

Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction

# Women <sup>as</sup> <sub>a</sub> force for change



JAPAN WOMEN'S NETWORK  
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

**4 YEARS OF ACTIVISM**



From Japan's 3/11 disaster to the 3rd UN World Conference on DRR

Published by

Japan Women's Network for  
Disaster Risk Reduction (JWDRR),  
Japan Association for Women's  
Education (JAWE)

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مِنْدُووق الصَّدَاقَةِ القَطْرِيَّةِ  
QATAR FRIENDSHIP FUND  
— كاتارل فريند فوندي —



**His Excellency, Dr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah, Minister of Foreign Affairs, State of Qatar** began his term in June 2013, taking on the responsibility of Qatar's representative in the international community.

He has had a distinguished career, serving in many different capacities including as President of the National Committee for Human Rights, Member of the Board of Trustees for the Arab Democracy Foundation, Vice President of the Qatar Financial Center Authority and Chairman Of the Board of Directors, Qatar's Stock Exchange.

In 1987 he completed his Bachelors Degree in Aviation Studies at King Fayssal Aviation College and in 1993, his Degree in Law at Beirut Arab University. In 1999 he completed his Masters Degree in Public Law and in 2006 his Doctorate in Law from Cairo University.

He plays a central role in administration of the Qatar Friendship Fund.

## Remarks by His Excellency Dr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar

Dear friends,

Konnichiwa.

On 18 March 2015, the Japan Women's Network for Disaster Risk Reduction (JWNDRR) and the Japan Association for Women's Education (JAWE) held an important symposium entitled "Women as a Force for Change - Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction", as part of the 3rd United Nations World Conference on DRR, held in Sendai.

This forum was followed by a project activity reporting symposium held by JWNDRR and JAWE on 18 June 2015 in Tokyo, which included speakers from both government and non-government sectors. Relevant policy proposals on ways to implement the Sendai Framework for DRR, adopted at the UN Conference, have also been delivered to government ministries by JWNDRR, forging necessary partnerships.

Held in close collaboration with the Qatar Friendship Fund (QFF), these activities attracted many participants and made a significant contribution towards greater gender equality in DRR-related practices. It was a real honor for QFF to partner with JWNDRR and JAWE towards this major objective.

Current developments are indeed alarming, in a world that is witnessing unprecedented population growth, increasing urbanization, and global warming. While global losses from natural disasters are estimated in trillions of dollars, indirect damages are even more severe. From Haiti to Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines or Vanuatu, whenever a natural disaster hits, tens of thousands of people die, workers lose their jobs, unemployment soars, schools get closed, and lives get disrupted.

In order to build greater resilience for the future, it is therefore critical to recognize that women and elderly people have unique capacity and strength to serve their communities and governments. This is precisely why QFF decided to support the efforts of JWNDRR and JAWE in order to empower and train women to be a real "force for change" in disaster recovery work, risk reduction planning and policy-making. I am delighted that their activities were able to shed greater light on viable policy solutions and tools, as well as suggest relevant areas for further research.

Since 2012, QFF has been backing a multitude of social and economic initiatives with a particular focus on child education, healthcare, fisheries and entrepreneurship, in areas that were most affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. This support stems from our close friendship with the Japanese people over the past 40 years, and from our belief that the revitalization of minds and hearts is ultimately far more valuable than the reconstruction of cement.

I truly commend your efforts in this important campaign and hope that, together, we can make a real difference in strengthening the resilience of communities around the world.

Domo arigato gozaimasu.

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## FOREWORD



Above: Devastation following the 3/11 disaster in Tohoku.  
Right: Four women who lost their husbands in the tsunami.  
Sendai, June 2012



**This report is an account of four years of grassroots activism**, from the aftermath of Japan's 3/11 earthquake and tsunami to the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), held in March, 2015 in Sendai, a city severely damaged by 3/11. In reading this report, I hope you will find encouragement that ordinary citizens, working together with dedication, really can make a difference.

From the outset, our efforts were urgently motivated by the shock of 3/11. Although many of us had been aware since the 1995 Kobe earthquake that gender was a woefully neglected aspect of DRR, as is so often the case, our efforts were focused on current issues not what might happen if disaster struck.

In the weeks after March 11, however, we were confronted by the acute and unnecessary suffering of women in the evacuation centers - suffering entirely and directly attributable to a lack of gender awareness in the DRR regime charged with their care.

From that moment our core group was committed. And as we urgently spread the word, hundreds of women from across Japan quickly rallied to our cause. At first, the efforts of the Japan Women's Network for DRR were focused on direct help for the victims of 3/11. Then we focused on planning and reconstruction policy reform at all levels of government in Japan. Fortunately, as you will read, we were able to directly influence Japanese government legislation in a way unprecedented for an NGO.

As our awareness grew, though, we realized that "gender and disaster" is not simply about caring for women victimized by disaster - it is about harnessing women's disaster-response capability and giving women a voice in planning and reconstruction. In fact, it is not only about women; it is about meeting the disaster-related needs of all marginalized groups. And we realized that our struggle was not just about Japan; it was about making everyone in the world safer and more resilient.

That realization coincided with the decision in May, 2013 that the Third World Conference on DRR would be held in Sendai, and it focused our attention on influencing the so-called "post-Hyogo" policy framework to be adopted at this important UN event.

Cumbersome as the multilateral process can be, I am a firm believer in it, having started as an organizer of the original 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. Even if the language adopted fails to bind the signatories, multilateralism sets crucial benchmarks that policymakers cannot simply wish away. Words matter.

Citizens matter, too. As we embarked on our effort to participate in the post-Hyogo process, we discovered citizen-led NGOs all over the world that share our concern for gender and disaster policy reform. We worked closely with these groups, by email, face-to-face at preparatory meetings in Bangkok and Geneva, and side-by-side in Sendai.

As a result, the renewed framework for DRR adopted at Sendai includes an entire section of contributions from stakeholders, making clear that the disaster cycle cannot, at any level, be managed solely by governments and experts. We live in an age of disasters, but also in an age of citizen participation, and the section on the role of stakeholders in the Sendai Framework for DRR (SFDRR) certainly reflects this. SFDRR also explicitly states that the leadership of women and youth must be promoted as part of an "all-of-society engagement and partnership."

From all of this, I hope you can take hope and encouragement. Women around the world have successfully come together to make meaningful progress toward the goal of making communities everywhere safer and more disaster-resilient. Perhaps even more important, our experience shows what citizens can achieve by working together to reach shared goals with passion, dedication and focus on process. In future, let's hope we can learn to summon up such energy without the shock of disaster as motivation.

**NOTE TO READERS:** *This report is necessarily comprehensive, including much material of interest to those active in the field of gender and disaster. But we encourage those who want to grasp the main themes to read Chapters 1-3.*

Akiko Domoto



President, JWNDDR

## Chapter 1: How Japanese women mobilized after 3/11 – and succeeded in rewriting disaster laws

Since the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of March 2011, women's groups have been involved in lobbying the Japanese government, urging it to make legislative and institutional reforms that recognize the importance of gender equality and diversity. Thanks to changes that we proposed on the importance of a gender perspective and women's participation, both the Basic Act on Reconstruction and the Reconstruction Guidelines include language on the critical importance of gender in DRR.

### ***Aftermath of 3/11: confronted with the problems women face in disaster***

On March 31, three weeks after the 3/11 disasters, four core members of our group drove north to the disaster-affected areas. We visited Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures, first stopping at the Azuma Sports Park Evacuation Center, accompanied by Dr. Hiromi Komiya, of the Fukushima Medical University Hospital Center for Gender Specific Medicine.

At that time, only medical personnel were allowed to enter this area. The evacuation center was housing 1,300 residents of Minamisoma who had been ordered to evacuate their homes after the explosions at the Fukushima Dai-Ichi Nuclear Plant. Even three weeks after they had begun living at the evacuation center, there was still not enough water available for them to wash clothes, and many women did not even have a change of underwear.

According to Dr. Komiya, many of the evacuees were worried about the effect of radiation on pregnant women and children. Women in menopause complained of body pain, insomnia and other symptoms. It was obvious that the problems being experienced could not be separated from social and gender issues.

In Miyagi Prefecture we visited the Rokugo Middle School Evacuation Center, where many families who had lost their homes to the tsunami had fled. We found there were no cardboard dividers for privacy, which meant there was no place for women to change or nurse infants. Elderly men also had no privacy to change their diapers. An elderly woman trying to warm herself at the heater in the gymnasium told us that she had lost four kilograms "because it was difficult having absolutely no time or space for ourselves."

Local community leaders, mostly elderly men, were managing the shelter. One of them told us: "The disaster has been difficult, but family, relatives and neighbors are all getting along. I want to be able to see everyone, which is why I won't allow them to put up cardboard dividers." There was absolutely no sign of anyone taking into account gender perspectives and only the views of men were heeded.

In times of disaster, the discrimination that women experience every day comes glaringly to the surface. For example, gendered work divisions become stronger and violence and sexual harassment become worse. The men in control do not regard the views and needs of women evacuees, and those with disabilities, as having any consequence. As a result, they are forced to endure difficult conditions. We were concerned that if the needs of these women were not even reaching the ears of the center managers, how would they ever be reflected in national laws and political policy?

Severe earthquakes are common in Japan, and in each case many elderly women have lost their lives, and women survivors have faced unnecessary hardship. Confronted with the reality of this hardship in Tohoku, we resolved to see gender perspectives incorporated in Japan's disaster response policies - in line with international standards.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), adopted in 2005 at WCDRR2, states:

*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.*

In the same year, the Basic Disaster Plan was amended to mention the importance of including gender perspectives and the Basic Plan for Gender Equality also promotes equal participation of men and women in disaster and environment related fields.

In the wake of 3/11, however, seeing with our own eyes the problems women were facing, it seemed that these laws and policies had not been implemented at all on the ground. We

became convinced that we must find a way of reforming and strengthening the present disaster institutions so that gender perspectives can be actually implemented.

### ***Women's Network Activities and Successes***

After visiting the disaster-affected area, we resolved to convey the demands of the victims to the government and to urge that gender perspectives be included in recovery policies. We decided that it was necessary to develop a national organization and that we would hold a symposium on June 11, exactly three months after the disaster, to address gender and disaster policies.

We set up an Executive Committee to organize the symposium, calling for members among women's groups and individuals throughout Japan. Our appeal was that we must not repeat the mistakes made following previous disasters, such as the 1995 Kobe earthquake, and that we must raise our voices as women until our demands were included in government policy.

Women from all 47 prefectures throughout Japan answered our appeal, and we rallied over 100 groups, NGOs and individuals - a diverse coalition including groups such as Japan Accountability Caucus for the Beijing Conference, the Society of Japanese Women Scientists, women's centers, medical organizations, welfare and education groups.

At the same time, the government was establishing the Reconstruction Design Council. When the members were announced on April 11, as we feared, out of 15 members, only one was a woman. Then the government released their Recovery Plan. Once again we were disappointed by the lack of focus on the environment, public health, welfare, medical care, education and cultural concerns, issues that should be addressed if achieving "human security" was the aim. Gender perspectives were an absolutely vital part of recovery, but the Reconstruction Design Council totally ignored these issues, making us all the more anxious.

### ***Lobbying the government and the Diet***

Discussions within the Reconstruction Design Council were proceeding rapidly and we decided that if we waited until our symposium on June 11 we would miss important opportunities, so we composed an urgent petition requesting that gender perspectives be thoroughly integrated into responses to the disaster. On May 9 we presented it to members of the Diet.

In this petition, our demands included: that gender balance be maintained in the Reconstruction Design Council and that the number of female members be increased; that recovery plans should actively include women and the elderly, people with disabilities, etc. when they are being drawn up.

On the following day, May 10, the Council announced "Seven Principles for the Reconstruction Framework" focused on economic recovery, largely ignoring social concerns and without any mention at all of "women" or "gender." Then on March 13 the Cabinet approved an outline of the Basic Act on Reconstruction and again "gender equality" was nowhere to be seen. We knew that our mission would not be easy, but women's demands were being totally ignored. It was as if we were being told "disasters are a man's work, no place for women."

