

GBV AoR HELPDESK

Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies

Key Considerations at the Intersection of Disasters, Climate Change and Gender-based Violence in the Asia-Pacific Region



Lara Quarterman | 13 October 2025

Introduction

As with every region of the world, gender-based violence (GBV) is a significant concern in Asia and the Pacific. Data from 32 countries across the region indicates women are most likely to experience physical or sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner, with reported lifetime exposure ranging from 10 percent in Indonesia to 64 percent in Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Survivors typically do not tell anyone about the violence, meaning they are unlikely to receive support services.¹ And the impacts of GBV are significant: GBV can result in both acute and long-term health, including mental health, issues for survivors. Communities and societies are also negatively affected. Costing studies from the Asia Pacific region estimate the impact of GBV on countries' gross domestic product (GDP) due to lost productivity and the individual and systemic costs associated with responding to intimate partner violence (IPV) range from .2 percent of GDP in Marshall Islands to almost 1 percent of GDP in Solomon Islands² and 3.19 percent of GDP in Viet Nam.³

During and after disasters, risks and impacts of GBV are exacerbated due to issues such as disruption of services and support, the breakdown of formal and informal protection systems, increased tensions within communities, households and relationships, and insecure and overcrowded living conditions. This link between GBV and disasters is particularly important to consider in Asia and the Pacific because it is the most disaster-prone region of the world, not only due to geographic features such as expansive coastlines with highly concentrated populations, low-lying areas, and many small island States, but also because of high levels of poverty and limited infrastructure and other resources to manage natural events. In 2022, over 140 disasters struck the region, leaving 7,500 dead and affecting more than 64 million people, causing an estimated USD 57

¹ UNFPA (2025) Violence Against Women - Regional Snapshot (2024) – kNOwVAWdata
https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/2025-07/REV_kNOwVAWdata%20regional%20VAW%20map%202024%20V8.pdf

² UN Women (2023) Marshall Islands Evidence Brief: Costing the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence and the Resources Required to Address it <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/03/costing-the-impact-of-intimate-partner-violence-and-the-resources-required-to-address-it>

³ UN Women (2014) The Costs of Violence: Understanding the costs of violence against women and girls and its response: selected findings and lessons learned from Asia and the Pacific <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2014/1/the-costs-of-violence>

billion in damage.⁴ Climate change is contributing to increased intensity and frequency of natural events in Asia Pacific.^{5 6 7} These include slow-onset crises, such as rising sea levels, to more sudden events, such as typhoons, tsunamis, cyclones, and floods.⁸

The climate crisis has also exacerbated violence against women environmental human rights defenders (WEHRDs), which impedes their activism and undermines overall global efforts to address climate change. The increase in threats, harassment, and femicide of WEHRDs is alarming.⁹ In 2020 at least 44 women human rights defenders were murdered and 69 percent of those killed were defending land, indigenous peoples' and environmental rights.¹⁰

This learning paper explores the links between climate, GBV, and disasters in Asia and the Pacific and considers key actions GBV specialists working in settings affected by climate change and disasters can take. Drawing from a desk review of relevant resources, it begins with a brief overview of the intersections of GBV, climate, and disasters, highlighting evidence that women and girls are often the most negatively affected by climate change and disasters yet the most excluded from climate action and disaster risk reduction (DRR), preparedness, response, and recovery. It then explores key considerations linked to climate action, with a summary of potential efforts GBV actors can take in climate change mitigation, climate adaptation and resilience, and supporting shifts from carbon-intensive economies to more sustainable use of natural resources. The paper goes on to consolidate recommendations for priority interventions to address GBV at three critical stages of disasters: risk reduction and preparedness, anticipatory action, and response and recovery, which are important when managing climate-related disasters.

Climate Change, GBV, and Disasters

The climate crisis disproportionately affects the world's poor, of whom the majority are women and girls.¹¹ Climate change intensifies discriminatory norms and gender inequality by worsening women's and girls' responsibilities for resources such as food and water, limiting their access to essential services and education, and reducing their economic security and decision-making power. These effects trap women in cycles of poverty and disempowerment, making it harder for them and their communities to adapt and recover from the impacts of climate change. Weather-related humanitarian emergencies can also heighten women's and girls' risk to multiple forms of GBV (see Box 1), allowing perpetrators to commit more frequent and severe acts with impunity.¹²

⁴ UN ESCAP (2023) Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12870/6258>

⁵ UN ESCAP (2023) Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12870/6258>

⁶ Clugston, N., Rhodes, R., Nneli, O., Fraser, E. (2024) 'Gender Based Violence: Addressing the overlooked barrier to effective climate action.' What Works to Prevent VAWG: London UK. <https://www.preventvawg.org/evidence-hub/climate-change-report>

⁷ Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (2023) Impacts of climate change on population and development in Asia and the Pacific https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/ESCAP_APPC7.3_E.pdf

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ OHCHR, UNEP & UN Women (2021) Human rights, the environment, and gender equality: Key messages <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/06/policy-paper-human-rights-environment-gender-equality>

¹⁰ Front Line Defenders (2021) Global Analysis 2020 <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/resource-publication/global-analysis-2020>

¹¹ <https://unfccc.int/gender>

¹² Clugston *et al*

The lack of basic protections and safe and accessible services for survivors of GBV makes it less likely that they will be able to meaningfully participate in their communities, including in climate-related activism.¹³ Women's persistent lack of access to decision-making processes and leadership opportunities prevent them from fully contributing to disaster management and climate action, including climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience, disaster preparedness, response and recovery, the just transition (discussed further below), and environmental activism.¹⁴

