



RESEARCH REPORT

Disaster and Gendered Impact in a Changing Climate towards Girl's Education



For Plan International Asia-Pacific Regional Hub

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Disaster and Gendered Impact in a Changing Climate towards Girl's Education Research Report

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ACRONYMS

APCSS	Asia Pacific Coalition on School Safety
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
CCGAP	Climate Change Gender Action Plan
CC	Climate Change
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEFM	Child, Early and Forced Marriage
CP	Child Protection
COP	Conference of Parties
CSSF	Comprehensive School Safety Framework
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EiE	Education in Emergencies
ESDO	Eco Social Development Organization
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GADRRRES Sector	Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education
GESI	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GoN	Government of Nepal
HVCA	Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
IDIs	In-Depth Interviews
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer+
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NCCP	National Climate Change Policy
NDMOs	National Disaster Management Offices

NCDs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NPDM	National Plan for Disaster Management
NDRRSAP	National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy Action Plan
PTAs	Parent Teacher Associations
Plan APAC Hub	Plan International Asia-Pacific Regional Hub
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SBDRM	School Based Disaster Risk Management
SCRSSI Safety Initiative	Strengthening Community Resilience to Disaster through School
SDMCs	School Disaster Management Committees
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFDRR	Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction
SMCs	School Management Committees
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plan International Asia-Pacific Regional Hub, in collaboration with Plan International Bangladesh and Plan International Nepal commissioned this research study on: “Disaster and Gendered Impact in a Changing Climate toward Girl’s Education” in Sunsari district of Nepal and Kurigram district of Bangladesh.

The purpose of the research was to understand the broader social and historical contexts in these two districts where Plan International Asia-Pacific Regional Hub and the Plan country offices have been supporting school based Disaster Risk Management initiatives. The research study maps out existing factors that compound and exacerbate natural hazard risks of marginalised children, especially girls in Sunsari district of Nepal and Kurigram district of Bangladesh, with particular attention to harmful gender norms and stereotypes. It attempts to capture actual and gendered impacts of disasters and climate crisis on girls and boys, with attention to educational continuity and attainment. The research also explores international, national and local regulatory frameworks on gender sensitive disaster risk management, climate resilience, and school-centred disaster risk management, not only in identifying the gaps but considering how to leverage current frameworks.

Girls, boys, teachers, school head teachers, parents, community leaders and representatives, and local education department focal points, local NGOs/CBOs from the six target schools and six communities (three target schools in three communities per country) in the Sunsari district of Nepal, and Kurigram district of Bangladesh have participated in the research. Stakeholders from the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and the gender working groups, as well as representatives of the Ministries of Education in both countries, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens in Nepal, and Ministry of Social Welfare in Bangladesh contributed to the research. Below are the key findings from the research:

Gender in existing global, national regulatory/policies/frameworks/guidelines: Globally, gender has been mainstreamed into the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) but less so in the Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Framework that aligns Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets and SFDRR priorities to the education sector.

At the national level, Nepal has made progressive national commitments on gender and inclusion by mainstreaming these issues in policy instruments, as well as in strategic plans such as the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy Action Plan (NDRRSAP) 2018-2030 and National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2019, CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines. The government of Nepal has integrated Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) principles¹ into both policy and practice. The government, bilateral, humanitarian and private agencies and civil society have also internalized GESI as a cross-cutting issue while formulating plans and programs. However, any real implementation of these policies is challenging in the absence of technical human and financial resources, supporting arms of these policies and guidelines, and political commitment from local and provincial governments.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has made significant achievements in mainstreaming gender into the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-2025 and Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan of 2009-2018. For DRR in the education sector, the GoB developed the Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Education in Emergencies (EiE) in 2014, which was adapted from the global CSS Framework. Bangladesh’s DRR and EiE Framework is gender aware, aiming only to improve the daily condition of women and girls by

¹ A GESI principle considers unequal power relations and inequalities experienced by individuals because of their social identities, and how these identities intersect to create experiences of vulnerability and marginalization. It focuses on actions to address these unequal power relations and inequalities, reduce disparities and ensure equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and respect for all individuals.

addressing practical gender needs. The Framework does not transform gender relations nor improve the social position of girls and women in school-based DRM.

Strengthen the national school-based disaster management frameworks/guidelines to be gender transformative: As Nepal and Bangladesh have adapted the global CSS Framework to the country context, the global framework needs review to be more gender transformative; and these national level frameworks that draw from the global framework should be reviewed and adjusted to become gender transformative, if gender equality is truly the ambition. In Bangladesh, the DRR and EiE Framework should be reviewed and updated to move beyond women and girls as 'vulnerable' to equal actors and agents of change; making it a gender transformative framework. In Nepal, while the CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines have adopted a gender transformative approach to a certain extent, there is room for improvement toward a gender transformative framework.

Existing gender norms and stereotypes in the Sunsari district of Nepal and Kurigram district of Bangladesh: The concepts of "patriarchal"², "patrilineal"³, and "patrilocal"⁴ male-domination shape the perceptions and practices of Bangladeshi and Nepalese society in general. The scale and magnitude of gender stereotypes and discrimination is even more in these two research locations in both countries as compared to the national context. In Sunsari district of Nepal is located in the Terai (the plains) with a dominance of the socially deprived Madhesi ethnic group. Kurigram district of Bangladesh is also located in a remote area close to the Indian border. The local population in the research locations of these two countries are living in very remote areas, and the traditional gender norms and stereotypes are strongly entrenched. Parents and the wider community in these two research locations are generally of the view that sons will take care of them in their old age and should be given a good education while girls are perceived as weak and in need of protection, more suitable to engaging in unpaid work, such as household chores. Therefore, investing in girls' education is not considered a priority in both research locations.

Impact on educational continuity and attainment: Based on the findings from both countries, it is confirmed that the gender norms and stereotypes in the Bangladeshi and Nepalese society have directly impacted on educational continuity and attainment of children, especially girls in the research locations. The gender norms and stereotypes impact upon children's education in the following areas: 1) drop-out rate, 2) school attendance, 3) study time, 4) participation in extra-curricular activities, and 5) continuation of higher education. In both countries, a girl's education is disrupted when families face financial crisis, climate and disaster risks, or shocks which increases difficulties for girls to access education. In Kurigram district of Bangladesh, poor families most affected by floods and other shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, were found to marry off their daughters before they complete secondary school as one way to cope with these shocks. In Sunsari district of Nepal, the same practice was observed, especially during the 2017 flood and more recently in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Poor families affected by shocks (secondary impacts of natural hazards) reduced the financial share for their daughter's education considering their limited options. Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM) is one of the negative coping strategies adopted in a financial crisis, particularly in some Madhesi communities⁵. Stakeholders shared that many girls permanently drop out of formal education following every disaster.

Compounded impact due to gender norms, stereotypes, disaster and climate risks: Both research locations are highly vulnerable to disasters and prone to multiple hazards such as flood, cyclone, drought, and currently the COVID-19 pandemic, among others. Research findings in the two countries evidence that the impacts of disaster and climate change poses risks to the life and

² "Patriarchal" is a system of society or government where men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.

³ "Patrilineal", also known as the man line, the spear side or agnatic kinship, is a common kinship system in which an individual's family membership derives from and is recorded through their father's lineage.

⁴ "Patrilocal" is a society or custom in which a married couple settles with or near the husband's family.

⁵ Group of people residing in the Terai of Nepal that comprises various cultural groups such as Hindu caste groups, Muslims, Marwaris and indigenous people of the Terai i.e. Thar

physical wellbeing of boys and girls, affecting girls in particular when it comes to educational continuation and attainment, safety and security, and protection. In particular for Bangladesh, the research identified that girls also face challenges in accessing food and nutrition, and water and sanitation facilities during emergencies. In both countries, girls are facing more challenges than boys during disasters because of the gendered response actions of boys and girls when it comes to the disaster and climate risks. The gendered division of roles and socially prescribed practices put girls at greater risk during an emergency compared to boys. Research participants confirmed that girls and women in both countries are burdened with a higher workload when it comes to household chores, tending to siblings, and managing household food and water requirements in general, and this is more pronounced during emergencies. They are also more vulnerable to child protection risks such as trafficking at this time.

Gender norms and stereotypes also shape the different roles and responsibilities of boys and girls across the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) cycle. In the research locations of the two countries, girls play important roles in disaster preparedness, response and recovery (post-disaster) and these roles are different to those undertaken by boys. Girls have limited engagement in the construction phase (as per findings in Nepal), and continue to be responsible for household chores throughout the entire cycle of DRM. The burden of work for both boys and girls more than doubles during the response and post-disaster phases when children (boys and girls) must support in the repair of damaged houses and assets, drying of wet seeds and grains, managing damaged crops and any livestock, and involve in income earning with their family members if required. In such a situation education is a low priority. However, the support role of girls is less visible and recognized as she is in the private, as opposed to the public domain that boys engage in. The relegation of girls to the private domain during or immediately after an emergency can put them in more danger. For example, the reluctance to send girls to shelters because of concerns about their personal safety or the lack of appropriate facilities, sees girls remain in dangerous conditions.

Gendered barriers preventing participation in school-based disaster risk management: During the study, many girls were found to be participating in School-Based Disaster Risk Management (SBDRM) activities which were implemented by different I/NGOs. Girls in both research locations of the two countries explained that although the school encouraged them to take part in such activities there were many barriers to their meaningful participation. This included commuting constraints because of safety concerns about girls travelling any distance from the home, workload at home and low self-confidence. These barriers were less observed among boys, and resulted in boys having more opportunities and in turn, greater skills and awareness about school-based DRM. The COVID-19 pandemic is another barrier preventing free participation of girl and boy's in community meetings/gathering including SBDRM activities hence they deprived from exercising their fundamental rights.

Societal factors shaping gender barriers and actors who can remove them: In Kurigram and Nagershari Upazilas of Bangladesh, religious beliefs, employment inequality, beliefs about job segregation between boys and girls, and cultural practices were identified as the major societal factors shaping the gender barriers. In Sunsari district of Nepal, interviewees identified traditional patriarchal norms, misinterpreted religious beliefs, illiteracy, low levels of awareness, and pressure from neighbours with constricted mindset as the major factors shaping these barriers.

Boys and girls themselves, parents, family members, neighbours, religious leaders, people of the community and local authorities including teachers and school head teachers are the key actors identified in both countries who can play important roles in reducing and even removing these gender barriers. These actors can play an important role in promoting gender equality in the project target communities.

Specific context for girls and boys from marginalised backgrounds, including those with disability and LGBTQ+: In the Kurigram district of Bangladesh, children from poor families, children with disabilities and children from the Hindu religion as a minority population in the area, were found

to be the most marginalised. In Sunsari district of Nepal, children from Motey, Urab, Musahar, Moche, and Khatje families (lower castes as per the Hindu caste system), LGBTQ+ children, children with disabilities, children belonging to conservative families with no or low levels of education, and children from poor families are more vulnerable than others in disaster and climate risks. Children identifying as LGBTQ+ have specific struggles and hindrances in accessing quality education, and inclusion in disaster risk management, and the lack of knowledge about this marginalised group warrants further study. In Nepal, rural societies are still not welcoming of persons identifying as LGBTQ+, leaving little opportunity for them to express their issues and concerns publicly. In Kurigram district of Bangladesh, communities are not accepting of the LGBTQ+ identity, and these children are hidden, highly stigmatized and face a myriad of sexuality and rights issues. They do not 'come out' about their sexual identity or sexuality within the family nor in the society, as there is little understanding about LGBTQ+ issues, and they are at risk of discrimination and isolation.

Recommendations

Plan International, the national governments of Bangladesh and Nepal and development partners including donors' agencies all play an important role in promoting gender equality in DRM, CCA and CSS in the two countries and beyond. Specific recommendations to address gender norms and stereotypes that exacerbate the impacts of disaster and climate risks on girls and boys, their educational continuity, and attainment are as follows:

I. Plan International

- Advocate with relevant actors for updating the global CSS Framework to be gender transformative. This would be done through (i) build momentum and collaboration among allied agencies from the Asia-Pacific region and globally, to update the global CSS framework, (ii) Plan International, in collaboration with allied agencies, can support the development of coherent action plans to update the Global CSS Framework to be gender transformative.
- Continue to support gender-responsive Safe Schools Initiatives in Bangladesh and Nepal alongside national level advocacy efforts for gender transformative CSS implementation in secondary schools. Include the following features in gender transformative CSS project design:
 - ✓ Understand and address how gender norms influence children throughout the DRM cycle.
 - ✓ Include indicators to measure the knowledge and skills of girls and young women in leadership positions for building disaster and climate resilient schools and communities.
 - ✓ Define indicators that measure positive behaviour changes of target boys, and young men to promote gender equality in building disaster resilient schools and communities.
 - ✓ Improve the conditions (daily needs) and social position (value or status) of girls and young women in building disaster resilient schools and communities.
 - ✓ Foster an enabling environment where all stakeholders work together to support children and youth on their journey in building disaster resilient schools and communities through capacity building, advocacy and campaigning.
- Strengthen Plan International's niche area of gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS at the country level. This would be done through (i) enhancing the capacity of Plan International country office staff and their partners in this area, (ii) strengthen partnerships with gender working groups and/or UN Women or other relevant agencies and bring together DRM, CCA, CSS and gender actors to better understand how gender norms and stereotypes deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children especially girls, and (iii) craft joint action

plans to remove gender barriers and build disaster resilient and gender inclusive communities and schools.

- Strengthen linkages between education, CSS and gender to address the gendered barriers facing adolescent girls and children from marginalised groups in access to/continuity of education and create opportunities for equal participation and engagement in SBDRM. For this, ensure to (i) build the evidence base gender-specific data and statistics on disaster impacts, (ii) conduct gender-sensitive hazard, vulnerability and capacity assessments, (iii) develop gender sensitive-indicators to monitor and measure progress, (iv) promote and empower girls as leaders and agents of change in DRM, CCA and CSS interventions, (v) build on Plan's niche area of adolescent girls, to address LGBTQ+ - through a Plan International and regional initiative that provides more insight about, and visibility to, this marginalised group through research, accompanied by LGBTQ+ integration in programme strategy, guidance and tools.
- Design and conduct an awareness raising program on gender norms and stereotypes and how these deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on marginalised groups, especially girls, to include: (i) campaigns against discrimination, bullying, CEFM, child labour, domestic and gender-based violence in media (radio, television, and other social media platforms) and community programs such as street drama, (ii) awareness raising programs with parents, religious leaders, and local authorities including teachers (iii) community level awareness campaigns through a whole-of-community approach with attention to parents of school-aged children, to create dialogue and awareness about the impacts of gender norms and stereotypes, and promote the commitment to, and investment in girls' education.

2. National governments of Bangladesh and Nepal to address disaster and gendered impacts in a changing climate

- Integrate a gender transformative approach into existing CSS national policies and frameworks through (i) thorough review and update of the existing DRR and EiE Framework of Bangladesh and CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines in Nepal in coordination with relevant key stakeholders in both countries, (ii) amendment of the education policy considering gender transformative CSS implementation guidelines to ensure formulation of gender transformative CSS action plans and inclusion in the school improvement plan.
- Work with sub-national level authorities including DRM agencies to make children's commute safe through (i) addressing the safety issues of adolescent girls during their commute from home to school in relevant sub-national plans, (ii) managing culverts, maintaining bridges, and improving trail roads, cutting old trees and branches at the edge of roads, managing electric lines, prohibiting cattle grazing on the road, and other relevant needed support to make children's school commute safe, and (iii) conducting campaigns to eliminate violence, bullying and sexual harassment.
- Mainstream gender equality in education policies and systems to support the educational continuity of adolescent girls through (i) ensuring greater representation of woman teachers in schools to meet the target of gender ratio, (ii) mainstreaming gender transformative DRM and CCA, GBV and inclusion issues into education curriculums at all levels, (iii) modifying those curriculums through gender lens to ensure that they do not perpetuate gender stereotyping (e.g. depicting mothers as women working in the kitchen) in coordination with Curriculum Development Centre of the Ministry of Education.
- Promote continuity of boys and girls in education while tackling poverty reduction interventions by (i) providing income generation skills training to needy parents to improve

their livelihood prospects (e.g., climate smart farming, entrepreneurship training), (ii) supporting in creating employment opportunities for poor and marginalised families so they can afford their children's education (e.g., introduce subsidies, loans, support business start-up, marketing, and value chain linkage), and (iii) improving women's economic empowerment in the face of climate change through token support in saving and credit initiatives, small-scale enterprises with the assurance of access to credit, information, training and outreach.

- Allocate a gender responsive budget for implementing gender transformative CSS interventions. This would be done through (i) include a contingency fund for schools so that children can continue their education during any emergency period, (ii) ensure sufficient funds are allocated to implementing gender transformative CSS action plans of schools and monitoring of schools regarding their compliance with the national policies, guidelines, and standards.
- Design and construct climate and disaster resilient school buildings and facilities that take into consideration diversity among children and their needs, with attention to adolescent girls and children with disability. This would be done through (i) compliance to the school safety building code, (ii) inclusion of child-, gender- and disability- friendly features in infrastructure development, and (iii) ensuring all new toilet facilities are child-, gender- and disability-friendly.
- Build capacity of sub-national level authorities, School Management Committees(SMCs) and child clubs/student taskforces on gender transformative DRM, CCA, and CSS framework through regular coaching, mentoring, orientations, review and reflection sessions and technical training. Consider capacity building as a “means” and not an “end.”

3. Development partners (Bilateral, humanitarian agencies and civil societies)

- Advocate for DRM, CCA, and CSS policy improvement and implementation jointly by addressing contemporary issues in policies and engaging in regular advocacy for synergy. This would be done through (i) organise joint programs to review the efficacy of existing DRM, CCA and CSS policies, guidelines and frameworks in collaboration with the government, (ii) conduct studies to identify gaps and implementation challenges of existing guidelines, strategies and action plans, and provide technical support to the government for the amendment of existing policy documents, (iii) support national government of Bangladesh and Nepal to craft clear action plans; and to promote the implementation of existing DRM, CCA and CSS guidelines, strategic plans and frameworks at the sub-national and school level.
- Promote knowledge management, and build capacity of national governments for ensuring the continuity of adolescent girls' education through (i) developing educational and campaign materials to raise public awareness around harmful gender norms and stereotypes that deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children, especially girls, (ii) rolling out training manuals/tools/guidelines on gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS that build capacity of government responsible stakeholders at all levels, (iii) facilitating learning and sharing of best practices on gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS as platforms to promote girls' leadership on DRM, CCA and CSS initiatives, and (iv) working in collaboration with I/NGOs and UN agencies to remove gender barriers that deny girls (especially marginalised girls) from accessing schooling and participating in school-based disaster risk management activities.
- Carry out country specific further research on hidden struggles of LGBTQ+ children in accessing education and how their identity increase their vulnerability in a changing climate

and disaster context in a collaborative way for policy advocacy and campaigning in collaboration with Government of Bangladesh and Nepal and other development partners.

- Facilitate the design of a practice based hands-on training curricula and impart life skills trainings to boys and girls based on their group-specific vulnerabilities, local needs and context alongside the priorities of local governments in coordination with national governments and development partners.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Since July 2018, Plan International Asia-Pacific Regional Hub, in collaboration with Plan International Nepal, Plan International Bangladesh and their local partners, has been implementing the Strengthening Community Resilience to Disaster through School Safety Initiative (SCRSSI) Project. In Nepal, the project covers four secondary schools and one primary school in Sunsari district (five schools in total). In Bangladesh, it covers three secondary schools and nine primary schools in Kurigram district (12 schools in total).

The project aims to promote school-based gender-sensitive disaster risk management, demonstrating that girls, boys, and young people are a catalyst for knowledge and behavioural change in their schools and communities, capable of handling intricate impacts of natural hazards, climate risks and protection issues. The project also ensures that targeted schools, education authorities and relevant stakeholders receive effective support which builds their capacity, while strengthening institutional linkages. All the activities supported by the project are aligned with national frameworks that relate to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and Education in Emergencies (EiE) in Bangladesh, as well as a newly developed school safety policy in Nepal.

As part of the project activities, Plan APAC hired the research team to undertake the study: “Disaster and Gendered Impact in a Changing Climate toward Girl’s Education” in the project target areas of Bangladesh and Nepal.

