economic planning, public investment strategies, and spending budgets and frameworks in all sectors and at all levels. As countries develop financing strategies for the implementation of national and local DRR strategies, it will be essential to ensure these include gender equality, with the participation of Ministries of Women in the development of national DRR strategies and reviews of risk-informed public budgets and investment projects.

The private sector is another key stakeholder in DRR investments with a gender perspective for resilience. There is a significant gap in the availability and accessibility of insurance products for households and SMEs that allow them access to funds to deal with disasters that affect their physical assets. Despite the limited availability of information, we have identified

several good practices. One of them is the Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies (ARISE). With support from UNDRR, ARISE is a network of private sector entities, including businesses and SMEs, the majority of which are led by women, working for resilience in sectors where women are overrepresented.

This global initiative is made up of national and local networks of private companies committed to risk-informed development and disaster risk and preparedness actions. ARISE has four priority areas: (i) enhancing the resilience of small and medium enterprises (SMEs); (ii) Integrating disaster and climate risk into investment decisions by the financial sector; (iii) incentivizing disaster risk reduction and enhanced data for risk-informed decision-making through engagement with the insurance industry as a global risk manager, and (iv) supporting resilient infrastructure development. The work of ARISE in the Americas and the Caribbean region covers these four areas through national networks operating in 21 countries and the INTEGRARSE and CARICHAM⁵⁴ networks.

The limited data available on DRR international cooperation funds with a gender perspective in LAC suggests opportunities for improvement in the areas of inclusion and sensitivity to gender inequalities. On the other hand, while data for the region is scarce, the global report *International Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction: Target E*, prepared by UNDRR, shows that only 11% of official development assistance (ODA) is disaster-related, and of this, only 0.5% is allocated to DRR and disaster prevention. This amounts to only 50 cents for every US \$100 of ODA spent on DRR. While this figure does not include aspects related to the gender perspective, the trend observed in this area suggests the amount is even lower. The

54 INTEGRARSE is the Central American Integration Network for Corporate Social Responsibility, and CARICHAM is the network of Chambers of Commerce of the Caribbean Community.

document also notes that while ODA resources are allocated to preparedness and rehabilitation, investments to prevent future disasters and mortality are insufficient.⁵⁵

Despite significant achievements in gender mainstreaming in multilateral bank financing actions and the allocation of international

cooperation funds in the region, such as the CREWS project in the Caribbean to improve Early Warning Systems - EWSs (described in detail under Priority No. 4), it is still necessary to implement mechanisms for systematic follow-up on DRR financing and the identification of gaps to implement the relevant corrective actions.

4.4. Priority 4: Preparedness for effective response, rehabilitation, and building back better with a gender perspective

Capacity building with a long-term multi-hazard preparedness focus as part of a comprehensive risk reduction approach is an opportunity not only for DRR but also to transform underlying gender inequalities. Thus, to identify progress made and outstanding challenges in the construction of an efficient response aligned with the “building back better” premise in post-disaster recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, it is essential to consider the level of engagement of the broadest diversity of stakeholders possible but, in particular, the level of participation and leadership of feminist and women’s organizations and other traditionally marginalized populations, such as indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants, persons with disabilities and LGBTIQ persons. It is also essential to assess knowledge, capacities, willingness to participate in DRR, resources, and practices for the adoption of the gender perspective in the above-mentioned priority areas (knowledge generation, sustained financing, and enhancing risk governance).

In particular, effective disaster preparedness requires far-reaching gender-responsive multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS). Data in connection with target G reported by countries

show more investments and technology transfers are required to develop forecasting, monitoring, and early warning capacities in developing countries. In late 2020, the CREWS initiative supported 57 less developed countries and small island developing states (SIDS) to enhance hydrometeorological systems and MHEWS, including gender mainstreaming as a key element.