When women and girls do engage in climate action, they may face increased risks of GBV, such as women environmental activists being exposed to online and offline violence, including femicide. This can limit women's involvement and participation in disaster planning, preparedness, and emergency response, yet this is not routinely considered in climate- or disaster-related policymaking and programming.^{15 16}

Climate Change, GBV and Disasters: Facts & Figures

- An epidemiological study of data from India, Nepal, and Pakistan found a 4.49 percent increase of intimate partner violence against women with each 1°C increase in the annual mean temperature.¹⁷
- Risks of GBV increased in the aftermath of the 2023 Cyclone Mocha in Myanmar as healthcare delivery was disrupted, households were displaced when their shelters and latrines were destroyed, and electricity was cut off.¹⁸
- Following recurrent flooding in two communities in Laos PDR in 2016, 47 percent of survey respondents felt women and girls were distressed by the rise in child marriage and 32 percent were worried about intimate partner violence.¹⁹
- Research in communities affected by flooding and an earthquake in Indonesia in 2016 found that temporary housing arrangements led to increases in sexual harassment in the aftermath of the disasters.²⁰
- Over 20 percent of men surveyed in Papua New Guinea felt that GBV had increased since the beginning of a drought in 2015.²¹
- Thirty percent of survey respondents in two communities in the Philippines affected by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 felt women and girls were concerned with the risk in child marriage following the disaster and 15 percent knew of incidents of intimate partner violence.²²
- After two cyclones hit Fiji in 2012, women staying in emergency shelters without private spaces reported being forced by their partners to have sex.²³

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ <https://unfccc.int/gender>

¹⁵ Amnesty International (2019) Challenging power, fighting discrimination: a call to action to recognize and protect women human rights defenders <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/1139/2019/en/>

¹⁶ Clugston *et al*

¹⁷ Zhu Y, He C, Bell M, Zhang Y, Fatmi Z, Zhang Y, Zaid M, Bachwenkizi J, Liu C, Zhou L, Chen R, Kan H. Association of Ambient Temperature with the Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence Among Partnered Women in Low- and Middle-Income South Asian Countries. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2023 Sep 1;80(9):952-961. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37379013/>

¹⁸ UN Women Photo essay: Vulnerable women and girls face compounded crises after Cyclone Mocha <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/feature-story/2023/05/vulnerable-women-and-girls-face-compounded-crises-after-cyclone-mocha>

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ CARE International (2015) Assessment on the impact of the El Niño event in Papua New Guinea <https://wrd.unwomen.org/practice/resources/assessment-impact-el-nino-event-papua-new-guinea>

²² IFRC (2018) The Responsibility to Prevent and Respond to Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Disasters and Crises <https://pgi.ifrc.org/resources/responsibility-prevent-and-respond-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-disasters-and-crises>

²³ *Ibid*

Figure 1 below demonstrates the relationship between climate change, disasters, and GBV. Disrupting this cycle is important to make climate action and disaster management inclusive and therefore more effective and to reduce the exposure of women and girls to GBV and the impact of GBV on individual survivors, communities, and societies.

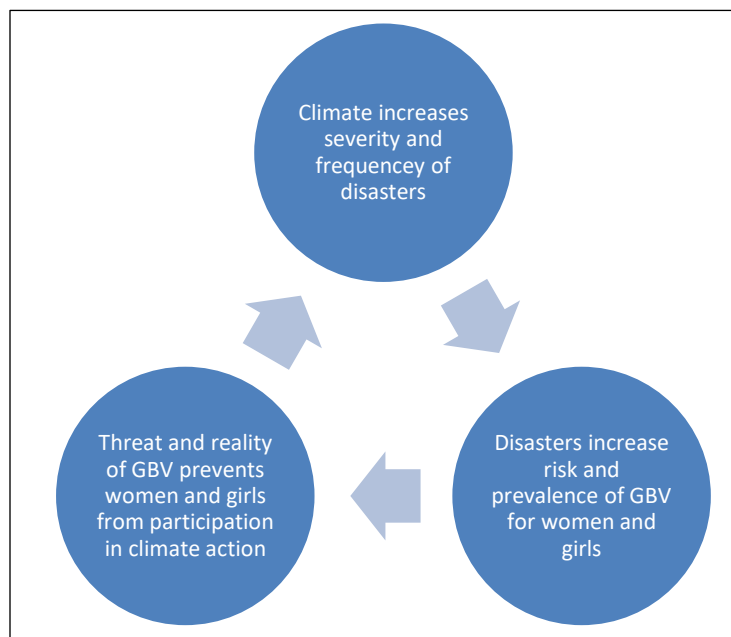


Figure 1: Climate change, disasters, and GBV

Disaster management, humanitarian response, and climate action are critical areas to integrate GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and response.²⁴ While many of the actions that GBV specialists will take in disasters are similar to actions in broader humanitarian GBV programming, there are unique characteristics of disasters that are important to note when designing and delivering humanitarian GBV programming, including:²⁵

- DRR, preparedness, response and recovery, particularly in the Asia Pacific region, are often managed by national governments and regional mechanisms; the international community may be called on when the needs exceed the capacity available to respond.
- Humanitarian responses to disasters are often informed by laws, policies, and guidelines developed prior to the event, demonstrating the importance of integrating GBV into disaster preparedness activities led by governments.

