In 2015, over 82.5 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, with the majority of whom were deeply impoverished. At any time, approximately 75% of any displaced or disaster-affected population will be pregnant. Yet, disaster planning and response continues to leave women and girls behind. As of 2015, only 0.5% of humanitarian funding was spent on addressing gender-based violence. Just 1 per cent of all funding to fragile states in 2015 went to women’s groups or government ministries that focus on women and girls. The capacity and knowledge of local women’s groups are not being fully utilized despite evidence that shows this is one of the most effective ways to increase the impact of disaster risk reduction.

In order to address the specific needs of women and girls before and during a humanitarian crisis, it is crucial to meaningfully include them in every stage of planning, response and recovery to maximize the impact of humanitarian action, reduce disaster risks, and promote gender equality.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Agenda for Humanity and the Sustainable Development Goals all commit to reaching the most vulnerable women, girls, boys, men and the needs of diverse and at-risk groups in situations of disaster vulnerability and risk. The pledge to leave no one behind is the central theme of the 2030 Agenda and places a new obligation on our commitment to reach and transform the lives of those most at risk of being left behind.
The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction emphasizes that women and their participation are critical to effectively managing disaster risk (V.36 a i). This is ensured through gender-sensitive implementation of the four priority areas.

**PRIORITY 1: UNDERSTANDING DISASTER RISK**
- Every plan and every response should systematically collect and analyse sex, age and disability disaggregated data each and every time.
- Undertake comprehensive gender and diversity risk assessment and analyses to fully understand the gender and diverse capacities, vulnerabilities, and priorities associated with disaster risk, response and recovery.

**PRIORITY 2: STRENGTHENING DISASTER RISK GOVERNANCE**
- Strengthen legal and institutional frameworks to secure the increased and meaningful representation and participation of women, and persons from all minority, marginalized and diverse groups in every aspect of disaster risk reduction.
- Incorporate voices and concerns of communities & local level actors in national law making and review processes through community level consultation with gender balanced and diverse groups including people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and religious minorities.

**PRIORITY 3: INVESTING IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FOR RESILIENCE**
- All investments in disaster risk need to be gender sensitive.
- Women are crucial social and economic agents.
- All investments should take active steps in reducing gender inequalities, address root causes of violence, and promote the protection of all women, girls, men and boys.
- Strengthen national support systems to ensure access to social safety nets and basic health care services, including mater- nal, newborn and child health, reproductive health, food security and nutrition, and housing and education.

**PRIORITY 4: ENHANCING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSE AND TO “BUILD BACK BETTER” IN RECOVERY, REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION**
- Disaster preparedness, response, recovery and reconstruction should be based on build back better principles. This includes addressing the root causes of vulnerability to ensure equitable economic, social, health and cultural resilience of all women, girls, boys and men.
- Allocate gender-responsive budgets, resources, as well as gender-sensitive indicators, for early warning, preparedness and recovery.
- Undertake gender-sensitive risk assessments and post-di saster needs assessments. These should be based on vulnerability and capacity analysis that take into account political, social, cultural and economic gendered roles, responsibilities and inequalities.
- Provide accessible women’s safe spaces for responding to and addressing gender-based violence, accessing information relevant to response and recovery, and for enabling collective demands for accountability.

These key messages were developed by the IASC regional network working group on Gender in Humanitarian Action in support of the Guidance Note: Gender Inclusion & Women’s Empowerment at the Centre of Resilience Building, developed by ISDR Asia Partnership’s Stakeholder Group of Organisations and Individuals concerned with Gender Issues.

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