Debates were beginning in both the Diet and the Reconstruction Design Council, so we invited female Diet Members to an emergency dialogue on May 19. Thirteen women legislators met with 50 members of our committee. The consensus that emerged was articulated in the "Demand for the enforcement of gender equality in response to the 3/11 disaster." It was signed by everyone present at the dialogue and submitted to the government.

Could it have been that a petition signed by a long line of Diet members finally moved the government? Ten days after the submission of this petition the Reconstruction Design Council announced that "regarding region building, it is important to aim for a true planned society, an active society and gender equal society, by having women, elderly, disabled and various people participate in the consensus development process."

While this was limited to "region building," having "women, elderly, disabled" and "gender equal society" included was our first success. Although it was not plain sailing thereafter, we felt pleased to have achieved some victories.

### ***The 6/11 Symposium: Disaster, Recovery and Gender Equality***

As hundreds of participants from all over Japan gathered in Tokyo for the 6/11 Symposium, there was an atmosphere of excitement, commitment and strength.

The morning session included two keynote addresses: by Miho Ohara, an earthquake engineer and disaster planner; and by Keiko Ikeda, a specialist in international disaster and gender trends; as well as a speech from the mayor of Sendai, Emiko Okuyama.

The afternoon session featured three speakers from each of the affected prefectures on the

theme “Reports from the ground: my appeal,” as well as presentations from two people involved in support activities. This was followed by a panel discussion in which 20 people came up to speak. In all, it was a marathon of seven hours.

Discussions included detailed reports from the affected areas, analysis from experts and views on the state of gender equality in disaster policy in Japan. Sendai mayor Okuyama noted that before 3/11 everyone stressed disaster policies for restoring lifelines such as water and electricity supply, however what actually saved people’s lives was not infrastructure, it was family or neighbors. She explained how she was implementing recovery measures that included a human security and cultural perspective.

In her closing remarks, Miyoko Tsujimura of Tohoku University said, “Three-way partnerships between people in education, research and practitioners are always emphasized, but we now also realize that local administration and NGOs must be included in that partnership. I think that is what we have achieved today, with participants from the Cabinet Office Gender Equality Bureau as well as representatives from major citizen’s groups.”

All participants were able to share information on various aspects of gender and disaster, including town planning, health, employment, child-rearing, etc. After identifying the issues, it was agreed that the next step should be to try to change government policy. Three demands were articulated:

- 1) Women must participate in all decision-making bodies.
- 2) The number of women members of the Reconstruction Design Council must be increased.
- 3) People directly affected by disasters such as women, the elderly, the disabled, etc. must be at the center of recovery planning



The 6/11 Symposium: Disaster, Recovery and Gender Equality in Tokyo.

### **Sudden Response to the 6/11 Symposium**

Three days after the 6/11 Symposium, at a meeting of the Upper House Special Committee on Reconstruction, Upper House member Tomiko Okazaki, after specifically mentioning the nationwide turnout for our symposium, confronted Prime Minister Naoto Kan, demanding that he increase the number of female members in the Reconstruction Design Council. The prime minister responded by apologizing that there had not been more representation from the beginning and promised to make changes immediately.

### **Reconstruction Design Council includes “gender perspectives,” but narrow definitions of women’s roles remains**

On June 25 the Reconstruction Design Council published a report, *Hope Beyond the Disaster*, that advocated building “an inclusive society that does not leave anyone out,” adding that “it is important that the disaster can be an opportunity for women, among others, who have difficulty voicing their opinions, to actively participate in local regional development. Above all, we must always maintain the viewpoint of gender equality.”

In the section on community development, it was mentioned that “when collecting the

opinions of residents, due attention needs to be paid to ensure the opinions of women, children, the disabled and foreign residents, among others, are appropriately reflected.” While this was progress, JWNDRR’s view was that including women as a category among “children, the disabled and foreign residents” tends to label women as vulnerable and makes them the mere subject of policy, not actors in the formulation of policy. Our point is that, as local residents, as citizens, legally and on a practical level, women must be seen as independent individuals with equal rights to participate in policy making.

Both the Basic Act on Reconstruction (enacted by the Upper House on June 20) and the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction released a month later, incorporated a substantial portion of our requests, so forcefully made through intensive lobbying. The Guidelines made references to gender equality in 12 sections.

We had also made strong demands for the appointment, in the Reconstruction Headquarters, of a person in charge of coordination of “gender equality perspectives” between the various authorities. This happened in August. At the time we hoped that having such an official would stimulate positive change, but the reality has been quite different. In the four years since this appointment was made, the Gender Equality Section has failed to make any gender-related policy interventions, and is not able to carry out its gender-mainstreaming mandate. Instead, it collects examples of good practices and performs other relatively minor jobs. This is unfortunate.

### **Policy change resulting from local women’s strength, not foreign pressure**

Most of Japan’s gender-related policies and institutions came about as the result of UN Conventions or Conferences such as the Equal Opportunity Act, which was compiled after the adoption of the Convention for Eliminating all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. Likewise, the Beijing Platform for Action resulted in the Basic Act on Gender Equality, passed in 1999.

In this case, however, the gender policies related to disaster are not a result of pressure from outside Japan, but rather of the activities of dedicated Japanese women. Feeling compelled to do something about the suffering that confronted us after 3/11, we single-mindedly pursued the government, determined not to miss any chance of influencing the policy-making process. The problems faced by our sisters in Tohoku are problems all of us share, and we believed that by getting gender perspectives written in to the Basic Act and the Guidelines on Reconstruction, we would be taking the first steps toward reform of Japan’s DRR policies and institutions. In other words, 3/11 taught us that in order to build a country that is secure and resilient, social reform from the perspective of gender equality is imperative.

### **The official emergence of Japan Women’s Network for DRR**

After the 6/11 Symposium on Disaster, Recovery and Gender Equality, the Executive Committee that had been in charge of organizing it had fulfilled its role and was disbanded. The Chair of the Executive Committee, Akiko Domoto, called for the formation of the JWNDRR so that the implementation of the amendments made to the Basic Act on Reconstruction and the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction, could be monitored. These amendments were the result of activities by the Committee, and it was important that they be followed up and that lobbying activities and study sessions be continued.

In the appeal to people to join the Network, five action items were set out:

- 1) Confirming and monitoring progress on each related policy.
- 2) Confirming and urging improvements to DRR policies of local governments.
- 3) Lobbying for amendments to the Basic Act on Disaster Control Measures so more women can be members of the local disaster councils.
- 4) Demanding improvements regarding DRR to the contents of the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality.
- 5) Taking steps towards improving the DRR content of the Fourth Basic Plan for Gender Equality.



Excursion to temporary housing at Higashi Matsushima with members of the Women’s Major Group, after the WCDRR3



**Our struggle becomes global**

After the 6/11 Symposium, we still saw our mission as a domestic one, ensuring that gender-mainstreaming provisions in the new laws were carried out. We did not envision playing a role in the global struggle for progress in gender and disaster. But as events unfolded, the global struggle came to us. And, fortunately, the momentum we had generated gave JWNDRR the resources and commitment needed to play a pivotal role when it did.

The first step came in February, 2012, when Japan tabled a resolution before the 56th meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. Inspired by our 6/11 Symposium findings, the resolution (see box) concerned gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters. This began to draw us into the multilateral dialogue on disaster and gender.

Fortunately, JWNDRR president Akiko Domoto, as a seasoned veteran of the multilateral process with experience stretching back to the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, was well able to represent our organization at a series of meetings leading up to the planned Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR3), at which a successor to the Hyogo Framework would be adopted.

The landmark development for JWNDRR was, however, the May 2013 announcement that WCDRR3 would be held in Sendai in March 2015. In terms of the global forces advocating progress in gender and disaster, this made us the local hosts – a role we were proud and delighted to take on.

**SUMMARY OF RESOLUTION 56/2****Gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters**

(The CSW) urges Governments and, where appropriate, United Nations entities, civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector and other stakeholders to:

- (a) Review national policies, strategies and plans and take action to integrate a gender perspective into policies, planning and funding for disaster risk reduction, response and recovery, considering the different impact that natural disasters have on women and men.
- (b) Ensure equal opportunities for women’s participation in decision-making, including the allocation of resources at all levels of disaster risk reduction, response and recovery.
- (c) Make the utmost effort to secure equal access for women and men to disaster relief assistance and provide disaster response and support for recovery that is fully responsive to the needs and views of women. Secure the victims’ human rights, with special emphasis on the needs of pregnant and lactating women, families with infants, single-parent households and widows, in such areas as food and supplies, water and sanitation, the set-up and management of shelter, safety and security, and the provision of physical, psychological and emergency health care, including for sexual and reproductive health, and counseling services. Encourage the involvement of female professionals and gender-balance among field workers.
- (d) Ensure that in post-disaster environments special attention is given to: sexual and gender-based violence and to the prevention of various forms of exploitation, including the risk of trafficking; and the particular vulnerability of girls, unaccompanied children and orphans.
- (e) Ensure women and girls’ equal access to information, training and formal and informal education on disaster risk reduction, in order for them to make full use of these resources.
- (f) Systematically collect demographic and socio-economic data and information by sex, age and disability and continue to develop gender indicators and analyze gender differences, including through gender-sensitive needs assessment and planning processes. Integrate this information into DRR and management policies and programs.

**Chapter 2: The Road to Sendai**

**The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR3)** in Sendai, was, like all such multilateral gatherings, the culmination of a multiyear process of consensus-building among stakeholders worldwide, involving both regional conferences and global consultations. Beyond conventional negotiations between member states, the UN process now includes a wider spectrum of civil society stakeholders – and this allowed JWNDRR to offer input via the Women’s Major Group, one of nine stakeholder groups recognized by the UN.

This chapter is an account of our close involvement in the two-year process leading up to Sendai to ensure that gender perspectives were included in the renewed international framework on DRR that was adopted at the Conference.

**Fourth Global Platform for DRR**

The 4th Global Platform for DRR, held in Geneva in May 2013, attracted 3,500 participants including members of national parliaments, state governors, mayors, academics and NGOs. This conference was also attended by about 100 private-sector corporations.

Global Platforms are held every two years in order to exchange information and facilitate the implementation of HFA. The slogan of the 4th Global Platform was “Resilient People, Resilient Planet.” There were three main agenda items proposed by UNISDR:

- 1) Private Sector for Disaster Resilient Societies
- 2) Potential of Communities and Networks
- 3) National Governments and Local Authorities Securing Sustainable Risk Management

**Gender-mainstreaming activities at the 4th Global Platform for DRR “HFA2 – Women making a difference”**

One session organized by UN Women, the Huairou Commission and UNISDR, had the following objective: to identify strategies to ensure that women and gender considerations are at the center of DRR decision-making in HFA2.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) progress reports show the low performance of the two gender equality indicators: 62 out of 70 countries reported in 2009-2011 that they do not collect gender disaggregated vulnerability and capacity information. The contributions of women and girls, visible especially at the community level, remain largely isolated from government, private sector and multi-stakeholder decision-making in DRR.

There were three speakers at the session. The first was Fatimetou Mint Abdel Malick, the only elected female mayor in Mauretania, who spoke about the contribution of women to DRR, emphasizing that women are not just vulnerable victims, they are also stakeholders. More women are now being recruited to local committees. Economic and social independence for women must be promoted, and so must women’s leadership. Rights that are guaranteed by law must be properly applied and implemented, and the custom of men taking control of risk management must be challenged. It was a convincing address, especially as she must deal with the reality of the situation in her position as mayor.

The message from this session was that women must not just be labeled as “vulnerable;” their knowledge, abilities and experiences must be utilized. To achieve this, a bottom-up approach to DRR needs to be established to replace the top-down approach that now predominates.

**Gender and Disaster Network (GDN) Booth: Gathering place for women**

This is where we first met Maureen Fordham, a professor at Northumbria University (UK), who organized the GDN booth. Two years later she was a keynote speaker at JWNDRR’s public forum at WCDRR3 – “Women as a force for change.” Maureen was also active at WCDRR2 in Kobe and through networking globally she has been one of the women challenging male dominance in DRR.