- When disasters are cyclical, seasonable, or predictable, significant investments may be made in emergency preparedness and anticipatory action.
- Localized responses are critical to ensuring that services continue to be available when infrastructure is destroyed or damaged during or after disasters.
- Humanitarian responses to disasters, especially where preparedness efforts have been made or where disasters are recurrent, may transition to recovery quickly and/or there may be pressure to shift to recovery quickly.
- Funding for emergency response may come from national governments or regional bodies, the private sector, or remittances and have short time frames for delivery and results.

Taking these intersections into account, there are important actions for GBV specialists to take across the spectrum of climate action that will both improve the effectiveness and impact of climate action as well as meaningfully address GBV. In addition, and following global GBV in emergencies guidance, measures should be implemented to lower the incidence of GBV, reduce the risks of violence faced by women and girls, and ensure access to quality GBV services and support at each phase of disaster management, from DRR and preparedness, to anticipatory actions in relation to forecasted hazards, to humanitarian response and recovery.²⁶

²⁴ Efforts to manage disasters from funding to frameworks and approaches to on-the-ground response are relatively developed, however, GBV is generally under addressed in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

²⁵ GBV AoR Helpdesk (2019) Prevention of, and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Settings Affected by Natural Disasters: With a specific look at Asia and the Pacific <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/preventing-and-responding-to-gbv-in-natural-disasters.pdf>

²⁶ Each of these areas of work must reflect and reinforce core guiding principles underpinning a survivor-centered approach. Core survivor-centered principles are summarize in Annex 1. For more information on the GBV Guiding

Key considerations for GBV actors are outlined below and include measures within general climate action, DRR and emergency preparedness, anticipatory action, and disaster response and recovery.

Key GBV Considerations in Climate Action

A 2024 paper from the *What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls* program outlines the ways in which GBV and climate action intersect, making the case that integrating GBV into climate action will have positive effects on efforts to address the impacts of climate change and to reduce its progression.²⁷ There are several key entry points for this work, including through *climate change mitigation*, *climate adaption and resilience*, *climate change-induced disaster management*, the *just transition*, and *climate activism*, each described below.

Climate change mitigation includes efforts to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions from human activities, such as shifting to renewable energy sources or adopting energy efficient practices. International cooperation on mitigation efforts is the focus of the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty on climate change adopted in 2015.^{28 29}

Climate adaptation and resilience refer to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to current and future changes to the climate, such as switching to drought-resistant agricultural crops, enhancing flood defense systems, or establishing weather-related communications systems. National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are developed at a country level outlining the actions that will be taken to adapt to climate change and build resilience.³⁰

Climate change-induced disaster management is the phases of emergency response when applied to a crisis that is caused by or exacerbated by climate change, such as the preparedness, response, and recovery from typhoons, floods, droughts etc.

Just transition refers to the process of moving economies that are heavily reliant on the use of carbon to more sustainable and lower-carbon economies in a fair and equitable manner, recognizing global wealth inequalities.³¹ It aims to maximize the benefits of climate action while minimizing the negative impacts on workers, communities, and vulnerable populations who might otherwise be left behind.

Climate activism encompasses the actions taken by citizens, including human rights defenders, women's rights activists, and environmental rights defenders to draw attention to climate change and to call for action by governments and duty bearers to mitigate the impacts of climate change and make adaptations and build resilience to its effects, and ultimately protect people and the environment.

Effectively incorporating attention to GBV into each of these areas of climate action will enable women to adapt and build resilience to the effects of climate change, support women's access to decision-making and leadership, improve emergency response to climate emergencies, protect women and girl climate activists

Principles, see Standard 1 of the Interagency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies <https://gbvaor.net/gbviems>

²⁷ Clugston et al

²⁸ For more information on the Paris Agreement, see UN Climate Change "The Paris Agreement" <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>

²⁹ UNDP (2024) What is climate change mitigation and why is it urgent? <https://climatepromise.undp.org/news-and-stories/what-climate-change-mitigation-and-why-it-urgent>

³⁰ UN Climate Change "Introduction to adaptation and resilience" <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/the-big-picture/introduction>

³¹ UNDP (2022) What is just transition? And why is it important? <https://climatepromise.undp.org/news-and-stories/what-just-transition-and-why-it-important>

from violence, and support a 'just transition'.³² Some non-exhaustive considerations for advancing efforts to integrate GBV in climate action are highlighted below and key considerations for climate change-induced disaster management are covered in subsequent sections.³³

Women's Leadership and Participation in Climate Action	
Advocate for the meaningful participation of women and girls throughout all stages of climate action, including women-led organizations (WLOs) and GBV service providing organizations.	✓
Provide institutional funding for WLOs focused on climate action to participate in climate-related policymaking, decisions, influencing, and advocacy, including attendance at coordination and planning fora and international convenings.	✓
Support WEHRDs to carry out their work without threats or experiences of violence, ensuring they have access to services and support, including peer support, and that service providers understand the unique risks of GBV faced by WEHRDs.	✓
Consider intersecting forms of vulnerability faced by women and girls and how this can impede their participation in climate action, including sexuality, gender identity, age, and disability.	✓
Coordination, Planning, and Advocacy across Climate Action	
Advocate for the inclusion of the links between GBV and climate change within climate financing instruments (see Annex 2) and processes to ensure that GBV is recognized as an impediment for women and girls to participate in climate action and that climate-focused projects identify and mitigate risks of GBV.	✓
Advocate for the use of climate financing instruments to fund GBV programming, including providing access to quality care for survivors, investment in evidence-based GBV prevention, and mitigating the risks of GBV in communities affected by climate change.	✓
Undertake research and generate evidence to bolster understanding of the linkages between climate change and GBV, including efforts to mitigate against climate change and adapt to and build resilience to climate change.	✓
Climate Change Mitigation	
Ensure that women and girls and WLOs inform national strategies and programming aimed at shifting to renewable energy sources or adopting energy efficient practices, including how the shift will affect their livelihoods and risk of GBV.	✓
Integrate gender and GBV into National Determined Contributions (NDCs), which are reports countries submit under the Paris Agreement that outline efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make adaptations to build resilience against the impacts of climate change.	✓
Ensure that NDCs are developed with the leadership and participation of women and girls and WLOs and reflect their lived experiences, including GBV.	✓
Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience	
Ensure that women and girls and WLOs inform national strategies and programming aimed at switching to less carbon-intensive economies, including how the shift will affect their livelihoods and risks of GBV.	✓
Integrate gender and GBV into National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), which are countries' long-term strategies to adapt to climate change impacts.	✓
Ensure that NAPs are developed with leadership and participation of women and girls and WLOs, and reflect their lived experiences, including the risks of GBV.	✓
Just Transition Programming	