In the LAC region, there are initiatives to integrate the gender equality and human rights perspective in DRR. These initiatives include examples of good practices at the regional, national and local levels. The *EnGenDER*⁵⁶ regional Caribbean initiative, for example, recognizes that different populations respond and react to disasters differently and also that groups with less knowledge and capacity are often the ones hit the hardest. It also proposes to empower governments so they can integrate the human rights and gender perspectives in DRR, climate change, and environmental management interventions.⁵⁷ One of its strengths is that it recognizes the differences between countries participating in gender equality, and the incorporation of this approach with DRR requires a differentiated and conscious approach

55 Study conducted for the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2021.

56 [Enabling a Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean.](#)

57 The initiative, which is led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with UN Women and the World Food Programme (WFP), is being implemented in nine countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Granada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname). [EnGenDer Regional Initiative and Project Document.](#)

depending on the different contexts. The initiative also aims to empower governments “to take ownership of their disaster risks and exposure with better national arrangements to deal with possible large-scale recovery needs, including improved shock responsiveness in national systems including social protection finance tools for the most vulnerable.”

Along the same lines, the CREWS project was launched in 2018 in the 15 CARICOM member countries, with an approach that prioritizes the inclusion of gender and vulnerable groups such as women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities. The project has three components: (i) Regional strategy and identification of priority investment needs, (ii) Institutional strengthening and streamlining of hydrometeorological services and EWSs, and (iii) Support for piloting national activities to improve EWSs. CREWS Caribbean has partnered with the World Bank (WB), the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) for the implementation of this project, as well as with other regional and national agencies.

Also, in the Caribbean, the World Bank document *Gender-Responsive Disaster Preparedness and Recovery in the Caribbean* presents a review of good practices on risk knowledge. 77% of the participants in the community hazard mapping of the project “Climate Risk Atlas in Negril, Jamaica,” implemented in 2015, were women who helped to identify high-risk areas and critical facilities

and infrastructure that could be affected by a disaster. In addition to women, this project included older persons and youth in a collective construction process

As far as local initiatives are concerned, in Peru, after the 2017 floods that hit the country as a result of the coastal El Niño event, UNDP, with funding from the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO), launched an initiative that brought together six associations of women artisans in Catacaos, in the north of the country, including approximately 250 women, to rebuild their economies after the crisis. This initiative, known as the *Tejiendo Futuro* (“Weaving the Future”) Programme, included not only women but also people with disabilities to create opportunities for women to rebuild their communities and livelihoods.⁵⁸ Its support focused on female-headed households through the use of a “cash for work”⁵⁹ methodology to help the population return to their homes and get a temporary job or occupation. Thanks to this initiative, women were able to participate in the reconstruction of their communities through the safe removal of debris and mud around houses, residential locations, and community spaces such as soup kitchens, health posts, and green spaces and, at the same time, they reactivated their homes and livelihoods. The initiative also received support from the UN Volunteers (UNV) programme and the Energy Network of Peru (ISA REP), which enhanced women’s contribution to the recovery of Catacaos and the resilience of their communities.

58 For more information, see PNUD (2017) *Género y Recuperación ante Desastres*; PNUD (2017) *Manos de Reconstrucción* and PNUD (2017) *Tejiendo Futuro*.

59 For more information, see: PNUD (2017) *Trabajando por la Recuperación*.



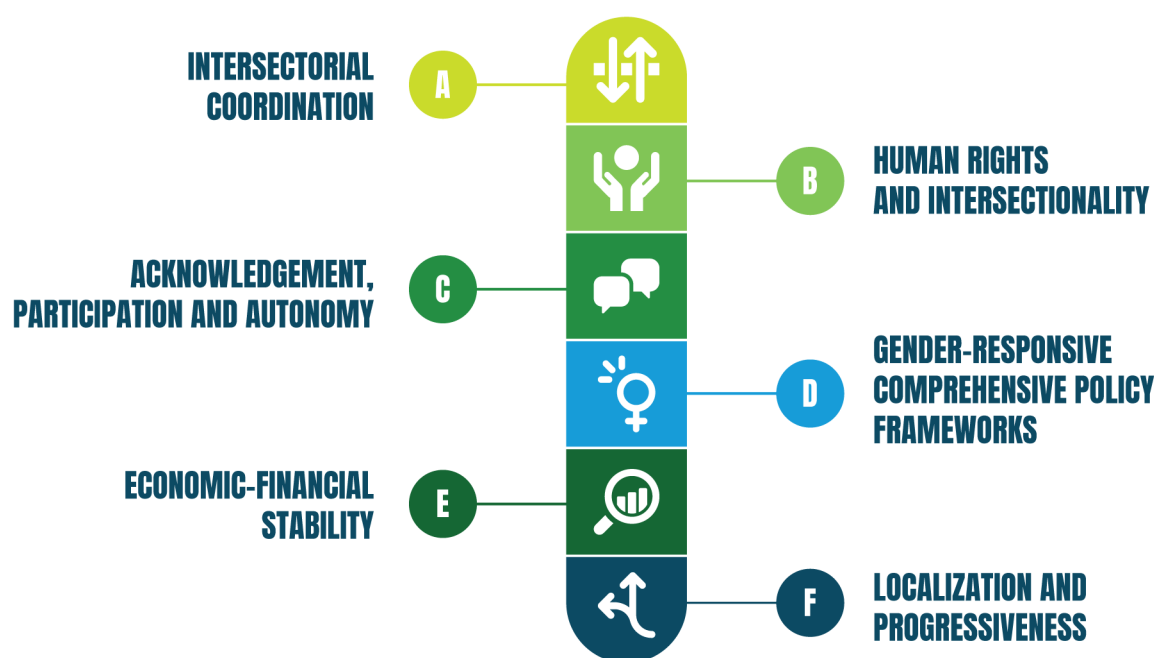
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5. Guiding Principles and Recommendations for Mainstreaming Gender in Disaster Risk Reduction