Our discussions at the booth were on the following topics:

- People often fail to realize that “gender and DRR” is different from other general issues such as “gender and development.” They tend to get lumped together.
- Women are seen only as “vulnerable.”
- There are already many tools and frameworks on gender perspectives but they are not reflected in DRR approaches.

- There is not enough networking between organizations working on environment, health and gender.
- Political will and leadership are lacking.

### Closing Ceremony

At the May 23 closing ceremony, Margareta Wahlström, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for DRR, made the following points:

- In order to increase resilience, participation of all stakeholders is necessary.
- The post 2015 framework must reflect the opinions of those stakeholders.
- This conference has successfully identified areas of common understanding and has built a common foundation regarding DRR.

Tanzania's environment minister, Terezya Huvisa, commented that DRR is intricately related to climate change and that the traditional knowledge of local people is being ignored.

Finally, the parliamentary secretary to the minister of Japan's Cabinet Office announced that the Third World Conference on DRR would be held in Sendai in March 2015. The stage was moving from Geneva to Sendai.

### International Roundtable on Gender Equality and Diversity in DRR (June 14, 2014)

As a lead-up to WCDDR3, JWNDRR held an international roundtable in Sendai on June 14, 2014. The main point on the agenda was how to get gender perspectives included in HFA2.

Speakers included Sendai mayor Emiko Okuyama; Ana Christina, gender specialist at UNISDR; and Cheryl Anderson from the University of Hawaii. Taking part in the discussions were Sumie Ishii from JOICFP; Yaeko Kisu from the Sendai Foundation for Gender Equality; Jackie Steele from the University of Tokyo; Yaeko Tabata from the Morioka Women's Center; and Etsuko Chiba from the Fukushima Gender Equality Center. Akiko Domoto was moderator.

The findings from this event were compiled into the Sendai Call to Action, one of the key JWNDRR policy documents. It was well-received at the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR held the following week and became an effective tool for forging solidarity among Asian women. The Sendai Call to Action was also presented at Preparatory Committee meetings in Geneva and became the basis of JWNDRR policy proposals.

### SENDAI CALL TO ACTION ON GENDER AND DRR (SUMMARY)

- In all national, prefectural and municipal policy- and decision-making bodies dealing with DRR, ensure the participation of a minimum of 30 percent women and 30 percent men from diverse sectors, training and expertise, and of diverse ages and family structures. Provide women with access to resources that strengthen **women's leadership** in all aspects of DRR and encourage men to actively reduce and remove barriers to women.
- Implement a training program for women to strengthen their capacity to participate in DRR as leaders and decision-makers and to enable other women to use their capabilities to build safe and resilient communities.
- Carry out participatory, community-based disaster risk assessments and conduct follow-up research in order to formulate diversity and gender- equal policies.
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation of policies integrating gender and diversity. Hold (annually, if necessary) participatory practices of national law reform and national policy-making to apply lessons learned in gender-responsive DRR and emergency preparedness.
- Ensure opportunities for diverse members of the population to actively contribute their experience and expertise in the creation of a risk-wise culture that embraces multiple perspectives and knowledge bases.
- Collect reliable and comparable demographic data that tracks relevant factors such as gender, age, economic status, disability, and language ability, based on individual (not household) survey participation.
- Strengthen support systems to prevent violence in society, specifically against women and marginalized populations.
- Recognize the resilience and strengths of women and girls, and support them as key "actors" and "leaders" in all phases of DRR to ensure that their knowledge, expertise and capacities can contribute to fostering family and community resilience.
- Member states should ensure effective training and drills that accommodate special needs and marginalized communities, so neighbors and communities will aid each other during disasters.



JWNDRR members and Dr. Cheryl Anderson with Margareta Wahlström at the AMCDRR6 in Bangkok

### 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR

AMCDRR6 was held from June 22-26, 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand. Three JWNDRR members, including Akiko Domoto, attended. This was one of five regional Ministerial Conferences held in Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and the Arab States. The outcome of these regional conferences was fed into the first Preparatory Conference (PrepCom1). In other words, the Bangkok Conference was to compile the input to PrepCom1 from the Asian region.

Women from Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Bangladesh and India - countries that had experienced tsunami, flooding and other large-scale disasters - came together under the leadership of NGO Duryog Nivaran.

JWNDRR's Sendai Call to Action (see page 10) in its entirety was well-received at this conference and the numerical target of 30 percent participation of women in all DRR related decision-making bodies, and the references to women's health in the context of disaster were particularly welcomed. There were calls for Japan to represent the Asian women's groups and deliver the women's statement, so Akiko Domoto stepped forward.

Lively discussions were also held on the need for women's leadership training, which were to lead to the creation of our "Training Initiative."

### SUMMARY OF AKIKO DOMOTO'S SPEECH TO BANGKOK DRR CONFERENCE, JUNE 25, 2014

Today I would like to offer some background on our proposed recommendations for HFA2. They are keyed to the ISDR's "Five Priorities for Action."

Under **Priority 1**, which is to "Make DRR a national and local priority, with a strong institutional basis for implementation..."

We would like to stress the critical importance of having women strongly represented in all facets of planning, response and reconstruction. And by this we don't just mean a token presence: women need to share in leadership roles at all levels.

Too often in DRR, women are patronizingly seen as "vulnerable," as helpless victims who need to be looked after. The truth is that women are pillars of resilience in every disaster. They are the caregivers. They are the ones who hold families and communities together in times of stress.

Yes, women are vulnerable, particularly when their needs are not addressed and their security is not assured. But in different ways, men are equally vulnerable. In Tohoku, we have seen far too many men succumb to depression and alcohol abuse that sometimes results in domestic violence and suicide.

So to say that "gender is a fundamental issue in disaster" is not just a statement about women. It's to say that, without reference to gender we cannot properly understand and respond to the social effects of disaster.

Having made that clear, let me also say that what we've learned from Kobe, from Niigata and from Tohoku - three major disasters in 16 years - is that... when women are not at the table when decisions are made, our needs are too easily overlooked and ignored. We need to be at the table - and not just serving tea - when decisions are made. That's why we propose that HFA2 should state clearly that women must have at least 30 percent representation in all decision-making processes.

**Priority 2** seeks to identify, assess and monitor disaster risks. Here again, gender is critical.

To identify gender-specific risks we need better demographic data down to the community level. From

overseeing the planning process in Chiba, I know that so far the emphasis has been on numbers of people and households, without going into more granular detail: gender, age, disabilities and so on.

We need this level of detail, and we must use it to identify specific risks faced by various groups. Better local demographic data is essential because we need to identify vulnerable groups and give high priority to their needs.

**Priority 3** is focused on using knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

The current reality is that gender-stereotyped roles in daily life are amplified after a disaster. So what we saw in Tohoku was that every able-bodied man was instantly employed – and paid well – to clean up the wreckage you saw on TV.

Women, meanwhile, were busy as cooks and caregivers in the evacuation centers. But where the men were paid, women were expected to perform social functions as volunteers. And three years after 3/11, women are much more likely than men to be unemployed or underemployed.

We would like to see all these problems addressed in the DRR planning process.

**Priority 4** aims at reducing underlying risk factors.

One of the major underlying risk factors we see is the lack of empowerment of women in societies around the world. Because the more empowered women become, the more they will be a source of disaster resilience and the less they will be vulnerable.

**Priority 5** is about more effective response at all levels.

How do you strengthen preparedness at all levels? For a start, we say: “Let women share responsibility at all levels.” But that won’t happen simply by adding gender to a list of best practices in a multilateral document like HFA2. We need to mandate a firm target worldwide: 30 percent of all positions in all aspects of DRR must be allocated to women.

There is a bigger picture, however. We must recognize that people are affected by disaster in different ways, according to the various components that make up their identity. If you’re male or female, young or old, rich or poor, mainstream or minority; if you’re able-bodied or physically challenged – all of these facets of your identity determine your fate in the event of disaster. Only by approaching the problem with an awareness of the risks attached to each facet of identity can we begin to address these risks.

That’s the thinking behind the proposals I have outlined today.

## PrepCom1 and the the Pre-Zero Draft

### Women’s Major Group

Duryog Nivaran led the women’s groups in the Asian region, but on the global level, the participation of observers in WCDRR3 and the PrepComs was organized through the Women’s Major Group. The concept of Major Groups is articulated in Agenda 21 and came out of the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992. At the Rio Summit, eminent women leaders such as Vandana Shiva, Wangari Maathai and Bella Abzug made strong statements about the effects that the environment has on every individual. They believed UN agreements on the environment must not be made solely by government delegations, and demanded that other stakeholders should also be included in the decision-making process.

The UN agreed to understand civil society in the context of sustainable development negotiations at the UN as nine Major Groups.<sup>1</sup> The Women’s Major Group was one of the stakeholder groups identified to participate in the process of the development of the post-2015 framework. Representatives from Major Groups interested in participating as observers at the Third UN World Conference and the Preparatory Committee meetings were required to be accredited to the UN and register accordingly.

Each of the Major Groups (MG) had a designated lead person and organization to coordinate participation. The Women’s Major Group (WMG) was led by Eleanor Blomstrom of the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), which coordinated the registration and participation logistics for PrepCom1.

Recommendations from the regional consultative meetings (such as the AMCDRR) were fed into the overall preparation, as the WMG formulated policy proposals to ensure implementation of the next agreement. Some of these recommendations included: enhancing women’s roles in leadership of DRR organizations and activities; ensuring that gender-specific data is collected

and used effectively; ensuring that the UN and member states provide resources for equality and participation in DRR and provide training on gender equality and DRR. Discussions reflected on the previous decade of the HFA implementation, and concluded that there is still insufficient comprehension of the need for gender equality in DRR, and that key decision-makers lack awareness of ways to mainstream gender in their DRR programs and activities at every level.

The Women’s Major Group was not given funding for participation, presenting a challenge to our efforts. At PrepCom 1, there were only eight participants: the lead from WEDO, two participants supported by JWNDRR, two from the Huairou Commission, two participants based in Geneva, and another from Africa supported by an NGO. Events at the PrepCom included Chair’s dialogues and technical sessions focused on indicators and monitoring, DRR financing and technology transfer. The purpose was to gather input and recommendations in developing the draft document for the next agreement.

### Gender gets included in Pre-Zero Draft

At PrepCom 1, the WMG talked with representatives from Member States to determine which states were supportive of gender equality and which aspects they would support – and provided informal briefings about the roles and positions of the WMG. The WMG also provided a plenary statement delivered by JWNDRR’s Akiko Domoto that outlined the importance of gender equality and women’s leadership in the DRR process. Other members attended the technical sessions and high-level dialogues, and provided interventions to ensure that the position of the WMG was formally recorded. Emphasis was on ensuring that a range of diverse human dimensions were taken into account, and that human rights-based approaches were used in DRR.

## PRE-ZERO DRAFT

In August 2014, UNISDR released the “Pre-Zero Draft” of the post-2015 framework for DRR. Areas where gender and women were specifically considered in the Pre-Zero Draft text were as follows:

### C. Guiding principles

12. The principles contained in the Yokohama Strategy and the HFA general considerations retain their full relevance and are complemented as follows to guide implementation.

d) Disaster risk management requires society-wide engagement and empowerment, equality, and an inclusive and non-discriminatory participation. **Gender considerations should inform all policies and practices, and women’s leadership must be promoted.** Children and youth, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples should be fully engaged in the determination and implementation of policies.