³² Clugston *et al*

³³ The measures identified are largely drawn from Clugston *et al*

Ensure that women and girls and WLOs inform 'just transition' strategies, funding, and programming aimed at switching to lower carbon economics, including how the shift will affect their livelihoods and risks of GBV.	✓
Integrate gender equality, disability, and social inclusion analysis in the design and evaluation of programming aimed at shifting to more sustainable and lower-carbon economies, ensuring impacts on women and girls are understood and addressed, including the risks of GBV.	✓
Embed GBV expertise within implementation teams of climate-related projects and ensure that training on gender and GBV is provided to all project staff to support a common understanding of GBV, including the risks that exist within the project.	✓
Establish robust safeguarding mechanisms in climate-related projects, especially infrastructure projects financed as part of the 'just transition.'	✓

Key GBV Considerations in Disaster Risk Reduction and Preparedness

The Sendai Framework provides the policy framework for DRR, which focuses on managing the risks associated with disasters, including the important role of preparedness for effective response.³⁴ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) defines emergency preparedness as "any action, measure, or capacity development that is introduced before an emergency to improve the overall effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of response and recovery."³⁵ Preparedness is a continuous process and includes identifying potential hazards, assessing risk, establishing hazard monitoring systems, and undertaking actions to ensure a rapid and effective humanitarian response in the event of an emergency. GBV actors have an essential role to play in emergency preparedness to ensure that its processes are inclusive and informed by women and girls, and that measures are taken to support GBV prevention and response.

Hazard Risk Assessment and Analysis

This component of emergency preparedness involves identifying potential hazards and assessing the risk they could pose to communities by estimating the likelihood and impact of those hazards. Once hazards are identified, they are monitored and thresholds identified to trigger an emergency response, including using disaster alerts. Hazard assessments and monitoring are typically done by disaster management authorities. GBV actors must work with these authorities to ensure that hazard risk analyses address women's and girls' specific vulnerabilities and that strategies are devised to effectively communicate about hazards to women and girls.

Integrate gender and GBV into hazard risk analysis. Risk analyses should reflect the heightened risk of exposure for women and girls to different types of GBV during and after disasters as well as other gendered effects of disasters on women and girls.	✓
Advocate for inclusion of gender and GBV in national or regional early warning systems for disasters, for instance supporting monitoring of conditions that lead to increased GBV risks, such as resource scarcity, disruption of services, and displacement.	✓
Advocate for ministries responsible for gender and GBV to be included in government disaster management systems for hazard identification, risk assessment, response, and monitoring.	✓
Ensure that disaster alerts are informed by consultations with women and girls to ensure they will receive information on disasters in an appropriate format, including information on evacuation routes and evacuation centers. Recognize that traditional channels (like radio or community meetings) may fail to reach women and girls due to mobility restrictions, lack of	✓

³⁴ UNDRR, [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](https://www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030). <https://www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030>

³⁵ IASC Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience (2015) Guideline: Emergency Response Preparedness <https://share.google/aYDizYTHbwzI0rFE1>

autonomy, or literacy. Utilize multiple channels, including appropriate and accessible digital technology, women's networks, and local WLOs.	
Coordination, Inter-Agency Planning and Advocacy <i>This component of emergency preparedness involves ensuring GBV specialist presence in relevant disaster management coordination mechanisms as well as ensuring a stand-alone GBV coordination mechanism where partners can be mobilized for joint action, including advocacy and support for integration of GBV risk mitigation measures by non-GBV specialists.</i>	
Ensure GBV specialists and representatives from ministries responsible for gender and GBV are included in disaster management coordination mechanisms.	✓
Ensure a stand-alone GBV coordination mechanism can be activated for the disaster preparedness and response.	✓
Advocate for the inclusion of GBV into disaster management-related laws, policies, and guidelines developed at the regional, national, and subnational levels, which will govern the actions of emergency preparedness.	✓
Advocate for the inclusion of women and girls and WLOs in all government and non-government led preparedness planning and exercises.	✓
Ensure that GBV preparedness actions are included in interagency Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs), Advanced Preparedness Actions (APAs), and Contingency Plans within the UN Humanitarian Country Team's workplan and that they are drafted with the participation of women and girls and WLOs.	✓
Advocate for the development of templates for primary data collection tools to be used in disaster response that are disaggregated by gender, age, and disability.	✓
Ensure that GBV is included in templates and tools developed for joint assessments, monitoring, and reporting in a safe and ethical manner, ensuring that individuals are not asked about their own experiences of GBV in surveys, interviews, or other data collection methods.	✓
Establish and maintain updated GBV referral pathways and share them with emergency management actors for distribution in the case of a disaster.	✓
Prepare templates that can be used for safety audits and site selection and share with relevant authorities and sector leads, along with training on how to use them to ensure GBV risks are identified and mitigated across all sectors engaged in disaster preparedness and response.	✓
Strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships and common understanding of the linkages between climate change, disasters, and GBV.	✓
GBV Programming Preparedness, Implementation, and Monitoring <i>This component of emergency preparedness involves undertaking preparedness activities that ensure safe and ethical GBV response and prevention programming in emergencies.</i>	
Map donors, both institutional and private, that might provide funding for GBV programming in humanitarian response to disasters and prepare proposals that can be used for rapid resource mobilization in the event of a disaster.	✓
Map WLOs, assess their capacity to respond to GBV in crises, and undertake capacity building efforts that strengthen their ability to respond in crises.	✓
Provide training for WLOs on the disaster management systems and processes to enhance their capacity to participate in them.	✓
Establish gender responsive financing mechanisms that are directly accessible to WLOs and local GBV actors to participate in disaster preparedness and response as well as climate action.	✓
Design and establish a model that can be activated for rapid deployment/redeployment of GBV specialists to disaster-affected areas through government social sector workforce systems, including case managers and social workers.	✓
Ensure that community-based protection systems, for instance safe spaces for women and girls, can withstand shocks and are able to continue their programming in disasters or can be	✓