In line with the challenges mentioned above, we propose six Guiding Principles (Graph 3) that, in turn, are related to a series of recommendations (Table 3) for the structural inclusion of the gender perspective in DRR actions and programmes, considering the SFDRR priorities.⁶⁰

GRAPH 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN DRR



Source: Prepared by the authors

60 For the design of these Guiding Principles we took into consideration the ten areas of the *Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030* in order not to lose sight of the regional gender perspective roadmap. The ten areas and their integration are: 1. Normative framework: equality and the rule of law (integrated into guiding principle D); 2. Institutional architecture: multidimensional and comprehensive gender equality policies (integrated into guiding principle D); 3. Popular and citizen participation: democratization of policy and society (integrated into guiding principle C); 4. State capacity-building and strengthening: public administration based on equality and non-discrimination (integrated into guiding principle E); 5. Financing: mobilizing sufficient and sustainable resources for gender equality (integrated into guiding principle E); 6. Communication: access to information and cultural change (integrated into guiding principle C); 7. Technology: towards e-government and innovative and inclusive economies (integrated into guiding principle E); 8. Cooperation: towards democratic multilateral governance (integrated into guiding principles C and E); 9. Information systems: transforming data into information, information into knowledge and knowledge into political decisions (integrated into guiding principle C); and 10. Monitoring, evaluation and accountability: guaranteeing rights and transparency (integrated into guiding principle D).

5.1. Intersectoral Coordination

To develop DRR policies and actions with a gender perspective, it is essential to have intersectoral coordination, understood as the joint work between different stakeholders of society, including Ministries of Women, Economy, Finance, Planning, and Environment, as well as agencies responsible for Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Ministries of Social Development, national DRR authorities, National Statistical Offices, local governments, national public investment systems, and statistical offices. It is also crucial to work with feminist, women's and civil society organizations, and the private sector and academia, among others.

5.2. Human Rights and Intersectionality

It is important to recognize that gender is not an isolated factor, but due to the power dynamics inherent in our societies, it overlaps with other factors such as class, race, ethnicity, age, disability, sexuality, or geographical location.⁶¹ This creates systemic inequalities that influence disaster risk and risk reduction processes. A human rights and intersectionality approach will bring attention to inequalities leading to serious human rights violations against women and girls, which are exacerbated in the case of indigenous and Afro-descendant women, women with disabilities, LGBTIQ persons, or persons in a situation of human mobility, among others. These rights violations range from the possibility of experiencing different forms of violence to barriers of access to water, health, quality education, decent work, or legal counsel.

5.3. Acknowledgment, Participation, and Autonomy

Capacity building and the willingness of government officials, civil society organizations, communities, the private sector, academia, and other relevant stakeholders to engage in the participatory formulation of public policies with a gender perspective and women's leadership are key. This requires integrating women's organizations and other traditionally excluded groups, such as indigenous and Afro-descendant women, in the process of formulation and implementation of policies in all their stages, participating with full autonomy, that is, with the capacity of ideation, creation, and decision.

61 UNDRR (2021) *Expert Group Meeting: Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes*. Background Papers: Resurreccion, B.