### D. Priorities for action

I. National and local context

*Understanding disaster risk*

14. National and local policies and practices for disaster risk management should be based on a clear understanding of risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability and exposure of persons and assets and hazards characteristics – particularly at the local level. Actions should include:

a) Systematically surveying, recording and publicly accounting for all disaster loss and economic and social impact, **taking into account gender-specific and sex/age/disability-disaggregated data.**

III. Role of Stakeholders

23. While States, building on existing relevant international instruments, may determine more specific role and responsibilities for all public and private stakeholders in accordance with national plans and priorities, some indications may include:

o) **Women should be recognized as critical to increase the capacity to manage disaster risk, and to design, resource and implement gender-responsive disaster risk management.**

Following the release of the Pre-Zero Draft, UNISDR convened informal consultations on September 9, 2014 in Geneva. Lily Hutjes-Boelaar of the Huairou Commission attended the consultations and provided the statement for WMG. She stressed seven priorities emphasized by WMG, including: 1) *Goals and targets* must be right, and these must include appropriate measures, such as sex and age disaggregated data; 2) *Gender equality and women’s rights* must be included beyond the recommended text to “mainstream gender,” which was not the case in the HFA, and which must be done by recognizing women’s capacity and leadership roles; 3) *Stakeholders* must be considered according to access for participation based on power dynamics, and therefore, platforms need to be developed where women, girls and young people’s experiences and recommendations – and the knowledge of indigenous peoples – are listened

#### Footnote

1. The nine Major Groups are: Business & Industry, Children & Youth, Farmers, Local Authorities, Indigenous People, Non-Governmental Organizations, Workers & Trade Unions, Scientific and Technological Community and Women

to and respected; 4) A *Human-rights* based approach will help to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders are better articulated; 5) *Inclusive language* is spotty and could be improved by using the word “All”; 6) *Difference* should be adequately recognized among people, especially in terms of differential risk, exposure and vulnerability; and, 7) *Environmental Resilience* requires more balance between the three strands of sustainable development - social, economic and environmental. The document needs to ensure that real commitments to invest in strengthening environmental resilience are made.

### PrepCom2

The second PrepCom was held November 17-18, 2014, once again in Geneva. Four members from JWNDRR attended and the WMG contingent increased to 18 members. The “Zero Draft” of the post-2015 framework was released by the UN just before PrepCom2, for consideration during the meeting. However, the Zero Draft had dropped some key language from Paragraph 12d) of the Guiding Principles of the Pre-Zero Draft, i.e.: “Gender considerations are to inform all policies and practices, and women’s leadership is to be promoted.”

JWNDRR produced a brochure for distribution to the Member State delegations at PrepCom2, calling for the full reinstatement of this language and advocating the importance of empowerment of women through DRR and leadership training.

WMG provided a plenary statement, presented by Grace Mbunga from Kenya, and participated in and provided interventions in many different sessions. It also submitted recommendations to ISDR. Akiko Domoto was able to officially announce the vital necessity of women’s leadership and training. WMG was able to appeal directly to the Japanese government through Mr. Suganuma, the Ambassador in charge of WCDRR3, requesting that the language on women’s leadership be retained. We received a favorable response, with Mr. Suganuma promising to do all he could to achieve this.

Women’s Major Group at PrepCom2: (back row) Akiko, Cait, Asha, Ramona, Katia, Maureen (front row: Leah, Grace, Teruko, Sarah)



## Chapter 3: The Third World Conference on DRR in Sendai

### 1) Conference outline and opening ceremony

The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR3), held in Sendai, March 14 thru 18, 2015, drew 6,500 participants from 187 countries. There were three segments in the conference: intergovernmental meetings that included ministerial roundtables and high-level partnership dialogues; a multi-stakeholder segment that included 34 working sessions over four days; and Public Forums that included over 400 events organized by NGOs and other groups at venues throughout the city.

Throughout the conference, negotiations between member states to determine the new framework on DRR were ongoing, sometimes late into the night.

At the March 14 Opening Ceremony, UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon said that, “an ambitious outcome from this meeting will put us on a path to a new sustainable development agenda - a universal, meaningful climate change agreement; and financing to turn plans into actions.” He concluded with a call to “act in a spirit of global solidarity to make our world safer and more prosperous for all.”

Japan’s prime minister, Shinzo Abe, also spoke at the ceremony, announcing the Sendai Cooperation Initiative for DRR with a pledge of US\$4 billion over four years and DRR training for 40,000 people.

As representative of the Nine Major Groups, Regina Kankinza Pritchett from the Huairou Commission, an NGO of grassroots women’s organizations, spoke of her work “with networks of women leaders, young and old to support their resilience building activities, recovery and reconstruction efforts.”

Ms. Pritchett also gave an informative report on the International Grassroots Women’s Academy in Tohoku, which was held just before the WCDRR in Minami Sanriku, one of the areas most affected by the 3/11 earthquake and tsunami. She spoke of meeting women from the Camellia Development Group who were reaching out to the wider community and forming partnerships with the local government, and how they were planning for disasters by utilizing and promoting local culture and history. She reminded us that even when we are making frameworks on a global scale, we must keep in mind the grassroots communities and the vital work they do.

### 2) High-level Partnership Dialogue: Mobilizing Women’s Leadership in DRR

The first day of the conference featured a High-level Multi-stakeholder Partnership Dialogue on mobilizing women’s leadership in DRR, co-chaired by Ms. Sanae Takaichi, Japan’s Minister of Internal Affairs and Communication and Senator Loren Legarda of the Philippines. Panelists included Ms. Tarja Halonen, former President of Finland; Ms. Emiko Okuyama, Mayor of Sendai; Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources; Ms. Ertharin Cousin, Executive Director, World Food Program; Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director UNFPA; and Ms. Adi Vasulevu Merewalasi, FemLINKPACIFIC.

In a keynote address, Prime Minister Abe noted that the 3/11 disasters brought a strong realization of the vital role of women in DRR and paid tribute to the role women play in caring for evacuees, and in recovery of livelihoods and communities. He said that women should participate in these activities even in normal times. He stated that his government’s contribution to promoting women’s participation would include commencing women’s leadership training as part of the Sendai Cooperation Initiative for DRR and that “Women and DRR” would be on the agenda at the World Assembly of Women to be held in Tokyo in the summer of 2015. We must hope that the prime minister’s words on the international stage will result in concrete policy reforms at home.



Co-Chairs of the High-level Partnership Dialogue: Mobilizing Women’s Leadership in DRR, Sanae Takaichi, Japan’s Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications (center) and Senator Loren Legarda of the Philippines (left)

Following the keynote address, the two co-chairs opened the discussion with brief speeches. Senator Legarda said that even though more women die in disasters than men, they must not be seen simply as victims. Women are in the frontline when it comes to DRR and climate change and have been very active in previous disasters, and she emphasized that this must be recognized. Women must participate in all decision-making processes and they must be empowered to fulfill their important roles. However, she noted that including gender perspectives in DRR is still a global challenge and that the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) are important value standards which must be included in the new post 2015 framework for action on DRR.

Ms. Takaichi mentioned the increase in the number of female firefighters in Japan, and the important work that women did in the aftermath of the 3/11 disaster. She asked participants to consider what actions we should take to ensure that women's knowledge, skills and experiences can be translated into women's leadership in DRR.

#### **Dialogue-Panelist's comments**

The following is a summary of the points made by panelists:

- 1) A gender perspective and the driving force of women is vital in making a resilient society.
- 2) In order to enable women to take leadership positions, it is necessary they are empowered through lifelong learning and access to information.
- 3) Women must participate in all decision-making.
- 4) It is necessary to set up gender-responsive indicators.

Ms. Okuyama, mayor of the host city, which suffered grave damage on 3/11, said her administration has implemented measures to enable women to be active on the ground during disasters, along with a system that enables women to speak up in decision-making bodies, plus a numerical target of 10 percent female participation in local DRR councils.

FemLINKPACIFIC's Adi Vasulevu Merewalasi spoke of the necessity of partnerships between local and national governments as well as the international community in order to come up with measures against the threat of climate change in the Pacific Islands. To achieve this, she said, it is necessary to use traditional forms of communication to transmit information.

#### **Comments from the floor (from member state and NGO representatives)**

The session was then thrown open to the floor. Most of the comments from members states covered their present situation and achievements but comments from NGOs included water issues, welfare, food policy and the environment, as well as gender issues.

Representing the Women's Major Group, Eleanor Blomstrom emphasized the importance of collecting data disaggregated by gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, ability, geographic location and income. "If we focus on averages, we do not pick up on individual needs and are therefore unable to address them," she said. "We cannot say we have met the targets until targets for all individuals have been met."

Ms. Blomstrom also pointed out that women can't simply be used as resources, they need resources to be able to fulfill their important roles. She cited structural issues such as women's unpaid work (e.g. domestic work and child care) and the gender labor division, which sees as the root causes behind the slow progress in implementation of gender perspectives in DRR - structural problems that must be addressed in both developing and developed countries. Women's contributions must be recognized and there must be redistribution of time, labor and resources so that women can work in paid jobs and participate in community activities, beyond their responsibilities for child and elder care.

Ms. Blomstrom also mentioned the increased risk of violence and trafficking of women and children in times of disaster.

Ms. Okuyama was asked how a mayor could influence policy in a dynamic way. She replied that it was important for women at the local level to be able to raise their voices and make sure that men hear. Once this has been achieved at a local level, she said, then it can be raised to the national and international levels.

The session concluded with a summation by Senator Legarda, who listed the main issues for mainstreaming gender, including access to education and information and economic investment. Reproductive health care and sexual violence issues also must be addressed. Men must stand with women on the frontline of gender equality if leadership of women and girls is to be achieved and if the global issues of DRR, climate change and sustainable development are to be addressed.

This session can be viewed on the UN web TV at: <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/conferencessummits/3rd-un-world-conference-on-disaster-risk-reduction-14-18-march-2015-sendai-japan/high-level-partnership-dialogue/watch/mobilizing-women's-leadership-in-disaster-risk-reduction/4110992551001>

A briefing note is available at:

[www.wcdrr.org/uploads/Mobilizing-Women's-Leadership-in-Disaster-Risk-Reduction.pdf](http://www.wcdrr.org/uploads/Mobilizing-Women's-Leadership-in-Disaster-Risk-Reduction.pdf)

#### **3) Citizen-organized Public Forums & the Gender and DRR Theme Pavilion**

While the main conference was taking place in the International Conference Center, across the Hirose River in various parts of Sendai, citizens held Public Forums in nine venues. These included "Theme Pavilions" such as Gender & DRR, Civil Society Collaboration & DRR, plus displays in Mediatheque and the People's Pavilion, where grassroots interaction took place. Participants reportedly numbered over 150,000, well in excess of the expected 40,000.

One special feature of these events was the huge participation of women and young people. There were over 400 events organized by citizen groups, and of these, the Japan Civil Society Network (JCC2015) was the largest, with 104 affiliated organizations. JCC2015 was formed specifically to organize participation in the WCDRR3.

JWNDRR has been a leading member of JCC2015 since its inception and Akiko Domoto is JCC2015 co-chair. Since the early days, this organization, along with international NGOs, has been making policy proposals to governments and the UN regarding the post-2015 Framework for Action.

Along with local groups in Sendai, JCC2015 set up the "From DRR to town planning" steering committee, and also organized the Citizen's World Conference on DRR. Panel discussions and symposiums that allowed every citizen to air his or her views were held in the Theme Pavilions. Nine sessions and one main event drew 1,500 participants who were addressed by 46 speakers (13 from overseas), creating a great opportunity to share diverse experiences and opinions.

The People's Pavilion was a hub where all could gather and exchange views. A booklet entitled *10 Lessons from Fukushima: Reducing risk and protecting communities from disasters* was published in five languages and distributed widely at the Conference and at the People's Pavilion.

On the conference's final day the "Declaration for DRR as Global Citizens" was announced. Messages received from participating citizens were woven together to produce a moving statement entitled "Dreams for the next 1,000 years."

#### **Gender and DRR—Women's leadership**

Another Thematic Pavilion on Gender and DRR was organized by Sendai City and women's groups at the Sendai Gender Equality Center (L-Park Sendai). Five sessions were held on the common theme of "Gender and DRR - four years after the Great East Japan Earthquake, the view from Sendai." Plus, other programs and symposiums were organized by different women's groups. These events featured deep discussions on various aspects of gender equality and DRR, particularly in relation to the status of women in disaster-affected Tohoku. Over five days, there were a total of 2,564 participants.