relocated in the case of displacement.	
Design remote or mobile delivery models for GBV services that can be activated in a disaster, for instance mobile health clinics, remote legal advice, or online psychosocial support.	✓
Carry out capacity building with frontline emergency responders to ensure they are aware of GBV risks and referral pathways, receive disclosures of violence safely and ethically, and understand codes of conduct and behavior in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).	✓
Develop information sharing protocols and standards for the safe and ethical collection and sharing of GBV-related data by service providers and other GBV programmers.	✓
Consult with women and girls in disaster-prone communities to determine what items they anticipate needing in disasters.	✓
Based on feedback from consultations with women and girls, include GBV-related items (e.g. clinical management of rape kits, menstruation management materials) in pre-positioning of humanitarian supplies in disaster-prone areas.	✓
Prepare community outreach materials that include information on GBV, including where to access services and support, in formats that are accessible to women and girls, including those living with disabilities.	✓
Conduct regular monitoring, including after-action reviews (AARs) and post-disaster needs assessments (PDNAs) with women and girls linked to GBV response and prevention interventions, as well as broader humanitarian response interventions.	✓

Key GBV Considerations in Anticipatory Action

Anticipatory action refers to using early warning systems to respond to a specific disaster using forecasts and available data to predict imminent hazards.^{36 37} This approach focuses on taking action within a short period of time of a forecast-based trigger, often within hours or days, to ensure a response to a hazard minimizes its impact on people, livelihoods, and infrastructure (see Figure 2 below).

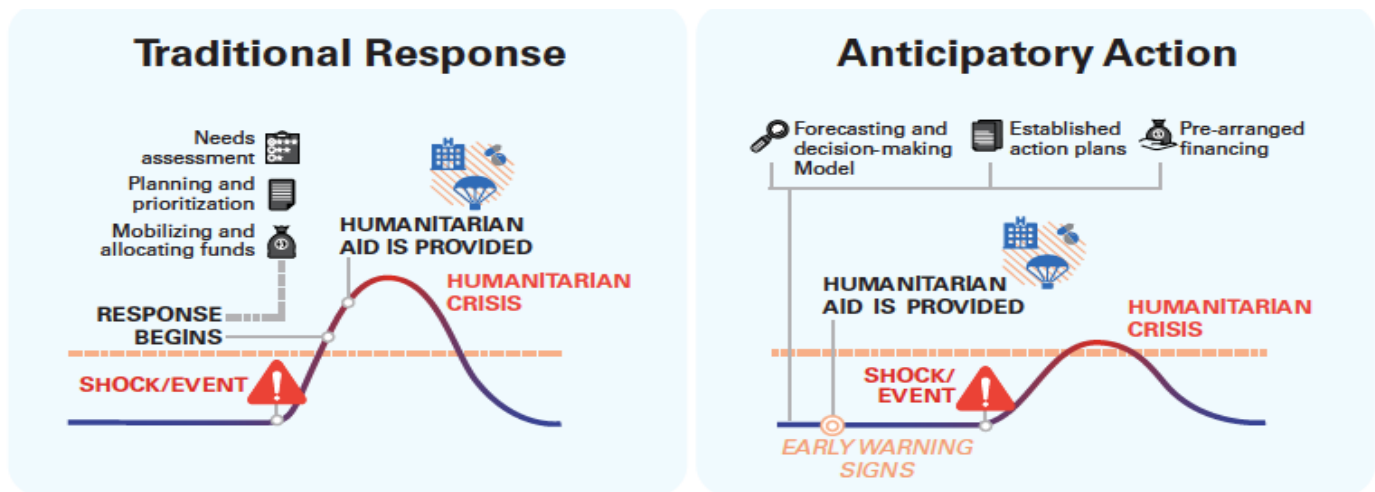


Figure 2: Traditional Humanitarian Response vs Anticipatory Action³⁸

Anticipatory action is contingent on effective forecast triggers along with preparedness actions. Pre-arranged financing is a core component of anticipatory action, where a pre-agreed allocation of funds is rapidly disbursed once specific forecast-based triggers for an impending hazard are met. This funding enables emergency

³⁶ Wilkinson, Emily et al (2020) 'Integrating 'Anticipatory Action' in Disaster Risk Management.' ODI