1.2. Research locations

Sunsari district of Nepal and Kurigram district of Bangladesh are the SCRSSI project's target areas under the regional project of Plan International. Therefore, this research has been conducted in these two districts.

In Bangladesh, the research was conducted in three schools and three communities of Nageshwari Upazila in Kurigram district. Kurigram district is one of eight districts in Rangpur division ([Banglapedia, 2015](#)). Kurigram district is located in the northern region of Bangladesh along the border of India and is considered the poorest district of Bangladesh. Its population was 2,069,273 as of the 2011 census. The district comprises 9 upazilas, 72 unions, and 1,872 villages. Kurigram District has 103,498 people with disability within 25,405 households ([Ministry of Planning, Bangladesh 2015](#)).

This district is prone to multiple hazards, such as floods, thunderstorms, earthquakes, and river erosion. The northwest region has already started facing slow onset climate change (temperature rise, changes in precipitation, drought) as well as sudden climatic shocks (floods, erratic rainfall). Such climatic events put tremendous pressures on the livelihoods of the inhabitants of this region ([CKDN, 2021](#)).

The large-scale flooding of August 2017 that created a national-level emergency affected about 8.2 million people while many families lost their crops and their livelihoods across 32 districts of Bangladesh. Kurigram was one of the most affected districts, receiving the brunt of the flood damage ([Relief International, 2017](#)). More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought a new kind of emergency to the area.

This research covers three schools (Indogarh Maddhomik School, Kachakata Balika Biddalaya, Upokule Mondoltary Primary School) and three communities (Kachakata, Kedar Upokule). The basic features of the three studied schools are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Key features of study schools in Bangladesh as of March 2021

School	Indogarh	Kachakata	Upokule
Grade	Grade 1 to 10	Grade 1 to 10	Grade 1 to 5
Teachers	18 (M-14, F-4)	20 (M-17, F-3)	4 (M-3, F-1)
Students	550 (boys: 328; girls: 222)	640 (girls: 640)	221 (boys: 96; girls: 125)
School area (land size)	65 Shotangsho (0.263 hectares)	1 acre 51 Shotangsho (0.61 hectares)	34 Shotangsho (0.138 hectares)
Safe place	School compound	School compound	School compound
Physical infrastructures	Buildings: 1 (CGI sheet roof) Rooms: 4 Existing Toilets: 3 One 4 storied building construction including 13 rooms and 18 toilets.	Buildings: 2 (CGI sheet roof) Rooms: 13 Existing Toilets: 9 One 4 storied building construction including 12 rooms and 12 toilets.	Buildings: 2 (RCC:1, CGI sheet roof: 1) Rooms: 6 Toilets: 2 single toilets

The basic features of the three studied communities are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Key features of three communities as of March 2021

Community	Kachakata	Kedar	Upokule
Major caste/ethnicity	Muslim, Hindu	Muslim, Hindu	Muslim, Hindu
Percentage of poor families	70-75 (estimated based on KII with NGOs and CBOs)	70-75 (estimated based on KII with NGOs and CBOs)	75-80 (estimated based on KII with NGOs and CBOs)
Major impacts of disaster in terms of death	Thunderstorm (2016): 2 people died Thunderstorm (2017): 1 cow died Thunderstorm (2019): 1 person died	N/A	Drowning (2011): 1 person died Drowning (2018): 2 people died
Major hazards	Flood, thunderstorm, cold wave, earthquake, riverbank erosion, cyclone, drought		
Key occupation	Agriculture, animal husbandry, daily wage labour, service, and seasonal labour		

In Nepal, the research was conducted in three schools and three communities of two local governments viz. Ramdhuni and Barahachhetra of Sunsari district. Sunsari is one of the 14 districts of Province 1 and has an area of 1,257 sq.km. and a population of 763,487 (CBS, 2011). It is the most risk-prone province overall and has known the greatest number of both natural and human-induced disasters. In particular, it has experienced the greatest number of climatic events; it accounts for 30 per cent of all floods and 27 per cent of all fires; and 25 per cent of all landslides: in hills district (District profile, 2017). Besides natural and human-induced disasters, Province 1, including Sunsari District, is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sunsari is located at the bank of Nepal's biggest river basin, the Koshi. The district covers diverse geographical regions from Siwalik, Chure, Bhawar to the plains/flat land (Terai). The district is prone to multiple hazards, including flood, landslides, fire, drought, earthquake, and epidemic, with floods and fire the most frequent hazards. Sunsari district was badly affected by the Koshi flood of August 2008, and the devastation of this disaster is still felt many years on. The Koshi flood affected 65,000 people and 700 hectares of fertile land in Nepal. Twelve years on, about 25 per cent of the affected land of Sunsari district remains barren and filled with flood sediment from clay to sand (District profile, 2020).

In August 2017, widespread flooding followed the worst rains in 15 years, and resulted in large-scale devastation on life, livelihoods and infrastructure across 35 districts of the country. Sunsari district was among the worst affected ([Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018](#)), and in this district alone, 75,207 people (37,205 men and 38,002 women) were reported to be affected by the disaster and 12 people died (four men and eight women) ([National Planning Commission, 2017](#)).

This research covers three schools (Janak, Chandrakamal and Auliya) and three communities (Salbani, Marchaiya and Chatara). The basic features of the three studied schools are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Key features of three research schools in Nepal 2019

School	Janak	Chandrakamal	Auliya
Grade	Grade 1 to 10	Grade 1 to 10	Grade 1 to 10
Teachers (men and women)	20	20	16
Students	238 (boys: 110; girls: 128)	522 (boys: 244; girls: 278)	350 (boys: 148; girls: 202)
School area (land size)	1 <i>bigha</i> 10 <i>kathha</i> (0.89 ha)	13 <i>bigha</i> 18 <i>kathha</i> (9.38 ha)	1 <i>bigha</i> 10 <i>kathha</i> (0.89 ha) non-registered land
Safe place	School compound	School compound	School compound
Physical infrastructures	Buildings: 5 (RCC: 2, CGI sheet roofed: 3)	Buildings: 9 (RCC: 3, CGI sheet roofed: 6)	Buildings: 6 (RCC: 2, CGI sheet roofed: 4)

	Rooms: 19 Toilets: 3	Rooms: 19 Toilets: 5	Rooms: 15 Toilets: 2
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The basic features of the three studied communities are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 : Key features of three research communities

Community	Salbani	Marchaiya	Chatara
Major caste/ethnicity	Rai, Limbu, Magar, Tamang, Brahmin and Chhetri	Tharu, Chamar, Badi, Dalit, Mushahar, Mehata, Muslim, Brahmin and Chhetri	Rai, Limbu, Magar, Tamang, Brahmin and Chhetri
Percentage of poor families	62-65 (<i>estimated based on KII with NGOs and CBOs</i>)	73-75 (<i>estimated based on KII with NGOs and CBOs</i>)	54-55 (<i>estimated based on KII with NGOs and CBOs</i>)
Major impacts of disaster	Windstorm (1979) Earthquake (2015) Snakebite (2016): 1 died Flood (2016): 35 died	Fire (1993): limited loss Earthquake (1988): 1 died Fire (1995): limited loss	Fire (1993): limited loss Earthquake (1988): 1 died Fire (1995): limited loss
Major hazards	Flood/inundation, fire, windstorm, drought, thunderstorm, cold wave, wildlife, road accident, hailstorm, earthquake, electric short-circuit		
Key occupations	Agriculture, animal husbandry, daily wage labour, service, and foreign employment		

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

This purpose of the research is to help the SCRSSI project team to strengthen their understanding of the broader social and historical environment in which the SCRSSI project has been embedded in Nepal and Bangladesh. Key research findings will also be used by Plan International and partners to design future project interventions. The specific purposes of the research are:

1. Capture the actual and gendered impacts of disasters and climate crisis on girls and boys, including on educational continuity and attainment.
2. Map out existing factors that compound and exacerbate natural hazard risks of marginalised children, especially girls and youth in target areas of both countries, with particular attention to harmful gender norms and stereotypes.
3. Explore international and national regulatory frameworks on gender sensitive disaster risk management, climate resilience, and school-centred disaster risk management, not only in identifying the gaps but considering how to leverage current frameworks.
4. Generate more reliable evidence specific to the gendered impacts of natural hazards and climate crisis on children and young people by crosschecking against the findings from the Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA), which the project teams in both countries conducted at the outset of the project.

The scope of the research is to review the extent to which a gender transformative approach has been integrated and adopted into the relevant regulatory frameworks on disaster risk management, climate resilience, and school-centred disaster risk management at the international, and national level, and to understand the existing gender norms and stereotypes that exacerbate the impacts of disaster and climate risks on girls and boys, their educational continuity and attainment. The six target schools and six communities (three schools in three communities per country) in the Sunsari district of Nepal, and Kurigram district of Bangladesh as the SCRSSI project target areas were selected to take part in the research.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research team undertook a variety of qualitative data collection methods with research participants, such as Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), and field observation. The field research focused on the three target schools and three communities in the Sunsari district of Nepal, and Kurigram district of Bangladesh. Primarily, the research methodologies included:



Table 5: Summary methodology

Desk Review	<p>The desk review was conducted prior to the fieldwork. The desk study consists of a review of secondary data including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current global, regional and national regulatory policies/frameworks/guidelines on disaster risk management, climate resilience, and school-centred disaster risk management. 2. Project documents of SCRSSI and other relevant Plan International CCRR, and CCA initiatives in Asia region 3. Existing studies/research on the gender norms and stereotypes in Bangladesh and Nepal <p>The research team has reviewed the list of documents as Appendix 8.</p>
Inception Report Development	<p>The Inception Report was developed which included the detailed methodology, questionnaires and field visit schedule. See Appendix 9 for the Inception Report.</p>
Field Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs with teachers, including head teachers • FGDs with Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), community members and parents • FGDs and IDIs with students/children's clubs in the project target schools (girls and boys) • FGDs and IDIs with children out of school including children from marginalised groups, children with disability (in the communities) • KIIs with community leaders, and local education department focal points • KIIs with NGOs/CBOs working on specific Child Protection (CP) issues, children with disability and/or LGBTIQ+ in the areas • KIIs with DRR and CCA, and gender working group in Nepal and Bangladesh • KIIs with Ministry of Education at the national level • KIIs with Ministry of Social Welfare
Data analysis and reporting	<p>For the data analysis and reporting, the research undertook the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The research team used the content analysis method to analyse the qualitative data by firstly translating transcripts of FGDs, IDIs and KIIs into English which were classified by research question and stakeholder in the excel spreadsheet per country. 2. The research team checked the consistency of findings generated across different data collection methods (desk review, KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs). To do so, the responses have been classified and similar responses have been grouped to identify the key issues and themes of concern to girls/children. 3. Data triangulation was accomplished by examining the key findings across the different information sources; those that were supported by one or more data sources have been prioritized. All core findings were linked to the key research objectives.

4. Based on the results from the data analysis per country, each associate researcher produced a country report which the research team leader synthesised into the consolidated research report based on the agreed reporting structure.

Source: Inception Report

3.1. Sampling

Given limited time in the field and the COVID-19 situation, the research team applied the purposive sampling technique to select the six target schools in six communities (three schools in three communities per country) to participate in the research. Based on consultation with Plan International Bangladesh and Nepal, the research and Plan team applied the following criteria to select the target schools and communities:

1. Disaster prone communities and schools (from multi-hazard perspective)
2. Number of marginalised groups including ethnicity, LGBTQ+, religious minorities, landless living in the slum areas/informal settlements, local residents' vs recent immigrants, etc.
3. Different geographical areas (urban and rural, etc)
4. Socio-economic background (class, livelihood resilience, social capital, etc.)

Girls, boys, teachers, school head teachers, parents, community leaders and representatives, and local education department focal points, local NGOs/CBOs, DRR and CCA from the six target schools and six communities in the Sunsari district of Nepal, and Kurigram district of Bangladesh have participated in the research. Stakeholders from the DRR, and the gender working groups, as well as representatives of the Ministries of Education in both countries, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens from Nepal, and Ministry of Social Welfare from Bangladesh contributed to the research.

Table 6: Summary of research participants from KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs

Name of countries	Qualitative methods	Research participants	Men	Women	Total adults	Boys	Girls	Total children	Total research participants
Bangladesh	KIIs	CBOs and NGOs	3	4	7				7
		Education and disaster focal points at the sub-national level	3	2	5				5
		Upazila level (MoWCA, Ministry of Social Welfare, Primary and Secondary Education focal points)	3	1	4				4
		Upazila level DRR, climate and gender working group	2	1	3				3
		School teachers	3	3	6				6
	Sub-total of KIIs participants		14	11	25				25
	FGDs	Community representatives from Muslim and Hindu		10	10				10

Name of countries	Qualitative methods	Research participants	Men	Women	Total adults	Boys	Girls	Total children	Total research participants
		communities for community leaders							
		PTAs	11	14	25				25
		Teachers and head teachers	18	3	21				21
		Boy and girl students				24	24	48	48
		Boys and girls (out of school children)				22	24	46	46
	IDIs	Boy and girl students				6	6	12	12
		Boys and girls (out of schools)				6	6	12	12
		Girls from minority communities					2	2	2
	Sub-total of FGDs and IDIs participants		29	27	56	58	62	120	176
	Sub-total for Bangladesh		43	38	81	58	62	120	201
Nepal	Kills	Community leaders/local governors							
		CBOs/NGOs	15	16	31				31
		Education and disaster focal points at the sub-national level	5	4	9				9
		Federation level (MoEST, MoFAGA, MoWCSS)	2	2	4				4
		Federation level (DRR, CCA and gender working group)	5	5	10				10
	Sub-total of Kills		27	27	54				54
	FGDs	PTAs	17	26	43				43
		Teachers and head teachers	19	23	42				42
		Boy and girl students				24	24	48	48
	IDIs	Boys and girls				8	11	19	19
	Sub-total of FGDs and IDIs		36	49	85	32	35	67	152
	Sub-total for Nepal		63	76	139	32	35	67	206
	Grand-total for both countries		106	114	220	90	97	187	407

Source: Data Analysis

As the research focused on qualitative data, the research team conducted research with 407 research participants in the two countries to capture their ideas, perceptions and experiences related to disaster and gendered impact in a changing climate towards girl's education. Of the persons directly contributing their views and experiences into the research, 46 per cent were children (22 per cent boys; 24 per cent girls) and 54 per cent were adults (26 per cent men; 28 per cent women).

3.2. Field data collection management

During the fieldwork, the associate researchers in the two countries conducted an orientation session with the enumerators (two women and one man in Nepal; three women and three men in Bangladesh) who then conducted the FGDs/KIIs under the supervision of the associate researcher in the respective country. The child safeguarding focal point of the country office in Bangladesh and Nepal also conducted child safeguarding training with the research team including enumerators before commencement of the fieldwork. At the end of each day, the associate researchers in Bangladesh and Nepal checked both the quality of data and that consent was obtained through the consent forms.

3.3. Research Ethics

The research team adhered to Plan's terms and conditions and adopted their ethical measures. Each research participant completed the consent form before data collection. Enumerators explained the purpose of the research and meaning of the consent form before starting the FGDs and KIIs. This included informing respondents on how their data will be used throughout the process, and advising that the security of personal and sensitive data at all stages of the activity would be ensured. The research team signed all relevant policies including the Child Safeguarding Policy of Plan International and other associated policies. See Appendix 9 for the relevant consent forms used (1. Consent form for children and parents/guardians, 2. Consent form for adults and 3. Media consent form).

Data collection methods during COVID-19 pandemic: All field interviews have been made taking protective measures to ensure safety during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Health protocols have been applied (use of masks, hand sanitisers, physical distancing, etc.) while interviewing project staff, partners, children, SMCs and PTAs, and other relevant stakeholders.

3.4. Identified limitations and mitigation approach

→ **COVID-19 pandemic:** The research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, with limits placed on the number of participants in the FGDs as per health protocols in each country.

Mitigation measures The associate researchers in the two countries practiced safe measures including wearing masks, carrying hand sanitizers and maintaining social distancing during the FGDs and KIIs to ensure the safety of participants in the research. The associate researchers made efforts to ensure the responses from children will be representative of the whole context of the areas.

→ **There was no FGDs with out-of-school children conducted in Nepal:** In Nepal, the research team did not find any out-of-school children from the project target communities viz. Salbani, Marchiya and Chatara. It was said that the provision of "midday meal at school" from the government encouraged parents to send their children (age 6-12 years) to school.

Mitigation measures The associate researcher in Nepal compared the findings with other studies before formulating the research conclusions.

→ **Limited women in KIIs and FGDs:** In both countries, there was limited women in various positions including community leaders, school teachers, school head teachers, and representatives from government ministries who were the key stakeholders for KIIs and FGDs. In some schools, there was less woman teachers than man teachers. Therefore, the associate researcher could not manage to have equal participation of men and women in the FGDs.

Mitigation measures The associate researchers in the two countries conducted KIIs with more women to ensure the meaningful and equal participations between men and women in the research.

IV. KEY FINDINGS ADDRESSING ALL THE RESEARCH CRITERIA KEY QUESTIONS

4.1. Country Disaster and Climate Risks Situation

Nepal and Bangladesh are among the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of disaster and climate risks. Bangladesh ranked 7th and Nepal ranked 10th among the most impacted countries between (2000-2019) on the Climate Risk Index ([GermanWath, 2021](#)).

Bangladesh is a low-lying country in South Asia, sharing its borders with India and Myanmar. Located next to the Bay of Bengal, its river systems drain excess monsoonal rainfall into the bay and this location renders the region among the most fertile globally ([UNDRR, 2020](#)). The country experiences frequent impacts of cyclones, flooding, including flash flooding, storms and periodic droughts depending on the season. Other hazards include earthquakes, landslides, lightning strikes, possible tsunamis, epidemics and ongoing riverbank erosion which contributes to the high flood risks and increasing vulnerabilities across the settlements in the coast's vicinity and river catchments (Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, 2010).

Over the last three decades, Bangladesh has been affected by over 200 natural disasters. Low-lying terrain, monsoons, and significant rivers have left it highly vulnerable to natural hazards. From 1970 to 2019, storms have been the most frequent disaster to affect Bangladesh at 52 per cent, followed by floods at 31 per cent, with the remaining disasters being epidemics, earthquakes, droughts, and landslides. During a normal monsoon, floods can cover about 20 per cent of the country, disrupting life and causing deaths. When monsoon flooding is severe, over 60 per cent of Bangladesh gets inundated (EM-DAT-2020). [IFRC World Disaster Report 2020](#) reports that in 2019, Bangladesh ranked as the 6th worst-hit country in the world in terms of climate and weather-related disaster. Cyclone Fani (2019) alone affected over 20 million people across parts of India and Bangladesh. Presently, Bangladesh is also facing the COVID-19 pandemic. WHO reported that as of 4 May 2021, there have been 763,682 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 11,644 deaths in the country ([WHO, 4th May 2021](#)). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh also faced cyclone Amphan in May 2020, and flooding in June 2020 (IFRC, 2020).

Climate change is likely to contribute to the increased frequency and impacts of hydro meteorological hazards, and Bangladesh is considered among the most vulnerable countries to such adverse effects (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2018). For example, it is expected that Bangladesh will be four per cent wetter by 2050 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018), which could lead to worsened impacts of flooding and storms, and increase the prevalence of vector-borne diseases. Sea-level rise could also further disrupt the ecological systems, credibly threaten food security and the availability of fresh water. This is a significant issue given that Bangladesh gets over 90 per cent of its water beyond its geographical boundaries, which requires the country to cooperate on upstream-downstream linkages to guarantee equity in water distribution (Scott, et al., 2019).

Nepal is a country in South Asia, lying along the southern slopes of the Himalayan mountain ranges. The country is located between India to the east, south, and west and the Tibet Autonomous Region to the north ([Britannica, 2021](#)). Nepal is exposed to many natural and human-induced hazards as the country has diverse typography, complex geology and a highly varying climate which sees the country among the top 20 of all multi-hazard countries in the world ([UNDRR, 2019](#)). Globally, Nepal ranks 4th and 11th in terms of its relative vulnerability to climate change and earthquakes, respectively (Maplecroft 2011, BCPR 2004 cited in MoHA 2015).