Questionnaires conducted after the events show positive responses from participants. Both the public forums and the main conference stressed that we cannot build a resilient society without fighting against sexual discrimination and stereotypes. Also the 3 R's for women - Resources for empowerment, Representation and Rights - were repeated continually throughout the conference and in the citizen sessions.



### Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Sendai, March 2015

**Far left column:** Comments from the floor at JWNDRR's Public Forum.

- 1.** Women's Major Group members at the Opening Ceremony.
- 2.** Eleanor Blomstrom of the Women's Environment and Development Organization speaking on behalf of the WMG at the High-level Multi-stakeholder Dialogue.
- 3.** JWNDRR Vice President Hiroko Hara delivers the Women's Major Group statement at the 4th Plenary Meeting of the WCDRR3
- 4.** WMG booth
- 5.** Margareta Wahlström, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for DRR
- 6.** Ban Ki Moon speaks at the Opening Ceremony in the presence of the Emperor and Empress.
- 7.** Audience and speakers at JWNDRR's Public Forum.
- 8.** JWNDRR President and Co-Chair of JCC2015, Akiko Domoto coordinates a session at the Global Citizen's Conference on DRR.
- 9.** Displays at the Gender and DRR Thematic Pavilion.



## Chapter 4: JWNDRR International Symposium: Women as a Force for Change

### WCDDRR3 Public Forum: “Women as a Force for Change – Gender and DRR”

JWNDRR and the Japan Association for Women’s Education (JAWE) jointly organized a 2½-hour symposium on March 18 at L-Park Sendai. As long lines formed before the doors opened, the total number of participants at 275 (including invited speakers and staff) was well above the expected 180. Out of a total audience of 225 people from 11 countries (India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, UK, Thailand, Costa Rica, New Zealand and Switzerland, Canada, Korea and Japan) 21 of the participants were men. Eleven reporters from nine media outlets monitored the proceedings.

Yasuko Muramatsu, president of JAWE, opened the proceedings. Then JWNDRR president Akiko Domoto presented the key concepts, explaining the necessity for women to lead the way to change. This was followed by community case studies and keynote addresses on training and indicators from overseas guest speakers.

The second half of the symposium featured comments from the floor. Thirteen audience members from nine countries stepped up to speak and some very lively discussions took place.

The emcees, Hiroko Hara (JWNDRR Vice President) and Caitlin Stronell (JWNDRR Secretariat), conducted proceedings in both Japanese and English. (Simultaneous interpretation (English/Japanese) and sign language was provided.)

### Welcome Speeches and Messages

Yasuko Muramatsu welcomed participants and gave a brief outline of the program. Then, in a video message, His Excellency Dr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Attayah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, spoke of the importance of women being able to fulfill their important roles in disasters and said that the Qatar Friendship Fund is supporting JWNDRR and JAWE to develop a training program that will enable women to do this.

Mr. Hideaki Domichi, vice president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), spoke about the importance of including gender perspectives in its training programs on DRR, which are set to expand with the prime minister’s announcement that Japan would support training for 40,000 DRR officials around the world, over four years.



A video message from Dr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Attayah is relayed to the attendees of WCDDRR3.

### Part 1 of the Program

#### • Introduction and Key Concepts: “Women as a force for Change, four years since March 11, Our Proposals for the Future,” Akiko Domoto, JWNDRR president

In the wake of 3/11, women, the elderly and disabled had a very difficult time in the evacuation centers. When we realized this was because only men are in charge of management and planning, and that gender-responsive policies are almost non-existent, we decided this must be changed. This is why we chose 'Women as a force for change' as today's title.

Since women everywhere face similar problems, we have joined with women’s organizations around the world, for example the Women’s Major Group, to work towards implementation of gender-mainstreaming in DRR policies. These are our proposals:

1. As we move towards 2025, member countries, local governments and international agencies should steadily implement DRR systems and policies which are based upon sensitivity to gender and diversity, as written in the new Framework for Action.
2. At national, prefectural and municipal levels, the minimum percentage of men and women participating in DRR policymaking, planning and decision-making should be not less than 30 percent for either gender.
3. Around the world, in order to empower women as agents of change, and increase their participation in leadership roles, DRR training programs need to be developed based on gender and diversity perspectives. These programs should then be implemented by international institutions and organizations, national and local governments, communities, NGOs/NPOs, etc.
4. In order to build resilient societies, it is important to clarify the root causes of economic disparity, discrimination and inequalities within society, and take appropriate actions to remedy these issues during normal times.

5. Sharing of resources: Using the Gender and Disaster Network (GDN), which is a network of DRR and gender researchers and practitioners, diverse resources which are available, can be compared and evaluated as well as collecting information and lessons on DRR and gender from around the world and seeing if they can be shared.

Finally, to promote understanding of the importance of gender equality, it is necessary to develop and implement an inclusive, integrated training program. To do this, the following steps are necessary: 1) define gender; 2) develop methods to collect data disaggregated by sex and age; 3) develop methods of gender analysis so that the different impacts of disasters on men and women can be determined. For all of these points, it is necessary to take into account the geographic, cultural and practical factors particular to each community.

### Keynote address I: “JWNDRR Training Initiative-Contents and Implementation” Dr. Cheryl Anderson, University of Hawaii

Dr. Cheryl Anderson is the Director of the Hazards, Climate and Environment Program at the University of Hawaii. Just before the WCDDRR2 in Kobe, she held a conference in Hawaii on gender and DRR and took the messages from the conference to the WCDDRR2. Over 23 years she has coordinated a vast range of research projects on gender and DRR. She has been working with JWNDRR as an advisor since 2014.

JWNDRR proposes the development of an international gender and DRR training initiative. The training initiative will target implementation of trainings over a 10-year time frame to ensure that gender equality is integrated in DRR approaches and that women’s leadership in the field of DRR is recognized.

### What problem will this Training Initiative address?

Although the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) identifies gender as a cross-cutting issue, the integration of gender in DRR policies and programs has not occurred. Even though progress has been made in identifying that women do have capacity that aids in risk reduction, DRR policies and programs have not effectively incorporated gender-responsive approaches. Training to understand entry points for gender in DRR approaches, has been identified as a solution to this problem, but there is still a need for the development of a comprehensive strategy and the implementation of training at multiple levels to coincide with DRR priorities.

### What is new about this Training Initiative?

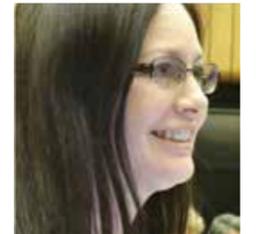
The concept for this initiative offers a new lens on training in gender and DRR by using a phased approach to target DRR policymakers and leaders, to recognize women’s leadership roles, and to ensure widespread sharing of key lessons and resources.

Japan’s recent experience with the 3/11 disaster has exposed many lessons in the ways that gender should be incorporated into DRR policies and practices throughout the disaster cycle – how the integration of women leaders of communities, fields of practice and organizations would have minimized risk, how response would have improved evacuation and sheltering by integrating gender considerations, how to involve women leaders in the reconstruction and recovery phases of the disaster, and how to better prepare and reduce future risks by using gender-responsive approaches. The Training Initiative will incorporate these lessons into materials for engaging in shared learning.

### What are the benefits of this Training Initiative?

The Training Initiative has several tiers for training to ensure that the policies at higher levels and practices at local levels are both able to integrate gender-responsive approaches. These will involve:

- 1) *Leadership Training (2 hrs)* - Ministerial or high-level leaders and policymakers to understand the reasons that gender equality is important in DRR and to ensure that policies and programs can integrate gender-responsive DRR.
- 2) *Training of Trainer Courses (5-10 days)*: Train international women leaders of agencies and organizations to enable these women in turn to conduct training nationally and locally, and to empower them to train more leaders, policymakers, and practitioners to understand how to develop and implement gender-responsive DRR.
- 3) *Practitioner Training (2-5 days)*: Training for officials in DRR-relevant organizations that shows how to integrate gender equality into practical applications through DRR planning and activities.
- 4) *Distance Education (2-hour increments for several days)*: Using web-based training programs,



Dr. Cheryl Anderson

lead courses that can involve participants from different locations and time zones. The benefit is that many people can participate at relatively low-cost.

- 5) *Resource Sharing*: Using the Gender and Disaster Network, an international network of people with knowledge and expertise in gender and DRR, the different training resources can be vetted and shared. Furthermore, lessons learned from DRR efforts globally can be shared and discussed for adaptation and application to other regions.



Prof. Maureen Fordham

### Keynote address II: “Developing Gender-responsive Indicators”

#### Prof. Maureen Fordham, Northumbria University

Prof. Maureen Fordham is a professor of gender and disaster resilience and coordinator of the Gender and Disaster Network (GDN). She designed and manages the GDN website and has worked on gender and DRR since the 1990s.

#### What are indicators? Why do we need them?

At the most basic level an indicator is simply a way of measuring the condition of a system or subject. Indicators enable an understanding of the direction of change, to evidence whether or not a goal has been attained.

Example: The Economy – one common indicator we use to judge whether the economy is going well or not is GDP, Gross Domestic Product. But GDP doesn’t tell the whole story about the economy. If we ask different questions, use different indicators, we will see different parts of the economy and the different affects economic policy has on, for example, men and women.

#### Why specifically gender indicators?

Evidence indicates that women are killed in disasters in greater numbers than men and at an earlier age. On the other hand, social and cultural expectations of men and boys may put them at greater risk in specific contexts.

These are *not natural* outcomes of hazards but the result of structured gender inequalities and this means *they are something we can change*.

Gender and age-disaggregated data collection is a minimum requirement to address structural barriers to gender equality and understand differential disaster risk.

#### Some example indicators

We need stronger accountability to gender equality in the Post-2015 framework for DRR. Let’s take some of the proposed targets of the framework and see how a gendered indicator would give us a means to measure how much progress countries are actually making in gender equality on each target:

#### Framework target: Substantially reduce disaster mortality

*Rationale and Aim*: Equalize survival rates - reduce the overall excess deaths of women and girls but also the gendered deaths of men and boys where social and cultural expectations around masculine norms put them at greater risk.

*Indicator*: Mortality data disaggregated by gender and age (at a minimum)

#### The process for developing gender-responsive indicators

The process of establishing and agreeing monitoring systems is equally as important as defining the indicators themselves. An inclusive, participatory process is essential in their selection and prioritization; they should be steered at grassroots level by the needs and interests of women and men, people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities and identities. Any portfolio of indicators should be transparent, easily accessible to, and open to change by, citizens.

### Comments on Keynote Addresses by Prof. Keiko Ikeda, Shizuoka University

Prof. Keiko Ikeda is a professor at the Faculty of Education, Shizuoka University, and a lecturer at the Center for Integrated Research and Education of Natural Hazards. She has done extensive research on DRR and women in Bangladesh and also runs training programs on gender and diversity and DRR in Japan

Both gender-responsive indicators and gender training can be powerful forces for change in DRR. But, if they are introduced without concrete visions and strategies to change present DRR systems and institutions, they will only serve as an additional set of information and end up with production of new knowledge only to be consumed. Access to proper information and knowledge



Prof. Keiko Ikeda



One of the many media crews covering the JWNDRR 'Women as a Force for Change' Symposium.

will be a process of empowerment to women. But, beyond empowerment of women, I hope that the proposed initiatives will become the strong force to transform DRR to be inclusive in many countries. Here are some discussion points, easy to mention but difficult to carry out, for realization of this change.

#### 1) How to bring changes in policy process?

What strategies are needed to actually bring about changes in DRR policies? Since the days when the Beijing Platform of Action was discussed, we keep emphasizing the importance of “Generating and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.”

What, especially in the DRR sector, is necessary for gender-responsive indicators to impact the policy process?

#### 2) Mainstreaming gender in activities and organizational culture of DRR institutions

It is important that DRR activities become gender equal and inclusive. It is also important that DRR institutions’ human-resource management, budgetary systems, and project-management systems as a whole is gender-mainstreamed. I hope today’s initiatives will change the organizational culture of DRR institutions.