5.4. Gender-responsive Comprehensive Policy Frameworks

As already explained, the shift from the objective of disaster reduction to the broader and more sustainable objective of disaster risk reduction introduced by the SFDRR in 2015 is not a minor change. This requires integrating the gender perspective in policies, plans, and decision-making processes as an integral part of its guiding principles, with inequality as a key element to consider. Therefore, this is an opportunity for States to adapt their DRR policy frameworks to the SFDRR premises, paying particular attention to the structural integration of the gender perspective in national policy frameworks.

5.5. Economic-Financial Stability

As in other spheres, economic-financial stability is key for States to be able to allocate sufficient resources to ensure the continuity of policies and actions with a gender perspective that makes it possible to sustain these policies over time and have a real impact in terms of bridging gender gaps and contributing to the empowerment and autonomy of women. States can increase DRR investments and resources and adapt their policies to incorporate DRR aspects into their investments, economic planning, public investment strategies, and spending budgets and frameworks in all sectors and at all levels while ensuring gender mainstreaming in the formulation and implementation of these initiatives.

5.6. Localization and Progressiveness

The formulation of DRR policies and actions with a gender perspective must consider the context of each territory, with respect for their characteristics and historical processes and ensuring women's full and effective participation. On the one hand, it is essential to be aware of the particular situation in each territory, based on information about community perspectives and support from local leaders. On the other hand, progressiveness refers to the recognition of the need to adapt temporary schemes to different historical and geographical contexts, as well as the definition of expectations and goals, understanding the diversity of local circumstances.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

After a detailed review of some of the main achievements and challenges in including the gender perspective in DRR in LAC, based on the SFDRR four priorities for action, we identified several key findings and conclusions.

As far as **risk knowledge** is concerned, we found that the structural barriers that exist in the region and prevent access by women, girls, and other traditionally marginalized populations to key information that allows them to reduce their vulnerability to a hazard are the same barriers that hinder the formulation of inclusive DRR policies that recognize the underlying risk factors that increase that vulnerability. The assignment of gender roles has had negative effects on the condition of women since their early childhood, a situation that also affects their education and aspirations. Progress has been made in the integration of gender considerations in institutional and methodological recommendations for the generation of statistics based on the SFDRR indicators in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in vulnerability and risk assessments, the implementation of Gender Markers, knowledge sharing, and collaboration with women's organizations, among others. However, significant challenges still exist in all areas, such as the fact that methodologies currently used for the generation of statistical data do not guarantee the systematic collection of disaggregated data by sex and age as well as other variables such as disability, racial or ethnic background or zone of residence and do not include a reflection on *for what*, *for whom* and *by whom* data is collected. Another pending task is the creation of mechanisms to update strategies to approach knowledge about hazards,⁶² exposure, and risk in general, and the structural incorporation of measurements of

variables that perpetuate discrimination against women, girls, and other vulnerable groups.

In the area of **disaster risk reduction governance**, intersectoral coordination and vertical DRR articulation (both at the national and local levels) are areas where more work must be done and, therefore, represent great opportunities for the cross-cutting implementation of the gender perspective in DRR. While the analysis revealed significant participation of women in DRRM processes, their role is not necessarily similar to that of men when it comes to decision-making, despite some progress made in the region in terms of the representation and presence of women in high-level positions. Another aspect worth noting is the existence of networks, working groups on gender, and publications that advocate the inclusion of the gender perspective in public policy, in addition to ensuring the sectoral integration of strategies proposed. However, there is still room for increased and effective participation of civil society, feminist, and women's organizations in all their diversity to address the specific needs and contributions of women, girls, and other historically marginalized populations.

