

PA



# Handbook on: Gender in Civil Protection



**EUSBSR**  
EU STRATEGY  
FOR THE BALTIC  
SEA REGION

**A compendium of  
references, quotations  
and statements  
that encourage inclusion  
and prosperity in and  
through **societal security**  
In the Baltic Sea region**

# Mandated

The Security Council (...) Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict.

From:  
Resolution 1325 (2000)  
Adopted by the UN Security Council at its 4213<sup>th</sup> meeting, on 31 October 2000



A gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training.

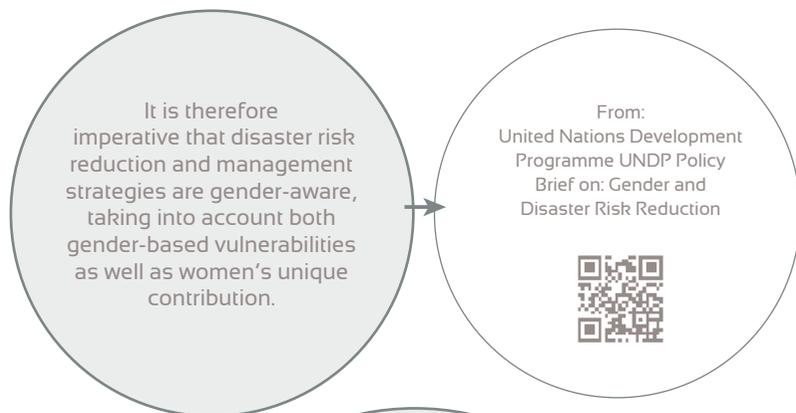
From :  
Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 - 2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters



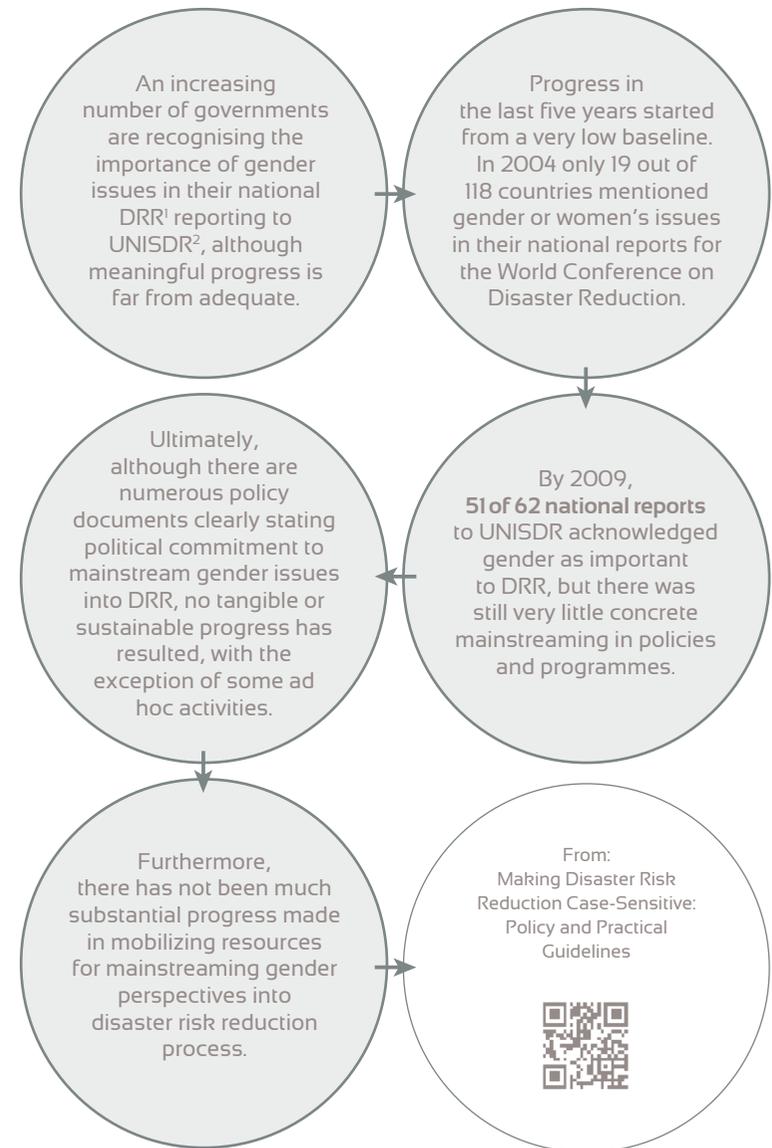
The obligations of States parties do not cease in periods of armed conflict or in states of emergency due to political events or natural disasters. Such situations have a deep impact on and broad consequences for the equal enjoyment and exercise by women of their fundamental rights. States parties should adopt strategies and take measures addressed to the particular needs of women in times of armed conflict and states of emergency.

From:  
Committee on the Elimination Discrimination against Women General Recommendation No. 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women





# Mapping the State of Play



<sup>1</sup> Disaster risk reduction

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction



## LOOKING CLOSER

Excerpts and quotations taken from:  
Humanitarian Response Index 2011:  
Addressing the Gender Challenge

Find the Index here:



### Michelle Bachelet

Former UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director Of UN Women

Pre-existing political, social, and economic structures and conditions determine who lives, who dies, and how populations recover from natural disasters and armed conflict.

Two-thirds of mortalities in the 2006 Asian tsunami were female. In some places, women or girls lacked crucial coping mechanisms, mainly because they were never taught to swim or climb trees, like boys, or because dress codes and cultural norms about male consent hampered their mobility.

The opposite is true. Without investing in gender equality before, during and after crises, women will not be able to build a protective environment for their communities

### Valerie Amos

UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

Women, girls, boys and men are affected very differently by humanitarian crises and, as a result, need to be assisted in different ways. This is what we mean when we talk about the gender dimensions of a humanitarian emergency.

Paying attention to women's needs is, of course, essential. But gender is a broader concept. It looks at how society works, who has the power and what roles different members of the society have.

The findings and conclusions from the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) field research to crises such as Haiti, Somalia, Pakistan and Sudan, along with its analysis of donor governments' policies and funding practices related to gender equality, show that there are still significant gaps in understanding the importance of gender issues by all actors, donors and humanitarian organisations alike.

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## Acknowledgement of High Performance

Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, along with the Netherlands and Switzerland, were indicated by the Humanitarian Response Index as **principled partners in humanitarian response**.

These countries were characterised by their generosity, strong commitment to humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, and flexible funding arrangements with partners.