#### 3) Multi-sector collaboration

Collaboration among various sectors is indispensable for inclusive DRR. It is necessary that various sectors are linked with each other, such as child care and care for the elderly, welfare, medicine, employment and industry, education and so on, so that they all can work together to prepare, respond and recover from disaster. Seeing the situation in Japan at least, however, even collaboration between the gender equity sector and the disaster volunteer sector is not so easy, to say nothing of collaboration among many other sectors. How can the proposed initiatives facilitate the generation of a dynamic collaboration process among many sectors?

#### 4) Changing the community

Local communities are the most important and basic DRR institutions. Communities also faces problems such as strong gender division of labor, and very low representation of women, on top of substantial population aging and less and less involvement of young people in community activities – if we look into our own community. If we want to bring about real changes in DRR, we will have to face these community issues in the training initiatives, too.



### Case Studies “Community Strength, Our Strength”

Five case studies were presented, three from NPOs conducting support activities after 3/11 and two from specialists who were working in the affected areas, one from a university the other from a hospital.

Many issues were discussed, including the numerous problems experienced at evacuation centers (toilets/bathing, partitions, designated space for women, distribution of relief goods, etc.); sexual violence; inclusion of women in the management of evacuation centers and temporary housing.

Masako Saito from Tokyo Kasei University spoke about the situation on the ground, where women’s participation has not progressed, their role is assumed to be housework and child-minding only, and they are considered to be merely victims in need of help. This despite the fact that directives from the Cabinet Office and the Recovery Agency have been received by the people in charge. Even now, four years after the earthquake, the role of women has been undervalued.

Other presentations emphasized the importance of leadership training for women and the importance of conveying the message to future generations. (See Appendix on JWNDRR Training Initiative)

Yaeko Aoki, Chair of the Nagareyama Kosodate (Child-raising) Project (NKP) spoke about the creation of “DRR Notes” by mothers in their 20s-40s. After printing this booklet, the mothers then went on speaking tours to introduce it to other mothers, greatly developing their speaking abilities. They are now members of community committees and have become full-fledged women leaders who want to pass on their experiences so the next generation of women will be empowered.

Executive Director of the NPO Women’s Eye, Megumi Ishimoto reported on an international training program that Women’s Eye had helped organize, with 40 participants from the disaster-affected area in Miyagi and 15 participants from overseas. Many of the women supported by Women’s Eye have learned to raise their voices, openly express their opinions and act upon them.

Keiko Hiraga, Chair of Participation Planning Iwate related how her NPO had been conducting seminars on women and DRR since before 3/11. She emphasized that in order to solve the many problems that had become obvious after the disaster, it was very important to nurture women DRR leaders and to use human resources effectively.

Hiromi Komiya from Fukushima Medical University Center for Gender Specific Medicine spoke about the anxiety experienced by Fukushima residents following the disaster at Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant. She organized training sessions for local health center staff on the nuclear disaster and mental health, as well as providing updated information on the nuclear disaster. The training was participatory and was also useful for the health center staff to exchange information among themselves.



Top to bottom:  
Masako Saito,  
Yaeko Aoki,  
Megumi Ishimoto,  
Keiko Hiraga and  
Hiromi Komiya presented  
case studies to the  
conference.

### Part 2 of the Program—Comments from the Floor

When the meeting was opened to comments from the floor, 13 speakers stepped up to give their thoughts on gender and disaster. Speakers from Japan were mainly involved in support activities in disaster-affected areas and shared their rich experiences and observations with us. We also had speakers from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Costa Rica, Thailand, Canada and New Zealand. The main points were as follows:

- Dr. Mahbuba Nasreen from the Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability, University of Dhaka introduced her training program. School curriculums, although they include components on disaster, lacked a gender perspective, so she created a manual on gender and disaster and trained 300 teachers to use it. She plans to expand this to 10,000 teachers.
- Ramona Miranda from Duryog Nivaran has been involved with the Women’s Major Group’s activities to make women visible. Her research, training, advocacy and networking activities have also empowered many women. She said that we must try to develop ways to use the media more effectively to convey gender-equality messages.
- After 3/11, Reiko Masai from Women’s Net Kobe made specific calls to protect women’s rights and allow women to participate in management of evacuation centers, etc. but according to the Cabinet Office, only one quarter of local governments were aware of this information and only a very meager 4.5% conveyed this information to those in charge on the ground. She expressed regret that 20 years after the Kobe earthquake, a women’s helpline was operating and PR posters had been made but the problem of shelters and the

tragedy of sexual violence was being repeated.

- Lee Sunhee, a Korean resident of Japan and a specialist researcher at Tohoku University drew attention to the importance of including migrants and foreign spouses within our discussions on diversity.
- Kumiko Fujiwara, a peer counselor who works with the hearing-impaired in Kobe, stated that people with disabilities in Japan are unable to lead everyday lives, they are labeled as “people who require help, who are weak.” But Ms. Fujiwara said, “we want to live as regular human beings and I also want to be a woman leader, a disabled woman leader!”

### Session wrap-up by JWNDRR president Akiko Domoto

One of the speakers from the floor pointed out that “gender” is not just about women and that really the title of today’s session should have been “Women AND men as a force for change.” But this speaker also pointed out that Japan ranks 104th in the world in the Gender Gap Index (World Economic Forum, 2014), which is very low. There is a very large imbalance between men and women in Japan, so that is why we are emphasizing women, in order to address the discrimination and gender inequality that exists in Japanese society.

When disaster strikes, this discrimination and inequality come to the surface, and women, the elderly and other marginalized groups experience unfair treatment. In order to make sure that this situation is not repeated we must change the mindset of men through training and dialogue.

Another speaker from the floor told us that social pressure made women in her community unable to raise their voices or express their opinion. In order to change this, each of us must demand that our needs are met and our opinion respected. We must each raise our voice from the grassroots up.

We also heard a very powerful message from a woman who is visually disabled. She said that women with disabilities have been treated as helpless victims until now, but she told us that she wants to be a leader too. “I want to be a disabled women’s leader,” she said.

We must all work on creating a society without social divisions, where everybody can live with self-respect and fulfill their roles, because we all have important roles, contributions we can make to creating a more secure and resilient society. We must create waves, movements that will spread throughout the world, building a strong network.

## Chapter 5: WCDRR3 outcomes and strategy toward 2030

### Activities of the Women's Major Group

The women who gathered at Bangkok, then in Geneva, were together again in Sendai, with 28 members of the WMG in attendance. Every morning at eight o'clock we met in the conference venue to share information and to calibrate our ideas and input. There was a room where Major Groups could meet but, other than the WMG, there seemed to be a lack of women participants from both Japan and abroad.

Before the Conference began, Eleanor Blomstrom (from WEDO in New York) sent a rough draft for the WMG statement, in which she set out the main issues that the WMG would be advocating. Included in this draft statement was the imperative that the new DRR Framework be based on human rights to ensure that it is centered on people in all their diversity. There are multiple treaties on this human rights framework, including CSW Resolutions. Ms. Blomstrom's draft also emphasized that language such as "gender-responsive" rather than "gender-sensitive" should be used in the new Framework.

Priyanthi Fernando from Duryog Nivaran also sent a draft statement to the WMG group emphasizing strengthening local governance structures. Local authorities must be enabled to act on local knowledge and evidence. Marginalized members of the community - women, for example - can communicate more easily with local authorities and the data collected can improve the quality of national-level data sets.

JWNDRR suggested that implementation measures must also be included in the statement, mentioning the importance of training programs in gender and DRR so that women are actually empowered to take leadership roles in the community. While the HFA mentions the importance of gender perspectives, this remains largely unimplemented. Ramona Miranda also commented on the importance of including gender perspectives in DRR training.

The statement was finalized with adjustments made by WMG members, both those present in Sendai, and others participating online. The official statement was read out by JWNDRR Vice President Hiroko Hara, as WMG representative at the 4th Plenary Meeting of the Conference on March 15. Although we were kept waiting, the chance finally came to deliver the only official spoken statement from WMG of the conference.

Women's Major Group members have a strategy meeting at the WCDRR3.



### STATEMENT BY THE WOMEN'S MAJOR GROUP

Thank you, Chair,

Esteemed colleagues, I am Hiroko Hara from the Japan Women's Network for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Women's Major Group is committed to achieving women's human rights and gender equality as well as ensuring that the post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is centered on all people, in all their diversity. To address underlying risk factors, we must use a human rights-based approach and involve women in every phase of DRR.

To guide the successful implementation of the post-2015 framework, the Women's Major Group recommends the following actions related to the priority areas.

- 1) We must deconstruct differential risk. This means that we must collect and analyze disaggregated data, including gender, sex, age, race, ethnicity, geography, income and ability.
- 2) Gender equality and women's human rights are a fundamental part of Disaster Risk Reduction efforts, as echoed in (CEDAW), the (SDGs) and the (UNFCCC). We urge governments and all stakeholders to ensure diverse and active participation in DRR decision-making, programming, implementation, evaluation, monitoring and financing processes.
- 3) We must incentivize partnerships, such as those between local governments and women's groups focused on community resilience.
- 4) Investing in DRR requires that women's and girls' perspectives, skills and knowledge are valued and integrated into the process. This requires Member States and institutions to:
  - Allocate resources to gender-responsive expertise, research, education and training at all levels.
  - Address socioeconomic vulnerabilities before disasters occur.
- 5) In order to "build back better," we urge governments and all stakeholders to:
  - Ensure accessible information and services through all disaster phases
  - Value resiliency contributions by women, including those in paid and unpaid, formal and informal labor

For the last decade, we have been committed to including gender and diversity in DRR practices and building resilience. We are committed to using gendered data for improving risk analyses, training leaders at all levels, and improving DRR design and planning with diverse participation.

During the past four years, Japan Women's Network for Disaster Risk Reduction has been networking with women and men all over Japan, particularly with women in Tohoku region. We hope Member States will reach a consensus at this important time in human history for the betterment of humankind and the survival of our precious Earth for many generations to come.

We call on Member States to demonstrate their political will and commitment. Women and communities must not wait another 10 years for them to take action.

Between the discussions and the preparation of this statement, WMG members also tried to attend some of the many other sessions that were being held. We attempted to attend the Ministerial Roundtable on "Reducing Disaster Risk in Urban Settings" as the ISDR and Japanese government's key theme of "Build Back Better" was to be discussed, but only pre-registered major group representatives were allowed entry. So we decided to cross the Hirose River to attend other events.

Over 400 events organized by citizens were taking place in various parts of the city on the other side of the river. One was a session on "Diversity and Disaster Response - from the perspective of disabled, LGBT, gender and foreigners." Jackie Steele, Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo and a JWNDRR member, was a panelist, and her own experience of being a student at Tohoku University during 3/11 as well as her role as a new mother and a foreigner gave an important perspective to the session and to the audience. We also visited the People's Pavilion, where passionate discussions on the Fukushima nuclear disaster were taking place. Speakers from India, Turkey and Russia gave a global perspective to this problem.

WMG members also attended a Public Forum organized by the World Bank and the European Commission which was part of the "Resilience Dialogue." Ways to sustain funding and implement disaster programs were discussed by high-level participants, including women such as Helen Clark (UNDP Administrator) and Margareta Wahlström (UNISDR Special Representative).

Over 6,000 people, mostly women, attended the sessions here over five days.

### Adoption of the new action framework

The process of renewing the Hyogo Framework for Action was a long one, stretching from regional conferences in the spring of 2014, through Prepcom 1 and 2 in Geneva. The WMG continued to provide input throughout the process. The new framework was scheduled for adoption at Prepcom3 on March 13, the day before the conference, but negotiations continued throughout the conference – sometimes until late at night.

There was a disagreement between developed and developing countries regarding financing and technology transfers, so negotiations on the Post 2015 Framework for DRR were very slow. WMG members sat through the entire proceedings, monitoring negotiations.

This year's autumn session of the UN General Assembly will decide Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for a range of issues, including poverty, health and the environment. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) is also scheduled for December in Paris.

It seemed that the delegates to the Sendai Conference, both from developing and developed countries, wanted a successful agreement for this first of a series of important negotiations scheduled for 2015, and this helped them overcome their differences. The new Framework's adoption was re-scheduled for the morning of March 18, but negotiations continued well into the night. The Closing Ceremony was eventually held after midnight, in the early hours of March 19.

