

Rahbord Peymayesh´ Educational and Research Institute

(Lisenced by Ministry of Sciences, Researches and Technology,
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Title of Project

**Review of Gendered Dimensions of Vulnernability
in confront with Natural Diasasters
(Case study: Iran Country)**

By

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Abstract

This report is result of research titled on "Measurement of Women's Educational Needs and Capacity Building for Accounting to Needs in Disasters Risk Management" that has been done by Rahbord Peymayesh institute. The statistical population of research consists of men and women in Gorgan and Kerman cities (due to experience earthquake and flood). This research from reviewing gendered dimensions of women vulnerability in comparison with men in 2009 found that women (along with physical differences) usually are more vulnerable due to social structures. The comparison of different situations between women and men in natural disasters showed that men have better situation than women in many factors such as knowledge about natural disasters and how confront with these disasters.

Introduction of Institute

Rahbord Peymayesh, as a non-governmental organization, after receiving educational and research license from Ministry of Sciences, Researches and Technology in 2002, and Organisation of Management and Planning in 2007, has done various educational and research activities about issues of social sciences. One of these researches is "Measurement of Women' Educational Needs and Capacity Building for Accounting to Needs in Disasters Risk Management" that has been done in charge of organization of management and planning and in collaboration with UNDP. In addition, this institute has been held many educational courses in domains such as social issues and researcher training.

Explanation of Present Conditions

United States' Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) has identified 40 natural disasters in 1990 that 31 types of them exist in Iran (CRED, 2008: 32). In other hand, statistics show that in Iran, about 400 thousands people kill in per 3 currencies (Scheuren, 2008: 32). For example, in Bam earthquake, number of victims was 1/074 people in per million that this number was up to 100 times in Japan (9 people). While the occurrence of earthquake in Japan is more than Iran (United Nations, 2007: 13).

In other hand, gendered perspective to natural disasters includes other important dimension for management of these disasters. Gender is important aspect of situations that has been socially structured (White, 2007). Women, along with children and aging, are the most vulnerable social groups in natural disasters. Women due to their roles as careers of home and family involve in affairs and activities that make them more vulnerable in confront with disasters such as earthquake, flood and thunder (Fothergill, 1998).

The aim of this research was review of gendered dimensions of women' needs in natural disasters. Therefore, one of the first matters under question in this research was the most

important vulnerability domains of Iranian women. The results showed that the most important vulnerability domains of women are: 1) lack of security, 2) lack of employment, 3) lack of training or low training among women about natural disasters, and 4) cultural problems or traditional thought of men about women and lack of belief to women participation. But in relation to causes of women's vulnerability (in comparison with men) in natural disasters, results were as following: 1) Potential of more spiritual and psychological vulnerability among women (for causes such as emotional, fear, anxiety), 2) defined social situation for women in society, 3) physical vulnerability of women, 4) and etc.

In relation to women's vulnerability in cultural and social spheres after natural disasters, the respondents expressed the most important as following: 1) inequality between women and men in receiving facilities, 2) misuse and sometimes gender aggression to women and feeling of insecurity, 3) isolation of women in camps and lack of their involvement in relief activities, and 5) lack of informing about special women facilities and services.

Type of respondents' information and capabilities for reducing the risks of natural disasters was another matter that was studied in field of respondents's knowledge about natural disasters. The obtained responses showed that majority of respondents expressed to following items: 1) having necessary information about first aids kit, 2) taking a shelter in safe home places, construction and stacks, and 3) having faith to god and preserving self-confidence.

In relation to sources of achieving information about natural disasters, the most important responses were respectively: 1) audio and visual media (radio and television), 2) group media such as newspapers, film and internet, 3) non-academic and brochur, 4) involve in educational workshop sponsored by organisations such as Halal Ahmar, local mosque and etc.

But, in relation to holding readiness maneuver in natural disasters by organisations such as Halal Ahmar, as another component of extent of knowledge about natural disasters among respondents, the results showed that situation was better in Kerman than Gorgan and the extent of people' knowledge about from these maneuver, due to experience Bam' earthquake and efforts of practitioners in this province, was higher than Gorgan.