The country's vulnerability to disasters is associated with poor human development indicators, increased population in urban areas, poor enforcement of building codes, and climate change. Over 80 per cent of the total population of Nepal is at risk from natural hazards, such as floods, landslides, windstorms, hailstorms, fires, earthquakes, and glacial lake outburst floods (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018). According to the Ministry of Home Affairs' calculation of economic loss from disaster from 2017 to 2018, fire alone accounts for 93.91 per cent of the total loss, followed by landslides (2.80 per cent), heavy rainfall (1.31 per cent), flooding (0.89 per cent) and windstorms (0.75 per cent). The personal stresses and trauma caused by disaster, particularly affecting children and adolescents, are long-lasting and do not abate quickly (Subedi and Poudyal Chhetri, 2019). Besides the impact on facilities and loss of learning time by disaster and climatic variability, children and their teachers suffer severe psychosocial consequences, and require psychosocial support and the protective environment that emergency education provides (Nepal Education Cluster, 2015; Gautam and Oswald 2008). Besides that, Nepal is also facing the COVID-19 pandemic. WHO report that as of 4th May 2021, there have been 343,418 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 3,362 deaths in Nepal ([WHO, 4th May 2021](#)). The country's fragile health system places the population at risk.

The impacts of the monsoon season in **Nepal** have become more severe in recent years. Flooding in August 2017 affected 1.7 million people and caused devastation amounting to 585 million US dollars, equivalent to three per cent of Nepal's GDP (IFRC, 2020). Nepal is also one of the countries in the world most at risk from the negative impacts of climate change. There are significant concerns that intensity of hydro-meteorological hazards (flood and drought) in Nepal is expected to increase in the future. By the mid-century, it is suspected that the amount of precipitation will increase by 15 to 20 per cent (Ministry of Environment, 2010) which will amplify the impact of water-induced disasters. Another rising concern is the agricultural losses resulting from periods of extreme precipitation or drought which affect food security and livelihoods. Given the future projections for population growth, mitigating the impacts of climate-induced hazards on production is crucial for the country (UNDRR, 2019).

4.2. Gender related provisions in existing regulatory/policies/frameworks/guidelines

Gender transformation involves actively examining, questioning and changing rigid gender norms and power imbalances towards gender equality. Plan International adopts a gender transformative approach, whereby the work and advocacy it engages in serves to influence and contribute to addressing gender inequality.

“Plan International’s gender transformative approach focuses on tackling the root causes of gender inequality and on reshaping unequal gender and power relations to realise girls’ rights and equality between all children, young people and adults regardless of their gender. It aims to improve the condition of girls and women while advancing their position and value in society. It supports girls and women to be able to make informed choices and decisions and to act upon these free from fear or threat of punishment.” (Plan’s Getting It Right Guidance document 2018. P5).

Plan International commits to gender equality in all of its programming, and gender transformation is one of the commitments under Plan International’s global approach to program and influence (Plan International 2020). Therefore, this research looks at the extent to which a gender transformative approach has been integrated and adopted into relevant regulatory frameworks on school-centred disaster risk management. The following are the results from the desk reviews of relevant policies/frameworks at the global and national level (Bangladesh and Nepal) on disaster risk management, climate resilience, and school-centred disaster risk management:

4.2.1. Gender in existing global regulatory/policies/frameworks/guidelines

Globally, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) includes “*Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all women and girls*” as goal five of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Women, men, girls, and boys experience disaster, and climate risks differently. Men and women and boys and girls prepare for, respond to and recover from disaster and climate hazards differently too (CEDAW/C/GC/37, 2018). However, many women and girls experience greater risks, burdens and impacts of disaster than men and boys (UN Commission, 2014). They suffer with higher levels of mortality and morbidity in disaster situations (Neumayer, Eric and Plumper, Thomas, 2007). A 2007 statistical analysis on the outcomes of disasters in 141 countries found women are more likely to die, and die sooner, than men in disasters and that this is because of socio-economic inequalities, including gender inequality (UN Women, 2021). However, women and girls also have tremendous potential to reduce disaster and climate risks and to strengthen community resilience and response to disasters. Active participation of women in DRR has proven effective, particularly in building leadership, exchange of knowledge and local traditions, as well as in developing capacities for reducing risk (UNDRR, 2018). In Disaster Risk Management, the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit called for gender equality, women’s empowerment and women’s rights to become pillars of humanitarian action, including in disaster preparedness and response (CEDAW/C/GC/37, 2018). In Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), the [Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction](#) (SFDRR) 2015-2030⁶ has acknowledged the role of women in DRR. The SFDRR 2015-2030 highlights the fundamental role of women in risk management and in disaster preparedness, response and recovery:

“Women and their participation are critical to effectively managing disaster risk and designing, resourcing and implementing gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programmes; 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” (Sendai Framework - Paragraph 36 (a) i).

In addition, **priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction** of the SFDRR, states that “*Women and persons with disabilities should publicly lead and promote gender-equitable and universally accessible approaches during the response and reconstruction phases*”.

Regarding climate change, the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#)⁷ (UNFCCC, 1992) recognizes the importance of involving women and men equally in UNFCCC processes by establishing a dedicated agenda item under the Convention addressing issues of gender and climate change and by including overarching text in [the Paris Agreement](#) (UNFCCC, gender).⁸ Under the Paris Agreement on page 4, parties acknowledge that “*climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity*”. In 2019, Conference of Parties (COP) 25 brought gender equality and the empowerment of women to the fore by adopting the enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its five-year gender action plan (2020–2024) ([UNFCCC, annual report 2019](#)).

⁶ **The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030** was adopted at the Third UN World Conference in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015. The Sendai Framework is the successor instrument to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.

⁷ **The UNFCCC** entered force on 21 March 1994. Today, it has near-universal membership. The 197 countries that have ratified the Convention are called Parties to the Convention. Preventing “dangerous” human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC.

⁸ The Paris Agreement is a **legally binding international treaty on climate change**. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016.

To ensure the state parties are implementing their obligations under the Conventions in relation to DRR and climate change, and the human rights of women and girls are respected, protected and fulfilled in accordance with international law, gender-related dimensions of DRR and CC, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was updated to include a specific recommendation around this. General Recommendation No. 37 on Gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change was developed in 2018. The general recommendation focuses “*on the obligations of States parties and non- state actors to take effective measures to prevent, mitigate and respond to disasters and climate change and, in this context, to ensure that the human rights of women and girls are respected, protected and fulfilled in accordance with international law*” (CEDAW/C/GC/37, 2018).

For DRM in the Education sector, the CSS Framework developed in March 2013 and updated in 2017 provides a unified focus for child-centred and evidence-based efforts to promote DRR throughout the education sector and to ensure universal access to quality education (GADRRRES, 2017). This framework provides a comprehensive approach to reducing risks from all hazards to the education sector. Furthermore, the framework promotes the participation of all children in all aspects of Comprehensive School Safety, and contributes to strengthening the agency of girls, building their capacities for leadership before, during and after a disaster, challenging the views of masculinity and instead creating youths that are aware and supportive of each other’s capacities (GADRRRES, 2015). The CSS Framework is a multi-hazards approach. However, it was not possible to apply the framework in the pandemic situation like COVID-19 as the schools have been closed and education of children has been disrupted.

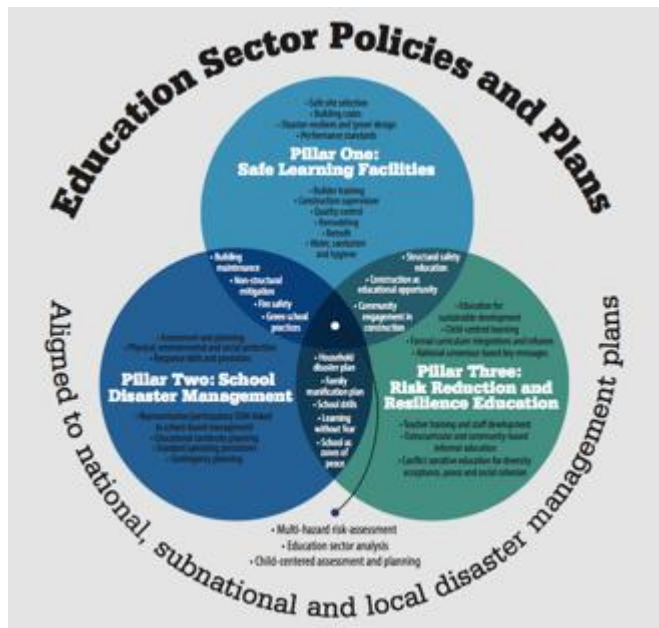


Figure 1: Three pillars of CSS Framework

Furthermore, the CSS Framework does not provide the detailed guidance on how to implement a gender transformative Comprehensive School Safety program in the schools. There are no gender sensitive indicators mentioned in the three pillars of CSS Framework: Safe Learning Facilities, School Disaster Management and Risk Reduction and Resilience Education. With this limitation of gender mainstreaming into the CSS Framework, the implementation of any specific interventions that are ‘gender transformative’ in nature in CSS interventions is unlikely to be implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) across other countries including Bangladesh and Nepal in Asia and globally. Therefore, the CSS Framework requires review to make it more gender sensitive to support the implementation of the SFDRR, and to address the emerging hazards like COVID-19 pandemic also.

At the global level, there is increasing recognition of the need for gender responsive action in response to climate change, disaster risks and in meeting the SDG targets. Gender equality and women’s empowerment is key to the success of all post-2015 multilateral agendas, including the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the SFDRR, and all future actions on reducing climatic and disaster risk (Global Gender and Climate Alliance, 2016). However, the implementation of these frameworks, agreements and policies is progressing slowly at the country level ([UN Women, 2020](#)). For example: As of August 2020, only 48 per cent (93⁹ out of 195 countries) of the total countries

⁹ There is a 111% increase in the number of countries that have reported having national DRR strategies aligned with the Sendai Framework on some extent, which grew from 44 in 2015 to 93 by 2019

around the world reported having national DRR strategies aligned with the Sendai Framework to some extent. In addition, only 37 per cent (72 out of 195 countries) of the total countries, reported to have DRR strategies within the local government ([UNDRR, 2020](#)). For the integration of gender into the DRM sector, a new policy tracker was developed by UN Women and DRR Dynamics to look at countries' progress on developing inclusive DRR strategies and policies. It showed that only 26 countries out of a possible 193 UN member states have policy or practice that specifically includes strategies for ensuring inclusivity on all Sendai-identified marginalised groups¹⁰ ([UN Women, 2020](#)). The results of the policy tracker illustrate that the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, including women and girls, are still not addressed at the policy level. This omission will continue to make it difficult to reach and engage women and other vulnerable groups in any emergency response.

For **climate change**, based on findings from the [gender climate tracker in 2020](#), it was analysed that seven of the 14 updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)¹¹ included a reference to women or gender. Several NDCs integrated gender across topics and used it as cross-cutting approach to climate planning and action, while others' references are less substantive. In addition, several parties who did not reference women or gender in 2016 did so with these NDCs in 2020, some in ways that were quite substantive. Some key notes in relation to NDCs in 2016: only 64 of the 190 NDCs analysed included reference to women or gender with several NDCs only mentioning gender in the context of the country's broader sustainable development strategy and not specifically in relation to climate change and 34 NDCs referring to women as vulnerable group. Only 15 NDCs refer to the role of women as important decision-makers or stakeholders in climate change policy-making, and only six NDCs referred to women as agents or drivers of change.

In conclusion, 2015 was a successful year in taking forward the post-2015 agenda, including the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and the SFDRR. Gender has been mainstreamed in all these frameworks except for the CSS Framework. Now in 2021, six years on, progress toward the ambitious goal of "leaving no one behind" and inclusion of marginalised groups including women and girls in DRM and Climate Resilience sectors still has a long way to go. Translation of global frameworks and guidelines into implementation to reach the most marginalised groups is yet to be accomplished.

4.2.2. Gender in existing national regulatory/policies/frameworks/guidelines

Bangladesh (2020) and Nepal (2019) have developed Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) status reports (UNDRR 2019 and 2020) to provide a snapshot of the state of DRR in both countries under the four priorities of the SFDRR 2015-2030. Both countries are among the 93 countries who have reported having national DRR strategies aligned with the Sendai Framework, with the two countries having accomplished achievements as follows:

¹⁰ Marginalised group defined in the framework as women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, poor people, migrants, indigenous peoples and older persons

¹¹ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are at the heart of the Paris Agreement and the achievement of these long-term goals. NDCs embody efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The [Paris Agreement](#) (Article 4, paragraph 2) requires each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that it intends to achieve.

Bangladesh: The legal Disaster Management framework that includes the Standing Orders on Disasters (SOD), the Disaster Management Act, and the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) provides a robust foundation for efficient and impactful disaster governance in Bangladesh (UNDRR, 2020). The [NPDM 2016-2020](#) reflected a paradigm shift from relief-based disaster response to proactive disaster risk reduction which made progress in alignment with the SFDRR, Paris Climate Change Agreement and SDGs and furthered

Bangladesh National policies/frameworks/plans on Disaster Risk Management and climate change:

- Standing Orders on Disasters (SOD) first introduced in 1999 and revised in 2010 and 2019
- Disaster Management Act 2012
- National Plan for Disaster Management 2010-2015 and 2016-2020 (renamed as NPDM)
- Inclusion as an underlying strategy in all action plans of NPDM 2021-2025
- Disaster Management Policy 2015, Disaster Management Act 2012
- Bangladesh Climate Change Strategic Action Plan (BCCSAP) 2009-2018
- Bangladesh Country Investment Plan for Environment, Forestry and Climate Change 2016-2021
- National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) 2015
- 2015 Bangladesh Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies
- A national framework for safe schools (based on the Comprehensive School Safety framework)

the national priorities and targets to reach middle-income status by 2021 (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, 2017). The review of NPDM 2016-2020 undertaken in preparation of NPDM 2021-2025 indicated that substantial achievements were made under the 2016-2020 NPDM against most of the 34 targets. Improvements were noted against targets such as reducing the number of disaster victims, strengthening the early warning and response mechanism, having an earthquake preparedness system in place, strengthening disability and gender inclusive disaster risk management and provision of safety nets, and strengthened civil-military coordination for humanitarian response. However, the NPDM 2016-2020 did not articulate how it would seek to implement gender and disability mainstreaming across the 34 indicators. It also lacked concrete indicators on gender and disability inclusion and a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework to ascertain progress made under gender-related commitments (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, 2017 and 2020).

With the vision “*Winning resilience against all odds*”, [NPDM 2021-2025](#) aims to achieve milestones in disaster risk reduction and building resilience. The new NPDM links the disaster, climate change and development agenda and is fully aligned with SFDRR, the SDGs, and the Paris Agreement. It draws from the directives of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the SFDRR 2015-2030, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) DM Plan, and other plans and strategies aligned with the country context.

Social inclusion is a basis for achieving resilience and is an underlying and cross-cutting strategy in the NPDM 2021-2025 action plans. Two main inclusivity areas were identified: to ensure incorporation of gender issues in decision making and participation of women and men in all priority actions, and to ensure adequate consideration for people with vulnerabilities across its implementation. Inclusion (disability, class, ethnicity, religious minorities) is a major objective, alongside gender responsiveness in all plans and programmes.

Gender components in the priority actions of NPDM 2021-2025, Government of Bangladesh:

1. Gender mainstreaming in national policies, relevant laws, plans, and budgets related to disaster risk management will be emphasized during implementation of programs.
2. Activation of DRM committees as per SOD, with representation from national ministry and/or line agencies responsible for women and social welfare and women’s organizations, along with mechanisms in place to review decisions from gender lens will be ensured at national, district and upazila levels.
3. Capacity for sex-disaggregated data collection through information management systems and capacity building of DM focal points at various levels will be ensured during implementation of the programs.

Source: NPDM 2021-2025

For climate change, the GoB developed the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan ([BCCSAP](#)) of 2009-2018. The BCCSAP was further integrated into the NPDM of 2016-2020 and the updated NPDM 2021-2025, with increased provisions to eradicate poverty, and improve social wellbeing by pro-poor climate change strategies and climate risk-informed DRR (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, 2017). Gender has been considered and incorporated in its Actions. The BCCSAP states that “.. *the needs of the poor and vulnerable, including women and children, will be mainstreamed in all the activities under the Action Plan*” (Ministry of Environment, 2010). To provide guidance on policy issues and initiatives that need to be taken into consideration by the government to address climate change in a gender sensitive manner, the Climate Change Gender Action Plan ([CCGAP](#)) 2013-2018 was developed. However, the document is now out of date. The Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund with technical support from UN Women has plans to review and update the CCGAP but this has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 ([Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bangladesh](#)).

The Ministry of Education of the GoB, has taken some policy decisions specific to disaster preparedness at educational institutions since 1997. The Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Education in Emergencies (EiE) was a recognized framework prepared for mainstreaming Comprehensive School Safety in the Education Sector in Bangladesh. It was first launched in 2012 and based on the three pillars of Comprehensive School Safety (CSS). In 2016, the Department of Primary and Mass Education in Bangladesh modified and introduced the CSS Framework for all primary schools across the country. Gender has been mainstreamed in the framework for DRR and EiE under inclusive education: “*Inclusive education acknowledges that all children can learn, acknowledge and respect differences in children: age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, HIV and TB status, etc. It enables education structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all children and is part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society*”. In addition, gender has been mainstreamed into pillar 1 (Safe Learning Facilities) of the framework for DRR and EiE in Bangladesh whereby it mentions that safe school construction needs to take *special needs of different gender and persons with disability into the design and implementation*.

Noted achievements have been made in institutional reforms and scale of efforts to improve proactive DRM and building climate resilience which have promoted gender mainstreaming into the existing national policies, frameworks, and plans in the country but some challenges remain. The DRR status report 2019 that reports progress against the SFDRR global targets, notes that there are still over 1.2 million Rohingya refugees in need of humanitarian assistance: a situation at that time estimated to require over US\$920 million in funding to maintain priority response efforts (such as food security, WASH and shelter) (UNHCR, 2019). In 2021, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh continue to require humanitarian assistance as the crisis marks its fourth year. Alongside the social challenges, issues related to financing, capacity, coordination and accountability are also prevalent in the country (UNDRR, 2020). For example: financing for all DRM and CCA efforts requires massive investment. As of the 2020 reporting, severe funding gaps were noted in the post-disaster phases, with the implications likely to carry on into the long-term future (UNDRR, 2020).

Indeed, all these above policy, frameworks and plans illustrate the commitment of the Government of Bangladesh towards upholding the rights of women and girls in the society. However, there is a need for further efforts to put these policies and plans into action, with the financial allocations to achieve it. For example, the Bangladesh Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as of 2020 made no mention of gender at all. Furthermore, the Gender Responsive Budget with the ministries still faces a funding issue. While the share of expenditure on women's development as a proportion of total budget increased from 24.65 per cent in FY2010 to 29.65 per cent in FY2019 ([General Economics Division, 2020](#)).

Nepal: The legal instrument for DRM in Nepal such as the Natural Calamity (Relief) Act, 1982, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2017, National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018-2023, and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy Action Plan 2018-2030 (NDRRSAP) have been developed by building on the foundations of DRM through robust, complementary legislative frameworks (UNDRR, 2019). The [National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy Action Plan 2018-2030](#) (NDRRSAP) has been developed in accordance with the international declarations and commitments such as SFDRR, the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of SFDRR 2015-2030, and the Cancun Declaration. The NDRRSAP takes into account experiences gained from the implementation of the National Strategy for DRM 2009, experiences and lessons learned from recent major disasters including the Gorkha earthquake (2015), and initiatives on climate change adaptation and the SDGs. The long-term vision of the strategic action plan “*is to build a safer, adaptive and resilient nation from disaster risk for sustainable development*” (Ministry of Home Affairs Nepal, 2019).