³⁷ [GBV AoR Helpdesk. \(2021\). "Climate Change and Gender-Based Violence: What Are the Links?"](#)

³⁸ United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office Bangladesh (2020) Handbook: Humanitarian Coordination and Collaboration in Bangladesh, p 11.

responders, including communities, to undertake time-critical interventions even if the predicted hazard does not fully materialize.³⁹

Key steps for implementing anticipatory actions by disasters response actors at the country level include:⁴⁰

1. **Assess risks and impacts** to better understand the potential impact of extreme weather events on communities and to inform the design and targeting of anticipatory mitigation actions.
2. **Assess the capacity of existing early warning systems** to produce and transmit reliable and timely information and forecasts for the implementation of anticipatory actions ahead of an extreme weather event.
3. **Establish triggers for action** when certain risk thresholds are reached based on multiple factors, including forecasting capacity, hazard type, and the time and cost necessary to complete sector-specific anticipatory actions.
4. **Develop an anticipatory action plan that outlines pre-agreed actions to be delivered**, along with the actors, costs, thresholds, triggers, and predetermined funds to be mobilized in anticipation of an extreme weather event. This plan is referred to as an **anticipatory action framework**, and usually also includes a learning, monitoring and after-action review plan.
5. **Monitor forecasts and act in response to a trigger** and, following a fast disbursement of financing, coordinate with key stakeholders to implement anticipatory actions as per the action plan.

Anticipatory action is distinguished from emergency preparedness, which also occurs prior to a crisis but does not rely on forecasts of a specific hazard and may not be hazard-specific. However, there are commonalities between these approaches and anticipatory action should build upon preparedness efforts.⁴¹ Activities outlined below should be considered in addition to the actions in the previous section on preparedness.

Anticipatory Action Coordination, Planning, and Advocacy	
<i>This component of anticipatory action involves ensuring GBV specialist participation in anticipatory action planning and coordination and scaling up GBV coordination mechanisms in response to an early warning of an imminent hazard.</i>	
Ensure that GBV specialists and ministries responsible for gender and GBV are part of anticipatory action planning processes.	✓
Ensure that GBV is included in national and subnational anticipatory action frameworks informed by the leadership and participation of women and girls and WLOs and acknowledge the risk and severity of GBV in relation to disaster-related shocks, such as displacement, loss of income, and disruption of services.	✓
Ensure targeting criteria incorporate the unique needs of women and girls, particularly those most vulnerable to GBV.	✓
Ensure a portion of the pre-arranged, forecast-based financing available during anticipatory action is earmarked for GBV prevention and response services that must be available at the time of the shock, including funds for the roll out of GBV guidance and standards, including the Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action and the Interagency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies	✓

³⁹ Anticipatory_Action_Framework_Nepal_Pilot_2021_OCHA

<https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/nepal/anticipatory-action-framework-nepal-pilot>

⁴⁰ IFRC (2019) Forecast-based Financing: A new era for the humanitarian system, cited in GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021) GBV and Anticipatory Action, <https://gbvaor.net/AnticipatoryAction>.

⁴¹ For comparisons between different types of humanitarian response frameworks for managing disasters, see GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). *Climate Change and GBV: What are the links?* <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2021-03/gbv-aor-helpdesk-climate-change-gbv-19032021.pdf> and GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021) GBV and Anticipatory Action, <https://gbvaor.net/AnticipatoryAction>.

Integrate GBV risk mitigation into every sector's anticipatory actions using the IASC GBV Guidelines, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy lighting and locks for gender-separated latrines/showers in identified evacuation sites. • Distribute pre-positioned dignity kits and ensure evacuation centers include private family areas and safe common spaces. 	✓
Mobilize GBV coordination groups in affected areas and provide support to advocate for inclusion of GBV risk mitigation and monitor the continuity of GBV services.	✓
Early Warning Systems and Forecasting Triggers <i>This component of anticipatory action involves forecasting hazards to trigger anticipatory actions to minimize the effects of hazards. GBV actors should ensure that women and girls can access information about the early warning system and receive alerts in a manner that works for them.</i>	
Advocate for technical hazard forecasts to incorporate social triggers that drive violence, such as forecasted prolonged drought leading to food scarcity and increased tension/migration, that can be translated into rapid financing for dedicated GBV funding.	✓
Ensure that early warning systems and disaster alerts are informed by consultation with women and girls and WLOs to ensure that women and girls, including information on evacuation routes and evacuation centers. Recognize that traditional channels (like radio or community meetings) may fail to reach women and girls due to mobility restrictions, lack of autonomy, or literacy. Utilize multiple channels, including appropriate and accessible digital technology, women's networks, and local WLOs.	✓
Ensure GBV service providers, including remote service delivery, and WLOs receive alerts from the early warning system to predict and better respond to increased demand for services.	✓
Provide training and information to women and girls in disaster-prone communities about the early warning system, forecasting of hazards, and triggers to ensure they understand and can access information.	✓
GBV Specialist Programming in Anticipatory Action <i>This component of anticipatory action involves activating plans to reduce risks of GBV and scale up GBV programming to meet expected increase in need following a notification from an early warning system.</i>	
Confirm supply chains, transportation routes, warehouses, prepositioned stocks, and cash grant arrangements in areas to be affected by forecasted hazard.	✓
Mobilize outreach volunteers and community support group members, including WLOs, and provide basic training and information on GBV, including on GBV risk mitigation measures and services available.	✓
Bolster the capacity of remote service delivery services to receive increased requests for service and make safe and effective referrals where possible.	✓
Establish women and girls' safe spaces in identified evacuation centers and/or displacement areas before people arrive.	✓
Deploy pre-positioned dignity kits, which include information on available GBV services, clinical management of rape supplies and equipment, and items required to establish women and girls' safe spaces.	✓
Post GBV referral pathways with information on how to access GBV services at identified evacuation centers and/or displacement sites.	✓
Deploy or redeploy GBV specialists to locations to be affected by the hazard, if feasible and safe to do so.	✓
Activate scale up plans for mobile or remote GBV service delivery modalities to areas that will be affected by the hazard, if telecommunications are expected to continue functioning.	✓