The adopted Framework sets out seven global targets in order to achieve the overall goal, which is: "The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries." Each of the seven goals focuses on one aspect, but there are no firm numerical targets fixed. It is stated, however, that "These targets will be measured at the global level and will be complemented by work to develop appropriate indicators."

Compared to HFA's time span of 10 years, SFDRR covers a longer span of 15 years in order to fit in with other goals and targets such as the SDGs. SFDRR acknowledges that disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity, exacerbated by climate change, and calls for each country to mainstream DRR policies. It emphasizes that recovery must include "build back better" strategies and international cooperation on DRR must increase.

In terms of gender, HFA mentioned gender mainly in the "General Considerations" section, but in SFDRR gender is mentioned specifically in:

- The Preamble in Paragraph 4, which mentions "women, children and people in vulnerable situations." While some women are vulnerable in disasters, it is important not to categorize women in this way as their strength and contributions tend to be overlooked. Paragraph 7, however, mentions women in a more independent way, emphasizing the importance of dialogue with all stakeholders, including women. This is an important paragraph because it recognizes all stakeholders and their important role in DRR and that governments should actively engage with diverse people.
- The Guiding Principles, which mentions that "a gender, age, disability and cultural perspective should be integrated in all policies and practices, and women and youth leadership should be promoted" in Paragraph 19d). And Paragraph 19g) states that: "disaggregated data, including by sex, age and disability" must be "openly exchanged and disseminated" and "complemented by traditional knowledge." This is to be welcomed, as disaggregated data was one of the main points advocated by the WMG.
- Priorities for Action, which includes a reference to "maternal, newborn and child health, sexual and reproductive health" in Paragraph 30j) in the context of access to basic health care services. Although violence against women in the context of disasters was not included anywhere in the SFDRR, we welcome the reference to sexual and reproductive health. Paragraph 32 states that "Empowering women and persons with disabilities to publicly lead and promote gender equitable and universally accessible response, recovery rehabilitation and reconstruction approaches are key." Emphasizing gender equality as a "Priority for Action" and saying that it is "key" implies that it must be implemented. Empowering women leaders is something that JWNDRR has stressed in relation to our training program. Paragraph 33b) mentions gender in relation to early warning systems.
- Most importantly an entire section on the "Role of Stakeholders," including women, has been added (Paragraph 36 a) i).

*Women and their participation are critical to effectively managing disaster risk and designing, resourcing and implementing gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programs; and adequate capacity building measures need to be taken to empower women for preparedness as well as to build their capacity to secure alternate means of livelihood in post-disaster situations;*

This paragraph is very important and shows the progress made since HFA, which didn't include such a section. From the Rio Summit in 1992, when the nine Major Groups were identified, until the present time, multiple stakeholders such as the disabled, migrants and so forth have been identified, and these have been recognized in the SFDRR.

Although the level of gender mainstreaming that WMG advocated for the SFDRR was not reflected in the final document, references to women's leadership, disaggregated data and the importance of training are very welcome. There are many interests and values regarding gender and it was difficult for member states to reach agreement, but the insistence of the host country Japan that "women and youth leadership" and "sexual and reproductive health" be included in the SFDRR is to be commended.

### Towards 2030: Implementing the Sendai Framework for DRR

Due to the influence of climate change, disasters are increasing in scope and causing more damage. So it is important for implementation that SFDRR is integrated into national and local legislation. It is also important for international agencies, such as the UN, and the private sector, to follow the spirit of the SFDRR. As it says in the Preamble, everyone has to act together for implementation to be smooth. In this context, women's organizations and networks are also vital for implementation at the local, national and international levels. Sharing information regarding the implementation progress and the challenges and successes through Gender and Disaster Network's website is also a very effective way of building networks and monitoring the SFDRR.

Earthquakes, droughts, floods, tsunamis, typhoons and hurricanes – there are many types of natural disaster, but learning from them and sharing the knowledge and information is the key to preventing damage. What we have learned from past disasters is that DRR is most effective in communities where there are good human relations, and in communities where there is equality and respect for all people in the community. Community building is one of the most important elements of ensuring resilience that we must work on as we move forward to 2030. At the community level, at the household level – indeed, at all levels – women have a key role to play, and they must be empowered to do this. Raising the awareness among men that empowered women are vital to creating a safe, resilient community is also a key to realizing the SFDRR goals.

### JWNDRR Symposium on Sendai outcome

To initiate discussion on how to successfully implement the SFDRR, JWNDRR and JAWE held a symposium at Tokyo Women's Plaza on June 18, 2015. During the session, we reported the outcomes WCDRR3 to our wider community and discussed ways to move forward.

Three speakers reported on the contents of the SFDRR, the activities of the WMG and JWNDRR, as well as the gender and disaster training programs which are key initiatives for JWNDRR.

The second half of the program featured a panel discussion, including panelists from a wide variety of backgrounds. Consensus was that each citizen has a part to play in empowering women and creating resilient communities. This reflects what we saw in Sendai as people from many different sectors, organizations and nations came together in support of these goals. Panelists agreed this solidarity must be maintained if we are to implement the new framework successfully.



JWNDRR and JAWE Symposium on June 18.

## Appendix 1: JWNDRR Symposiums and Petitions

### 1) DRR, Recovery and Gender Symposium

A symposium was held in collaboration with Josai International University on June 23, 2012. The first session was a report of the impact the 6/11 Symposium had on various policies. The theme for the second session was “One year on from 3/11 – messages from the affected areas.”

A presenter from Miyagi Prefecture reported how a restaurant had become a new community hub. From Iwate we heard how women had recorded memories of the disaster. A Fukushima woman recounted her experiences of being moved nine times – from the evacuation center to various temporary housing – since she was forced to flee her home because of the nuclear disaster, and how this led to her conviction that nuclear power must be abandoned.

Another speaker from Fukushima who lives with a disability and had evacuated to Niigata Prefecture, spoke about how important it is to make judgments and decisions yourself and act on them without relying on others to provide information and tell you what to do.

In the third session, participants exchanged information and ideas and compiled a petition for presentation to the government.

### 2) DRR and gender mainstreaming symposium – the world and Japan

In May, 2013, the 4th Global Platform for DRR was held in Geneva, where it was officially announced that the WCDRR3 would be held in Sendai in March 2015. After returning home from Geneva, JWNDRR president Domoto held a meeting on June 8 to report on the Global Platform and inform women in Japan of global trends in mainstreaming gender into disaster policy as well as to stress the importance of building international networks.

After this meeting, we presented a petition on the post Hyogo Framework for Action for adoption at WCDRR3 to the prime minister and minister for recovery.

In October 2013, the UNISDR Office in Kobe held a symposium to which JWNDRR president Domoto and vice president Hara were invited. It was useful to hear about the UN approaches and also to report on the activities of Japanese women.

### 3) Expert’s Meeting and the Hongo Concept Note

On October 6-7, 2014, JWNDRR held an “Expert’s Meeting,” at Hongo in Tokyo, to discuss what would become known as our “Training Initiative.” Although we had been heavily involved in policy changes and law reform in Japan, we realized that laws can go only so far in empowering women. Although it is essential to have basic legal and institutional tools in place, it is also necessary to have an understanding of gender issues in the community and to train women to become leaders. Having received a promise of funding from the Qatar Friendship Fund in September, we were able to invite Dr. Cheryl Anderson and Dr. Elaine Enarson, international experts in the field of gender and disaster training.

The Expert’s Meeting began with reports on the situation in Japan, including case studies of gender and disaster training programs that have actually been conducted. This was followed by international examples presented by Drs. Anderson and Enarson, as well as Dr. Keiko Ikeda. The Hongo Concept Note was compiled after intense discussion.

As a result of this meeting we confirmed the importance of strategizing and funding for gender and disaster training and our Training Initiative (see Appendix) took its first concrete step forward in the form of the Hongo Concept Note. Also this was the base for the brochure we made for PrepCom2 in November.

#### Hongo Concept Note

##### Goals and Objectives:

- 1) Develop a 10-year international training initiative on gender equality and DRR that fosters an exchange of knowledge, drawing on global lessons and from Japanese experiences of the 3/11 Tohoku disaster.
  - Secure sustainable funding for the translation of disaster experiences, both from Japan and overseas, for international education.

- 2) Strengthen existing international and regional networks, such as the Gender and Disaster Network, with expertise on gender equality and DRR and Resilience through sustained collaboration among government and NGOs.
  - Create an international network of trainers to support the capacity of diverse communities and men/women leaders capable of meeting the challenges of future hazards and disasters, and helping to mentor the next generation of DRR leaders.
  - Ensure the mentoring of trainers for the next generation of DRR leaders.
- 3) Demonstrate the practical value of mainstreaming an inclusive, gender-equal, and diverse approach in the core activities of DRR.
- 4) Create and maintain a virtual multilingual repository for gender-equal DRR trainers by identifying, evaluating, organizing and synthesizing high-quality training and educational resources – supplementing these with original materials as needed.
  - Use the GDN website to create an online portal and catalogue of material.
  - Create multiple training models to meet the needs of diverse target audiences and regional contexts.
- 5) Support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new international HFA2 commitments.
  - Evaluate the process of training models and resource materials to ensure they meet the needs of participants and adhere to the guiding principles.

#### Guiding principles:

- Ensure ethical guidelines and a participatory approach for diverse participants
- Intersectional, inclusive and diverse content
- Holistic Approach: multi-hazard, multi-sector, cascading events
- Evaluation and Accountability - participatory
- Context Specific: Rural/urban, regional differentiation, reflecting local and indigenous knowledge, hazard variation, climate change
- Gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Sustained effort
- Adaptable to fit background, expertise and time availability of participants
- Intergenerational knowledge
- DRR education: risk-wise culture
- Innovative, technologically-advanced, multi-method, creative, media-savvy

## Appendix 2: JWNDRR Training Initiative – Japanese Program

**On the international stage**, we shared our conviction that it is essential to implement gender mainstreaming in DRR, especially through training programs to empower women as leaders in DRR. We confirmed at the Hongo Expert's Meeting that in order to make a basic training program that could be utilized across national borders, we had to include all levels of society, all types of disasters and communities.

Within JWNDRR we set up a “committee to investigate domestic training programs in gender and DRR.” We commissioned the gender equality centers in each of the disaster-affected prefectures in Tohoku (Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima) to develop and implement training programs on gender and DRR, based on their previous experience.

Meetings of JWNDRR members and experts were held on October 27 and November 3, 2014 and an explanatory session was held in Tokyo on December 5 that was attended by representatives of each of the Tohoku women's centers in charge of implementing the training programs.

The JWNDRR investigation committee confirmed that:

- 1) The word “resilience” in Japan was associated with construction and infrastructure, the “hardware” of DRR, while the international trend was to think of resilience more from a “soft” perspective of community. It was important to spread this idea of “soft” resilience.
- 2) In order to achieve this, the training program must not just target women, but must also include men from the community, including from DRR-related areas of local governments, civic groups, etc.
- 3) The women's centers' experiences of the 3/11 disaster must be utilized.

Each of the centers developed their own programs with a different emphasis. For example, Miyagi and Iwate prefectures had experienced major problems related to gender in the evacuation centers, so their training programs were based on evacuation center management and included workshops to help participants realize the importance of including gender perspectives in DRR through the issues raised in evacuation center management. The program in Fukushima included issues faced by that prefecture, such as the nuclear disaster. It also created a list of community resources and confirmed how to obtain information and study the issues.

Some of the centers had conducted gender and DRR training programs prior to 3/11. Morioka Women's Center, for example, held study sessions for three years from 2007 on gender and disaster themes, thus adding a depth of experience to the training programs.

In the initial stages of planning, JWNDRR President Akiko Domoto and other JWNDRR members went to each of the prefectures and spoke to the local training program committee members and other related people from the community. At one of the Sendai meetings, Ms. Domoto spoke of the importance of incorporating direct experiences of 3/11 from the community in the training program. The fact that Sendai City had a female Mayor and a female Ward Mayor should have some impact on the type of disaster drills and PR, and this important experience should be reflected in the training program.