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## Main Findings of the Humanitarian Response Index<sup>3</sup>

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The humanitarian sector is still too male-dominated

Gender is often considered a low priority in emergency responses

Gender is still mainly equated with women's issues and not as a comprehensive strategic approach to programming

<sup>3</sup> Selected as most relevant to this booklet

# Introduction



# Welcome to the PA Secure Handbook on Gender in Civil Protection. What is the Handbook about?



One could think of this booklet being a brochure of ambiguous nature. After all, it is not a fact-sheet or a quantitative summary of a scientific research study, even though it does draw attention to certain facts. Nor is it a white paper targeting policy changes that would aim at directly attending developments in upcoming legislation, even though it mentions challenges and opportunities lying in applying government-imposed quotas. Finally, it is not a carefully selected bibliographical list of the subject-related documents, even though it provides links to some landmark texts in the field. Nor is it an exhaustive archive of a public debate on the topic, even though it provides with a collection of statements by prominent leaders in the field.

In order to get closer to the core of what this booklet aims to tackle, one should consider the three aspects that lie at the origins of this book.

**First**, this booklet belongs to a larger publication *Be Secure in the Baltic Sea Region: A Handbook of A Priority Area* that registers recent developments within coordination and steering of priority area Secure (PA Secure) of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), as well as provides a study on institutionalisation of civil protection cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. This booklet thus complements the overview provided in the former book as well as presents a concrete case from PA Secure initiatives.

**Second**, it stems from an actual event that was organised by PA Secure co-coordinators Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency MSB and the Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat back-to-back to the 4th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The event called *Women in Civil Protection: Gender Equality and Gender Main-*

*streaming - Towards Prosperity in the Baltic Sea Region (The Case of Civil Security)* brought together four prominent professionals to bring forward and discuss the subject matter that relates to the core of our attempts to ensure the highest level of societal security. This booklet thus serves as recording and documentation of the event, including its background text, information about speakers, their main statements and discussion points, as well as links to the session video documentation online.

The aim of this booklet, however, is not mere documentation as such. The aim rather is an intention to provide a material basis for further development and implementation of points and suggestions highlighted by the discussion. The event thus can be regarded as an occasion for this booklet to come about and to present itself as a beginning of a discussion and a constructive attempt to continue searching for concrete answers to the challenges it first disclosed.

This brings us to the third and final aspect. The documentation for the above described reason is an editorially curated and fragmented register of the said event's discourse. Furthermore, it provides selected references to contextually related documents, concepts, terms,

definitions and text excerpts. These fragments do not represent a closed and finalised statement. The way they are placed in the booklet, they are contextual suggestion and invitation to deeper consider the nature of and reason behind the very fact of bringing up the issue of gender perspective in civil protection at this point in time and in this particular geographic, socio-economic and political setting.

It is not without reason that fragments collected in this booklet do cross beyond usual literature in disaster risk reduction. Just like the booklet itself, having a not-so-usual for this occasion form and layout, it emphasizes the claim that in order to successfully address the shortcomings in ensuring societal security, it may be necessary to include cross-boundary efforts as well as knowledge collected by various disciplines.

What end could this booklet serve? We hope it would engage in a conversation and ensure the commitment to consider and to remember to *not forget* this particular issue that directly affects societal security and prosperity.

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**Eglė Obcarskaitė**

Adviser  
Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat



# Key Concepts

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## Gender

The multiple and complex ways in which social differences between the sexes acquire meaning and become structural factors in the organisation of social life

Rossi Braidotti

rather the simultaneous mobilisation of legal instruments, financial resources and the Community's analytical and organisational capacities in order to introduce in all areas the desire to build balanced relationships between women and men.

Read more about Gender Mainstreaming:



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## Gender mainstreaming

"Gender mainstreaming is a contested concept and practice. It is the re-invention, restructuring, and re-branding of a key part of feminism in the contemporary era."

From: Walby, S. Gender mainstreaming: Productive tensions in theory and practice



Gender mainstreaming is the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policymaking.

From: Gender Mainstreaming: Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Presentation of Good Practices Council of Europe, May 1998

Read the report here:



Gender Mainstreaming is not a goal in itself but a strategy to achieve equality between women and men. It is used to integrate gender concerns into all policies, and programmes of the European Union institutions and Member States.

The systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men in all Community policies and actions, this is the basic feature of the principle of "mainstreaming" which the Commission has adopted. This does not mean simply making Community programmes or resources more accessible to women, but

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## Gender Awareness

Gender awareness is an understanding that there are socially determined differences between women & men based on learned behavior, which affect their ability to access and control resources. This awareness needs to be applied through gender analysis into programmes, policies and evaluation.

From: European Commission, Gender Equality Glossary



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## Gender equality

Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society. Gender equality starts with equal valuing of girls and boys.

From: UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework, Baseline definitions of key concepts and terms



Gender specific approach/perspective actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situations of men and women.

Download Manual for Gender Mainstreaming here:



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## Gender roles

'Deconstructing' the way we think about gender we might move towards a new equality where people are not restricted by masculine or feminine gender roles.

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* 1990.

S: (n) gender role (the overt expression of attitudes that indicate to others the degree of your maleness or femaleness) "your gender role is the public expression of your gender identity"

Princeton lexical database  
WordNet



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## Gender-blind

Gender blindness is the failure to recognise that gender is an essential determinant of social outcomes impacting on projects and policies. A gender blind approach assumes that a policy or programme does not have unequal (even if unintended) outcome on women and men.

From: European Commission, Gender Equality Glossary



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## Gender division of labour

Gender Division of Labour is the result of how each society divides work among men and among women according to what is considered suitable or appropriate to each gender.

From: UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Framework

# Women In Civil Protection: Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming - Towards Prosperity in the Baltic Sea Region

## The Case of Civil Security

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11 November 2013, Vilnius, Lithuania

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### Panel Discussion with:

**Helena Lindberg**  
Director General of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency MSB

**Tatjana Milkamanovič**  
Head of the Emergency Planning Division of the Lithuanian State Fire and Rescue Service

**Tiina Peltola-Lampi**  
Director of International Affairs at the Department for Rescue Services of the Ministry of Interior of Finland

### Commenting:

**Dalia Leinartė**  
Professor, Director of the Centre for Gender Studies at Vilnius University

### Moderator:

**Svante Werger**  
Director of Communications of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency MSB



## Background

As one of the side events during the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Priority Area Secure organises a discussion to highlight an issue that is at stake whenever considering what conditions are necessary for achieving the highest results in ensuring prosperity and success of our region. This issue, namely, is gender mainstreaming and gender balance in various fields of our work.

The importance of this issue is already widely acknowledged by the Member States of EUSBSR. The EUSBSR Action Plan (February 2013) states that "Successful implementation of the Strategy requires also the adoption of a gender perspective in the governance system and the Action Plan. Equality between men and women is a core value of the European Union. At the same time, economic and business benefits can be gained from enhancing gender equality. In order to achieve the objectives of the EUSBSR the contribution and talents of both women and men should be fully used."

Introduction of a gender perspective within a strategic framework of macro-regional cooperation, which

was initiated to enhance the prosperity and success of the region, comes of no surprise, especially if we consider what definition of gender mainstreaming is proposed to us by scholarly accounts. As it is described in a UN research paper, gender mainstreaming can be understood as "a practice, [...] intended as a way of improving the effectivity of mainline policies by making visible the gendered nature of assumptions, processes and outcomes" (Walby, 2003).

