Women’s Leadership for Disaster Risk Reduction: Japanese experience since 3.11

Keiko Ikeda 池田恵子
Faculty of Education / Center for Integrated Research and Education of Natural Disasters, Shizuoka University, Japan

Ikeda.Keiko@shizuoka.ac.jp

Co-representative, Training Center for Gender and DRR

contact@gdrr.org http://gdrr.org/
Training materials developed by Women’s Network for East Japan Disaster (2011-2014) and Training Center for Gender and DRR (2014-)

Women’s Network for East Japan Disaster, Integrating Gender and Diversity Perspectives into Disaster Response: A Collection of Good Practice in Disaster Response based on the East Japan Disaster (2012) [30 cases]

Japanese: http://risetogetherjp.org/?p=2189
English: http://risetogetherjp.org/?p=3909

Textbook ‘Gender and Disaster’ (2013)
Picture material ‘Gender Issues in Disaster’ (2013)

Workbook ‘Disaster Risk Management from gender and diversity perspective’ (2015)
Low representation of women in response and recovery planning: 2011 East Japan disaster

Management of shelter/temporary housing community
- Most of the local leaders were men
- Women are not encouraged to participate

Very few women in disaster response Headquarters
- Only 5% of headquarter member in each local government were women

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<th>Recovery committee</th>
<th>Women in committee</th>
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Very low representation for reconstruction planning committee
- Women occupy 11% of committee members, with 9/33 committees, there are no women
- Information do not reach women

Sigh over ‘gender equity hasn’t taken root in our country’


1. Management of evacuation center only with men
   During the disaster, we realized that ‘gender equity hasn’t taken root in this country’. Gender division of labor manifest itself, only men bears heavy decision-making burden in managing the center even though they are exhausted, resulting in becoming like despotic ruler. And women just obey men silently and powerless.
   (Female, 50’s Miyagi)

2. Women could not speak out their needs
   Women hesitated to request setting up space for changing cloth, partition, and so on. After two months of Tsunami, their privacy was not protected in evacuation centers.
   (Female, 60’s Miyagi)

3. Women could not get information on recovery nor to speak
   When the recovery plan was discussed in the fishers’ cooperative, women of fishing household could not get any information. Women are not given membership. When I asked about plan of joint ownership of ships, men glared at me and told ‘this is not a women’s business’.
   (Female, 60’s Iwate)
Men and women are affected differently in 2011 East Japan disaster

① Environment and Safety

Privacy, Hygiene, Dignity
- No separate space for babies/the aged, changing, breast-feeding, drying...
- Infants, pre/post-natal women, aged, disabled, single women, sexual minorities... could not stay in the evacuation centers
- Relief & information ⇔ privacy/dignity

Violence against women/children
- Harassment, domestic violence, gender-based violence
- Sexual abuse in exchange of providing support
- Unsafe evacuation centers (eg. toilet)
Men and women are affected differently in 2011 East Japan disaster

2 Relief Supply
- Shortage of women’s babies’ the aged goods continued longer
- Only men are in charge of relief (assessing needs, distributing)

3 Intensified gender division of labor
- Heavy care burden without lifelines, day care facilities
- Some women quite job
- Unpaid communal cooking (mostly women)
- Community leadership responsibility on men
- Only mother & children migrate from Fukushima to remote unfamiliar place escaping radiation

Men and women are affected differently in 2011 East Japan disaster

4 Economic resource for recovery

Employment and income
- Women lost jobs first, finding jobs again were more difficult
  - emergency employment schemes are meant for male bread winners
- Female HH fall into poverty

Inheritance
- Some women who lost husband were denied their inheritance rights (especially foreign-born wives)

Picture
- Employment after disaster
- Temporary housing
To what extent the policy is put into practice?

New activities after East Japan Disaster

✓ Amending **local plan of DM** (each local government)

✓ Increasing/appointing **female committee members** or establishing women’s section of **DM council** (each local government)

✓ **Women’s voluntary groups** which are interested in disaster response increased

✓ Formulation of **manuals for evacuation center** or disaster preparedness with gender/diversity perspectives

✓ Including topic of gender/diversity sensitivity in **training for community-based DM committee** (CBDMO)

✓ **Capacity building of women** specializing DM

Problems and factors to consider

Problems

✓ Number of female leaders of CBDMO hardly increases
✓ It is not easy for local female disaster managers who joined the capacity building training to be accepted by CBDMO

⇒ Problems that CBDMO faces (i.e. population aging, indifference of young generations, weaker sense of community, etc.) and practice of DM in community level.