The target participants for each of the training programs also varied depending on the community and the particular issues being addressed. For example, in Fukushima, the training session was attended by 27 people various sectors, including administrative officials from the prefecture, as well as city, town and village offices (from both gender and disaster related sections), people from gender equality centers, emergency services, women's fire prevention clubs, etc.

### Future Challenges

Taking into account the unique characteristics and conditions of each area and of the background of the participants will be very important in developing and implementing our training programs in the future.

We must also include the full disaster cycle and the diverse needs and contributions of people in the community at each stage—prevention, response, evacuation, temporary housing, recovery and reconstruction—if our training initiative is to be comprehensive and inclusive.

Target areas in the Training Initiative have been identified as follows:

- 1) Defining gender and its relevance to DRR

- 2) Gender indicators and data collection
- 3) Gender analysis
- 4) Gender entry points in DRR
- 5) Best practices in gender-responsive DRR

Proposed modalities for the Training Initiative are as follows:

- 1) Leadership training (2 hours)
- 2) Training of trainer courses (5-15 days)
- 3) Practitioner training (1-5 days)

We plan to develop and implement the Training Initiative in a 10-year time frame. During this process we will evaluate the Tohoku programs, as well as other programs in Japan, and include the best practices, adding new elements and developing new material as they become necessary.



One of the training sessions held in Tohoku in April, 2015.

## Appendix 3: A History of Natural Disaster Response by the UN

### Climate Change and Increasing Natural Disasters

Natural disasters such as typhoons, droughts, earthquakes and tsunamis are increasing in frequency on a global scale. The accompanying graph shows world statistics on natural disasters from 1980 thru 2010. In 1980, less than 400 such disasters were recorded; by 2010, the number had risen to about 1,000 - more than doubling in 30 years. Earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and other geophysical disasters have essentially remained level overall; however, typhoons, severe storms and other meteorological disasters, floods and other hydrological disasters, and climatological disasters such as droughts and forest fires, have all been on the rise.

On a related note, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>2</sup> in September 2013 published the “Fifth Assessment Report - Working Group I Report, Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis.” The report states, “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal . . .” and, “It is extremely likely . . . that human influence was the dominant cause of global warming. . .”

### Early Disaster Response by the United Nations

Accompanying the increase in the number and scale of natural disasters due to climate change is a precipitous increase in effects on the poor in developing nations. The UN regards disasters as a global problem, and in 1990, the “International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction” began.

In 1994, UN member nations gathered for the first “World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction,” held in Yokohama. They discussed a mutual framework for action, and the way of thinking regarding disasters changed significantly after this conference. Until then, the main focus was on disaster reduction measures by means of infrastructure - such as breakwaters. Support for disaster victims was viewed as something to be handled “after-the-fact.”

But the Yokohama Conference held discussions centered on disaster reduction, which is the development of concepts and guidelines for preemptive action to prevent disaster damage. Agreement was reached on developing an atmosphere to make international cooperative action possible, with the goal of minimizing disaster risk. Subsequently, the “Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation” was adopted. This marked a shift from a passive approach to the creation of a positive, proactive, comprehensive disaster prevention structure.

However, gender mainstreaming<sup>3</sup> was not written into the Yokohama Strategy. An additional 10 years would be required until an international agreement was reached on the mainstreaming of gender in regard to disasters.

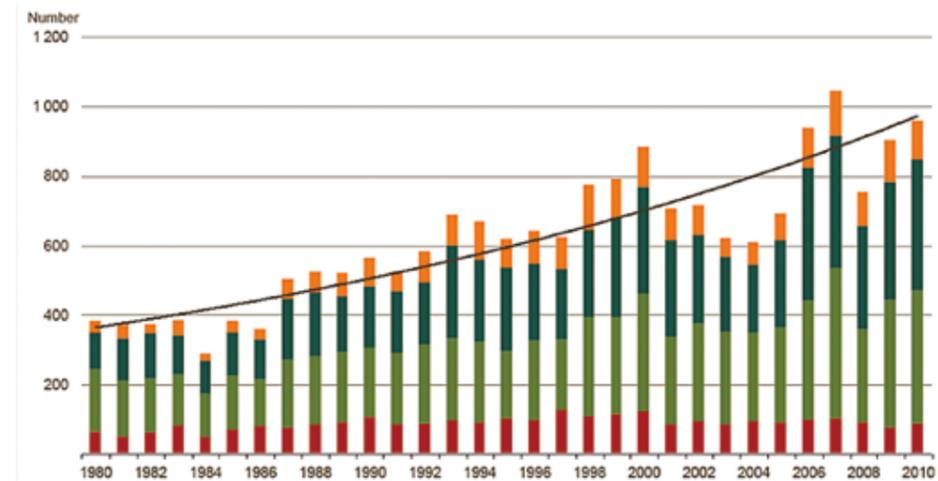
In 1999, the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction drew to a close, and in the year 2000, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) initiated activities as a UN organization with its headquarters in Geneva. The organization’s principles and activities are based on DRR and its objective is promoting projects that include all spheres - such as socio-economic, environmental, etc. - so as to incorporate DRR viewpoints into humanitarian and developmental areas. Since then, ISDR has used DRR as the basic framework regarding global disaster reduction, though it continues to be improved and enhanced.

In times of disaster, there are differences in the damages and injuries suffered by men and women. Victims of floods, droughts, etc., in developing nations are overwhelmingly female.

#### Footnote

2. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is an organization established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Its objective is to carry out comprehensive evaluations from scientific, technical and socio-economic standpoints concerning human-induced climate change, the effects thereof, and methods of adjustment and alleviation. As it provides a scientific basis for international programs dealing with global warming, it has played an extremely important role. The Fifth Assessment Report was created by over 800 contributors over an approximate four-year period.

3. Gender mainstreaming: The “mainstreaming of gender perspectives” refers to the public policy concept of assessing the different implications for women and men of any planned policy action. This process assesses the meaning attached to all planned actions by both men and women, on all levels in all sectors - including the legal system, government policy and business planning. In the comprehensive process which includes the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of politics, economics and society, it is a strategy to ensure that matters of interest to, and expectations of, both men and women are an integral dimension, such that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. [ECOSOC, 1997, *partially edited* (cf. [http://cn.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/6663\\_86289\\_What\\_is\\_gender\\_mainstreaming\\_and\\_gender1.pdf](http://cn.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/6663_86289_What_is_gender_mainstreaming_and_gender1.pdf))]



### Natural Catastrophes Worldwide 1980-2010 Number of events with trend

Source: NatCat Service

- Geophysical events (earthquake, tsunami, volcanic eruption)
- Meteorological events (storm)
- Hydrological events (flood, mass movement)
- Climatological events (extreme temperature, drought, forest fire)

Nevertheless, even as disasters emerged as a global issue in the latter half of the 20th century, gender perspectives rarely appeared in each nation’s disaster reduction policies.

Women in various parts of the world who realized this felt misgivings about the situation, and took it upon themselves to see gender perspectives included in disaster policies, and to also gain access to the venues where policy decisions were being made. Momentum grew as demands for female participation were heard. At the same time, in 1995, the year following the adoption of the Yokohama Strategy, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing, China. The Beijing Platform for Action, made specific mention of gender and disasters. Five years later, at the follow-up to the Beijing Conference held in New York as a special session of the UN General Assembly, in the summary report for the 2000 World Conference on Women (Beijing + 5) it clearly states that there is rising awareness “that a gender perspective must be incorporated whenever disaster prevention, mitigation and recovery strategies are being developed and implemented.”

Five years later, at the follow-up to the Beijing Conference held in New York as a special session of the UN General Assembly, the summary report for the 2000 *World Conference on Women (Beijing + 5)* clearly states, “that a gender perspective must be incorporated whenever disaster prevention, mitigation and recovery strategies are being developed and implemented.”

It was not until 2002, however, at the 46th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), that the problems faced by females in disasters were thoroughly discussed, and concrete recommendations for the mainstreaming of gender perspectives were first made. At CSW46, “Eradicating poverty” and “Environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters: a gender perspective” were chosen as critical issues, and CSW called for the participation of women at every level of decision-making, the prevention of disasters through women being on equal standing with men, as well as women’s involvement in disaster recovery. In addition, the Commission called for the inclusion of gender perspectives at the 2nd World Conference on Disaster Reduction scheduled for 2005 (in Kobe).

### Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction and the Hyogo Framework for Action

In 2005, the year following the Niigata Chuetsu Earthquake, the 2nd World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held in Kobe, where the “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters” was adopted. While the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) carried on the Yokohama Strategy from 10 years earlier, it also made extensive revisions. The resulting agreed-upon HFA document has served for the 10 years since (2005-2015) as a guideline for disaster reduction, an implementation strategy and a comprehensive action framework which includes the follow-up issue.

Below are HFA’s five Priorities for Action:

- 1) Ensure that DRR is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
- 2) Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
- 3) Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

- 4) Reduce the underlying risk factors.
- 5) Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

Through the implementation of HFA, it was expected that nations were “to substantially reduce disaster losses, in lives, social, economic and environmental assets,” and DRR was set as its basic framework.

Regarding gender mainstreaming, as mentioned above, at the 46th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2002, the policy recommendations for “Environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters: a gender perspective” that were adopted proved effective. In the HFA, under Priority for Action #3, “A. General considerations,” (d) states, “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.”

The following five areas all called for consideration of gender mainstreaming (UNISDR, UNDP and IUCN, 2009):

- 1) Mainstreaming gender perspectives in all initiatives related to disaster management;
- 2) Strengthening the capacities of women’s groups and community-based organizations;
- 3) Ensuring gender mainstreaming in communications, training and education;
- 4) Guaranteeing women opportunities in the areas of science, technology, etc.;
- 5) Guaranteeing the mainstreaming of gender in program implementation, oversight and assessment.

In HFA, DRR was developed as the basic foundation, and calls were made for the inclusion of gender perspectives in policy and strategy in all areas – from disaster prevention and emergency response, through the disaster recovery stage.

With the Hyogo Framework for Action, all UN organizations were called upon to solidify gender equality in areas ranging from development to humanitarian assistance in the wake of disasters, and on to disaster reconstruction. For UNISDR to integrate gender into DRR, the following three points were proffered as important steps in realizing the comprehensive goals of HFA:

- 1) Stressing the importance and necessity of gender equality;
- 2) Educating and engaging both men and women in the promotion of gender equality in DRR; and,
- 3) Providing gender-sensitive policies and guidance, as well as instruction about best cases related to DRR.

Despite the advice to UNISDR about the necessity of mainstreaming gender in DRR, in actuality, UN organizations – as well as most national governments – have yet to enact gender-sensitive DRR policies. Specifically, contributions by women in DRR efforts are usually viewed as unimportant, and there is a tendency to ignore female-specific needs. In the formulation of disaster-reduction policy, decision-makers do not seem to understand that in order to effectively reduce disaster vulnerability and risk, significant benefit can be derived for themselves by mainstreaming gender perspectives, and overall efficacy can thereby be enhanced. (UNISDR, UNDP and IUCN, 2009).

This is, in fact, the exact situation in Japan. If gender perspectives were incorporated into our country’s disaster reduction policies, and women participated in a broad range of activities, communities overall would become more efficient and more livable.

## Acknowledgements



JWNDRR and JAWE members and supporters at the Reporting Session Symposium, Tokyo, 18 June 2015.

**At the center of all our activities**—from policy proposals to international symposiums – are the 3/11 survivors who, even during the difficult times immediately after the disaster, patiently explained to us the details of their painful experiences. For all their help, which they still continue to give us, we are deeply and humbly grateful. Survivors from the Kobe and Chuetsu Earthquakes have also given us invaluable insights and information.

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### **Women as a Force for Change - four years of activism**

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The front cover photograph shows an evacuee - Eiko Kanno, from litate village - who now lives in temporary housing near Fukushima City, 2014.  
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Inset photo, Arahama, Sendai in April 2011.  
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