Provide cash assistance, sometimes unconditional, to vulnerable women and girls to mitigate GBV risks by alleviating financial barriers and stress, covering material, basic food, and health needs. ⁴²	✓
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Key GBV Considerations for Disaster Response and Recovery

Guidance and best practice on designing and delivering GBV programming in humanitarian response should be used in response to disasters, including those that are driven by climate change. Three key resources are:

- [Handbook for Coordinating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Emergencies](#)
- [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#)
- [Interagency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming](#)

Each of these key guidance documents emphasize that risks of GBV increase during humanitarian emergencies and responding to GBV is a lifesaving priority, including in disasters.

GBV Specialist Coordination in Humanitarian Response	
<i>Note: These are examples of priority areas. Additional actions are outlined in the Handbook for Coordinating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Emergencies.</i>	
Establish or support existing national and subnational GBV coordination systems to carry out coordination functions in disasters.	✓
Where safe and ethical, support inclusion and leadership of government ministries responsible for gender and GBV in regional, national, and subnational GBV coordination systems.	✓
Advocate for the inclusion of local WLOs to participate and lead sub-national and community-based GBV coordination efforts.	✓
Advocate for opportunities for women and girls to participate in recovery and rehabilitation planning through consultations and feedback mechanisms.	✓
Advocate for attention to women and girls and GBV in ongoing disaster management plans, policies and programs.	✓
Advocate for all data collected during the disaster response to be disaggregated by gender, age, and disability.	✓
Advocate to donors for ongoing response and recovery funding.	✓
GBV Risk Mitigation in Humanitarian Response	
<i>Note: These are examples of priority areas. Additional actions are outlined in the Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action.</i>	
Ensure that GBV is included in inter-agency and sector-specific templates and tools used for assessments, monitoring, and reporting in a safe and ethical manner, so that individuals are not asked about their own experiences of GBV in surveys, interviews, or other data collection methods.	✓
Support sector actors to carry out consultations with women and girls to determine their immediate and priority safety needs relevant to that sector and support ongoing consultations throughout the disaster response to identify any changes in risk. Ensure women and girls participate in monitoring response programming and their concerns are heard and addressed.	✓
Support sector actors to carry out safety audits of response sites, including evacuation centers, aid distribution points, and mobile service delivery points, to ensure that risks of GBV are identified and mitigation measures are instituted.	✓

⁴² For information on how to decide whether cash assistance should be unconditional see the Toolkit for GBV Risk Mitigation in Cash and Voucher Assistance: <https://gbvaor.net/node/1607>.

Ensure women and girls have opportunities to participate in sector-related structures created to manage the disaster response, such as housing or shelter committees.	✓
Distribute information to sector actors on referrals, and as appropriate, provide them with information to share with women and girls on how and where to access GBV services in a format and manner that is appropriate for women and girls, including those living with disabilities.	✓
GBV Specialist Services and Support in Humanitarian Response <i>Note: These are examples of priority areas. Additional actions are outlined in the Interagency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming.</i>	
Support or establish women and girls' safe spaces that can be integrated into existing community-based systems.	✓
Deploy/redeploy GBV specialists, including social workers or case managers, through government social sector workforce systems.	✓
Activate alternative delivery models to provide GBV services, such as mobile health clinics, remote legal advice, or online psychosocial support to disaster-affected communities.	✓
Ensure that WLOs can access available financing and are able to deliver community-based services to women and girls.	✓
Assess damage to GBV services and equip and reconstruct facilities where needed, for instance, distributing pre-positioned clinical management of rape supplies and equipment.	✓
Distribute community outreach materials that include information on GBV, including where to access services and support, in formats that are accessible to women and girls, including those living with disabilities.	✓
Distribute emergency non-food items to women and girls, based on their feedback received in consultations, which might include menstruation management materials, clothing, underwear, soap etc.	✓
Mobilize or redirect resources towards GBV programming within the disaster response.	✓
GBV Services and Support in Disaster Recovery <i>Following a disaster there will be a period of recovery, the length of which will vary based on the severity and impact of the disaster as well as the strength of the preparedness, anticipatory action, and response.</i>	
Ensure that services continue to be available to survivors of GBV address the long-term effects of experiencing GBV, particularly the need for ongoing physical and mental healthcare and psychosocial support.	✓
Ensure that emergency programming that targets women and girls, for instance safe spaces or peer support initiatives, are not lost in the transition to recovery and are transitioned to service providers that can continue to offer programming for women and girls, including service delivered by government or civil society.	✓
Advocate for any livelihood programming designed to support individual and community recovery from disaster is suitable for women and adolescent girls and that they are consulted in its design.	✓

Annex 1: Guiding Principles for a Survivor-Centered Approach

Across all aspects of climate action and disaster management, the GBV guiding principles that underpin a survivor-centered approach should be central. These include:⁴³

Safety - the physical safety and security as well as psychological and emotional safety of survivors, her children and other family members, and those assist survivors must be a priority for all actors.