Furthermore, the relevance of the issue to international cooperation can be drawn even further, if we were to consider the origins of the concept itself: "Gender mainstreaming is an international phenomenon, originating in development policies, and adopted by the UN at the 1995 conference on women in Beijing, before being taken up by the European Union (EU) and then its Member States." (Ibid.)

PA Secure aims at facilitating civil protection cooperation in a macro-regional and cross-border context, and as such it is a platform to jointly discuss conditions that may have fundamental impact to the

success of this process. The issue of gender balance (as an indicator) and that of gender mainstreaming (as means for both to set and achieve the target) in the field of civil security in the Baltic Sea region in this regard can be articulated as one of the case studies on embracing complex challenges in macro-regional cooperation, the origins of which may often lie at the level of

national organisation. The urgency of addressing this issue within the context of PA Secure stems from the fact that civil security and protection policy and field experts from the region themselves claim the unresolved status of this issue and its relevance, undermine the overall prosperity in civil security and protection work.



## Aim of the Discussion

The 1,5 hrs long discussion brought together a panel of leading female executive officers in civil protection along with comments from an expert in the field of gender equality policy, had three concrete aims:

- **To kick-off** the discourse on gender balance and gender mainstreaming issues. - Where does the region stand, what are the challenges, and what can we do as regards to the issue in the civil protection field in particular, and in the regional cooperation priorities in general.

- **To define** the focus point of this issue (as discussed on international macro-regional cooperation framework), in order to ensure its substantial contribution to informing policy decisions and thus facilitating the development of the field.

- **To propose** three most urgent actions to be taken up in order to position the issue and in order to encourage, launch its consideration.

- **To capitalise on** inclusion in policy making processes and recognition of the relevance, importance and impact of the gender mainstreaming perspective on the overall prosperity in various fields.

Panel

**Helena Lindberg** HL



Ms Lindberg is the Director General of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB). Ms Lindberg has had a long career within Swedish public services. Before joining MSB in 2009, she held the position of Director General of the Swedish Emergency Management Agency and the Swedish Rescue Services Agency. Between 2003 and 2008 she served as the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Swedish Ministry of Defence. Additionally, Ms Lindberg has been the chief legal adviser at the Swedish Security Service; the Deputy Director of the Swedish Ministry of Legal Affairs; and an Associated Judge of Appeal at the Svea Court of Appeal in Stockholm.

Ms Lindberg holds a Master's degree in Law from Stockholm University.

**Tatjana Milkamanovič** TM



After having worked at the Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence, Ms Milkamanovič joined the Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania in 2004, initially as the Head of International Relations Subdivision of the Civil Protection Department. In 2005 she moved to the Fire and Rescue Department, where she has held the position of the Head of the Emergency Planning Division since 2009. As the Head of the Emergency Planning Division she is responsible for the organisation and coordination of activities of the Civil Protection System in Lithuania; the analysis and implementation of national, NATO, and EU documents; the coordination and implementation of decisions made by Government Emergency Commission; and the representation of Lithuania in international organisations, including the EU, in the field of civil protection.

Ms Milkamanovič holds a Master's degree in Research of Lithuanian language and a Bachelor's degree in Lithuanian language and literature from Vilnius University.

## Tiina Peltola-Lampi TPL



Ms Peltola-Lampi is the Director of International Affairs at the Department for Rescue Services of the Finnish Ministry of the Interior. Before taking the position of Director of International Affairs, Ms Peltola-Lampi was a Ministerial Adviser at the same department from 1996 to 2002- and again between 2008 and 2012- as well as a Counselor CEP at Mission of Finland to NATO under the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs from 2005 to 2007. Additionally, she has held several positions within the Finnish Ministry of Justice. Ms Peltola-Lampi is the Head of the Delegation of Finland in the EPPR (Arctic Council); Chair of the Barents Joint Committee 2013; a member of several national committees in the field of crisis management and national preparedness; and represents Finland in the Nordic Civil Protection Cooperation.

Ms Peltola-Lampi holds a Master's degree in Political science from the University of Helsinki.

## Dalia Leinartė DL



Since 2000 professor Dalia Leinartė is the Director of the Gender Studies Centre at Vilnius University, Lithuania, as well as a Consultant of the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, Lithuania. Since 2009 she holds professorship on Family History at Vilnius University. Since 2011 prof. Leinartė is a member of the working group for Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Lithuania. Professor Leinartė is the author of and a contributor to various research publications, including, among others, *Life Stories of Lithuanian Women, 1945-1970*, Rodopi, New York, 2010; "Families in Europe between the 19th and the 21st century", *Romanian Journal of Population Studies*, 2009; *Gender Mainstreaming in Social Inclusion Policies in Lithuania*, USP-Publishing, 2008; *Gender Mainstreaming in the EU Member States*, Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality, Sweden, 2006; *Trafficking in Women and Prostitution in Lithuania*, Vilnius University Press, Vilnius, 2003.

# Svante Werger



Svante Werger has worked as Director of Communications at the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) since 2009. Before that, he had senior positions at the Swedish Emergency Management Agency and the Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning. He has also worked as a journalist and editorial writer at Swedish newspapers. He has an education in Political Science, Economics and Literature.



# Positioning and Mapping

## Helena Lindberg

Watch statement here:



### Individual experience

Looking back at my own career within fields that were traditionally dominated by men, I did not feel that it was a disadvantage being a woman - on the contrary - it may even have been an advantage. I was easier to spot surrounded by all the men in grey suits.

#### Socio-cultural professional setting:

Experience of fair amount of **male jargon**

Witnessing very powerful **male networks**

### The power of quotas and appropriation

In the mid-90s, while I was working at the Swedish Ministry of Justice, **I had first-hand experience of the importance of regulations in tackling gender inequality**

**I am not a fan of quotas for women in general**, but I did see that there is power in setting goals and having them imposed on police agencies in Sweden



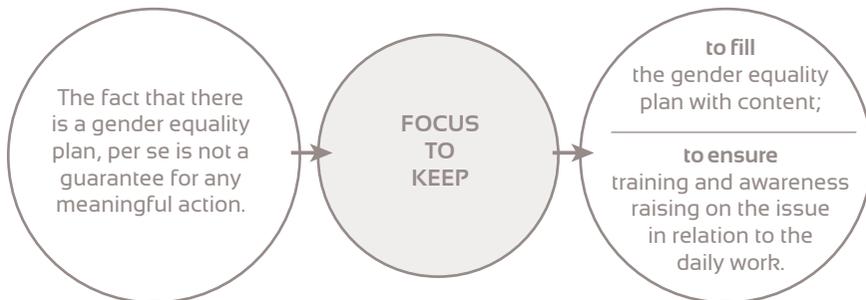
We would not have seen such an increase in female police officers in Sweden during the 90s, if it had not been for those governmentally imposed quotas.

