



Pacific Perspectives on the Gender Action Plan to Support the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Integrating Inclusive Peacebuilding Approaches into Disaster Management

Informal Roundtable Discussion

Summary Note

This informal discussion assessed the opportunities presented by the Gender Action Plan (GAP) to support the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 to create a more gender-sensitive and impactful disaster risk governance based on the perspectives of women frontline responders and peacebuilders in the Pacific. The discussion featured concrete recommendations to support the localised implementation of the GAP at the field level. It was convened in collaboration with UNDRR, the Women's Resilience to Disasters programme of UNWomen with DFAT.

Climate-induced disasters destroy communities across the world. They affect women in at-risk communities in a very specific way. Therefore, response to disaster risks needs to be gender-sensitive. The international community has recognised this for many years, leading to the development of the [Gender Action Plan \(GAP\)](#) to support the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

The [CEDAW General Recommendation 37](#) reflects that "well-designed disaster risk reduction and climate change initiatives that provide for the full and effective participation of women can advance substantive gender equality and the empowerment of women while ensuring that sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and climate change objectives are achieved." In 2021, [the UN Study "Beyond Vulnerability"](#) highlighted the need to take concrete steps to meet the gender commitments raised during the drafting of the Sendai Framework. In 2022, Member States and other stakeholders called for the development of [the GAP during the CSW67](#), as well as during [the 2022-2023 Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework](#).

The GAP presents a concrete roadmap for driving meaningful change to address the root causes of gender inequality in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) efforts. The GAP's objectives are two-fold: 1) decrease gender-related disaster risks and 2) increase resource allocation, activities, and impact of gender-responsive DRR. It is also a conflict prevention mechanism tool that signals that everyone's livelihoods are important.

The GAP aligns with relevant international treaties and global initiatives, such as the WPS-HA Compact, creating space for integration and coherence with other efforts. It is projected that, when fully operationalised, the GAP will improve outcomes for women and build resilience within communities.

Women peacebuilders, mediators, and activists from regional networks and movements across the Pacific have been active in advancing the call for the GAP, and their experiences provide a variety of lessons learned for its implementation. The initial input from the Pacific into the GAP drove the following objectives: 1) the inclusion of anticipatory action/early warning, 2) the focus on all investments to be risk-informed and gender-sensitive, 3) the emphasis on collaboration and coordination at all levels; 4) the presence of accountability mechanisms and a clear M&E framework; and 5) the attention to sex, gender, age and disability disaggregated data.

Now, as the GAP is launched, the following are practical considerations for all Member States and their partners regarding its localised implementation:

- **The implementation of the GAP must be coherent and complementary to other government efforts** to implement commitments on climate, DRR, biodiversity, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), Women, Peace and Security (WPS), and beyond. None of the commitments can be siloed through a dedicated action. Policy coherence will increase the implementation of all commitments. While there is always a question of appointing a focal point for the GAP implementation, the governments should consider cross-ministerial positions and working groups driving the implementation of all commitments in a coordinated manner. National women's machineries have a key role to play in coordination, however, this will require additional resources, including dedicated capacity. Regionally-grown civil society movements and networks (i.e., the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict in the Pacific (GPPAC Pacific), the Pacific Women Mediators Network (PMWN), the Shifting the Power Coalition), the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) present a great resource for facilitating policy and operational coherence rooted in local and national ownership.
- **The governments and their partners need to recognise that it takes time to implement the GAP.** The first step should be ensuring women's representation. Then, the discussion on gender sensitivity can begin to be followed by the discussion on gender responsiveness. Gender transformation of systems is the last step in this trajectory. At every stage, it is important not to overcommit and have clear accountability mechanisms for minimum standards at each stage.
- **The GAP implementation must be highly contextual.** All governments cannot do the same things in the same way with the same capacity. In the Pacific, reporting is a burden. This opens up an opportunity to do more integrated reporting, creating a good practice for bigger systems to adopt. In this vein, it is

important to assess whether there is a need for new indicators and whether existing indicators can be used for reporting. However, it is important to ensure that the sex, gender, age and disability data are properly recorded.

- **Governance systems for the GAP implementation must be inclusive.** The implementation requires the improvement of informal and formal governance mechanisms and partnerships between community members and government ministries. Civil society must be adequately empowered and financially supported to ensure proper accountability for the GAP implementation. The GAP implementation efforts must also reach, engage and mobilise young people, drawing upon their creativity and ability to contribute to community problem-solving and decision-making while setting clear expectations about goals and finances behind young people's participation in the process. Proper implementation efforts also intentionally and meaningfully include diverse women with disabilities throughout the entire process, including equitable access to financing and adequate social protection mechanisms.
- **The establishment and financing to sustain women-led multi-hazard early warning systems is a critical element of the GAP implementation, as well as meeting other climate and conflict prevention commitments.** This will help bridge information gaps and integrate traditional, local indigenous knowledge into the scientific evidence base for early action. While women have been excellent in preparing for disasters, they rely on accurate, reliable, trustworthy information. The lack of such information often exacerbates gender-sensitive impacts of disaster risks.
- **All partners in the GAP implementation must be realistic about how much it will cost to implement it.** Resources and political will are both required to take it forward. Donors need to be aware of the costs early on to ensure that the action does not become projectized. For example, information and data are required from all groups. Therefore, proper resourcing is required to advance the inclusion of diverse communities. Local women cannot be fluent in all languages, so engaging like-minded partners with their networks is important.