Confidentiality – a survivor has a right to choose with whom they will or will not share their story and the decision to release any information related to their experience rests with the survivor alone.

Respect – survivors' choices, rights, and dignity must be respected by GBV program actors, who should be non-judgmental of a survivors' choices and uphold her right to choose which services she will access as well as her choice not to access services.

Non-discrimination – GBV programs must be informed by an intersectional analysis and GBV actors should be equipped with knowledge, skills, and attitudes on inclusive programming, which is tailored to the needs of individual women and girls.

⁴³ For more information on the GBV Guiding Principles, see Standard 1 of the Interagency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies <https://gbvaor.net/gbviems>

Annex 2: Climate Financing Instruments

Climate financing refers to the funding mechanisms that raise, manage, and channel money towards activities that mitigate the effects of climate change and make adaptations to cope with its effects. Opportunities to integrate GBV into climate financing instruments should be sought, including advocating for financial instruments to integrate GBV risk mitigation measures into projects they fund and use of climate financing modalities to fund GBV prevention and response in contexts vulnerable to climate-induced disasters and in recognition of the intersections between climate change and GBV. Some key climate financing instruments are highlighted below.

Global instruments

Adaptation Fund – The Adaptation Fund finances programs and projects that support communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change in developing countries take action to adapt. This fund provides financing to entities implementing projects at the national, regional, and multilateral levels, including through grants designed for locally-led adaptation efforts and for innovation.

Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) – An entity of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the FRLD finances recovery efforts following climate-related losses and damage, both economic and non-economic, in developing countries vulnerable to the effects of climate change

Global Environment Facility (GEF) – A combination of several multilateral funds, the GEF provides financing, typically grants, in developing countries to address goals outlined in international treaties and conventions on climate, biological diversity, desertification, and other environmental issues. One of the initiatives of the GEF is the [Small Grants Program](#), which provides financial and technical support to local civil society organizations, especially those led by women, indigenous people, and youth, to develop innovative local actions, improve livelihoods, and reduce poverty.

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) – A multi-donor fund and housed within the World Bank, the GFDRR provides development financing and technical assistance to low and middle-income countries to understand, manage, and reduce their risks for natural hazards and disasters resulting from climate change.

Global Resilience Partnership – A global partnership of governments, UN agencies, civil society, and the private sector, the Global Resilience Partnership delivers programming to strengthen resilience to climate change, including through grants to civil society organizations to transform food and financial systems, scale innovative approaches to resilience, enhance learning, and embed resilience in the private and financial sectors.

Global Shield against Climate Risks – The Global Shield provides pre-arranged financing through Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance (CDRFI) to support countries vulnerable to the effects of climate change and residual risk that cannot be mitigated through risk management measures. The Global Shield facilitates in-country multisectoral processes to identify needs and solutions that harness expertise and capabilities, including from the private sector.

Green Climate Fund (GCF) – The largest global fund dedicated to addressing climate in low- and middle-income countries, the GCF supports the shift towards low-carbon and climate-resilient development, focusing on countries particularly vulnerable to the effect of climate change, such as small island states and the least developed countries. A critical element of the Paris Agreement, the Green Climate Fund provides repayable loans and grants to states and their accredited entities to achieve the goals of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Insurance Development Forum (IDF) – A public-private initiative led by the insurance industry along with the

World Bank and UNDP, the IDF mobilizes insurance expertise and capital from public and private funds to implement projects in low and middle-income countries to strengthen response to and recovery from disasters. The IDF aims to improve the use of insurance as a tool to manage residual risks of natural hazards, including those exacerbated by climate change.

International Finance Corporation (IFC) – Part of the World Bank group, the IFC supports the private sector in emerging markets to improve climate financing available to the private sector, mostly in the form of loans, to implement projects to shift towards lower carbon emissions and build resilience.

International Recovery Platform (IRP) – Though not a financing instrument, the IRP is a platform that aims to strengthen knowledge through experience and lessons sharing as well providing technical assistance on how to build back better in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction following disasters.

World Bank – The World Bank, guided by its Climate Change Action Plan 2020 – 2025 (CCAP), provides financing to state-led projects focused on adaptation and mitigation in the form of loans, concessionary loans, and grants to support national efforts to align with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. The World Bank has also mainstreamed climate measures across its financing instruments.

Regional instruments⁴⁴

Asian Development Bank (ADB) – ADB operates a [Climate Change Fund \(CCF\)](#) to address the causes and consequences of climate change in the region by supporting low-carbon and climate-resilience initiatives in developing member countries.

The GBV AoR Help Desk

The GBV AoR Helpdesk is a unique research and technical advice service which aims to inspire and support humanitarian actors to help prevent, mitigate and respond to violence against women and girls in emergencies. Managed by Social Development Direct, the GBV AoR Helpdesk is staffed by a global roster of senior Gender and GBV Experts who are on standby to help guide frontline humanitarian actors on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response measures in line with international standards, guidelines and best practice. Views or opinions expressed in GBV AoR Helpdesk Products do not necessarily reflect those of all members of the GBV AoR, nor of all the experts of SDDirect's Helpdesk roster.

The GBV AoR Helpdesk

*You can contact the GBV AoR Helpdesk by emailing us at:
enquiries@gbviehelpdesk.org.uk*

The Helpdesk is available 09.00 to 17.30 GMT Monday to Friday.

Our services are free and confidential.

⁴⁴ For a comprehensive overview of climate financing instruments in the Asia Pacific region, see ADB (2023) Climate Finance Landscape of Asia and the Pacific <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/901611/climate-finance-landscape-asia-pacific.pdf>