There is some regulatory push that can be used very efficiently.

## Swedish civil contingency management

The picture is quite mixed: while the national managing authority MSB is systematically working on gender equality and has a **gender equality plan**, there exists an obvious gender imbalance in the fire and rescue services.

While the overall awareness is increasing, there is room for improvement in the fire and rescue services.



Are we giving women and men the same access to leadership courses?



QUESTIONS at the level of day-to-day management:



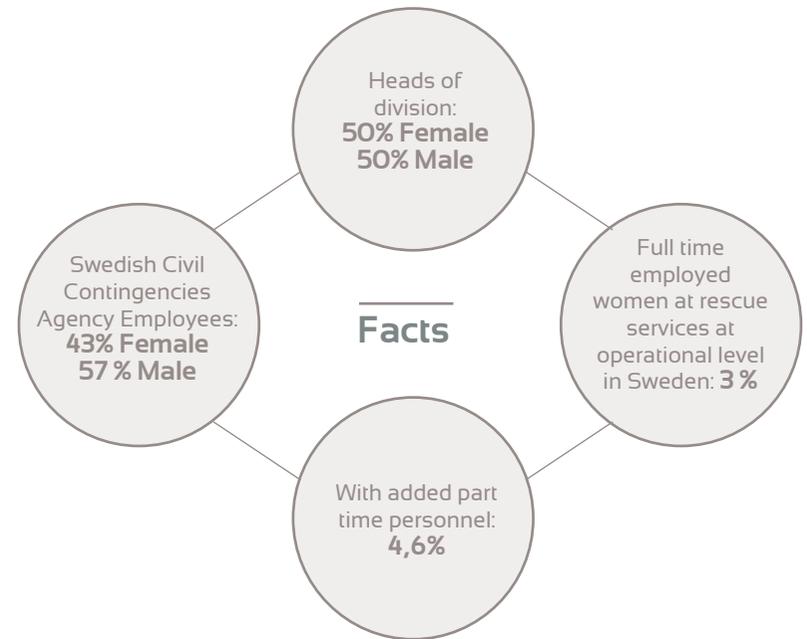
Are we asking women and men the same questions when it comes to career planning?

we inform the public about risks and emergencies?

ARE WE CONSIDERING THE NEEDS OF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN WHEN:

we are financing research?

we design our exercises and programmes?



## Traditional archetypes

Gender imbalance influences the whole professional culture in that respective field, including norms, standards, values.

One of the problems we find here is the strength of traditional male archetypes:  
**the idea of a brave, strong and potent fireman, ready to sacrifice his life and save vulnerable women and children.**

These archetypes seem hard to combine with a modern idea of a fire- man or -woman who uses smart techniques and equipment rather than physical strength to do the job.

It is important to note that traditional archetypes are not only devastating from a female gender perspective.

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## International assistance, field missions & humanitarian aid

We are generally more successful in developing and applying a gender perspective within international missions, compared to what we are achieving on national level.

One of the reasons of this is the impact of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325. It has been a powerful vehicle for action. Sweden prepared a national action plan based on this resolution. The plan is quite executive and includes indicators that measure achievements on the issue. Sweden has also developed gender training for field staff, a code of conduct and gender equality handbook.

Download the  
handbook here:




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A working group Women in Fire Services of the International Association of Fire and Rescue was founded in 2012.

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Find out more here:




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## Good practice examples

### Mission in Pakistan

In 2010 Sweden was assisting with response to large scale floods. Implementing the task of water cleaning, the teams carried out surveys before building new cleaning plants. The survey showed that it was often a dangerous task for women to fetch water. The specific needs of women were considered in the planning and location of the plants.

### Mozambique

In Mozambique MSB has been involved in a DRR mission focused on developing the local capacity for risk mapping and early warning. Within this work we have been able to focus specifically on the impact of climate change on women and children. Sometimes there is a need to develop other forms of alerting mechanisms to reach these target groups.

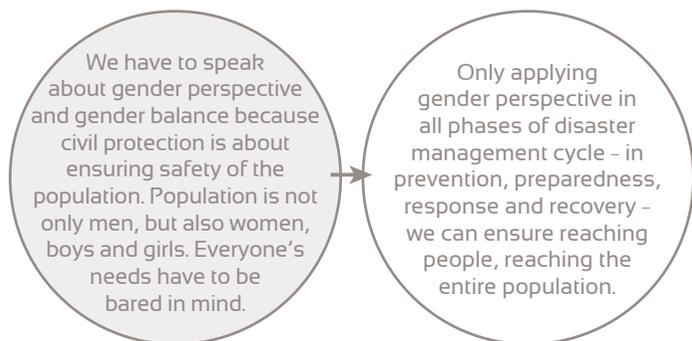
# Tatjana Milkamanovič

Watch statement here:



The aim of this event is an achievement on its own right: We are starting a discussion that will have to continue with more concrete activities.

## Socio-political commitment



We still have to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming in our work.

The truth is somewhere in the middle. Both, in private and in public sector, good balance between women and men should be promoted in order to achieve the most effective results.

## Operational work and work conditions

Civil protection is traditionally men dominated field, from on-ground operations, local level, to decision and policy makers.

Improvement may be seen on the decision making level: negotiations on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in 2013 were led and finalised by women: the decision was negotiated between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission and lead-representatives from these institutions were female.

## Positioning and Mapping

Low numbers of women in field and operational work in fire and rescue services may depend on physical requirements and social conditions. In Lithuania, firefighters work every third day 24 hour shifts.

If women are placed within the realm of expectations to fulfill traditionally "female" social roles related to family and children, it is difficult to combine those with working conditions in rescue services.

## Women in international humanitarian work

Women should be active in international work, and in responding to humanitarian crises.

In many countries due to cultural and religious differences, it is a woman who would be let to talk and assist local women and could best understand and explain their needs



# Tiina Peltola-Lampi

Watch statement here:



## The necessity of the discussion

If we were not talking about the situation, it would stay as it is forever.

**Civil security** can only be enhanced up to its full extent if engaging all possible talents.

## Career & Gender: Personal Experience

I started my career in the Ministry of the Interior, the department of Rescue Services in 1986. It was not easy: back then, male in higher positions would not easily recognise potential in young women.

This is understandable: for a person it is easier to recognise someone whom they can relate to, who reminds them of their younger selves.

Three decades ago, it was difficult for a woman to **get trusted in this field**. I hope the situation has changed now.

**Women needed to work three times as much as men** in order to get the same level of recognition.

Yet quality of the results of groups of **mixed gender** was higher than that of groups containing of one gender only.

## Positioning and Mapping

### Equality as Packaging

On high levels in Finland we are very well gender balanced: Finnish government has gender balanced representation, while almost all permanent secretaries at Finnish ministries are women.

The principle of gender balance is well in place at the department of the Rescue Service as well.