Nepal National policies/frameworks/plans on Disaster Risk Management and climate change:

- Natural Calamity (Relief) Act, 1982
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2017
- Environment Protection Act, 2076 (Chapter 4 deals with climate change)
- The National Disaster Plan for DRM 1996
- National Strategy for DRM (NSDRM) 2009
- National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018-2023 (National DRR policy)
- National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy Action Plan 2018-2030 (NDRRSAP)
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Regulation (2019)
- National Climate Change Policy (2019) (replaced Climate Change Policy 2011)
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) Development Guidelines 2017
- CSS Master Plan 2017
- CSS Minimum Package 2018
- CSS Implementation Guidelines 2019
- National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) 2010. Review is in process, postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- National Framework on Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) in 2011

Gender has been integrated throughout the entire document of NDRRSAP 2018-2030. The Gender and Social Inclusion and Governance Sector which is co-led by the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens was one of the thematic working groups that recommended activities related to their sectors to be included in the strategic action plan. As a result, gender is reflected under the strategic activities of the NDRRSAP such as “*1) Implement gender sensitive and inclusive approach in all the processes of Disaster Risk Management, 2) Prepare and implement guidelines for the security of vulnerable groups and prevention of gender violence during emergency, and 3) Prepare Gender Equality and Social Inclusion action plan for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management at each level and sector*”. Moreover, among the strategic activities under the NDRRSAP 2018-2030 is to “*Allocate adequate budget including Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in annual programs by all sectoral agencies*” (Ministry of Home Affairs Nepal, 2019).

Gender and climate change linkages have been researched extensively in Nepal. [The National Climate Change Policy \(NCCP\) 2019](#) has its goal “*To contribute to socio-economic prosperity of the nation by building a climate resilient society*”, and one of the objectives under the Policy was “*To mainstream Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) into climate change mitigation and adaptation programs*”. The NCCP also demonstrates strong linkages between climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) as DRRM was one of the inter-sectoral policies/strategies which would be adopted based on the guidance from the NCCP for attaining the aforementioned goal and objectives (Ministry of Forest and Environment, 2019). Existing frameworks such as the National Framework on Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) in 2011 and revised in 2019 and the National Adaptation Plan of Action in 2010 and Climate Change Gender Action Plan

2012¹² will be updated and implemented based on the revised version of the NCCP 2019 (Ministry of Forest and Environment, 2019). This has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government of Nepal (GoN) initiated mainstreaming of DRR into the curriculum from the early 1990s from which safe school initiatives have gradually broadened their scope, from structural integrity to include disaster and climate change education, and preparedness and response planning. The School Sector Development Plan 2016-2023 in Nepal identified school safety and resilience education as one of five dimensions for strengthening school education (MoEST 2016). Therefore, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) has developed the CSS Master Plan (MoEST 2017) based on the three pillars of the global CSS Framework (UNISDR and GADRRRES 2017). A key part of the Nepal CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package has been developed as a guide for creating the minimum level of acceptable safety in all of Nepal's schools, including in public and private schools from pre-school through to higher secondary level in public and private schools ([CEHRDC, 2018](#)). In addition, the GoN has developed CSS Implementation Guidelines of which the overall objective of the guidelines is *"to guide the operationalization of the CSS Minimum Package in a systematic and strategic way, including by specifying the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders to promote the minimum level of school safety at all levels of public and private schools including early childhood development centres"* ([CSS Implementation Guidelines, 2019](#)).

Gender has been well integrated across the CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines of Nepal. For example: one of the outcomes of the CSS Minimum Package, 2018 was *"to establish the foundation for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) friendly school safety as the basis for scaling up towards comprehensive school safety in all Nepal's schools"*. The CSS Implementation Guidelines, 2019 mentioned that each school should have a *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) focal teacher (one per school) under CSS Personnel*. The concept of gender, child and disability disaggregated data is one of the topics to guide on training school trainers on CSS (CSS Implementation Guidelines, 2019).

In conclusion, Nepal has expressed its commitment to grow through resilient development aligned with international agendas and frameworks such as the SDGs, SFDRR, the Paris Climate Change Agreement and CSSF. However, the Nepal DRR status report 2019 noting progress against SFDRR mentioned that Nepal still faces some challenges to achieve the SFDRR global targets. For example: 1) Collecting, analysing and managing disaster and climate related data remains inadequate, and it is not accessible to many of the local level planners and the private sector, 2) Local capacities, and the ability of sub-national level disaster authorities needs to be highlighted as a high priority for the government as they are the first responders, 3) Because economic growth in Nepal is highly reliant on utilizing the "window of opportunity", managing trade-offs between sustainable development and economic growth in a context characterized by numerous hazards and severe impacts of climate change is increasingly important and necessary to consider in development planning (UNDRR, 2019). When it comes to climate change, Nepal is currently preparing an updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) report for submission to the UNFCCC in 2021. Nepal's NDC 2020 report could not be rated due to it only including several targets on clean energy, afforestation, sustainable transport systems, climate friendly practices in agriculture, and waste management and building codes, but not against its economy-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction target (Climate Action Tracker, Nepal country profile, 2021).

Overall, Nepal has made progressive national commitments on gender and inclusion at the national level in the policy instruments, and in strategic plans such as the NDRRSAP 2018-2030 and NCCP 2019, CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines. While *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)* principles have been integrated throughout all documents, these are not always translated into implementation at the local level, except where

¹² Nepal developed its Climate Change Gender Action Plan for six priority sectors: agriculture; forest; water; energy; health; and urbanization (Nepal Climate Change Gender Action Plan, 2012).

supported by NGOs, and the disparity between disadvantaged and marginalised groups and the rest of the school-aged population continues to increase (SSDP Update, 2020).

Key informant interviews with local and federal government officials, NGO and CBO workers and national DRR, CCA and gender professionals revealed that Nepal's policy landscape is indeed gender-sensitive although the operationalization and prioritization during annual planning and budgeting remains challenging. As the majority of policies including NDRRSAP 2018-2030, NCCP 2019, CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines were formulated between 2017 and 2020 following the reformation of Nepal's government under a federal structure during 2015-2016, true implementation of these policies is challenging. In particular, the absence of technical human and financial resources, limited supporting arms of these policies and guidelines, and poor political commitment from the local and provincial governments hinders implementation. There is a gap between policy and practice and development partners and humanitarian agencies should work together with Nepal's government to reduce those gaps.

4.2.3. Strengthen the national school-based management frameworks/guidelines to be gender transformative

As Nepal and Bangladesh have adapted the global CSS Framework to the country context, leveraging the global CSS framework to be gender transformative is the most strategic direction to promote development and implementation of a national gender transformative CSS framework in the two countries and to other countries in the world. The global CSS Framework requires review and update to make it more gender transformative to support the implementation of the SFDRR, and also to address emerging hazards like the COVID-19 pandemic. A guideline on gender transformative implementation of safe school programming of Plan International Asia-Regional Hub can be used as a guidance document to influence the update of the global CSS Framework. In addition, the evidence brief from this research can be developed as an entry point to advocate with the Asia Pacific Coalition on School Safety (APCSS) and the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Education (GADRRES) members for further actions to update the global CSS Framework in which Plan International is well placed to do as lead of APCSS, and a member of GADRRES.

At the country level, Nepal and Bangladesh are at different stages when it comes to gender mainstreaming into the country CSS Framework.

For Bangladesh, the current Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Education in Emergencies (EiE), was developed from 2014, adapted from the global CSS Framework. Bangladesh's DRR and EiE Framework is gender aware (detailed analysis in 4.2.2), aiming only to improve the daily condition of women and girls by addressing practical gender needs. The Framework does not attempt to transform gender relations nor improve the social position of girls and women in school-based DRM. Based on Plan International's six elements that underpin gender transformative work, language under the DRR and EiE framework should be adopted that moves beyond women and girls as 'vulnerable' to equal actors and agents of change and it needs to be revised with consideration to make it gender transformative:

1. The DRR and EiE framework should have tools to assess how gender norms influence how girls and boys experience disasters risks and climate hazards differently. These assessment tools should be included in the Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA) of the DRR and EiE framework before developing the school safety plan.
2. The DRR and EiE framework should have indicators and interventions to strengthen girls' and young women's agency over the decisions that affect them, by building their knowledge, confidence, skills and access to and control over resources on school-based disaster risk management.
3. The DRR and EiE framework should have indicators and interventions to work with and support boys, young men and men to embrace positive masculinities and to promote gender equality in the school-based disaster risk management, while also achieving meaningful results for them.
4. The DRR and EiE framework should consider girls, boys, young women and young men in all their diversity while identifying and responding to their needs and interests before, during and after a disaster to build safe schools.
5. The DRR and EiE framework should have indicators and interventions to improve the conditions (daily needs) and social position (value or status) of girls and young women on school-based DRM.
6. The DRR and EiE framework should foster an enabling environment where all stakeholders work together to support children and youth on their journey towards gender equality on school-based DRM.

Six elements that underpin Plan International's gender transformative work:

1. Understand and address how gender norms influence children throughout their **life-course**, from birth through to adulthood.
2. Work to strengthen girls' and young women's **agency** over the decisions that affect them, by building their knowledge, confidence, skills and access to and control over resources.
3. Work with and support **boys, young men and men** to embrace positive masculinities and to promote gender equality, while also achieving meaningful results for them.
4. Consider **girls, boys, young women and young men** in all their diversity when identifying and responding to their needs and interests.
5. Improve the **conditions** (daily needs) and **social position** (value or status) of girls and young women.
6. Foster an **enabling environment** where all stakeholders work together to support children and youth on their journey towards gender equality.

Source: Plan International Guidance Note: Gender Transformative Education and Programming

For Nepal, Nepal's CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines have adopted a gender transformative approach to a certain extent. Nepal's CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines are addressing gender norms throughout the life-course and make a provision of working with boys, young men, and men to embrace gender equality and exercise positive and diverse masculinities but not very explicitly. Other elements like (i) strengthening girls' and young women's agency, (ii) advancing both the condition and position of girls, young women, and women, (iii) responding to the needs and interests of girls and boys in all their diversity and (iv) fostering an enabling environment for gender equality and girls' rights, are included to some extent. Based on the literature review and interview with key informants in communities, schools, and with local and federal government representatives as well as national-level professionals in the sector, it was found that there is room for improvement in the following ways:

1. *Inclusion of all categories of children irrespective of caste, gender, and disability: scholarships, distribution of materials, gender- and disability-friendly school facilities* as these issues are not explicitly addressed in the CSS Implementing Guidelines of Nepal, hence there is a risk that children from marginalised families would be left out from the services.
2. *Working in collaboration with many I/NGOs, UN agencies to remove the gender barriers that limit girls (especially marginalised girls) from accessing schooling and participation in the school-*

based disaster risk management activities. Note that the CSS Implementation Guidelines of Nepal do not yet include this component.

3. *Gender responsive budgeting: investment in toilets with uninterrupted water supply and sanitary pad disposal facility, sanitary pad distribution, facility of nurse/assistant and basic medicines available in school.* Given the current situation is that the gender responsive budgeting does not explicitly address these pertinent issues of girls at school.
4. *Addressing structural inequalities and societal transformations through awareness: community awareness sessions, campaigns against CEFM, gender-based violence, discrimination, and bullying* as the existing CSS Implementing Guidelines of Nepal needs to address these important issues categorically to serve the girls from the marginalised communities.
5. Gender-based redistributive principles integrated in policies, practices, and social protection systems: mandatory gender equality and social inclusion focal teacher to supervise gender-based issues, fifty per cent women representation in decision making roles, disaster committees (based on population ratio), and task forces. These provisions are at place under the CSS Implementation Guidelines, but due to limited human and financial resources as well as low political commitment of local governments, there is still challenges in translating these provisions into practice.
6. Incorporate gender mainstreaming: gender mainstreaming topic during parents' awareness sessions, mandatory *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion* focal teacher to supervise gender-based issues, include gender audit during school safety assessment as there is a need for sensitizing head teachers, SMCs, PTAs along with education units of local governments about the policy provisions and guiding how those provisions would be implemented.
7. Meaningful participation of children including from marginalised groups: include children in decision-making while formulating disaster risk reduction, evacuation, and capacity building plans and strategies at school and community level, and ensure their concerns are heard and addressed by including them in disaster management committees and task forces. Although the framework refers to children, it does not reference specific categories of children: girls and boys (including consideration to age), children with disabilities and children and young people identifying as LGBTQ+. Hence, there is still risk of non-participation of these categories of children in institutions, as well as in the decision-making process to claim their rights and entitlements.
8. Ensure girls are given a leadership role and promote girls in leadership, with attention to barriers that limit their participation. Emphasize leadership skills development of girls that is supported by peers, teachers, parents, community members, and relevant institutions (e.g. religious, other) and promote and disseminate good examples of this, as this is missing in the CSS Implementation Guidelines of Nepal.

4.3. Gender norms and stereotypes

4.3.1. Country Context, Gender Norms and Stereotypes

Globally, the commitment to advancing gender equality has brought about improvements in some areas, but the promise of a world in which every woman and girl enjoy full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed remains unfulfilled (Global SDG progress, 2021). In all South Asian countries, patriarchal values and social norms keep gender inequalities alive. Girls are systematically disadvantaged across the region as structural inequalities and the low status of women affect their rights. Social norms in South Asia prioritise a son receiving higher education, so the girl child must struggle twice as hard to survive and fulfil her potential (UNICEF South Asia 2018).

In **Bangladesh**, gender norms are intimately bound up with religious beliefs and cultural practices. Bangladesh is a largely Muslim country with 87.12 per cent of the population practicing Islam, with Hindus the largest minority at 11.78 per cent, followed by Buddhists (0.6 per cent), Christians (0.4 per cent), and others (0.1 per cent) (Demographics of Bangladesh, 2020). Bangladesh is a man-

centred, patriarchal society with rules of purdah¹³ minimizing interaction between the sexes. It isolates women socially, and defines acceptable and desirable behaviours and traits for women such as submissive, ignorant, and not independent from men (Nidhi K, 2009). Women are dependent on men throughout their lives, with the dominant members in the patriarchal society starting at home: fathers, husbands, brothers, sons (Farhana Haque, 2019). Further, Bangladesh as a hierarchical society awards respect due to age and position. Bangladeshis expect the most senior man, by age or position, to make decisions that are in the best interests of the group.

From childhood to adulthood, young girls to adolescents and adult women, face more limitations on their access to education, employment, health care, and other domains, than men. Women are only entitled to reproductive purposes and bound to do their household works, and they are not allowed to work outside of the home. Men mostly own and inherit the familial land and women are deprived of these ownership and inheritance rights (Institute of Economic Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia 2015). In general, parents show differential treatment toward their daughters and sons from birth. Among poorer households, many parents think that there is no return from a girl child, rather a girl comes as a burden to her parents with the associated marriage responsibilities and dowry requirements when compared to their boy child (Islam and Akter, Arts Social Sci J., 2018). Because of these stereotypical gendered ideas about who should play what role in family or society in general, the girl child is more likely to be married off early and/or to drop out of school, which also often leads to child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). Bangladesh has the highest prevalence of child marriage in South Asia and ranks among 10 countries in the world with the highest incidence. Among the country's entire population of girls and women, 38 million married before the age of 18; of those, 13 million married before 15 years of age. An estimated 51 per cent of women who are currently aged 20-24 were married while they were still children (UNICEF, 2020).

When it comes to gender-based violence, social norms prescribe domestic violence and intimate partner violence as exclusively private matters; as a result, the actual number of cases are never known; 25.4 per cent of women think partner (husband) violence is justified (MICS 2019). Within this context, violence against women and girls in Bangladesh appears to have further increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Need Assessment Working Group's Anticipatory Assessment Report reveals 49.2 per cent of women and girls feel safety and security is an issue in the current lockdown. The Human Rights Watch Report October 2020, Gender Monitoring Network consultation and BRAC study on COVID-19 in the slums, support the assumption of increased domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh.

Women in Bangladesh on average performed 3.43 times more unpaid domestic care work than men (BBS Gender Statistics 2018). During the COVID-19 lockdown, school closures and the entire family staying at home has further exacerbated the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women. This unpaid work is even more difficult for woman headed households and single mothers (UN Women in 2020). Despite the deeply ingrained gender norms that limit the participation of women and girls across all spheres, it is important to note that in the urban areas of Bangladesh, a lot of women in Dhaka and other cities with large populations are working in many sectors including alongside men. Women exceed 50 per cent of the agricultural labour force (FAO, 2016). Young women are the leading labour force in the country's garment industry, and in the health sector, nursing and midwifery roles are largely performed by women, with midwifery dominated by a recent cadre of women under the age of 25 years. It is important to note that working women too are adversely affected by prevailing gender norms. In a 2018 study of midwifery quality care in Bangladesh (Bogrin et al.), young midwives highlight the challenges and cultural prejudice they face in the workforce due to the "cultural norms that have been shaped by beliefs associated with religion, society, and gender norms" and in turn how this affects quality of care in the country (BMC Health Service Research, 2018). The COVID-19 Bangladesh Rapid Gender Analysis by UN Women in 2020 found that women are vulnerable to infections and risk to their lives due to COVID-19 as more than

¹³ Purdah (seclusion), literally meaning veil or curtain, is the main barrier to women's mobility, placing strict boundaries on women and determining and defining their roles in society and the family.

94 per cent of nurses are women and more than 90 per cent of community health workers are women.

Besides all the challenges, Bangladesh scores 72.6 per cent in its overall gender gap and ranks 50th on the Global Gender Gap Index¹⁴. It is the only one of the South Asian countries featured in the top 100 countries, ahead of Nepal (101st), Sri Lanka (102nd), and India (112th). Bangladesh ranked at 50 because the country has a strong performance on the Political Empowerment sub index (score of 54.5 per cent, ranking 7th out of 153 countries worldwide) where women have had a longer tenure than men at the helm of the state over the past 50 years. Currently, the Speaker of the National Parliament, the Prime Minister, and Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the House are all women (World Economic Forum, 2020). In the economic sphere, as of 2018, 38 per cent of adult women were part of the labour force (up from 34 per cent in 2017), compared with 84 per cent of men. Only one in 10 leadership roles is occupied by a woman, and the estimated average annual income of women is 40 per cent that of men (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Nepal: Gender norms and stereotypes in Nepal vary with context, caste, ethnic group, religion, and socio-economic class. Overwhelmingly, the traditional family structure is grounded in the belief that men have pre-eminence over women. Women and girls in Nepal are suppressed by traditional practices like the dowry system, child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), son-preference, stigmatization of widows, seclusion of women (purdah¹⁵), domestic violence, polygamy, and the segregation of women and girls during menstruation (chhaupadi¹⁶), among others.

The expectation that girls will assume greater domestic workload is still very common in Nepal irrespective of religion or ethnicity, which impedes teenage girls in particular, from focusing on their studies. Further, more vulnerable families can often only afford to send one child to school and the preference is to educate sons. It is typically girls who are the first to be denied schooling in the aftermath of extreme events, as their education is given less priority than that of boys (Plan Nepal, 2012). The percentage of literate women is 57.7 per cent as compared to 75.6 per cent of men showing a big gap between the sexes (UNESCO, 2018).

Nepal has the 16th highest prevalence rate of CEFM in the world and the 17th highest absolute number of child brides – 662,000 which is the third highest rate of CEFM in Asia, after Bangladesh and India. CEFM is common in Nepal. About 40 per cent of girls in Nepal marry before age 18 and 7 per cent are married by age 15, in spite of the fact that the minimum age of marriage under Nepali law is 20 years of age. Boys also often marry young in Nepal, though in lower numbers than girls. An estimated 10 per cent of Nepalese boys are married before the age of 18 (Girls Not Brides 2019). The National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage (2016) notes that children's vulnerability to child marriage increases during emergencies. A study conducted by Safe to Learn (2020) found that the girls are also victims of traditional practices such as early and forced marriage, dowry-related abuse, and sex trafficking.

In Nepal, Gender Based Violence (GBV) is the leading cause of violence-related deaths. In 2017, 149 people were killed as a result of GBV of which 140 were women (World Bank, 2019). According to the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016, 23 per cent of women have reported

¹⁴ The Global Gender Gap Index benchmark the national gender gaps on economic, education, health and political criteria

¹⁵ Pardah or purdah is a religious and social practice of woman seclusion prevalent among some Muslim and Hindu communities. It takes two forms: physical segregation of the sexes and the requirement that women cover their bodies so as to cover their skin and conceal their form. This tradition is inaugurated by Muslims and later adopted by various Hindus, and that involves the seclusion of women from public observation by means of concealing clothing (including the veil) and by the use of high-walled enclosures, screens, and curtains within the home.