Also, in relation to experience of natural disasters in life, results showed that approximately 70 percent of Kermanian respondents and 60 percent of Gorganian respondents have experienced the natural disasters in life at least one time. In this field, respondents have been wanted to express what's their feeling in natural disasters as deficiencies. The responses showed that the most important were: 1) safe places, 2) spiritual and psychological helps, 3) first aids kit, 4) distribution of welfare facilities, and 5) identify injured and victims and help them.

Then, the most important needs of women in before, during and after natural disasters stages were questioned and the results showed that women have different needs in various times and with attention to various situations in society. In field of the most important

needs of women in before time of natural disasters, respondents expressed following items such as: 1) giving knowledge and information to women, 2) holding training courses in field of relief and rescue and first aids kit, 3) giving necessary spiritual, psychological and physical, and 4) preparing necessary facilities and procurements.

In relation to the most important needs of women in during time, results showed that the most important needs are as following: 1) giving in time relief, 2) giving self-confidence, 3) presence of rescuer women. Finally, in field of the most important needs of women in after time of natural disasters, the expressed items by respondents were as following: in time informing, 2) help to injured people and relieving to them, 3) meet various emotional, spiritual and psychological needs of women such as giving self-confidence and comfort for confronting with situations, ..., and 4) providing financial support by state.

Another matter that reviewed in this research was prioritizing influential groups in reducing women vulnerability in natural disasters. In this direction, the first matter was reviewing influential groups in reconstructing economic, social and psychological and reducing women's vulnerability after natural disasters. In response to this question, the respondents expressed the role of practitioners more important than other groups. After that, respondents expressed the special role of people and non-governmental organizations and finally collaboration between people and practitioners.

The second question that reviewed in relation to influential groups in reducing women's vulnerability in natural disasters was necessary actions for increasing women's economic ability and respondents' economic ability by practitioners after natural disasters. The results showed that respondents expressed to help and collaboration of state, undertake educational professional courses for women, and identify the abilities of women as most important necessary actions for upgrading women's economic ability in natural disasters.

Then, the membership of women in people associations and formations was reviewed and results showed that 8 percent of Gorganian and 2 percent of Kermanian were member of non-governmental organisations.

In relation to the most constraints and solutions of women's participation in natural disasters, results showed that 1) social and cultural constraints such as strotypes about gender roles among men, 2) mental constraints of managers and decision-makers for giving decision-making roles to women, and 3) constraints of local-ethnicity subculture are the most important constraints of women´ participation and lack of involvement in natural disasters respectively.

Methodology

Current research is one of the field researches that has undertaken gendered analysis of women needs in natural disasters by interview and questionnaire techniques. Also, aim of this research was to compare the needs of two woman and man sex by comparative approach. The statistical population of research includes 768 people from women and men

in two Gorgan and Kerman cities that have been selected by cluster and stratified sampling and then the questionnaires have been completed with them.

Challenges and Obstacles

The most challenges of this research are as following:

1- Patriarchal structures in society that includes naturally the masculinity values and as a result provides less opportunity for designing and reviewing the gendered issues.

2- Less involvement of women in decision-making and management spheres. In natural, this challenge will make it difficult the possibility to mainstreaming gender in natural disasters management.

Recommendations

1- Change the attitude of practitioners and experts in related decision-making and practical institutions. In other words, providing the ground to practitioners about to accept women's participation in management is the first action for mainstreaming gender in natural disasters.

2- Increase of the awareness and attitude of women about own their personal abilities and capabilities in natural disasters by psychological consultative activities.

3- Undertaking educational courses in relation to how women confront with natural disasters.

4- Building culture in public in order to attention to women's rights and give importance to situation of women in society

5- Sensitivity on the basis of gender in collecting natural disasters data in various domains.

Statement of Result and Outlook

The result that can be taken from gendered review of women needs in natural disasters is that one of most important causes of Iranian women's vulnerability in natural disasters and weakness of the gendered management in these disasters is gendered social structures that in turn defines different social norms and role behavior for men and women (Of course, this matter is less in smaller cities and rural areas). This matter leads to gendered division of labor and men's dominance on decision-making and women's subordinate that in final, results in gender inequality and women's vulnerability in natural disasters.