Whilst the closer to the ground you go, the fewer women you meet. In Finland, there have only been 6 women-rescuers ever.

On government level, gender mainstreaming is included in all Finnish preparedness legislation.

There used to be times when a woman would be told-off of a higher salary for she should rather be home taking care of her children.

Formal equality nowadays is so advanced that this argument would not be articulated anymore.

Nevertheless, the question remains:

How do we get more women in to do the real practical work in rescue?

Having both men and women as rescuers, increases **versatility in response**, which may be a critical factor in enhancing the overall success of rescue operations.

## Gender Balance as Competency Enhancement

Balanced gender inclusion into both, national and international work, provides higher level of professionalism for the whole field.

Being a woman especially helps in situations that are fuelled by cultural prerequisites.

Only mixed teams can assure presence of the highest possible competence.

Ensuring diverse gender representation in the field and on the level of decision making is the way to contribute to widening the scope of approaches within the **complex field of civil protection**.

## Education

Physical entry requirements for rescue service training in Finland are almost impossible to be met by a female body.

Innovation and technology allow for new methods, techniques and modes of physical action in emergency response; would it not be the time to allow for reconsideration of what has to be required from rescuers, including the **necessity for physical and competence diversity**?

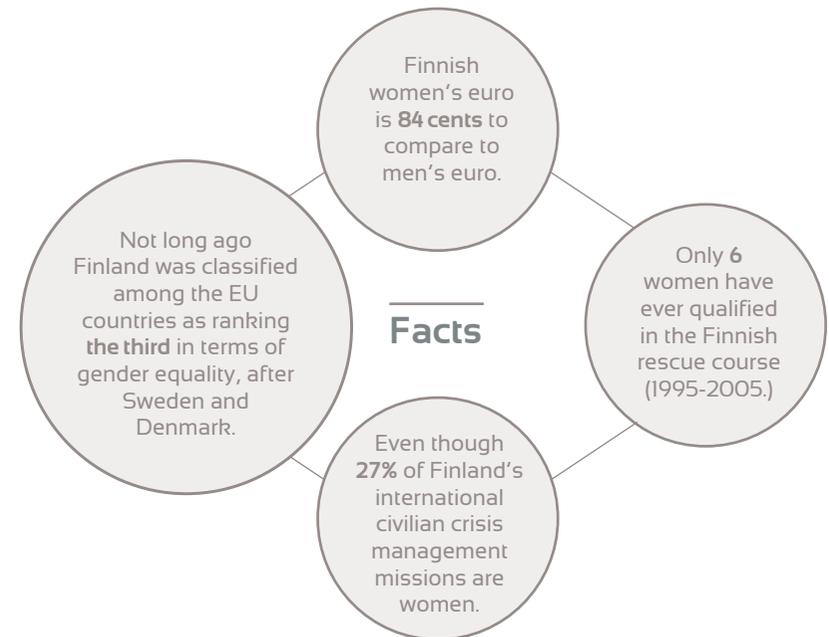
What cultural and social stereotypes are keeping women from applying to become rescuers?

Finnish rescue system is largely based on voluntary service. These voluntary fire brigades include many girls. But why wouldn't they apply to become rescuers when turning of age?

## Way Forward

It is important to ensure gender balance at all levels of organisation: while the policy making level has already moved forward in this regard, real practical work on the ground is still very male dominated.

75 % Finns would like to have more female rescuers



We may be third in the overall gender equality ranking in Europe. But in terms of people working for Finnish fire brigades, we are almost the last ones.

## Dalia Leinartė

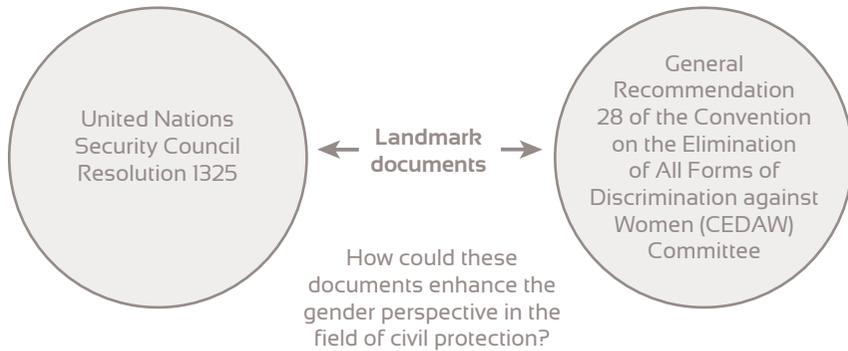


Watch  
statement here:



### Gender perspective in the field of civil protection

Gender perspective from the point of protecting women during military conflicts



Both documents stress that **armed conflicts worsen existing gender inequalities and place women at a higher risk of sexual and gender based violence** in the armed conflict and post conflict situations.

Both documents also stress that conflict related **sexual and gender based violence and discrimination against women do not appear in a vacuum. It is always a combination of the disruption of everyday life, family and community structures.**

The main principles of the two documents can facilitate a better **understanding of gender equality policies in the field of civil protection during and after many other socio-political and economic crises, as well as natural disasters.**

Numerous researches state that during any political social economic crises or in the course of natural disasters **women suffer more because of their gender and deeply rooted gender inequality that existed before the disaster.**

In this respect, discrimination against women goes together with other intersecting forms of discrimination, including but not limiting the discrimination on the basis of race, socio-economic status, colour, ethnic and social origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age, refugee or other immigration status.

Both documents mentioned here draw attention on the **importance of women access to economic, health and education infrastructure during social unrest and after that.** For instance, it is often women who suffer more from high unemployment rates, which force many women to work in illegal sectors during or after social crises or natural disasters.

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**Economic vulnerability affects more women than men because of male dominated leadership structures in many societies.**

In case of natural disasters, hidden gender, race, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status **stereotypes surface more easily, becoming a ground for discrimination, marginalisation of the needs and/or violence of those groups that have lesser opportunity of active participation in societies regular functioning before the disaster.**

**Stereotyping of women exclusively as mothers and housewives, in ways that limit their meaningful participation in political, economic and public activities of a country** is a globally spread gender stereotype weakening women's active role in societies in general.

**Gender mainstreaming** is a strategic way of working which intends to display the actual conditions for women and men.

Every task that affects an individual should be tested from a **gender perspective**, and consequences for the changes for women and men should be analysed.

The mainstreaming strategy is to create **gender equality** between women and men through a long term process which prevents putting gender equality aside while promoting other political issues and tasks.

Mainly this understanding of gender mainstreaming is already implemented at the level of legal framework in Finland and Sweden, but if to talk about the rest of the countries in the Baltic Sea region, I think we should still strive for better understanding.