In the area of **DRR investments for resilience**, despite the existence of national laws and normative frameworks with budgetary allocations to DRR, public investments seem to be biased and lack the inter and multisectoral coordination required to provide the necessary stability and promote long-term changes to address the differentiated needs, demands

62 See [Hazard Information Profiles](#) produced by ISC and UNDRR in October 2021, and [press release on their launch](#).

and proposals of women, girls and other populations that require special support and help. The entities leading the different economic sectors at the national, subnational, and local levels still face challenges in the implementation of efforts and the coordination of actions with ministries, secretariats, and women's offices. Along the same lines, there are areas of opportunity for national entrepreneurial groups, such as chambers of commerce or industrial associations, to play a more active role in the promotion of DRR and the gender perspective among their members. Regarding the financial, insurance, and reinsurance sectors, existing financing instruments and insurance policies are not enough to overcome the barriers of access to land ownership and property of assets faced by women and other historically marginalized populations, which leaves them unprotected in case of a disaster. Finally, in the area of international cooperation, it is evident that resources currently allocated to disaster prevention are insufficient and fail to incorporate the mechanisms necessary to ensure those funds are allocated, taking into account the differentiated needs of women, girls, persons with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, and other populations whose rights are violated.

To identify outstanding challenges in **response preparedness**, it is essential to recognize and engage the broadest diversity of stakeholders, including the effective participation and leadership of women's organizations, other marginalized populations, and individuals, in the design of emergency preparedness and

response strategies. As already explained, despite several noteworthy initiatives in LAC in this area, there is still a lot of work to do. The EWS initiative dissemination channels, for example, have not ensured no one is left behind. Likewise, mechanisms to ensure the availability of and access to sexual and reproductive health basic services after a disaster are still insufficient, and frequently, there are no special gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and support protocols that can be activated as part of actions to respond to a disaster. Finally, concerning actions and opportunities to **rehabilitate** and **"build back"** better, the outstanding challenges include identifying how gender inequalities manifest themselves in the territory and implementing strategies to address them in the reconstruction process. However, there are examples of progress in the incorporation of the effective participation of women, girls, populations with diverse gender identities, and their organizations into the reconstruction planning and execution processes. And these are valuable contributions to the elimination of gender inequalities.

The following recommendations (Table 3) are based on the interrelationship between the guiding principles and the main achievements, opportunities, and challenges identified in the incorporation of the gender perspective into the four SFDRR priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁶³ While the table is structured around the guiding principles, it has been simplified to illustrate the close connections, overlaps, and causal relationships between the different recommendations.

63 To organize the guiding principles and formulate the recommendations, we took into account the following: a) contributions made by women and women's organizations in the context of the [consultation session](#) with feminist, civil society and women's organizations organized by UN Women and ECLAC on December 17 2020; and b) [the responses received to the open survey](#) among the members of the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Women for Disaster Risk Reduction on gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women and girls in the context of DRR policies and programmes for the preparation of this document.

TABLE 3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN DRR BY GUIDING PRINCIPLE AND PRIORITIES OF THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

GUIDING PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	SFDRR PRIORITIES
A. Intersectoral Coordination	<p>R1. Promote the diversity and representativeness of stakeholders involved in DRR</p> <p>R.1.1 Ensure the participation of Ministries of Women in the development of national DRR strategies, together with the Ministries of Finance, Planning, Environment, and other relevant stakeholders (see also R11).</p> <p>R.1.2 Ensure the recognition and participation of civil society organizations in decision-making regarding DRR policies and programmes, in particular, feminist and women's organizations, as well as those that represent traditionally excluded groups.</p>	2,4
	<p>R2. Prioritize partnerships with feminist and women's organizations</p> <p>R2.2. As part of efforts to promote diverse representation and participation, it is important to prioritize partnerships with feminist and women's organizations, including indigenous and Afro-descendant women's organizations, among others, with opportunities for their participation in negotiation and decision-making.</p> <p>R2.3. Review existing mechanisms for the formulation of public policies to promote the full and effective participation of women from the above-mentioned organizations in their design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and review, as well as in accountability processes.</p>	2
<p>B. Human Rights and Intersectionality</p> <p>↓</p>	<p>R3. Increase knowledge about the human rights, gender, and intersectionality perspective in DRR</p> <p>R3.1 Produce publications and educational content (reports, briefings, courses, etc.) for an intersectional analysis of risk by and for women, girls, and other traditionally excluded groups, to understand how different structural barriers combine to hinder their participation and influence on DRR and prevention decision-making.</p>	1