¹⁶ Chaupadi pratha is a tradition practiced for centuries that banishes women during their menstruation period from the house. Despite a ban being imposed by the Supreme Court on the chaupadi tradition in 2004, it is a practice that is still heavily widespread in the mid and western regions of Nepal. Its history is said to be from religious practices where it was believed that Gods and Goddesses were angered at women staying in the family house at such a time. According to religious folklore, Indra, the King of Heaven was accused of killing a Brahmin and because of the illicit acts with women that Indra committed during his quest to redeem his sin, for these acts all women were said to be punished through menstruation.

experiencing physical violence and 7 per cent of women aged 15-49 have experienced sexual violence. The most commonly reported perpetrator of physical violence among married women is their husbands (84 per cent). Factors such as a woman's age, caste/ethnicity, wealth status, ecological zone, region and number of living children can all impact the degree to which she may experience spousal violence, with Muslim women generally experiencing the highest level (55 per cent). Rural women are more likely to have experienced physical violence (22 per cent) than urban women (19 per cent) (CARE, 2015). During the COVID-19 pandemic, there are several reports of a number of women facing violence in the lockdown. The Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) reports that since the lockdown 336 women and children reported incidences of violence of which more than 55 per cent of cases involved violence from partners and 21 per cent from other family members (WOREC, 5 May 2020). However, there was a decrease in reported violence noted in the UN Women Gender Equality update 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic which could be due to women's inability to leave the house physically or make phone calls owing to the proximity of the abuser in the house itself (CARE, 2020)

The participation of women in the labour force is 26.3 per cent as opposed to 53.8 per cent of men (National Planning Commission, 2020). On the other hand, women in Nepal spent more time on unpaid work with an estimated two-thirds of all unpaid production work done by women (ILO, 2020). During the COVID-19 lockdown, women's unpaid care and domestic workload increased between 18-22 hours each day, from the usual six to 10 hours. The burden of household and care work has not been shared equally among other family members owing to the traditional gender division of labour that assigns this role to women (CARE 2020).

Besides all the challenges, educated women from a high caste has more opportunities to work outside her house than a rural Dalit¹⁷ women. In politics, women hold 33.8 per cent of seats in the national parliament, while it is 34.4 per cent in provincial parliaments and 40.75 per cent in local government bodies (National Planning Commission, 2020).

4.3.2. Existing gender norms and stereotypes in the project target areas

Results of KIs and FGDs in the research locations found that gender stereotypes are deeply ingrained in the society, social norms, and traditions of both Nepal and Bangladesh.

"Patriarchal", "patrilineal", and "patrilocal" man-dominated concepts shape the perceptions and practices of Bangladesh and Nepal Society in general. Son bias¹⁸ is deeply rooted in the mindset of parents in the research locations of both countries. Nepalese and Bangladeshi culture is a patriarchal one where a son inherits his parent's property, takes his father's name, and stays with his parents in their old age. Thus, discrimination between boys and girls begins right from the start when the baby is in the womb and continues throughout life in the way parents take care of a child, provides food and education.

In **Bangladesh**, the majority of research participants from teachers, boys and girls (both in and out of schools) and members from the gender working group shared that parents do not consider their girl child to be an independent individual. Parents in the community still believe that the girl child needs to assist their mother with household work (unpaid work) such as taking care of younger siblings and they believe that the girls cannot get a good job. They believe that the boy child can take care of the cow for grazing, and boys can engage in different income earning activities at an early age to benefit the family. Boys are given more priority at home and in the community and their decisions are valued more than girls as girls are viewed as weak.

¹⁷ **Dalit** is a name for people belonging to the lowest caste in Nepal, characterized as "untouchability." They are not only discriminated by the so-called higher caste people in the Hindu system, but also by people within the same caste. Dalit women suffer much more than Dalit men.

<https://www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section2/2002/12/dalits-in-nepal-story-of-discrimination.html>

¹⁸ **Son Bias:** Preference of sons can be explained by an attitude: a belief that boys have more value than girls. It can be defined as a gender bias as well.

Similarly, in **Nepal**, according to the group discussion and in-depth interviews, boys are perceived as brave and strong. Parents believe their sons will take care of them in their old age and should be given a good education and learning opportunities so that they are able to find a well-paid job in the future. On the other hand, girls are perceived as weak and needing protection, and more suited to managing the household. Parents view them as temporary members of the family who will leave them as soon as they grow up to live with their husband and his family. Thus, they believe that investing in girls' education is not very important. Rather, they should be taught household work so they can manage their husband's house responsibly after marriage. These perceptions of parents were reported in all focus group discussions (FGDs), and especially highlighted in FGDs with teachers in Chandrakamal Secondary School. Teachers explained that as a result of parental influence, girls were more focused on household responsibilities and boys on entertainment. A higher workload at home hindered girls' education.

Most of the girl children interviewed for this research are of the view that even when their parents are educated and aware about gender equality, their actions are sometimes guided by social pressure rooted in patrilineal and patriarchal beliefs and traditions. Similar observations were reflected in the group discussions with teachers and in-depth interviews with CBO/NGO members.

“..even when parents are educated, they can be influenced by social norms. For example, they think our brother will take care of them when they grow old, so they are more concerned about his education, his career and his future...” –IDI with girls, Chandrakamal School, Marchaiya, Nepal

However, all groups of respondents including children recognize that gender norms and stereotypes are changing due to improved awareness, education, and sensitization through radio, TV, social media, and school. Many girls claimed that they and their man siblings were treated equally at home because their parents were educated.

4.3.3. Impact of gender norms and stereotypes on educational continuity and attainment

The governments of Bangladesh and Nepal have made a commitment to fulfilling the right to education of its people, and in turn significant efforts have been made towards ensuring access to educational services for all. The compulsory level of education in Bangladesh¹⁹ and Nepal is the same which is completion of grade 8 (WENR, 2019). Bangladesh and Nepal have achieved a net enrolment rate for primary education (97.97 per cent in Bangladesh and 97.2 per cent for Nepal in 2018/2019). Bangladesh and Nepal have achieved the Gender Parity Index²⁰ (GPI, BLD:1.075 in 2018, Nepal: 1.06 in 2019) value higher than one at primary school. It means that there are more girls in primary schools than boys. For secondary school education, Bangladesh still achieved 1.19 GPI value while Nepal was only 0.95. It means the number of girls who access secondary schooling in Nepal compared to boys is less than in Bangladesh. However, GPI value of Bangladesh was less than 1 (0.93) at the tertiary level and it is way below one for technical education (GPI: 0.72) (General

A Statistical Snapshot of Status of Education Bangladesh 2019

Girls	Boys	Girls	National
Net enrolment rate			
Primary school	83 %	89%	86%
Lower secondary school	51%	65%	58%
Upper secondary school	43%	53%	48%
Completion rate			
Primary school	76%	89%	83%
Lower secondary school	59%	71%	65%
Upper secondary school	32%	27%	29%

Source: The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was carried out in 2019 by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics with support from UNICEF.

¹⁹ Primary school: grade 1 to 5, Lower secondary school: grade 6 to 8, Upper secondary school: grade 9 to 10, High secondary school: grade 11 to 12. In Bangladesh MICS 2019, all analysis for the upper secondary category includes class 9 to class 12.

²⁰ The gender parity index (GPI) is defined as the ratio of woman to man enrolment rates, gross or net. When GPI has a value of one, woman enrolment and man enrolment rates are equal. A value of less (more) than one indicates that proportionately less (more) women have enrolled than men.

Economics Division, 2020 for Bangladesh and National Planning Commission, 2020 for Nepal). Challenges are observed for both countries in accessing upper secondary schooling for girls and boys (UNICEF South Asia, 2019). For example: in **Bangladesh**, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey carried out in 2019 by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics with support from UNICEF found 83 per cent of children in Bangladesh completed primary school, but only 29 per cent of children completed upper secondary school. In the upper secondary school, girls' completion rate was less than boys' (27 per cent versus 32 per cent). Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a risk that more than 45 per cent of the secondary level students in the country will not return to schools once education resumes due to these households falling below the poverty line (DhakaTribune, August 2020).

For **Nepal**, the primary enrolment rate increased to 97.2 per cent in 2018/2019, with gender parity also almost achieved. However, due to sociocultural and economic factors, by the time girls reach higher secondary school (grade 11), more than 80 per cent are already out of school (Brookings, 2019). The COVID-19 school closure is likely to increase drop-out rates in Nepal as it is estimated that only 56 per cent of people in Nepal have access to internet. According to Pandit (2020), only 13 per cent of schools might be able to run online classes (though 35 per cent of schools have access to internet). The drop-out rate may rise due to economic burden on households. With job losses experienced in many households it is likely that some parents may not be able to afford their children to attend school (or university) and children may need to work to provide economic support to their family. It is believed the situation will be worse in rural areas.²¹

Based on the results from the research in Sunsari district of Nepal and Kurigram district of Bangladesh, gender norms and stereotypes practiced in the home and society of the research locations in both countries affects access to education and growth opportunities for children especially girls. It impacts upon children's education in five ways for both countries:

- a. Impact on drop-out rate
- b. Impact on school attendance
- c. Impact on study time
- d. Impact on participation in extra-curricular activities
- e. Impact on continuation of higher education

a. Impact on drop-out rate

Girls in Nepal and Bangladesh face the highest levels of child marriage and adolescent childbearing in the South Asia region. The association between educational attainment, particularly secondary school completion and child marriage is evident in both Bangladesh and Nepal. Girls who married after the age of 18 in both countries had remarkably higher secondary completion rates. In contrast, high levels of school drop outs after primary school has been observed among women aged 20–24 who married before the age of 18, in both settings: 35 per cent of Nepalese women and 49 per cent of Bangladeshi women who had married before the age of 18 did not complete secondary schooling, compared to only 13 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively, who did (UNICEF South Asia, 2019).

Research from the target locations in both countries found the common issue of the Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM) in Bangladesh and Nepal society is directly correlated to the school drop-out rate. Boys and girls are affected differently by the social norms of CEFM: boys could not complete their education as they are sent to work while girls stop their education for household work after marriage.

In **Bangladesh**, the majority of research respondents from the FGDs with parents confirmed that the people in these communities, especially poor families, withdrew their girl child from school because of CEFM. Girls are mostly married off between the ages of 12 to 16 years of age. Once a girl child is married off, her in-laws do not allow her to go back to school, as a result, her education comes to

²¹ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED609894.pdf>

a stop. In this way, the practice of dowry and early marriage, alongside poverty remains a barrier to girls' education. The findings from the research are well aligned with the UNICEF report which found that 78 per cent of girls under 18 were married in 2014 (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2014). In 2020, there were 291 child marriages in Kurigram alone between January and August 2020 which was higher during this eight month period when compared to the pre COVID-19 pandemic (Plan International Bangladesh 2020). It is aligned with BRAC's 2020 research findings that at least eight per cent of the total marriages in February and March in Kurigram were child marriages, rising to nine per cent in April and 11 per cent in May 2020. BRAC's research, corroborated by the field research, found that the monitoring mechanism against child marriages has fallen apart during the pandemic. The anti-child marriage committee in Kurigram did not hold any meetings and they could not conduct door to door visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, although there were many complaints of child marriages over the hotline (BRAC, 2020).

In **Nepal**, the majority of teachers during FGDs expressed that girls' education is not perceived as a worthwhile investment by families, kin groups and the wider neighbourhood as it is thought that any benefits from their education is transferred to their husband's family after marriage.

In many societies, especially in Madhesi and Tharu communities where the traditional practice of CEFM still prevails, some parents even pressure their daughters to marry elderly men. Adolescent girls forced into early marriage often have little knowledge of reproductive health, and gender norms that restrict mobility hinder their access to health services (Plan International and ICRW, 2013).

'The risk of school dropout due to marriage heightens after girls complete the seventh grade. In our society, married girls are many times more likely to drop out of the school than unmarried girls. Poverty, lack of access to education, child labour, pressures from kith and kin and neighbours for marriage, are the factors determining dropout rates of girls.' FGD with teachers _ Chandrakamal school, Nepal

Research participants estimated that between 18 to 25 per cent of dropouts were associated with CEFM.

"..parents may also force girls into child marriage or marriage for economic gain during times of emergency when there is economic strain on the family...." –FGD with teachers, and head teachers, Janak School, Salbani, Nepal

Experiences related to CEFM in the research sites match wider research and findings across the country, and over time. Plan Nepal (2012) found that cultural norms, values, and societal pressure to 'preserve girls' purity' account for child, early and forced marriage, which in turn forces girls to manage additional household responsibilities instead of focusing on studies. Recurrent disaster shocks, financial crises induced from disasters like COVID-19 further propagate these practices. When there are financial crises within the family, families take decisions to invest in one child only and the boy is the first choice for this investment. Even if schooling is continued after marriage, pregnancy is often a cause for discontinuing education. These findings are also supported by the recent study carried out by MoEST in 2020 of Government of Nepal.

b. Impact on school attendance

Gender norms and stereotypes affect school attendance of girls in many different ways, for many different reasons. Findings from the project target areas in both countries revealed that many girls skip school when they are menstruating because of poor sanitation facilities at school. Similar findings have been cited in studies of Plan Nepal in 2012 and the Annual Primary School Census (APSC) from Bangladesh in 2017. Similarly, girls in FGDs in **Bangladesh** shared that menstruation was a key reason for school absences, due to discomfort especially when there is no separate toilet facility for girls.

In **Nepal**, more than 95 per cent of girl respondents during FGDs said that not having gender friendly WASH facilities has a profound impact on girls' school attendance.

'The school does not have good ventilation and lighting in the toilets. Also, waste management, particularly of used sanitary pads, is a big problem that discourages school attendance during this time' Janak school _FGD_Girls, Nepal

In both countries, the majority of respondents from FGDs and KIIs confirmed that long travel times and an unsafe commute to school are among the reasons children are missing school. Children from poor families tend to live in risky areas some distance from school. The need to spend long hours doing household chores coupled with long travel time to school makes children, especially girls, miss school. Distance is one of the determining factors for the discontinuation of school. Long travel distance to school and associated risk (teasing, bullying and other abuse) in between home and school sometimes raises high concerns about girls' physical safety.

'The distance to school is long so reaching school on time is a challenge. It takes almost two hours just to reach school, and the heat of the summer and risky and dusty road conditions do not help' -IDI_girls_Auliya school.

'Marginalised students of caste "Majhi" and "Chamar" are more vulnerable as they live far away from the school and have to commute through risky routes. They have to cross a forest to get to school and are at risk of wild animal attacks (the study area lies in the buffer zone of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve). Their community is also vulnerable to fire hazard' FGD_Teachers_head teacher_Auliya school.

'The route from home to school is full of risks. The road is often inundated with the water used for irrigation, and cattle are tied on the road such that people may trip on the ropes and fall. Electric poles and wires are not maintained and are unstable. Children are afraid to cross the river in the monsoon because there is no reliable bridge and it is difficult to estimate the depth of inundated water during the monsoon.' Chandrakamal school_FGD_Girls

From Nepal

c. Impact on study time

In terms of study time, the results from the research found that for many girls from both countries, they are extremely busy with household chores to the detriment of their study time. Girls have less time to study at home than boys. **In Bangladesh**, the major respondents from KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs said that the mind-set of parents and people of the community is such that girls cannot work, they need to be engaged in household chores only. Their roles for family and society are decided by their parents which are highly influenced by the community as a whole. When girls want to study, mothers ask them to take care of their younger siblings, and to assist them in household chores.

The parents in the communities believe that "As the girls cannot assist in disaster risk management, it's better to involve them in the households only by making food" _ parents in three communities, Bangladesh.

In Nepal, the major respondents from KIIs with stakeholders from NGOs and CBOs shared that the girls and children from low economic class hardly get any time to study at home due to the burden of household chores or other unpaid income generating activities such as helping parents in shops or on the farm. The findings have been confirmed by all respondents of the study (girls, boys, teachers, CBOs/NGOs) as well as parents and other community members that educational attainment of a child was determined more by the economic class of the child's family than the child's gender in low economic class families. It was also observed that the choice of children's education is largely dependent upon the level of earning of the family. Daughters are automatically pulled out from formal education when families face any financial crises.

"...students from lower economic class such as from "Motey" and "Urab" families often miss school during extreme weather because they do not have umbrellas or other essential study materials, and often live in areas which are vulnerable to flooding or other disasters. After every disaster, children have to support their families to repair and maintain their collapsed houses. They also miss school due to other imperatives at home..." –FGD with Teachers, Janak School, Salbani, Nepal

Many girls find that household work is their greatest barrier to learning during school closures (VSO, 2020), and it is estimated that over 90 per cent of girls are concerned about this (UNDP, 2020). This concern was mirrored in the field discussions. By the time the girls complete their family

responsibilities in the evening, they are too tired and cannot concentrate on studies. During FGDs and IDIs with girls, they pointed out that parents were more comfortable asking girls to do the extra chores associated with plantation and harvest season, and family emergencies, which led to less study time and greater absenteeism.

“...we struggle with reaching school on time as we must help with other household chores. If boys are late for school, they don't have to worry about household responsibilities, but girls are still expected to help with cooking and other kitchen chores. Though we are at class, we are still thinking about the key tasks we have to complete after school...” –FGD with Girls, Janak School, Salbani, Nepal

d. Impact on participation in extra-curricular activities

Extra-curricular activities commonly seen in the schools are sports such as football, cricket, volleyball, chess, debating, essay writing, speech competitions, and arts and crafts competitions. As the study was undertaken in SCRSSI project target areas of Plan international, trainings/workshops, and simulation drills were also extra-curricular activities in the six target schools in both countries.

In Bangladesh, teachers encourage both boys and girls to participate in these group activities equally and provide support to ensure they receive adequate life skills training. From FGDs with school boys and girls, it was found that student boys and girls who are members of these groups do not face objections from families to participate in these activities. However, the majority of respondents from the girl drop-out FGD group shared that while they expressed to their parents they wanted to study and participate in the extra-curricular activities their request was denied. Instead, now mothers teach them household chores and the family is waiting to find a suitable husband for them.

In Nepal, in terms of children's participation in extra-curricular activities, the research found that the girls get less opportunities due to the perception that girls will not be safe if they go out of the house late or far away to attend trainings, workshops, and participate in other activities. Family and society inculcate girls with the fear of traveling from childhood such that they learn to avoid afterschool and extra-curricular activities.

(Note: There was no FGDs with out-of-school children in Nepal, and only one IDI with an out-of-school child due to limited out of school children in the project target areas. As such, we cannot compare the findings between children in and out-of-school)

'In many families, girls are not allowed to take part in trainings after school, so boys are comparatively more knowledgeable. Parents only want us to go to classes but not take part in extra school activities even if it helps increase our understanding and knowledge. Neighbours also play an important role in inciting our parents to not allow us to take part in extra-curricular and after school activities. When boys speak about things they have learned, they are appreciated at home and in the community, but girls do not

e. Impact on continuation of higher education

Gender norms and stereotypes in the society in both countries that give priority to men and boys, impact on the continuation of girls' higher education. **In Bangladesh**, the majority of respondents from the FGDs with parents confirmed that when families face financial challenges, most of the parents in this community prioritize the education of the boy child over the girl as they do not believe that their girls can get a good job and contribute to the family. Parents are not motivated to continue the education of the girl child. In all the studied schools, the number of woman teachers is lower than man teachers, and most of the village leaders are man, which illustrates the gendered education and employment trajectory and reinforces gender inequality.

In Nepal, the key informants of NGOs and CBOs revealed that in cases where a family is struggling economically, the education of the son is prioritized, often at the expense of a daughter. An educated son will earn well enough to take good care of parents in their old age, and is considered a more worthwhile investment of the limited household resources. Consequently, girls are either not sent to school or sent to cheaper schools overlooking the quality of education. UNICEF (2010) found that there are still divisions both along class lines and also in relation to gender, with boys tending to be sent to private and boarding schools and girls going to state schools. It is found during the IDIs and FGDs with the girls that the boys study at the boarding schools while girls are studying in the government schools.

“...I have a brother and a sister. Our parents treat us well, but when it comes to education my brother is given more priority. He is sent to a boarding school whereas my sister and I study in a government school...” –IDI with Girls, Chandrakamal School, Marchaiya, Nepal

The government has introduced many schemes to encourage the education of girls at the primary level such as free lunch, and provision of education materials for primary level students. Therefore, even in conservative or poor families, girls who are too young to help around the house are sent to school. However, as a daughter grows older and can provide more support to household activities, she is encouraged to work at the expense of her study. During KIs with members of CBOs and NGOs, it was said that CEFM, early pregnancy and the burden of household chores combined with pressure from the family and society triggers girls to give up on education. Deprivation of higher-level education is a key hindrance to girl's empowerment and in-turn girls are more vulnerable to CEFM, dependence on spouse for financial needs and at greater risk of harm such as domestic violence, human trafficking, etc. During the field discussion, many respondents agreed that patriarchal values and stereotypes are impeding factors to the continuation of higher education for girls.

