

Fifth Arab Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

**From Risk to Resilience: Accelerating
Local Action for Disaster Risk Reduction**

**08 - 11 November 2021
Rabat, Morocco**

**Gender Equality and Women's
Empowerment Voluntary Stakeholder
Group 1 on DRR, Climate Change
and Migration (Arab States)
Voluntary Action Statement**



FIFTH ARAB PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

From Risk to Resilience: Accelerating Local Action for DRR

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Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Voluntary Stakeholder Group¹ on DRR, Climate Change and Migration (Arab States)

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Preamble

- Guided by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change 2015, the SDGs 2015 and the UN Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration 2018 as mutually reinforcing mechanisms that promote and protect gender equality and women's empowerment in disaster preparedness, risk reduction and response; climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and the sustainable development goals;
- Noting the gender-based differences in the ways men, women, boys, girls prepare for and reduce risks; are impacted by, cope with, mitigate and adapt to disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation;
- Acknowledging that these gender-based differences in impacts and contribution to survival are anchored in pre-existing gendered roles and attributes, sex and gender-based discrimination and inequality, and other interacting forms of marginalization such as economic status, age, disability, race and ethnicity, immigration status, nationality, geographical location and others, with disproportionate impacts on women and girls;
- Highlighting that these differences are manifested in varied ways across contexts, but that there are commonalities, demonstrated for example by greater female deaths on average in disasters, including older women, women and girls with disability who may be left to perish because of social stigma and a perception of them as liabilities; greater economic impacts on women than men; increased workloads, fatigue, loss in time and income-generating opportunities due to long hours of travel to forage for food, fuel and water; sexual and domestic abuse and violence; greater difficulties for women, especially pregnant women, older women, women and girls with

disabilities to move to shelters; greater marginalization from access to material and non-material resources for relief, recovery and reconstruction; lack of representation on decision-making mechanisms;

- Reiterating that this directly affects women's resilience and ability to cope with disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation;
- Reinforcing that women and girls are not just victims of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation, but are frontline first responders and key agents bringing their resources to drive family and community survival, preparedness, risk reduction, recovery and adaptation;
- Recognizing that S. 36 a (i) of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 calls for participation of women as critical to managing risk and designing and implementing disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programs and for strengthening women's capacities for preparedness and alternate livelihoods post-disaster;
- Acknowledging that as women and girls are differently and disproportionately impacted in disasters from men and boys and are creative first responders, women and girls from a range of excluded groups are best positioned to represent their own interests and work with governments at all stages of the policy process to ensure that their priorities are addressed in formulating, implementing, financing, monitoring and evaluating prevention, preparedness and response interventions. This ensures tailored interventions, gender equality and women's empowerment and maximizes the investment in disaster risk reduction and response, climate change mitigation and adaptation and environmental depletion;
- Recognizing that women constitute half the population and in some countries more, including different categories of women and their priorities in developing and implementing well-resourced policies, plans and programs addressing disasters, climate change and environmental degradation will contribute robustly to sustainable development;
- Acknowledging that disaster risk reduction and response, climate change mitigation and adaptation and environmental protection cut across various policy fields requiring intentional policy coherence, collaboration and co-ordination between institutions from multiple sectors, including ministries/departments of agriculture, environment, disaster management, national women's machineries, CSOs and gender specialists in these areas;

- Noting that human mobility is a crucial component of risk and resilience, and that effective climate change mitigation, adaptation interventions and DRR provide communities the choice to live where they are; Noting however that disasters, climate change induced events, environmental depletion have together with a range of other gendered development processes also been important drivers of migration;
- Also noting that women have in this context migrated independently, or with families as a survival strategy; and in some contexts greater numbers of men have migrated, leaving women and children behind;
- Recognizing that as migrant women face disproportionate discrimination at all stages of the migration process that includes lack of pre-departure information, inaccessible pre-departure training, fewer assets to move than men rendering them susceptible to exploitative recruiting agents, traffickers and debt-bondage; labour market discrimination in the form of a decline in decent living opportunities.

Voluntary Action Commitments (2021-2024)

The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Stakeholder Group, Arab States Voluntary Action Statement commits to supports governments in the region in the following ways:

Gender Sensitive data collection, research, tools for policy development and implementation

- Incorporating gender data into the existing databases and development of check lists and guidelines to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into climate DRR and migration developed policies.
- Assessing and reviewing the five developed country strategies in the region from a gender perspective to have a better understanding of the current planned actions and identification of gaps.
- Development of local and regional case studies that help integrate gender equality and women's and girl's priorities into DRR, climate change, migration and SDG strategies, legislation, plans, budgets and programs.
- Making use of the existing facilities and research activities at the member partners institutions to support gender sensitive risk mapping, including indicators for each risk as part of a resilience plan that can be shared with Arab countries

Promoting women's and girl's participation in decision-making

- One of the key activities of the group is contributing to the inputs of the *Prioritized Action Plan 2021-2024 of the Arab Region Strategy for DRR 2015-2030* to include the following recommendations/inputs to promote women participation in Decision-making:
 - Ensuring that the action plan and financial support to assess current strategies in some countries is not only focusing on inclusion of biological hazards but there should be a focus on opportunities to see how and gender and women priorities in climate change, DRR and migration are included.
 - Developing policy guidelines/checklists to support gender mainstreaming in the policies that focus on DRR in relation to climate change and migration.
 - Enhance the dialogue on climate change and migration and gender perspectives to support Governments with data and knowledge to support dealing with these issues.
 - Capacity development programmes to study the existing countries strategies and support stakeholders to be able to apply and implement these strategies on both local and regional levels.
 - Development of for local gender sensitive action plans with capacity development and budget allocation for implementation.
 - Contribute to support capacity development activities based on the assessment of the developed DRR strategies in some of the Arab countries and recommendations of actions needed on the ground to support inclusion of actions supporting gender, climate, DRR and migration.

Advocacy and capacity strengthening to mainstream gender equality and women's rights into policy design and implementation

- Co-organize workshops/webinars with national and local governments, CSO's and other stakeholders to create awareness and build capacities to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment into DRR, climate change, migration strategies.
- Develop in cooperation with partners awareness raising toolkits, videos, infographics and other communication products to advocate for mainstream gender equality and women's rights into policy design and implementation.
- Developing and implementing regional training programs to support mainstreaming of women's rights into policy design and implementation.
- Contribute to the development of school's curricula in the Arab countries.

Operations of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Stakeholder Group

- Support the capacity building activities to provide content and training activities as a gender group, and to make sure that articles and existing reports are translated to Arabic to be available for different stakeholders.
- Contribute to and enhance the dialogue on climate change, DRR and migration from a gender perspective to support Governments with data and knowledge needed to develop the policies and strategies.



- Introduction of the gender responsiveness on DRR in schools curricula to build capacities of young generations on these issues.
- Complementing the activities between the major voluntary groups and integrating gender into all activities of CSO's in the Arab region.