<p>B. Human Rights and Intersectionality</p>	<p>R3.2 Support training courses, workshops, and mechanisms to monitor indicators with sex, age, and disability disaggregated data, by sex and age as well as other variables such as disability, racial or ethnic background or zone of residence, as well as training to analyze those indicators from a human rights, gender and intersectionality perspective, aligning national development cooperation policies with national and local DRR strategies (see R9).</p> <p>R3.3 Design training courses and manuals on DRR and gender-targeted to media outlets.</p> <p>R4. Develop tools to generate knowledge (including data collection and information analysis) about disaster risk with a gender and intersectional perspective, in particular by evaluating underlying risk factors</p> <p>R4.1 Develop and leverage data collection and reporting tools and generate sex, age and disability disaggregated data at the national and local levels⁶⁴, incorporating in them the intersectional gender perspective together with global SFDRR indicators and disaster-related SDGs.</p> <p>R4.2 Incorporate the intersectionality perspective in national plans and develop guidelines for its local integration in gender markers that consider the evaluation of underlying risk factors and promote the diversity and representativeness of stakeholders involved in the 4 SFDRR priorities (see also R8).</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>C. Acknowledgement, Participation, and Autonomy</p> <p>↓</p>	<p>R5. Develop links between feminist, women's and civil society organizations</p> <p>R5.1 Implement and support horizontal exchanges between these organizations in the region to share experiences, challenges, opportunities, lessons learned, and good DRR practices. These exchanges can include communities of practice, laboratories, observatories, workshops, meetings, or other similar mechanisms. Existing mechanisms such as regional and global platforms, national DRR platforms, the LAC Network of Women for DRR, REDULAC, and the UNDRR Science and Technology Advisory Group (STAG) can be used to this end.</p>	<p>2</p>

64 Create synergies with existing data platforms such as [CEPALSTAT](#), [SDG Gateway LAC](#), [Sendai Framework Monitor \(SFM\)](#), [DesInventar Sendai](#) and the [INFORM platform](#), among others.

C. Acknowledgement, Participation, and Autonomy	<p>R5.2 Coordinate actions with the organizations mentioned above for the design and implementation of protocols for the safety and wellbeing of women and girls to be implemented in emergency response scenarios (evacuation drills, temporal shelters, information booklets, among others) and define their potential role during disasters.</p> <p>R6. Support women's leadership in negotiations and decision-making regarding knowledge generation and management by promoting intercultural data analysis with a gender perspective in DRR.</p> <p>R6.1 Consider how data reflect and reproduce social hierarchies and injustices, beyond data disaggregation by income, sex, age, or disability. Understanding data as a form of power, consider if and how women and other traditionally excluded groups have access to that power.</p>	2
	<p>R7. Acknowledge, value, and incorporate the ancestral knowledge of feminist, women's, and civil society organizations</p> <p>R7.1 Create and promote knowledge-sharing opportunities, including the participation of feminist and women's organizations, in particular, to share local and ancestral knowledge.</p> <p>R7.2 Actively incorporate their recommendations into DRR initiatives, especially in the case of indigenous and Afro-descendant women's organizations.</p>	1,2
	<p>R8. Develop and incorporate gender markers for programmes and projects based on the 4 SFDRR priorities (knowledge, governance, investment, response, and reconstruction).</p> <p>R8.1 Develop processes for the incorporation of gender markers for programmes and projects based on the 4 SFDRR priorities (knowledge, governance, investment, response, and reconstruction), including mechanisms to monitor and evaluate that incorporation.</p>	1,2,3,4
D. Comprehensive Policy Framework ↓	<p>R9. Align agendas and policy frameworks, as well as DRR policies, strategies, and plans, with an intersectional gender perspective</p> <p>R9.1 Formulate and support cross-cutting long-term policies and programmes with a gender perspective, to combine immediate actions with mid and long-term actions for DRR, as well as for disaster recovery and reconstruction</p>	2