“...with time, discrimination against daughters is decreasing. However, our community still has a long way to go. Parents prefer not sending their daughters away from home with concerns about their daughters' safety. In terms of education, girls have higher dropout rates and their higher education is not given as much as value as the education needs of sons. As more people are educated, more parents are allowing girls to leave home to take part in training, workshops, and income generating activities...” –FGD with teachers, Janak School, Salbani, Nepal

4.3.4. Compounded impact due to gender norms, stereotypes, disaster and climate risks

People in the research locations in both countries have been identified to experience climate change differently depending on their gender. Coping strategies towards the climate crisis also vary according to gender. Power relations and socially constructed gender norms shape the roles, capacities, and preferences of people with different gender identities. Girls are often affected disproportionately by the impacts of disaster/climate risks compared to boys.

a. Impacts of disasters on girls' education

Based on the findings, even in normal situations outside of a disaster, CEFM has directly contributed to the increased drop-out rate and/or ceasing of education of children especially girls in the research locations in both countries. The situation worsens when families face financial crisis, disasters, or shocks which increases difficulties for girls to access education. Poor families have been shown to be the most affected by floods and other shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and marry off their daughters before they complete secondary school as one way to cope with these shocks. In Nepal and Bangladesh, research found that young girls may be pulled out of school and into a marriage to alleviate financial hardship caused by extreme weather events (Women Deliver Research, January 2021).

Furthermore, the evidence also shown in the COVID-19: A threat to progress against child marriage from UNICEF in March 2021 found that disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic, increase the risk of

child marriage through five main pathways: 1) interrupted education, 2) economic shocks, 3) disruptions to programmes and services, 4) pregnancy, and 5) death of a parent. Changes like these increase the likelihood of child marriage, and over the next decade, up to 10 million more girls globally will be at risk of becoming child brides as a result of the pandemic. It is also clear that education is a protective factor against child marriage. Families tend to make decisions about a girl's education and marriage in parallel (Steinhaus, M., et al, 2016). When the protective umbrella of education and care systems are no longer in place because of COVID-19 pandemic, the education of vulnerable adolescent girls especially for those who are living in poor or remote rural areas, and those with disabilities, has been disrupted. Besides education, they are also more likely to suffer from abuse and violence at home (Plan International, 2020).

In Kurigram district of Bangladesh, this trend has been highlighted during the KIs with school head teachers, whereby the 2017 flood and the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously impacted on children's education, especially girls. It was identified that during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, 20 per cent of adolescent girls' students of one head teacher's school were married off. According to the head teachers, where the CEFM rate had been around five per cent, during COVID-19 there has been an alarming increase. During the flood in 2017, Save the Children's Education Disrupted Series (2017) revealed that 52 per cent of primary schools were affected by flood, at least 32 per cent of primary schools (421 schools out of 1,300) were damaged, and four schools were completely destroyed in Kurigram district. As a result, approximately more than 53 per cent of the school-aged population of children between six to 10 years old were unable to attend school in this district during the 2017 flood.

In Nepal, as shared during the FGDs with PTAs and social leaders in both schools and communities, when a disaster occurs, income and livelihoods of households are grossly affected, and in such a situation, girls are the first ones to bear the brunt as their education is stopped to save money, and they are mobilized to tend to sick members of the family, support childcare, do additional household chores or in some cases support the household financially by working as a domestic worker. In such a situation,

"Education of girls is the first thing to be curtailed when an economically struggling family is affected by a disaster. So, programs on disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response, and recovery are important. Livelihood resilience programs should be undertaken one step ahead to reduce the disaster and climate risks"- DRR, CCA and Gender working group members, Nepal.

CEFM is considered as one of the crucial coping strategies to save the money in some Madhesi communities. In Sunsari district, the same situation was observed especially during the 2017 flood and more recently in the first phase of the COVID-19 2020 pandemic. These disaster events badly impacted upon the socio-economic conditions of already poor families, worsening their situation, and leading them to make the decision to reduce the financial share for their daughter's education considering their limited options. Research participants shared that many girls permanently dropped out from formal education following every big disaster and were of the view that the CEFM is a common practice at this time.

b. Experiences of girls and boys about recurrent climate and disaster risks

As both girls and boys live in the same communities, they face the same climate and disaster risks but these risks impact upon them differently. Girls and boys in the FGDs shared that they experience climate and disaster risks differently. Global research undertaken by Women Deliver (January 2021) found that women and children are up to 14 times more likely than men to die in the aftermath of disasters, including extreme weather events such as hurricanes, wildfires, and flooding. However, it is important to note that comparative mortality rates may differ depending on the specific context. There are specific incidences of related disasters in which more men than women died (Bernard, K., 2010), and men's vulnerability may be exacerbated due to gender norms that promote risk-taking (WHO, 2014). In the research locations for both countries, it was found that girls are exposed to the following risks based on gender:

Safety and security: In Bangladesh, according to the FGDs with community members and KIs with woman members of the SDMC, it was revealed that parents are less inclined to send their daughters to shelters during disasters due to concerns about the lack of security. In addition, in the shelter, there are no separate toilets for girls, and girls face many difficulties maintaining their personal hygiene in these places. For example: during floods in 2017, parents were too scared to send their girl child on a rescue boat as the girls didn't know how to swim or out of fear of harassment. For boys, they can move around easily to take shelter at the bazaar as there are concrete shops in the highland areas. Girls were not allowed to do so. They were mostly asked to remain at home no matter how bad the situation was. This is a general trend for all girls in the research communities. Practices that limit girls' participation outside of the home, are not only dangerous during any emergency but can create obstacles for girls in the time of disaster when they are compelled to go outside of their home to meet their daily necessities or in an emergency. In the case of boys, they are more likely to migrate to other areas of the country in the search of work to support their families in the post disaster phase which expose them to risks including child labour.

On the positive side, during the FGDs and KIs, girls in the communities and girls out of schools mentioned that this practice of keeping girls at home despite the dangers during flooding improved during the 2020 flood, whereas it was widely observed during the 2017 flood. This was considered to be because of many interventions undertaken by NGOs, including Plan International Bangladesh and partners, in the research target locations which including equipping schools with separate toilet facilities for girls, which girls can also use during flood situations.

In Nepal, during interviews, girls expressed that they are kept at home during an emergency. This not only violates their freedom of movement but also puts them at risk during disasters, and negatively impacts on their self-esteem, confidence to contribute in the society and overall mental wellbeing. When girls are isolated during disaster situations, they are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation and lowered self-esteem and confidence makes them less likely to report such violations. Interviews with parents as well as NGO and CBO workers revealed that parents are often hesitant to send their adolescent daughters to shelters as some cases of sexual exploitation were recorded in the past (during the flood of 2014 and 2017, earthquake of 2015, and windstorm of 2019 in another part of Nepal).

During FGDs with boys, they were of the view that they are more exposed to disasters such as thunderbolt, storm and flood because they stay outside for a long time and are asked to undertake risky tasks.

Protection: In Bangladesh, in Kachakata Union there is a common area of land that can be accessed by both Indians and Bangladeshis, with no strict boundary and a porous border crossing. FGDs with the PTAs confirmed that at the time of flooding and river erosion girls are at risk of trafficking across the Indian border which is very near to this area. As a result, during emergency periods when there are greater risks for girls and their vulnerability is increased, there is a tendency for girls to remain at home for their 'safety and protection', and this includes not attending school.

During IDIs with children out of school, it was revealed that parents have some fears about trafficking as there were some cases in the Upazila a few years ago.

A girl out of school mentioned during interview that "... it is unfair that boys can go anywhere whenever they want to. Mobility is an issue here. My mobility is hindered by norms that say that girls should stay indoors. I do not like how society puts up a boundary between boys and girls, creating discrimination. My parents are also afraid of trafficking during disaster."

In Nepal, some studies also highlight that girls are more at risk of sexual violence, CEFM, and trafficking as a result of disasters, with sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, and trafficking tending to increase following disasters (Brown et.al., 2019; Withers and Dahal, 2015). In the month following the 2015 Earthquakes for instance, in a context of restricted migration laws for women in

Nepal (Grossman-Thompson, 2016), 793 people were intercepted illegally crossing the border, some of whom were trafficked. More than 57 per cent were women and girls (Jones, 2015; Standing et al., 2016). There have also been instances of girls being taken into prostitution or sold as domestic slaves and boys taken into forced, often hazardous, and manual labour (UNICEF, 2016). Forced population displacements place families and communities in vulnerable situations, with children separated from their families being particularly at risk (Standing et al., 2016). Teachers, parents and NGO/CBO members also shared their views during the focus groups, that children in general and girls in particular, are at risk of trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation following every disaster. It was generally the case that after every disaster, poor families were immersed in a vicious cycle of poverty, experiencing loss of life and damage to assets and livelihoods. In such a situation, families would engage their adolescent daughters in daily wage labour some distance from their village. In such a situation, there is a risk of trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation either from employers, peer circles, relatives and the traffickers that prey on this vulnerability.

With the extensive loss and damage experienced during any disaster, women and girls are particularly busy in the recovery of damaged houses and assets and in such situations girls are absent for many days from school. Most of the cases, girls drop out of school permanently.

“...even though people talk about gender equality, certain tasks are still allocated for women such as cooking and bringing fodder from the forest. Therefore, women and girls are more exposed to hazards such as fire, snake bites and wild animal attacks. Women are also vulnerable to domestic violence and other gender-based discrimination such as neglect, restrictions on movement and not continuing onto higher education...” –FDG with PTA, Marchaiya community, Nepal

The research team in Bangladesh also highlighted the following issues facing girls during and after an emergency:

Food and nutrition: Gender norms impact on how food is distributed in the family during emergencies/ disasters. Research participants from the FGDs with out-of-school girls shared that parents in the target communities give nutritious food to boys and men during and after disasters because they believe that they are hard workers who go around in the flood waters to source food and manage shelters. The girls and women eat less nutritious food which affects their health especially during and after disasters, and they frequently fall ill due to weakness.

Access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): During FGDs with girls (in school) at Indrogarh High School it was identified that girls face problems going to the bathroom, and in accessing food and clean water during disaster situations. Lack of clean water increases risk of illness, and water borne disease. As a result, it is often seen that girls are more likely to fall sick after a disaster than boys. During disasters, girls are under more pressure to work which causes both mental and physical stress for them. This results in girls and women in this community falling severely ill after disasters. Further, boys can go outside to meet their toilet needs anywhere, but girls can't. Girls face problems especially when they are menstruating and they need to maintain their personal hygiene. Taboos around menstruation make personal hygiene in disaster and flood contexts even more challenging, and increases the risk of infections and illness due to poor menstrual hygiene practices (UNICEF 2008).

“Schools and flood shelters don't provide any toilet rolls nor soap for girls. If we face any kind of menstrual problem then we go to houses near to school for help” told a girl of class 7 during interview in Motherganj High School, Nomodash Para, Bolloverkhas, Bangladesh.

c. Perceived contribution of girls and boys in disaster risk management cycle

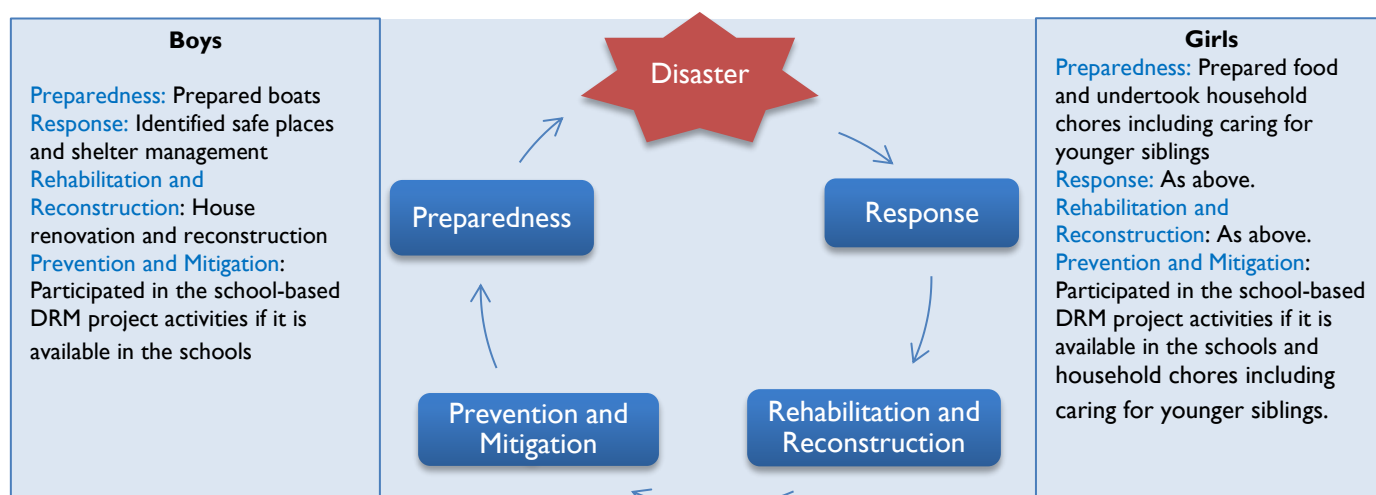


Figure 2: Perceived contribution of girls and boys in DRM cycle

Due to the existing gender norms and stereotypes, girls and boys have different roles and responsibilities in their day to day life. The research findings from both countries found that boys and girls contribute differently and undertake different roles at every stage of the disaster risk management cycle, i.e., preparation, response, recovery, and reconstruction.

In Bangladesh, from the IDIs with out-of-school children, it was confirmed that the girls along with their mothers perform the role of providers of food and water and household managers and caregivers. During and after the disaster the burden of household chores falls on the girls and their mothers, starting with the collection of dry foods to gathering cattle or furniture to the shelter. Caregiving responsibilities double or even triple their workloads. Due to their lack of financial resources, girls and mothers in this locality find themselves in particularly dire circumstances during and after disasters. Boys along with their fathers work outside the homes in choosing a safe place for evacuation, boat riding, shelter management, and other activities. The girls and boys who are in schools and participated in the Plan project confirmed both girls and boys engaged in the disaster preparedness activities in the preparation phase. Despite this, out-of-school girls mentioned that girls do not often get the opportunity to receive training on disaster preparedness and response, and as a result when they face any disaster, they become nervous and do not know what to do. Some girls explained that they even freeze during disasters which causes them and their family members more difficulties.

A majority of the interviewed respondents agreed that boys and girls are impacted differently and were of the view that it was vitally important that girls and women take active roles in the Union-level disaster management process. All woman respondents iterated the importance of women members participating in activities such as disaster risk reduction planning, raising awareness, helping and aiding women, children, and the disabled, and in damage assessment activities post-disaster. The larger portion of the man members interviewed expressed strong views in support of woman members.

Girls and boys during FGDs informed how they have learnt through different awareness raising activities to prepare for disasters. When the girls and/or women have an opportunity to learn and involve in the DRM activities in schools and communities they could reduce risks by themselves as well as to support the whole community. For example: a woman Union Parishad²² member explained during interview, that she was actively involved in distributing relief after disasters. She even

²² Union Parishad is the lowest tier of Local Government in Bangladesh

provided shelter to a few families in her house during the flood of 2017. It is, therefore, imperative to create a gender transformative nature of capacity building in the community where both girls and women can participate in the disaster management process together with boys and men.

In Nepal, the majority of respondents from among the NGO and CBO members and parents claimed that girls are engaged in preparedness and recovery because work inside the house is preferred for them while boys are engaged in response and reconstruction because they are perceived as stronger and more capable of working outside the house. Due to the socially propagated notion that girls are weak, the girls themselves do not feel confident to take part in activities demanding physical strength and in trainings such as search and rescue. Girls believe they are less capable than their man counterparts and less suited to play a prominent role in disaster management. However, it should be noted throughout the whole disaster management cycle, girls are also engaged in household work like cooking, cleaning, fetching water, firewood, and fodder, and caring for younger siblings and assume double responsibilities during the response and post-disasters.

FGD with teachers revealed that boys are allowed to take part in extra-curricular and after school activities that enhance their knowledge and practical skills to cope with disaster and climate risks. Unlike girls, they are readily welcomed in various meetings in the public sphere which boosts their knowledge of disaster and climate risks and coping techniques and increases their confidence to manage risks. Encouragement from all members of the society boosts the confidence levels of boys which is reflected in their self-efficacy. Boys were found to be more confident about their ability to contribute to society across all the phases of disaster management.

“...due to social norms, girls are deprived of different trainings, and other learning experiences. As a result, they are less confident and have less skills outside the domain of household chores...” –FGD with NGO and CBO representatives, Salbani community, Nepal

On the bright side, the majority of the respondents (NGOs and CBOs members) shared that the perception of women is changing positively in the society due to awareness raising work done by several organizations, the government, and the media.

“...girls are more encouraged to study and take part in other activities due to increased awareness. The role of SMCs and PTAs is paramount in this...” –KII with NGOs and CBOs representatives, Chatara community, Nepal

As discussed earlier, in terms of division of roles in the disaster risk management cycle, boys are of the view that only they are involved in risky activities (such as checking drainage on the farm in extreme weather) while girls are of the view that they already have household chores to attend to, and adding further responsibilities related to preparedness, response and rescue can be unequitable and burdensome. However, during FGDs with girls, they added that learning life skills to keep themselves safe is key and should be encouraged. Respondents in FGDs with teachers and KIIs with members of CBOs and NGOs emphasized the need to divide roles equally among girls and boys and encourage girls to participate in DRR trainings and increase their confidence to establish them as contributors rather than vulnerable groups in all phases of the DRM cycle.

4.4. Gender barriers

4.4.1. Gendered barriers preventing participation in school-based disaster risk management activities

Schools, especially those that are being supported by different I/NGOs, organize many School-Based Disaster Risk Management (SBDRM) activities to increase resilience and improve risk management capacity. During the study, many girls were found to be participating in such activities as active members of child clubs or representatives of disaster management committees and task forces. They shared that the school encouraged them to take part in such activities. However, they identified several constraints preventing girls from participating in SBDRM activities. The two countries have found the three common barriers:

1. **Commuting constraints:** In Bangladesh, geographically, each school is located some distance from the houses of local girls and boys and the roads can be muddy or dusty. The alternative way to commute to school is by river, but this is dangerous as the quality of boats is often poor.

The research team found that SBDRM activities were normally conducted on Thursdays, and other days after school hours with permission from teachers. In school, teachers would encourage boys and girls to participate in the SBDRM activities equally, therefore if the boys and girls were present in school they had equal opportunity to participate in these activities. However, if the SBDRM activities were implemented late after the school hours, parents would not always allow their children, especially girls to participate in the SBDRM activities, due to the distance of the school from their home. They were particularly concerned about the difficulties for the girl child to return home alone. Parents and teachers shared with the research team, that students travel around three to four kilometres to get to school. As most roads in the area are unpaved, a little rainfall causes heavy mud, making it difficult for children to come to school, especially girls. In addition, during floods, the commute system becomes water-centric, so boats are the only means of transportation for students to go to schools. As most children, especially girls, did not go to school during the flood, it is challenging to implement any SBDRM activities during the flood season. Teachers in focus groups shared that schools and/or their surrounding areas are flooded two to three times each year, and teachers are forced to stop normal activities including SBDRM activities at this time because it is risky for students to come to school. Teachers also mentioned that the school attendance decreases during times of flooding by about 70 per cent.

In Nepal, the majority of girls responding in the IDIs shared that if the SBDRM activities require staying for long after school or traveling to different locations, such engagement is heavily discouraged by their families because of safety concerns. Sometimes, parents do not allow girls to take part in different activities that require traveling out of fear of what their neighbours might say about their daughters' behaviours which may affect the girls' reputation and in turn marriage prospects. Further, girls are viewed by the society as prone to gender-based violence and incapable of self-defence and the same mentality is instilled into them from a young age. Additionally, their movement is more restricted during their menstruation period due to lack of access to appropriate sanitation facilities, which impedes them from participating in extra-curricular activities.