⇒ How to secure space for activity for women disaster managers who joined the capacity building sessions?

✓ Collaboration between gender equality sector and stakeholders of disaster management / response is not easily promoted

⇒ How to promote linkage with other sectors such as child care, the aged care, employment, community planning and so on

⇒ Issue of gender-insensitivity? Or joining different system/mode of operation?
Main role of Community-based disaster management organizations (CBDMO, *jishubousai soshiki*)

**Preparedness**
- Information on disaster prevention
- Mock drills

**Response**
- Early stage fire fighting
- Rescue
- Reporting damage
- Guiding evacuation
- Managing evacuation center

Mock drills in Shizuoka, Sept. 2012
Senior population, key to disaster risk management and community development, but......

Substantial population aging
Population over 65 years of age (2012) : National average 24.1%
Affected pref. Iwate 27.9%, Miyagi 22.9%, Fukushima 26.1%
Cabinet Office, 2014, Whitepaper on Aging Society

CBDMO in Shizuoka
• Same as resident’s association, .....70%
  Male leadership, 98.9%
  (national average, 95.6%)
  Women in decision making
  1.24 / 8.86 committee
• Gender division of labor
Shizuoka Pref. Government, 2013,
Research report on status of Jishubosaikai

Basic Issue on top of aging...
• Changes in local community (bond, relationship, depopulation)
• Problem of instruction from local government
• Policy on regional development (finance, municipal merger • • •)

Picture
Community based disaster risk management organization’s meeting
Capacity building of women disaster managers

Capacity building using local guidelines of gender and DRR


Target  community leader women、Women interested in DM (total 110 women)

Contents (2days x 3 batches)
1. Lecture on Gender & DRR
2. Hazard risks in Pref.
3. Evacuation simulation game
4. How to use guideline with local people

Providing list of women after finishing 2 day training
Women’s capacity building: impact and problems
(question to trainee one year after the capacity building training)

Impact
✓ Residents association invited me to talk
✓ It became easier to speak out
✓ Started a program with mothers for disaster preparedness in collaboration with local government
✓ Organized check-up tour of disaster preparedness warehouses in the community with leader of CBDMO

Obstacles
✓ I could not join in CBDMO because all committee members are men
✓ As I am not a block leader, I was denied to participate in the meeting of CBDMO
✓ CBDMO is aging and not flexible. It is not easy for women to join.
✓ Women themselves opposes to the idea of joining to decision making of CBDMO
✓ It is traditionally decided that women’s task for DM is communal cooking and first aid, and women are not given opportunity to speak other than these tasks

Did you used what you have learned?

- 4% 无回答
- 8% わからない
- 24% 少しあった
- 28% ほとんどなかった
- 36% 大いにあった

Gender Equity section of the Shizuoka Pref. Government ‘Pre-follow-up training questions to women who attended the capacity building training in 2013’ (Nov. 2014)
From CBDMO based only on the residents association to based on collaboration with different sectors

Special relief good and services to infants, the pregnant and aged and disable?
People with food allergy?
Problems foreigners face?
Child care support?

Outside resources
- local governments
- private sector CSR
- Medical experts
- Care-giving experts
- welfare council (Volunteer center)
- Volunteers, NPO/NGO of various sectors
- Gender equity center
- international center

Exhausted! No time to care for different needs!

No milk... no diaper... but can I ask the leaders?

A community

Only aged male leaders

Aged, infants, children, pregnant & lactating women, disabled and sick person, foreigner, men and women living alone/ with family, men and women employed/not employed, students......

B community

Men & women (child care to aged care generations)
PTA, Welfare counselor, women’s association, Disabled association, NPOs

Inquiry of assistance came from our national headquarter

Let’s request local women’s groups to work with us!

Offer of assistance.

I will ask leaders and co-operate what I can do!
It was almost impossible for organizations outside of affected areas to conduct disaster response and recovery operations with gender equity perspectives, unless they had close relationship with women’s organizations or NPOs before the disaster event.

- Disaster response HQ of local government did not cooperate
- Burden of collaboration were concentrated in Gender Equity Center in the affected areas, which paralyzed their own activities

Thematic organizations (i.e. disabled people’s organizations) which have regional branch offices could perform better, but burden of coordinating concentrated to the branch office.

In the affected areas, collaborations among different sectors and agents developed gradually, but outside of affected areas, same kind of collaborations were seldom seen.
Lessons from Japanese experience?

- Disaster Risk Reduction or Disaster Risk Management?
- DRR in super-aging society, gender and care giving
- Local governance, DRR and gender equity