<p>D. Comprehensive Policy Framework</p>	<p>R9.2 Review national policy frameworks and ensure their harmonization with international instruments, to have a policy structure that establishes the guidelines, instruments, mechanisms, and institutional and financial arrangements necessary to ensure DRR with a gender perspective, including increasing knowledge about hazards and risks with information about the differentiated needs of women and other historically marginalized populations, in addition to promoting inclusive disaster risk governance that allows the active participation of populations with differentiated needs.</p> <p>R9.3 Review and align public policies and agendas on human rights, gender, DRR, natural resource management, climate change, and the SDGs, among others, to ensure more coherence.</p>	<p>2</p>
	<p>R10. Assess and build the technical and administrative capacities of public entities leading the formulation of DRR policies, agendas, and policy frameworks, to incorporate the gender perspective.</p> <p>R10.1 Design and implement processes for the development and assessment of the technical, operational, and administrative capacities of public entities leading the formulation of DRR policies, agendas, and policy frameworks, to incorporate the gender perspective.</p> <p>R10.2 Develop or strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and accountability processes with a gender perspective to guarantee DRR rights and transparency.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>
<p>E. Economic-Financial Stability</p> <p>↓</p>	<p>R11. Obtain political commitments for public financing and international cooperation for DRR with a gender perspective</p> <p>R.11.1 Obtain budgetary commitments that can be sustained over time for the implementation of risk-informed national and local DRR strategies that integrate the gender perspective</p> <p>R.11.2 Include gender and resilience markers in public investment projects (see R8)</p> <p>R11.3 Ensure the participation of Ministries of Women in decisions, monitoring, and evaluation of public budgets, together with the Ministries of Finance, Planning, and other relevant stakeholders, to obtain sustained financial commitments for gender equality in DRR</p>	<p>2,3</p>

<p>E. Economic-Financial Stability</p>	<p>R11.4 Promote disaster risk-informed ODA investments with an intersectional gender perspective and include the exchange of experiences, technologies, and capacities to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls</p> <p>R11.5 Seek increased financing for civil society organizations, especially for feminist and women's organizations and other historically excluded groups, such as indigenous and Afro-descendant women's organizations.</p> <p>R11.5 Maintain and increase the allocation of funds to hire or train gender experts or gender expertise, so the gender perspective principles are appropriately incorporated into policies, programmes, and actions.</p>	<p>2,3</p>
<p>F. Localization and Progressiveness</p> <p>↓</p>	<p>R12. Develop and strengthen DRR public and private partnerships with a gender perspective</p> <p>R12.1 Design differentiated financial and insurance products to ensure access by feminist, women's, and civil society organizations to them.</p> <p>R12.2 Review sectoral plans aiming to bridge social protection gaps in the informal sector and lower-paying jobs, which have been historically held by women and other traditionally marginalized groups, whose situation often worsens in the event of a disaster⁶⁵.</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>R13. Ensure sustained financing for feminist, women's, and civil society organizations</p> <p>R13.1 Identify opportunities to finance these organizations and engage in advocacy efforts to sustain their DRR initiatives and projects.</p>	<p>3</p>

F. Localization and Progressiveness	<p>R14. Develop DRR education processes with a gender perspective adapted locally</p> <p>R14.1 Identify good practices on gender mainstreaming in DRR to build upon achievements made in each territory at the local level, and design strategies to share achievements and challenges to scale up solutions and lessons learned</p> <p>R14.2 Develop and promote formal and informal education processes adapted to the specific contexts and historic circumstances, both to understand the need for the gender perspective in DRR and convey information in an inclusive manner.</p> <p>R14.3 Remove barriers of access for women and girls and promote their participation in higher education programs in the areas of science and technology applied to DRR, including facilitating access through scholarships or other initiatives that prioritize them.</p>	1
	<p>R15. Expand multiscale work with a gender perspective for resilient territories</p> <p>R15.1 Seek the effective inclusion of the intersectional gender perspective in the SFDRR mid-term review processes that will start in 2022.</p> <p>R15.2 Incorporate the gender perspective into DRR work, not only at the regional or national levels, but also in cities, neighborhoods, and rural communities, which are key intersectional territories,⁶⁶ to integrate discussions and actions.</p> <p>R15.3 In urban areas, promote city planning and urban development that incorporate the intersectional gender perspective and promote safer, more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive cities.</p> <p>R15.4 DRR investments in vital infrastructure (schools, hospitals, among others) with solutions adapted to the different local needs of women and girls, as well as other traditionally marginalized groups.</p>	2,4

66 For additional information on the concept of intersectional territories, see [RAR, 2021 pp.94-95](#)

In addition, the members of the international community, including UN agencies, particularly those working on DRR in the region (UNDRR, UN Women, ECLAC, UNDP, UNEP, PAHO/WHO or WFP, among others), as well as regional and subregional intergovernmental agencies, also have the opportunity to enhance the inclusion of the gender perspective and women's autonomy in DRR. In this regard, we see opportunities such as:

- The design of guidelines to accelerate the implementation of the MSRRD with an intersectional gender approach between now and 2030 and beyond, taking advantage of the Mid-Term Review process of its implementation (2022-2030);
- Identifying points in common and articulating actions for the inclusion of the gender perspective in DRR with those on climate change and sustainable development in the context of an integrated agenda.
- Creating guidelines for the inclusion of a gender perspective in different initiatives, including “*Making Cities Resilient (MCR2030)*”, the ARISE partnership with the private sector, and the *Platform on Disaster Displacement*, among others.