2. **Workload at home:** In Bangladesh, during FGDs with girls (out-of-school) at Kochakata school it was mentioned that from childhood girls have an additional burden of supporting their mothers with household chores. Girls have to struggle for time management between household work and education. They also look after their siblings and elderly family members and help out on the farm. Thus, they do not have time to take part in the SBDRM activities.

In Nepal, traditional gender norms usually confine women to the private domain of the kitchen, household, farm and family, whereas men largely occupy the public sphere of jobs, market, and formal economic activities (K.C., Van der Haar and Hilhorst 2017). During FGDs with girls, they shared that they have an additional burden of supporting their families in the house and on the farm. Thus, they do not have time to take part in SBDM activities.

“...girls have the burden of household chores and less access to DRM and Climate Change training programs. As a result, they are more vulnerable...” –FGD with NGOs and CBOs representatives, Marchaiya community, Nepal

“...we help in household chores and in the field as far as time allows. We have learned about disaster management, and we share preparedness tips with our family. But in many families, girls are not allowed to take part in trainings after school, so boys are more knowledgeable...” –FGD with Girls, Chandrakamal School, Marchaiya, Nepal

“...my mother passed away when I was only two years of age. My father is not at home to care for me nor is he able to convince my stepmom to send me to school. I am now 12 years old and I have spent all my life following my stepmom's instructions. I have to look after six goats, two cows, and 13 chickens every day, besides doing all the household chores. Additionally, I also have to do seasonal farm activities. I learned some Nepali alphabets from friends when they joined me to take livestock to graze during school vacations. I want to learn more through formal education, but the circumstance of my family does not allow it...”

–IDI with out-of-school girl, Salbani community, Nepal

3. **Low self-confidence:** In both countries, around half of children from FGDs and IDIs identified low confidence as a major reason for not participating in school-based disaster risk management activities. Low confidence was particularly observed in girls, and children with disabilities. The scenario is such that both mothers and daughters are neglected at home and as the mother does not speak up the daughter too is not encouraged to assert her rights.

“...society still undermines women and girls which has a negative impact on their confidence and willpower. I think this gap could be reduced by having more women teachers in school based on gender ratio...” –KII with official, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens Nepal (MoWCSC), Nepal.

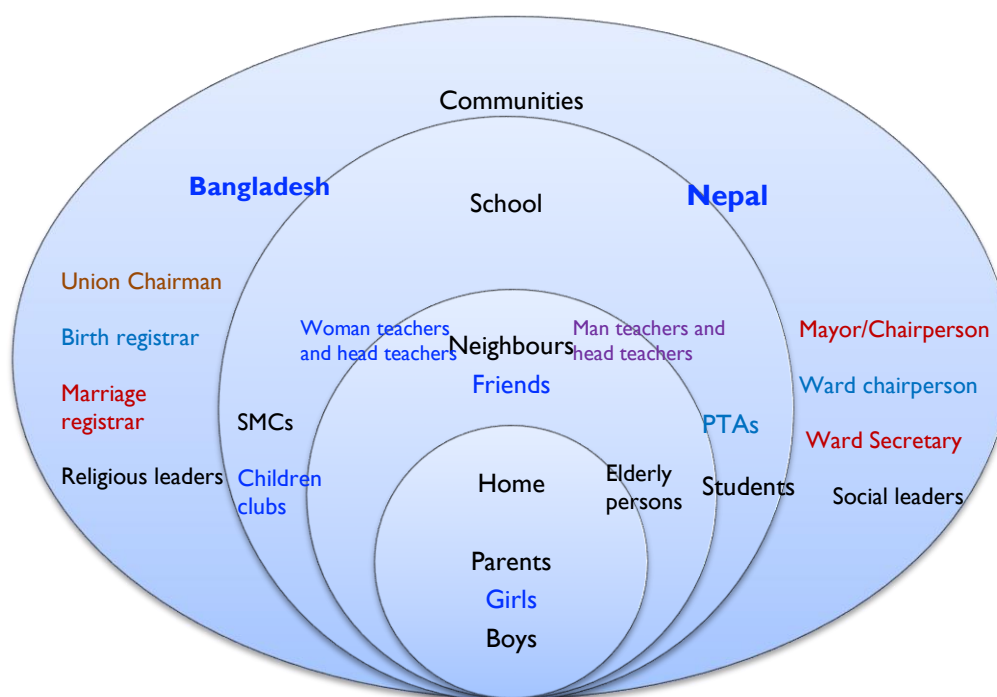
“...at school, I only participate in activities that I feel confident in...”

–IDI with Girls, Janak School, Salbani. Nepal

In addition to the points noted above, the research team in Bangladesh also found mindset as another barrier as in this locality there are few role models for girls. There are limited woman teachers or doctors, or any other woman job holder or entrepreneurs who will act as motivators for girls and people in the community. The mindset of girls is very weak because they are not encouraged to chase their dreams, as parents and the wider community still believe in the prevailing gender norms. Even the girls who participated in the school based disaster risk management at school faced challenges to apply those concepts at home.

4.4.2. Societal factors shaping gender barriers and actors who can remove them

Figure 3 Societal actors for discrimination in Bangladesh and Nepal



In Kurigram district of Bangladesh, the majority of respondents from parents, community leaders, woman community members, woman NGO staff, and school teachers identified religious beliefs, employment inequality, inherent beliefs about job segregation between boys and girls, cultural practices, and poor medical care as the major societal factors that are shaping the gendered barriers.

The overall mindset of this society has a significant impact on gender inequality. Children identify their parents as the main actors shaping these gender barriers. Neighbours, especially elderly persons who believe in old norms which considers the contribution of girls to be less significant, influence the decisions of others that limit and restricts equity in girl's participation and opportunity. From this research location in Bangladesh, it was identified that girls who have dropped out of school think the marriage registrar (Kaji²³), birth certificate provider, and Union Chairman are also to be blamed for child marriages as the marriage registrar does not check whether the birth certificate is true or false and they register those marriages which were done secretly with girls under 18 years old.

In Sunsari district of Nepal, the majority of respondents during KIs with parents and NGO/CBO workers identified patriarchal traditional norms, misinterpreted religious beliefs, illiteracy, low awareness, and pressure from neighbours with constricted mindset as major factors shaping these gendered barriers. In the Nepalese context, gender-based discrimination is mainly faith based, embedded with fear and myth, and is deep rooted in the culture and social norms (Samuhik Abhiyan, 2008). Examples of cultural practices include Dagbatti²⁴, Chhaupadhi²⁵, dowry, and child, early and forced marriage (CEFM).

During FGDs with girls at Auliya School, it was revealed that girls face gender based discrimination at home by parents, in friend's circles, from the teachers and from the society. Many girls said that they were discriminated at home and school even when parents and teachers are educated. It illustrates that even educated parents and teachers discriminate because of gender. Girls were of

²³ The person who is responsible for registering the marriage

²⁴ A system of crematorium and performs Dagbatti, a traditional final rite in Hindu religion. These rituals are usually conducted by the man members of the deceased's family.

²⁵ Menstrual taboo whereby women and girls are considered to be 'impure' during menstruation and are prohibited from participating in daily activities during menstruation, and confined to a shelter outside of the household.

the view that the society in which they live, particularly the neighbours, perpetuate gender based discrimination and at times even incite their parents to be more biased.

In Bangladesh, the majority of respondents from teachers, NGO woman staff, school girls and woman members of SDMC suggested that girls themselves can play an active role to remove these gender barriers. They need to be motivated to be more vocal, encouraged to participate in social activities, and be the change-makers. Along with them, parents need to give priority to their girl's lives as it is in their hands to help their child build a good healthy life. **In Nepal**, the majority of respondents from NGOs and CBOs including workers, local government officials and national DRR, CCA and gender professionals were of the view that such barriers can be removed through continuous and joint efforts of government and like-minded international and non-government organizations like Plan Nepal, and FORWARD. Respondents believe that since the barriers are created by families and each member of the society, they can be persuaded to change using social media, radio, TV, newspapers, and community awareness sessions.

4.4.3. Suggested interventions to remove gender barriers for gender-responsive DRM

Findings from both countries indicate that the boys and girls themselves, parents, family members, neighbours, religious and social/political leaders, community people and local authorities including teachers and school head teachers play important roles in reducing/removing societal factors that shape gender barriers and are key to promoting gender equality for girls in the research communities. True engagement of a range of stakeholders in all programmes, and understanding of, and support for gender transformative programming is crucial to reduce gender barriers and in promoting girl's participation and leadership in gender responsive DRM. The role of local governments in both countries is crucial to ensure gender responsive DRM considering the authority and power of these local entities. Below are some of the key interventions identified based on the response from respondents to remove gender barriers and to foster gender responsive DRM in both countries:

<p>Bangladesh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote girls to be leaders in the student taskforces and other school based disaster risk management activities to be agents of change for supporting other girls to fulfil their rights. • Organize awareness programs with parents, religious leaders, and local authorities including teachers, on gender norms and stereotypes and how these deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children especially girls, toward working together to remove gender barriers and support girls to actively participate in the gender responsive DRM interventions. • Organize awareness campaigns targeting the wider community and parents on gender norms and stereotypes and how these deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children especially girls, for promoting the investment in girl's leadership in DRM. 	<p>Nepal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage children in HVCA process, identify most vulnerable and risk prone areas, equip schools with gender friendly toilets and other physical facilities based on HVCA outcome and mainstream risk-informed structural and non-structural actions in SBDRM Plans. • Involve education related stakeholders in technical training like risk-informed DRM and school safety drills at local government and school level to sensitize the issues and engage in gender responsive DRM initiatives. • Include issues and concerns of children in general and girls in particular in policies related to DRR, CCA and gender and run a series of campaigns and policy advocacy for gender responsive DRM. • Organize sessions in schools for families on the available laws and provisions related to DRR, CCA and gender to raise awareness about and develop SBDRMP and joint action plans
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop educational and campaign materials to raise public awareness around harmful gender norms and stereotypes that deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children, especially girls. • Encourage and promote the participation of both girls and boys in life skills training and capacity building such as separate swimming lessons for girls and boys with adequate gender sensitive swimming and life safety equipment. • Make children's route to school safe by developing boat safety management, improving roads, and maintaining bridges, etc. • Build separate WASH facilities for girls in schools and in emergency shelters which can be used in normal periods and in emergencies. • Provide opportunity for girls-led initiatives in schools to address their own needs, and overcome barriers to their participation such as promote a special shop for girls where they can purchase sanitary pads that can be run by girls especially in the disaster time. 	<p>with education related stakeholders for their effective execution in coordination with federal, provincial and local government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage educational materials, scholarships, uniforms, and sanitary pads distribution targeting girls in coordination with local governments and education related stakeholders. • Engage and equip child clubs/networks to organize campaigns against CEFM, domestic violence, child exploitation, gender- and caste-based discrimination with attention to communities unreached by previous campaigns based on HVCA exercise.
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4.5. Specific context for girls and boys from marginalised backgrounds, including those with disability and LGBTQ+

In Bangladesh: In the research study areas, children from poor families, children with disabilities and children from the Hindu religion as a minority population in the area, were identified to be the most marginalised.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer, and others (LGBTQ+) rights are heavily suppressed, with homosexuality illegal under Bangladeshi law. Social attitudes toward homosexuality are conservative, and negative. In 2013, hijras, referring to transwomen (man-to-woman transsexual or transgender individuals) were legally recognised as a separate gender by the Bangladeshi Government in addition to men and women. In April 2019, it was reported that Bangladesh would allow the "hijra" to vote under their gender identity, as officials introduced "hijra" as a third gender option on voting forms for the first time (PinkNews, 2019). Where hijra once assumed a certain role in society, they now live on the fringes, with increasingly conservative attitudes, including religious fundamentalism, now making them vulnerable to violence, discrimination and abuse. Persons from the LGBTQ+ are largely hidden. If the transgender people reveal their identity, they cannot study in schools as fellow students and even teachers do not treat them well; they do not get good jobs because of the lack of education, even the jobs that do not require literacy are not offered to "hijras" as the employers and other workers do not approve of their presence in the workplaces. They are denied medical treatment by the doctors and health staff because they are uncomfortable to serve them and sometimes maltreat them. Even within their own

families, persons identifying as LGBTQ+ often do not have the option to live with their families. The parents, siblings and other relatives are not comfortable to disclose their identity. So, they must either hide their sexuality and/or gender identity and assimilate - or leave the family ([Researchgate, 2015](#)).

In the research target areas, researchers observed that due to the prevailing cultural norms, LGBTIQ+ issues were not broached, nor raised by any stakeholders. In general, transgender children are hidden, highly stigmatized and face a myriad of sexuality and rights issues. They do not come out about their sex to the family and the society as transgender people are at risk of discrimination and isolation. Already living at high risk during normal situations, LGBTIQ+ persons face more struggles during any emergency. Due to prejudice, LGBTQ+ people are often excluded from disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and relief efforts in the short- and long-term, including their access to emergency shelters, medical care, and food (Dominey-Howes, 2014).

Religious Minority: In the Bollober Khash union of Nageshwari upazila in Kurigram there is a village named Majhipara, where people of the Hindu religion are living. There are 95 to 100 families. Most of the people of that village are fishermen, and a few are engaged in the fish trade or work in the clothes business. Muslims live next to their village and all are living in peace. While there is no direct conflict between the Muslim and Hindu communities, Hindus as a minority in that area express that they are afraid or feel hesitant to talk with Muslim people.

Poverty: During the KIIs with the women NGO staff, it was shared that the poor families are the most affected by natural disasters such as floods. For example, the local boatmen community lost their income and were forced to take shelter in a nearby school building without any government aid. When the poor families were affected by flood, they could not continue their children's education and girls especially were withdrawn from school. During the KIIs with out-of-school children, a girl shared experience of being withdrawn from school:

I dropped out of school after class seven and felt very bad afterwards. I always wanted to become something in life. I have tried to convince my parents to send me back to school but they could not afford my education. But my brother is continuing his education at a madrasah and my parents chose to pay for his education but refuse to pay for mine. My brother gets more support from my parents and they listen to him more.”- IDI with girl out of school, Bangladesh.

Children with Disability: During FGDs with students they mentioned that children with disabilities represent the most marginalized groups. Discrimination of children with disability was found during the research.

In the research areas, the children with disability are the marginalized group and sometimes they are discriminated against by other children. According to the FGDs with students it was revealed that sometimes they witnessed fellow students discriminate against children with disabilities: no one wants to sit or play with them, they are always left alone by themselves. Moreover, children with disabilities are more at risk during an emergency situation. No one thinks separately about children with disabilities. Shelters do not have adequate facilities for them. Most parents are also unaware of the specific needs of these children and tend to take care of these children in the same way they care for their other children, despite any special needs. The research findings are aligned with the [Women Deliver research](#) (January 2021) that explored the link between climate change and sexual and reproductive health and rights. This research found that girls and women living with disabilities also experience compounded impacts of climate change, as they face stigma, discrimination, and environmental barriers that limit their access to education, employment, healthcare, food security and other important services including emergency response and disaster preparedness support. Community leaders reported during KIIs that access to any kind of services post-disaster is difficult for disabled girls and boys, as they are dependent on others and require constant support.

The students from FGDs shared their thoughts on how to help the children with disability and to make education inclusive for all. “...Students with disabilities face trouble to come to school. Sometimes they receive help from school, such as rickshaw assistance, but it is not

always ensured that this assistance is not compromised. Roads need to be improved or water transportation needs to be introduced and promoted”. – FGD responses, Bangladesh.

Nepal: In the research areas, children from Motey, Urab, Musahar, Mocheý, and Khatje families²⁶ were vulnerable due to their socially perceived low caste, low economic status and habitation in neglected areas exposed to multiple hazards. As shared in the KIIs with NGOs and CBOs, children with disabilities, children belonging to conservative families with no or low levels of education, and children from poor families are more vulnerable than others in the context of disaster and climate change. Such families generally live in areas prone to disaster or in neglected lands far away from social amenities. The children from such families (a) are forced to travel through risky areas such as forests and across rivers to reach school (b) are deprived of basic protective gear such as umbrellas, warm clothes, shoes or educational materials like bags and pencils, (c) are forced to miss school days or drop out of school as soon as a disaster strikes either because they lose the means to continue education or because they have to support their family in earning daily bread due to the loss of livelihood and property.

“...children from poor families such as Musahar, Mocheý, and Khatje are more vulnerable. They cannot afford to continue education. Even a small event of extreme rainfall can create havoc in their communities as they often live in risky houses and areas. Children from such families may not have umbrellas in rainy weather or warm clothes in winter. Similarly, families of the so-called lower castes also generally have weak economic conditions and no social safety net and are thus vulnerable...” –FGD with PTA, Chandrakamal School, Marchaiya community, Nepal

Poverty and marginalization are two key factors which Motey, Urab, Musahar, Mocheý, and Khatje families face in particular. High rates of man out-migration, increases the responsibilities and workload on women, and this often results in low enrolment and disenrollment of girls from these households, from formal education (Goh 2012, Kapoor 2011, Lambrou and Piana 2006, Ngozi Akosa and Oluyide 2010, Petrie 2008). Following men's outmigration, women take up their husbands' roles, and keep their daughters at home to take care of the domestic chores (Sharma, 2016). As many as 24 per cent of children working during the lockdown period had started working recently to help their families earn income due to financial distress (UNICEF Child and Family Tracker Survey, 2020).

Women and girls of lower castes are sometimes disadvantaged in terms of status, have limited access, control and ownership of resources, and are excluded from decision-making at the community level and in disaster preparedness planning (Leduc and Shrestha, 2008; Plan Nepal, 2012

). Girls are poorly represented in decision making bodies as sociocultural norms and attitudes hinder them heavily. Women and girls face an even more serious risk with climate-induced disasters: organised trafficking. Women and girls are more vulnerable to trafficking and gender-based and sexual violence after a disaster. Families are often not aware that their daughters will end up with traffickers, who falsely promise that the girls will have better lives, education and life opportunities (Nellemann et al. 2011).

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and queer (LGBTQ+): At the country level, the Nepalese Constitution recognizes LGBT rights as fundamental rights (Nepalese Constitution, 2015). Nepal's Education Board has implemented information about sexual and gender diversity in the curriculum of grades 7-9 (age 13–15), making Nepal the second Asian country after Mongolia to implement this [UNDP, USAID (2014)]. Universities also run courses about LGBT issues. However, many LGBT children still face discrimination and are unable to complete their education due to "threats, bullying, and neglect from fellow students and teachers alike" (Greene, Sophia, 2015). Furthermore, transgender Nepalís face severe gender-based violence and are unable to receive a proper education, especially in rural areas (ujyaaloonline.com, 2016).

²⁶ They are from so-called lower caste according to Hindu caste system

In the research areas, LGBTQ+ children are silent sufferers as they struggle to navigate through their sense of self and society's expectation. Seeing girls being discriminated, they fear they will also not be supported and thus remain silent which takes a toll on their confidence and self-efficacy.

During IDIs with children and KIIs with NGOs and CBOs representatives, it was reported that it was extremely rare for children to come out about their sexuality as they spend most their trying to understand themselves and even suppress their sexuality considering it to be abnormal. Another reason why LGBTQ+ children do not come out at an early is because "school officials and administrators are often not trained to understand issues facing those of different social orientation and gender identity and therefore cannot maintaining a healthy and safe school environment for learning for all children" (BDS and Heartland Alliance, 2013).

'LGBTQ+ children are unable to express themselves publicly. Their mental state causes them to hesitate from seeking help and results in them being impacted differently prior to, during and after disasters situations' Barahachhetra municipality education unit, Nepal

"...unlike other children, those belonging to LGBTQ+ group are unable to share their feelings with family members, neighbours, and relatives because they fear they will not be understood or worse, will be bullied or become outcasts. Family members pressure us to hide our sexuality and gender non-confirming behaviours labelling them as "unusual".