**Sara Myrdal**

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency MSB



**Anna Ekstedt**

Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat, Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings

**Audience comments**

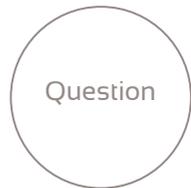
**Ligia Broström**

Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat



## Sara Myrdal

Being a woman does not automatically mean that you are an ambassador of gender equality. It may be very difficult to identify rooted inequalities that are defended even by some women themselves. This is challenging.



If you were to create a gender equality manual, a practical guide for rescue services in the Baltic Sea region, WHAT WOULD BE IN IT?

**HL**

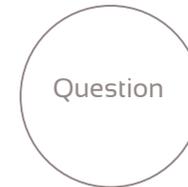
**Values** – to show why it is so important.  
**Examples** – of good practices created and lessons learned overseas, so it could be transformed into national best practices.

**TPL**

**The importance of:** values, teamwork and diversity.

## Ligia Broström

Through my work I have observed an interesting phenomenon among women and men similarly developing their careers: while women may often be hesitant to start a family and take maternity leave due to being afraid of losing a possibility to have a successful career after returning from leave, men, in contrary, would highlight their choice of taking care of their family by even recording their paternal leave on their CVs. This signals that unlike women, men consider parental leave as an important message being given to their career.



How could we advise policy makers to recognise the importance of women taking maternal leave?

**HL**

Being a parent is a good leadership course. Women should not be afraid of pointing this out.

**SW**

I would like to share an example from my own experience. I am a parent of two small children, and I feel that I can enjoy certain privileges that my wife cannot. I can bring my children to a work meeting if I need to, without experiencing any judgment. In contrary, I feel it is considered somehow cute when a man brings his kids to a work meeting. My wife, however, is very reluctant to do this, and I think it is this gender stereotypes related perspective that lies here at the bottom.

**TPL**

It was not motherhood what made my career difficult in the beginning. It was rather a gender issue. To make a career it was as difficult to me as to my female colleagues who did not have any children.

## Anna Ekstedt

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The civil protection field could use experience of governance within other sectors, such as, in the case of Sweden, police and military. Instead of discussing only values, we should also discuss instruments such as getting more women in police education by having a national appropriation bill. This is needed in other fields as well. Probably the reason why we have more women in international operations is because we have Resolution 1325. But when it comes to the national arena we do not have documents saying that you should employ more women for fire brigades and rescue services. Having a national appropriation bill, that would change values, but also would provide financial instruments, initiatives and ideas for the institutions.

HL

The idea is great, but the problem is that the Swedish government cannot issue an appropriation bill to the 290 local municipalities - they decide for themselves.

Even if MSB runs colleges and can educate future female fire fighters, these women will not get employed. This is why the question is very tricky. I hope for political leadership on local level, as well as awareness raising, discussion, and for the the issue to be brought to the table. This is what we try to do at MSB, yet we feel that the area is still very conservative and traditional.

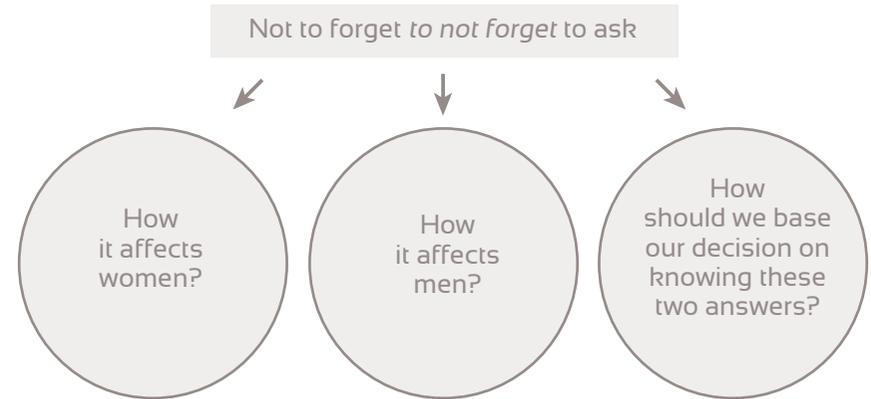
Discussion

Watch discussion here:





Points



Sometimes it seems that it is easier to implement gender equality in a place far away from your home, in another country, in another culture. It is easier for us to identify what structures there are, and what are the elements that matters. Is it because we have already advanced beyond these issues, or is it because in general it is more difficult to see patterns of an issue when one looks up close in your own country?

The answer may vary among the countries. If Finland's international assistance is based on their national fire brigades, then, naturally, there will be no female rescuers either, as there are only six female rescuers in the country. In other countries, however, the difference may be higher, and it is indeed a difficulty of seeing your own troubles from a close perspective that may have role in recognising the issue at all. Raising awareness, for this matter, is key.

What about an image of a strongly build and large fire-fighter, rescuing population after an earthquake - is it a wrong perspective and we have to adapt another way of thinking and imagining other modes of working?

**TPL** Search and rescue is a heavy work. The modes and methodologies, however, are changing with shifts in technology solutions. One thing to remember is that these are the situations where one has to come very near to the population. Half of the population are women. Thus there must be enough women on the search and rescue side to help them.

**DL** On the other hand, the issue is not only about equal numbers of men and women in rescue services. It does not help to solve the problems if there are only women who's behaviour and decisions are mainly informed by patriarchal attitude. The core issue is about a mindset. No matter of which gender you are, your mindset should be shaped from the perspective of gender equality, and informed by the reasons why it is needed.

Gender equality mindset could help to avoid such situations as we have seen during the armed conflict in Bosnia & Herzegovina in 1992-1995. Over 50 000 women were raped during that period of time, whereas only 7 men were accused until now. The whole society and the legal system keeps silence about it as it became the great stigma.

**HL** The word strength triggers me. What is strength? It is not only about physical strength. It is important to see that you can add strength in different ways. There is mental strength and cultural strength. Urban search and rescue teams are teams, so are the national teams of fire-fighters. For a strong team you need a mixture. Sometimes you need someone big and muscular, but sometimes you may need someone who is thinner, smaller, lighter and who can get into various holes. It is a combination of the two and mixed teams of men and women have a much stronger force - to do the job.

The issue of fire-fighter rescue hero, an old traditional archetype. Don't we like this icon too much for getting rid of it so soon?

**HL** One should always be careful with abolishing traditions. On the other hand, however, he stands there blocking our minds. I think we should leave him.

**TPL** Three quarters of Finns wish to see more female rescuers. This profession is, as a matter of fact, one of the most trusted and appreciated professions in Finland. It would not harm that hero if he were joined by a few more women in that profession.

**DL** It is important to not forget that, as history has showed to us, the super hero rescuer can just as easily become a violent sexual assaulter against female victims, as it happened during the conflicts in places like Bosnia & Herzegovina, Rwanda and Congo, among other places.

How do we discuss gender issue in our countries? Is it only a female issue?

**HL** This issue is about inclusiveness. Nothing would be achieved if we labeled the issues as female issues when in fact it is about human rights. Those who are in the profession on ground, i.e. fire-fighters, as well as civil protection decision makers and ordinary citizens. All of us need to talk about this issue, regardless gender.