While it is key to have actions in place to reduce risk factors and thus prevent a disaster from occurring, it is also vital to be able to take advantage of these occurrences and plan to recover better in case they do occur, since disasters and emergency situations tend to reinforce, perpetuate and exacerbate the gender inequalities that already existed prior to the event. Recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation strategies provide a window of

opportunity to overcome inequality situations, bridge gaps, and create spaces for inclusion and sustainable development.⁶⁷ A response with a gender perspective must recognize that:

- The recovery process can provide an opportunity to favor the emergence of social, political, or economic balance conditions between women and men where they did not exist before, for example, through equal access to education and employment opportunities.
- The reconstruction process opens up the possibility of correcting structural gender inequalities, for example, in relation to property titles for new constructions.
- The rehabilitation process is a key moment to bridge inequality gaps, especially those that exist between men and women, for example, by normalizing the participation of women's organizations in community negotiations and decision-making.

This translates into specific aspects that must be considered so these processes can be consolidated as transformative strategies to create opportunities for change and sustainability. The following are some of the actions to facilitate this process:

- Identify and bring attention to the leadership of women in the response. Strengthening these processes will facilitate the reconstruction of the social fabric in communities affected. It is important to reiterate that the recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation processes provide opportunities, and, in this regard, they can be key for the development of leaderships and long-reach social transformations.

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- Ensure the active participation of women in decision-making spaces and mechanisms of projects in their different phases. Including institutions and machineries for the advancement of women in this process is essential for the design, follow-up, and implementation of recovery strategies.
- Seek inclusive opportunities for consultation with civil society, including organizations working for gender equality, among others, to identify vulnerable groups and persons that are more difficult to reach.
- Design recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction programmes that take into account the differentiated needs of women and girls, as well as their capacity to contribute to the construction of more resilient and sustainable societies. Development plans and programmes must be participatory, promote resilience and take into account gender, age, disability, and interculturality.
- Incorporate the gender equality perspective in public budgets to address and respond to disasters. Ensure that socioeconomic recovery programmes, projects, and initiatives include specific work areas targeted to women, with the corresponding budgetary allocations.
- Promote training and capacity-building programmes that favor the transformation of traditional gender roles and allow women to join labor and economic sectors where they are currently underrepresented to move towards sustainable recovery. The recovery phase must lead to economic recovery by facilitating access to more dynamic productive sectors with new and broader value chains. It is also important to recognize the burden of care work that traditionally falls on women and to promote its redistribution, both within families and with the active participation of the State and the private sector.
- Promote media coverage with a gender equality perspective. Efforts must be made to publicize information disaggregated by sex and age, as well as other variables such as disability, racial or ethnic background, or zone of residence and, to the extent possible, to ensure the media have access to elements and information to convey information about the recovery that gives visibility and strengthens the contributions made by women and girls as well as their needs. Ensure there is appropriate communication with the population affected to inform them about the services and forms of help available to them.
- Be attentive to the risk of violence, exploitation, and sexual abuse and adopt a policy of “zero tolerance” on these behaviors. All stakeholders participating in the response must take measures to prevent, address, punish and eradicate all forms of gender-based violence during and after a disaster. Implementing and monitoring protocols is essential. The same applies to the immediate creation of confidential pathways to report violence and gain access to comprehensive victim services and access to justice, among other factors. It is also important to have mechanisms in place to identify, report and punish any acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by those responding to the emergency and participating in the recovery.
- Incorporate women and women’s organizations into damage and losses assessment mechanisms, response assessments, and subsequent adjustment processes. This includes reviewing security and civil protection mechanisms to incorporate the gender equality perspective and a differential approach in their procedures. Also, promote the active participation of women and women’s organizations in DRR education and training.

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