**TM** Sometimes it is less important who raises these questions, but rather how one thinks about them. The issue is indeed inclusiveness itself, not so much technical compliance with women's rights. Instead of turning it into a game who possesses more power, we must think of whether we are taking up this approach in order to achieve the highest possible result in what we do.

## In search for a super woman to join the super man

HL

At present the physical requirements within the rescue services constitute barriers against gender balance.

DO THE JOB –  
BY BUILDING UP  
A TEAM

It is difficult to convince male decision makers on the ground that not everybody needs to carry a 80 kg body or ladders.

TPL

It is very much a question of values and even more so - of building a team. Civil protection is not an individual job.

If you have a team with different qualifications, knowledge, people, you will reach that **VERSATILITY IN RESPONSE.**



# Conclusions

The issue discussed at the event which this booklet aimed to capture and register remains open. This openness is precisely what one could consider as a positive result of the initial attempt to bring the issue of gender perspective in civil protection in the Baltic Sea region to the forefront. Contributions of prominent panellists have clearly demonstrated that even among the countries that are considered as leading examples in implementing gender equality, societies are still awaiting for a shift to come. While enjoying the greatest achievements in securing the political will and a high level gender balance recognition among the decision makers, the homework on ground still remains to be done.

||| We have fulfilled the formal quotas. Now it is time to find a way to make sure that these requirements is not an empty form, but rather a possibility to address the actual needs of our societies. |||

It may require a new language, new terminology, and new definitions of what is considered to be *strong, secure, and courageous*.

**The call is thus for:**

Not erasing but rather recognising, embracing and employing  
**THE DIFFERENCE.**

Members of our populations are diverse and differ one from the another. This, however, does not make one *lesser* or *less capable* than another. The next step is to ensure that this diversity is appropriated not only in governmental legislation, but in our **social imaginary** as well.

||| **Societal security** is the fundamental area serving both, as an indicator and a target in this regard. |||

**Failure** to implement the approaches described above may result in devastating outcomes to our populations. **Success**, on the other hand, may pave ways to the prosperous and viable future of our societies.

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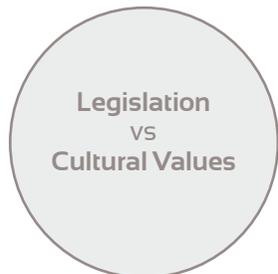
## The way forward is to consider the following



International practice in applying gender perspectives in civil protection is considered to be more successful than implementation of similar approaches on national level. One possible reason for this may be the fact that national level civil protection management meets socio-cultural resistance informed by strong gender-biased stereotypes. Civil protection management on international level, in contrary, has an opportunity to start on a new blank slate.



Appropriation documents and imposed quotas is an important first step in ensuring diversification of gender representation in the field of civil protection. In order to achieve the overall aims, however, the next step implies addressing the obstacles that prevent diversification take place on-ground civil protection activities. Formal quotas do not necessarily affect the situation on-ground.



In order to achieve the next level of successful and rewarding implementation of gender perspective in civil protection on decision making, management and on-ground implementation levels, it must be acknowledged that the issue refers not only to normative legislation, but to core cultural values that inform our individual behaviour. Thus it is a challenge that needs to be addressed from basic socio-cultural perspective and in a relevant language.



# Further Reading

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## The Disaster Risk Reduction Process: A Gender Perspective

A Contribution to the 2009 ISDR Global  
Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction

Inputs from the Gender and Disasters Network,  
Facilitated by UNISDR, Geneva  
February 2009

Read full text here:



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Gender issues in development and disasters are relatively well established and have been acknowledged globally at the highest levels. Within the development context, disasters showcase and highlight gendered imbalances in society. This includes both vulnerabilities and capacities, and social and economic imbalances arising from class, caste, disability and minority status. Aspects of gender cut across all segments of society and have implications for every action and move towards sustainable development, where DRR acts as a non-negotiable parameter. Thus, mainstreaming gender perspectives into the DRR process offers new opportunities to advance gender equality in the socio-economic development process.

Promoting gender equality in DRR requires multi-sectorial and multi-stakeholder approaches. Gender and DRR issues need to be addressed through political, social, economic, scientific and technical,

and humanitarian approaches, where everyone can make a contribution. All citizens have a role to play and should assume some responsibility and accountability for advancing gender equality in DRR.

At the global level, available information shows that efforts to promote gender equality in DRR have focused on advocacy and/or awareness-raising, along with support for policy changes and gender mainstreaming in inter-governmental processes. Thanks to the consistent efforts and support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Secretariat (UNISDR) in cooperation with other UN and international agencies, gender is now on the international agenda and featured in some inter-governmental processes.

There has recently been a critical shift in the mainstreaming of gender considerations into DRR: from a

women-focused approach to a gender-focused approach based on the belief that gender relations in DRR should be analysed within a socio-economic and cultural context. On top of this shift, the strategic focus of DRR and disaster management has changed from reactive disaster response to long-term proactive disaster risk and vulnerability reduction where gender and DRR considerations are considered necessary to achieve sustainable development.

A number of regional inter-governmental level policies and strategies focusing on disaster management and DRR have come into place over the last five years or so. Unfortunately, commitment to gender issues is rarely stated explicitly; rather, it tends to be seen as an implicit part of the larger commitment to implement the HFA and achieve MDGs. The efforts of regional non-governmental development organizations to address gender-based issues at the programme or operational level are typically implemented in an ad hoc and inconsistent manner. For the most part, the increase in recognition of gender issues at the regional level is due to the dedicated work of a handful of organizations and women's/gender activist groups.

(...)

## The gender issue

In today's society, gender issues arise from a complex mix of dynamic factors that include differentiated roles and responsibilities, skills and capabilities, vulnerabilities, power relations, institutional structures, and long-standing traditions and attitudes. The specificities of gender relations may vary depending on the socio-cultural values of a society; however, the fundamental gender-based divisions of roles, responsibilities and identities largely remain the same throughout the world. As a result, men and women develop different and, often, specific skills. They also have different life experiences, and therefore different concerns, needs and priorities. These differences are partly due to biological factors but mostly occur because of social factors.

Within gender relations there are strong imbalances between men and women that are typically unfavourable towards women. In general, women occupy a subordinated status in the family, community and society at large. Gender-based relations, in particular power relations, and established social and institutional structures and attitudes effectively lead to the subordination of women, denying them opportuni-

ties and interfering with their rights as individuals. Such an imbalanced gender relationship prevents women from enjoying equal-rights and equal-partners status as policy makers, contributors and beneficiaries of development and DRR processes. Gender relations, however, are not static or permanent; they are learned behaviours that vary by location, culture, class, ethnicity and religion, and change over time.

Powers and opportunities to contribute to, and benefit from, development have typically been confined to men, since traditional development approaches have largely targeted and viewed men as the heads of households, farmers, bread winners. Women have been seen merely as housewives, secondary earners and mothers within the context of the family/household unit and mostly addressed in these stereotyped roles, if at all. Although gender issues in the development context are fairly well researched and debated, women are still largely marginalized in the development process.

## The gender issue in DRR

In essence, gender relations in disasters reflect gender relations in society. Owing to different life experiences, women and men differ

in how they experience, respond to, and recover from disasters. When disaster strikes, men and women have different abilities and ways of responding, and, in the end, the impacts are different. It has been widely observed, researched and documented that women are more vulnerable than their male counterparts of the same social classes, races, ethnic and age groups during all phases of a disaster. Gender-based social, economic, religious and cultural constructs marginalize women across all communities and groups, irrespective of class, caste, economic standing, status, ethnicity or age. Therefore, addressing gender relations in DRR requires more attention to the status of women, along with the challenges they face.

(...)

a socially subordinated position of women leads to a compounded status of vulnerability across all categories of women. Gender-based inequalities and vulnerabilities place women at greater degrees of risk to disasters, including less access to disaster early warning, to policy and decision making in risk reduction and disaster management, to knowledge and information, to relief assistance, in addition to higher level of illiteracy, poverty and risk of sexual and domestic violence and sexual abuse. Disaster situations,

with the breakdown of family, community and institutional security and protection, generally make prevailing gender-based disparities surface to a greater degree than in normal situations, putting already vulnerable groups at higher risk. Women, in this context, can be identified as among the most vulnerable groups in most societies.

Men, too, can be harmed by gender-based social expectations, especially in the aftermath of disasters. Socially and culturally, they are expected to deal with their own losses and grieve alone. The formal aspects of psychosocial support bypass men, since, according to stereotypical views, they are expected to be strong and face the crisis in a manly manner. While there may be specific interventions to help widows and female-headed households recover, the concerns of widowers who are left with the responsibility of raising young families are often not addressed. Furthermore, gender-based social conditioning does not give men the necessary resources to develop skills in domestic chores and care giving. This situation often goes overlooked in gender-blind disaster recovery interventions. As a result, gaps in men's coping capacities in such circumstances can victimize them in the recovery process.

(...)

The common perception of women as dependent, weak and subordinate acts as a barrier that isolates them from planning and decision making processes. Their skills and life experiences are not identified as resources, and, therefore, are not incorporated into risk reduction and disaster preparedness, relief or recovery efforts.

Such a dual disadvantage results in deepened vulnerability and dependency, and denied opportunities to learn and grow and provide leadership and contribute to DRR efforts. As a result, cycles of gender-biased unequal power relations are further intensified and conditions are created for the perpetuation of the status quo. This situation constitutes a tremendous loss to women as individuals and a loss of resource to their families, communities and nations.

Because of their different role definitions and life experiences, men and women can complement each other when contributing to risk reduction and disaster management. Good practices of gender-inclusive DRR observed across the globe are evidence of this.

## Further reading



# End Note Cloud of Quotations

**In examining masculinity and femininity throughout the world**, anthropologists have found that different cultures universally construct a model of appropriate manhood that is usually difficult for men to achieve and, once achieved, can be precarious. Thus, men are regularly under a much greater burden to “prove” their masculinity than women are to similarly prove their femininity.

Read more here:



**In addition to age, gender is one of the universal dimensions on which status differences are based.** Unlike sex, which is a biological concept, gender is a social construct specifying the socially and culturally prescribed roles that men and women are to follow. According to Gerda Lerner in *The Creation of Patriarchy*, gender is the “costume, a mask, a straitjacket in which men and women dance their unequal dance”

Read more about Gender and Society:



Michael C. Kearl

**The boundaries of gender as a social structure** are set by taboos that define social power relationships through prohibiting transgressions and violations of the binary gender code or heterosexist gender discourse.

Read the text here:



**Karmen Špiljak**

Gaze and Gender, construction of female identity in popular culture with special focus on comical genres

Feminist theory has often been critical of naturalistic explanations of sex and sexuality that assume that the meaning of women’s social existence can be derived from some fact of their physiology.

Read full article here:



Judith Butler *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution*

**1** The project of sexual equality takes male achievements, values and standards as the norms to which women should also aspire. At most, then, women can achieve an equality with men only within a system whose overall value is unquestioned and whose power remains unrecognised. Women strive, then, to become the same as men, in a sense, "masculinised."

**2** To achieve an equality between the sexes, women's specific needs and interests--what distinguishes them from men--must be minimised and their commonness or humanity stressed. (This may, for example, explain the strong antipathy to maternity amongst a number of egalitarian feminists, [2] a resistance to the idea that women's corporeality and sexuality make a difference to the kinds of consciousness or subjects they could become.)

**3** Policies and laws codifying women's legal rights to equality--anti-discriminatory and equal opportunity legislation--have tended to operate as much against women as in their interest: Men, for example, have been able as much as women to use antidiscrimination or equal opportunity regulations to secure their own positions.

**4** In this sense, equality becomes a vacuous concept insofar as it reduces all specificities, including those that serve to distinguish the positions of the oppressed from those of the oppressor. One can be considered equal only insofar as the history of the oppression of specific groups is effaced. [3]

**5** The project of creating equality between the sexes can be socially guaranteed, if it can, only in the realm of public and civic life. And even if some kind of domestic equality is possible, an equality at the level of sexual and particularly reproductive relations seems impossible insofar as they are untouched by egalitarianism

Elizabeth Grosz  
Sexual Difference  
and the Problem  
of Essentialism

Read full  
article here:



# Food for Thought and Inspiration

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"(...) what is called gender identity is a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo. In its very character as performative resides the possibility of contesting its reified status."

**Judith Butler**  
*Performative Acts and Gender Constitution:  
An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*

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"No longer is emancipation about the legal removal of obstacles or impediments of freedom. Nor is equality to be achieved by abstraction from social or other differences. And neither emancipation nor equality are considered to be the consequences of state action (although they are qualities said to thrive in secular democracies). Rather, emancipation and equality are traits presumed to inhere in individuals, establishing their agency - their very humanity - and so their eligibility for membership in the community of the nation."

**Joan Wallach Scott**  
*Emancipation and Equality: A Critical Genealogy*

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**Successful implementation of the Strategy<sup>1</sup> requires also the adoption of a gender perspective in the governance system and the Action Plan.**

Equality between men and women is a core value of the European Union. At the same time, economic and business benefits can be gained from enhancing gender equality.

**In order to achieve the objectives of the EUSBSR the contribution and talents of both women and men should be fully used.<sup>2</sup>**

1 European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

**Read more about the Strategy here:**



2 Action Plan for the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region - An integrated framework that allows the European Union and Member States to identify needs and match them to the available resources by coordinating of appropriate policies, thus enabling the Baltic Sea Region to achieve a sustainable environment and optimal economic and social development.

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