The society also takes LGBTQ+ negatively labelling it as "Purba Janma Ko Pap" (punishment for sins of the previous life). Family members are also worried that their family's god ("Kul Deveta") will be angry with them. LGBTQ+ people face multiple types and layers of discrimination. The challenges multiply one hundred-fold as they grow up and try to lead a dignified life as an independent person belonging to LGBTQ+. LGBTQ+ children are not involved in the task forces, groups, committees, and networks. Other people assumed that involving them in these social platforms would "destroy the social solidarity". Thus, such a child has less knowledge about the disaster and climate risks as a result of not being involved in interactions, debate and discussions, training and exposure. LGBTQ+ people are impeded from demonstrating their crucial role in the society due to the social mindset; their voices are never heard, and their ideas are suppressed. It is therefore essential to increase awareness about LGBTQ issues and share the success stories of other LGBTQ+ people for spreading positive energy. LGBTQ issues should be included in trainings, and debate and discourse among teachers, parents, media persons, local government officials and civil societies..." – An adolescent belonging to LGBTQ+ Salbani community, Nepal

Transgender people are vulnerable to being forced out of their family living situations as a result of stigma and prejudice. For those who live with their families, prejudice inside the family unit can mean that LGBTQ+ family members receive less material support inside the household. During an emergency, the relief efforts typically use the family as a common unit for analysing and distributing relief services. As a result, there is a risk that relief aid may be denied to transgender people. In the research area, the district of Sunsari is particularly vulnerable to regular heavy flooding of the Koshi river. After a flood in 2008, residents of villages destroyed by the flooding. The metis (man-bodied feminine people – often categorised as gay or transgender) reported that she was facing discrimination to receive the relief aid. The officials did not give them food or only half of the allocated proportion because they were of the view that the transgender couple did not have children, so they did not need it as much as other households. In this case, the non-traditional living situation combined with increased desperation and competition for resources put the transgender people in an acutely vulnerable position. These findings have been confirmed by the Humanitarian Practice Network, September 2012:

'When the district leaders came to hand out food supplies, my family got half of what other families got, who lived with her family and her boyfriend in a village near the Koshi. They told my parents that they didn't need to feed me, and that the family didn't deserve the full portion because they had a child like me.

- Quote from metis in the Humanitarian Practice Network, September 2012 report, Nepal.

Children with disability struggle to meet their necessities since existing school and other infrastructures are not disability friendly. Daily struggles of leading an average life coupled with discrimination and neglect affect their confidence and self-efficacy during a disaster event. During FGDs with teachers, they expressed concerns over the fact that disaster response programs are often designed to cover large mass and do not cater to the specific needs of children with disability, and having disability friendly temporary shelters is not realistic when even permanent structures like school are not completely disability-friendly. Existing policy documents do emphasize prioritizing children and people with disability during disaster response, however implementation is a challenge, especially considering the needs of one person with disability varies with the needs of others.

'Young children and those with disability are unable to keep themselves safe or move to a safer place during disasters. Those with weak economic status are more at risk as the little belongings they have are at the risk of being lost forever.' - FGD_Teachers_head teacher_Janak School, Nepal.

"Children with disability are not sent to schools and so they do not have adequate knowledge and capacity to face disasters making them more vulnerable. Also, schools are not disability-friendly in the truest sense". - FGD_Teachers_head teacher_Chandrakamal School, Nepal.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

Gender stereotypes are deeply ingrained in the society, in social norms, and in traditions. The "patriarchal", "patrilineal", and "patrilocal" male-dominated concepts largely shape the perceptions and practices within Bangladeshi and Nepalese societies. The scale and magnitude of gender stereotypes and discrimination is even more in these two research areas in both countries as compared to the national context. In Nepal, the research area (Sunsari district) is located in the Terai (the plains) with dominance of the socially deprived Madhesi ethnic group and is located close to the Indian border, posing a high risk to trafficking. Kurigram district of Bangladesh faces the same child trafficking risk, also located in a remote area close to the Indian border. The local population in the research areas of these two countries are living in very remote areas, and the traditional gender norms and stereotypes are strongly entrenched.

Male domination is deeply rooted in the mindset of parents and the wider community in the research areas, with parents of the view that their sons will take care of them into their old age, and as such should be given opportunities for education and learning to support them to find a well-paid job in the future. Girls on the other hand are perceived as weak (physically and in their decision making) and in need of protection, and more suited to managing the household. Therefore, investing in girls' education is not considered to be very important. Thus, discrimination between boys and girls begins right from the start when the baby is in the womb and continues throughout life in the way parents take care of a child, provide food and education.

Based on the findings from both countries, it is confirmed that the gender norms and stereotypes in the Bangladeshi and Nepalese society have directly impacted on educational continuity and attainment of children especially girls in the research locations. Girls in the research areas are facing challenges to continue secondary school with Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM) a common issue in both countries especially Bangladesh where it is directly correlated to the school drop-out rate. The gender norms and stereotypes impact upon children's education in five ways: 1) Drop-out rate, 2) School attendance, 3) Study time, 4) Participation in extra-curricular activities and 5) Continuation of higher education. It means even in the normal situation, gender norms and stereotypes in the research areas directly impacts upon educational continuity and attainment of children, especially adolescent girls. The situation worsens when families face financial crisis, disaster and climate risks, or shocks which increases difficulties for girls to access education. Poor

families have been shown to be the most affected by floods and other shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and marrying off their daughters before they complete secondary school is seen as one way to cope with these shocks.

Both research areas are highly vulnerable to disasters and prone to multiple hazards such as flood, cyclone, drought, and currently the COVID-19 pandemic, among others. In the context of increasing disaster and climate risks, the research findings evidence that the impacts of disaster and climate change poses risks to the life and physical wellbeing of boys and girls, affecting girls in particular when it comes to educational continuation and attainment (e.g., absenteeism and dropping out of school due to loss of livelihoods in the household), self-actualization (e.g., when they are unable to participate in disaster management phases due to low skills and confidence), safety and security, protection, food nutrition and health, and water and sanitation issues.

Further, girls and boys experience disasters differently. In the research areas of the two countries, girls (in and out schools) play important roles in disaster preparedness, response and recovery (post-disaster) assuming different roles to boys based on the prevailing gender norms and stereotypes in the society. Girls have limited engagement in the construction phase (as per findings in Nepal), and continue to be responsible for household chores throughout the whole cycle of DRM. The burden of work of both boys and girls is more than double during the preparation, response and post-disaster phases. However, girl's roles are less visible and recognized as they are in the private, as opposed to the public domain that boys engage in. In addition, the sheltered / private domain poses risks to girl's personal safety during an emergency situation more than boys.

In the Kurigram district of Bangladesh, children from poor families, children with disabilities and children from the Hindu religion as a minority population in the area, are the most marginalised. In Sunsari district of Nepal, children from Motey, Urab, Musahar, Mochey, and Khatje families²⁷ were vulnerable due to their socially perceived low caste, low economic status and habitation in neglected areas exposed to multiple hazards. LGBTQ+ children, children with disabilities, children belonging to conservative families with no or low levels of education, and children from poor families are more vulnerable than others in the context of disaster and climate risks. LGBTQ+ children are hidden, highly stigmatized and face a myriad of sexuality and rights issues in the two research areas. LGBTQ+ children have specific struggles and hindrances to accessing quality education, with little real information available about their experiences, including in disaster risk management. During field consultations, it was suggested that a study with carefully designed methodology would be necessary to understand the specific issues of LGBTQ+ children in the context of disaster and climate change because their issues remain hidden as LGBTQ+ people rarely come out at an early age.

Globally, gender has been mainstreamed into the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) but less so in the Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Framework that aligns SDG targets and SFDRR priorities to the education sector. However, it is six years from post 2015 agenda. The progress of achieving the ambitious goal of “leaving no one behind” and inclusion of marginalised groups including women and girls in DRM and Climate Resilience sectors still have a long way as the translation of the global frameworks/guidelines into the implementation to reach the most marginalised groups are hardly to be accomplished.

When it comes to a country level, Nepal has made progressive national commitments on gender and inclusion in policy instruments, as well as in strategic plans such as the NDRRSAP 2018-2030 and NCCP 2019, CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines. The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) principles²⁸ have been integrated throughout all

²⁷ They are from the lower caste categories according to Hindu caste system

²⁸ A GESI principle considers unequal power relations and inequalities experienced by individuals as a result of their social identities, and how these identities intersect to create experiences of vulnerability and marginalization. It focuses on actions to address these

documents. However, true implementation of these policies is challenging in the absence of technical human and financial resources, limited supporting arms of these policies and guidelines, and poor political commitments from the local and provincial governments. This shows that there is a large gap between policy and practice and development partners and humanitarian agencies could work together with Nepal's government to reduce those gaps.

In Bangladesh, the Government of Bangladesh has made institutional reforms and scaled up efforts to improve proactive DRM and in building climate resilience which have promoted the mainstreaming of gender into the NPDM 2021-2025, Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan of 2009-2018, and DRR and EiE framework (adapted from the CSS global framework) but some challenges remain. The DRR and EiE Framework is gender aware, aiming only to improve the daily condition of women and girls by addressing practical gender needs. The Framework does not attempt to transform gender relations nor improve the social position of girls and women in school-based DRM. The language under the DRR and EiE framework should be revised to move beyond women and girls as 'vulnerable' - to women and girls as rights holders, and equal actors and agents of change – and transform into a gender transformative vision a Framework for change.

5.2. Recommendations

Plan International, the national governments of Bangladesh and Nepal and development partners (donor agencies) all play an important role in promoting gender equality in DRM, CCA and CSS in the two countries and beyond. Specific recommendations to address gender norms and stereotypes that exacerbate the impacts of disaster and climate risks on girls and boys, their educational continuity, and attainment are as follows:

5.2.1. Recommendations to Plan International

1. Advocate for a gender transformative CSS Framework globally, and work alongside relevant actors to update the current framework

- Identify allied agencies from among the UN agencies and INGOs, including in the Asia Pacific region, to get commitment for a common goal to leverage the global CSS Framework to be gender transformative and updated accordingly.
- Together with allied agencies develop a clear action plan to update and leverage the global CSS Framework to be a gender transformative framework.
- Develop an evidence brief from this research to use as an entry point to advocate with the Asia Pacific Coalition on School Safety (APCSS) and the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Education (GADRRES) members for further action to update the global CSS Framework.
- Use the guidelines on Gender Transformative Implementation of Safe Schools Programming of Plan International Asia Regional Hub as a guidance document to update the global CSS Framework.

2. Continue to support gender-responsive Safe Schools Initiatives in Bangladesh and Nepal

Target schools for the new Safe Schools Project should focus on the secondary school level with aims to remove gender barriers faced by girls in Nepal and Bangladesh, in completing secondary school education.

unequal power relations and inequalities, reduce disparities and ensure equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and respect for all individuals. https://www.thet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/22458_THET_-UKPHS-GESI-toolkit_V6-1.pdf

- **Plan International Bangladesh** should work with other agencies in the country (including the EiE working group) to update the DRR and EiE Framework to be gender transformative. The following actions can be taken:

- ✓ Develop a policy brief from the research and disseminate the policy brief to key UN agencies and INGOs, MoE, and NDMO as an entry point for further collaboration.
- ✓ Identify the potential networks (e.g., EiE working group or National Alliance for Risk Reduction and Response Initiatives Consortium - NARRI) and garner support for this initiative.
- ✓ Consult with the Ministry of Education (Primary and Secondary) and National Disaster Management Officials to get their commitment to this initiative.
- ✓ Develop a joint work-plan with the identified network/working group to deliver this task.
- ✓ Allocate budget to deliver this initiative.

- **Plan International Nepal** should work with other agencies in the country to support the Government of Nepal in the operationalization of the CSS Implementation Guidelines at the school level. The following points can be taken:

- ✓ Select the target schools to pilot the CSS Implementation Guidelines with the gender transformative approach.
- ✓ Document the successful stories and areas for improvement to update the CSS Implementation Guidelines to be a fully gender transformative framework.
- ✓ Work with other working groups to advocate for a gender-responsive budget allocation in rolling out the CSS Implementation Guidelines countrywide.

- **Design gender transformative CSS project interventions.** The following points can be considered in the gender transformative CSS project design:

- ✓ Understand and address how gender norms influence children throughout the DRM cycle.
- ✓ Include indicators to measure the knowledge and skills of girls and young women in leadership positions for building disaster and climate resilient schools and communities.
- ✓ Define indicators that measure positive behaviour changes of target boys, and young men to promote gender equality in building disaster resilience schools and communities.
- ✓ Contribute to improving the conditions (daily needs) and social position (value or status) of girls and young women in building disaster resilience schools and communities.
- ✓ Foster an enabling environment where all stakeholders work together to support children and youth on their journey in building disaster resilient schools and communities.

3. **Strengthen Plan International's niche area of gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS at the country level.**

- Design a comprehensive training manual on gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS which can be used as the trainer guide to provide training to Plan International country office staff and its partners to improve their knowledge and understanding on how to implement gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS interventions.
- Build/strengthen partnerships with gender- working groups and/or UN women to strengthen the linkages between DRM, CCA, CSS and gender at all levels.

- Produce and promote positive case studies that demonstrate how the DRM, CCA and CSS project interventions can contribute to improve gender equality of girls.
- Bring together DRM, CCA, CSS and gender actors to better understand how gender norms and stereotypes deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children especially girls, and work together to remove these gender barriers and support girls to build disaster resilient communities and schools.

4. Strengthen linkages between education, CSS and gender to address the gendered barriers facing adolescent girls and children from marginalised groups in access to/continuity of education and create opportunities for equal participation and engagement in SBDRM

- Strengthen linkages between Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) from a gender perspective through (i) building the evidence base with gender-specific data and statistics on disaster impacts, (ii) conducting of gender-sensitive vulnerability, risk and capacity assessments, and (iii) development of gender sensitive-indicators to monitor and measure the progress.
- Promote girls to be leaders in DRM, CCA and CSS interventions and empower girls, with attention to adolescent girls, as agents of change to support other girls to fulfil their rights.
- Build on Plan's niche area of adolescent girls, to address LGBTQ+ - through a Plan International and regional initiative that provides more insight about, and visibility to, this invisible and marginalised group - e.g. research, accompanied by LGBTQ integration in tools, dialogue, advocacy.

5. Design and conduct an awareness raising program on gender norms and stereotypes and how these deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on marginalised groups, especially girls

- Conduct campaigns against discrimination, bullying, CEFM, child labour, domestic and gender-based violence through mobilizing media (radio, television, and other social media platforms) and community programs such as street drama.
- Conduct awareness raising programs to reduce gender inequalities induced by disasters by (i) better understanding the differential impact, underpinned by gender inequality, informed by data (gender, class, age, marital status, caste/ethnicity, and profession), (ii) making proactive efforts to amplify the voices of marginalised populations, and (iii) building trust, and engaging with, and listening to the experiences of those most-at-risk.
- Conduct community level awareness campaigns through a whole-of-community approach, with attention to parents of school aged children, to create dialogue and awareness about the impacts of gender norms and stereotypes, and promote the commitment to, and investment in girls' education.
- Organize awareness programs with parents, religious leaders, and local authorities including teachers, on gender norms and stereotypes and how these deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children especially girls, toward working together to remove gender barriers and support girls to build disaster resilience communities and schools.

52.2. Recommendations to the national governments of Bangladesh and Nepal to address disaster and gendered impact in a changing climate:

1. Integrate gender transformative approach into existing CSS national policies and frameworks

- In Bangladesh, the DRR and EiE Framework should be updated to be gender transformative with technical support from the relevant key stakeholders.

- In Nepal, strengthen efforts for sub-national level implementation of NDRRSAP 2018-2030, NCCP 2019, CSS Master Plan, the CSS Minimum Package and CSS Implementation Guidelines along with gender-responsive budget allocation.
- In Nepal, amend the education policy in light of the CSS implementation guidelines. At the school level, ensure the formulation of CSS action plans and its inclusion in the school improvement plan.

2. Work with sub-national level authorities to make children's commute safe

- Addressing the safety issues of adolescent girls during their commute from home to school in relevant sub-national plans.
- Make children's route to school safe by managing culverts, maintaining bridges, and improving trail roads, cutting old trees and branches at the edge of roads, managing electric lines, prohibiting cattle grazing on the road, and other relevant needed support to make children's school commute safe.
- Conduct campaigns to eliminate the culture of violence and sexual harassment through (i) mobilization of children's clubs, youth clubs and networks, (ii) building linkages among SMCs/PTAs, local police cells and women/children's desk of the local government authorities, and (iii) managing help lines and toll-free numbers.

3. Mainstream gender equality into education policies and systems to support educational continuity of adolescent girls

- Ensure greater representation of woman teachers in schools, in line with the gender ratio, with teachers that have roles and responsibilities to support adolescent girls to remove gender barriers that impacts on their educational continuity and attainment.
- Mainstream gender transformative DRM and CCA, GBV and inclusion issues into education curriculums at all levels.
- Modify existing curriculums through a gender lens to ensure that they do not perpetuate gender stereotyping (e.g. depicting mothers as women working in the kitchen) in coordination with Curriculum Development Centre of Ministry of Education.
- Organise campaigns to influence social attitudes towards gender roles - girls and women as leaders and agents of change; against negative cultural practices - such as CEFM; continuing to invest in girls education - with further attention to adolescent girls, considering the higher risk of dropping out.

4. Promote continuity of boys and girls in education while tackling poverty reduction interventions

- Provide income generation skills training to needy parents to improve their livelihood prospects (e.g., climate smart farming, entrepreneurship training)
- Support in creating employment opportunities for poor and marginalised families so they can afford their children's education (e.g., introduce subsidies, loans, support business start-up, marketing, and value chain linkage)
- Improve women's economic empowerment in the face of climate change through token support in saving and credit initiatives, access to credit, information, training and outreach.

5. Allocate a gender responsive budget for the implementation of gender transformative CSS interventions

- Allocate a contingency fund for schools to ensure the continuity of education of children, especially girls, during any emergency period.
- Allocate sufficient funds for the implementation of the gender transformative CSS action plans of schools and monitoring of schools regarding their compliance with the national policies, guidelines, and standards.

6. Design and construct climate and disaster resilient school buildings and facilities that take into consideration diversity among children and their needs, with attention to adolescent girls and children with disability.

- Construct climate- and disaster- resilient school buildings through (i) compliance to the school safety building code (ii) capacity building training to construct resilient critical infrastructure (iii) investment in construction and upgrade of disaster resilient critical facilities through inter-sectoral coordination.
- Include child-, gender- and disability- friendly features in infrastructure development in schools by complying with national guidelines and standards, training of construction workers, and monitoring and compliance training to school authorities. Advocate for children and disability resilient infrastructure through engaging of child clubs/networks in consultations and incorporate priority issues into policies.
- Ensure toilet facilities are child-, gender- and disability- friendly (e.g., uninterrupted water supply, sanitary pad disposal facility, ramps and railings and toilet facilities with adequate space for wheelchair access) by (i) developing relevant IEC materials, toolkits, guidelines and manuals that are resilient to climate change and disaster risks, (ii) disseminating knowledge on climate change, disaster and children resilient WASH infrastructure designs, and (iii) imparting trainings and orientations to governments, private sectors, NGOs working for children and representatives of child clubs/networks.

7. Build capacity of sub-national level authorities, SMCs and child clubs/student taskforces on gender transformative DRM, CCA, CSS framework

- Cooperate with the gender transformative DRM, CCA, CSS experts to conduct capacity needs assessments with the responsible departments at the sub-national level on the gender transformative DRM, CCA, CSS.
- Cooperate with the gender transformative DRM, CCA, CSS experts to develop and implement capacity building plans to strengthen the capacity of the responsible departments at the sub-national level on gender transformative DRM, CCA, CSS.
- Build the capacity of SMCs and child clubs/student taskforces so that they are capable of handling the roles and responsibilities as envisioned under the gender transformative CSS framework.

5.2.2. Recommendations to the development partners:

1. Advocate for DRM, CCA, and CSS policy improvement and implementation jointly by addressing contemporary issues in policies and engaging in regular advocacy for synergy.

- Organise joint programs to review the efficacy of existing DRM, CCA and CSS policies, guidelines and frameworks in collaboration with the government; conduct studies to identify gaps and implementation challenges of existing guidelines, strategies and action plans, and provide technical support to the government for the amendment of existing policy documents.
- In Nepal, development partners can provide technical support to the Government of Nepal to ensure the implementation of CSS Implementation Guidelines in schools.
- In Bangladesh, development partners can work together to provide technical support to the Government of Bangladesh to update the EiE and DRR Framework to be a gender transformative CSS framework. This gender transformative CSS framework should in turn

be reflected in the DRR in Education national policies to ensure proper budget for implementation.

- In Bangladesh, development partners can facilitate effective coordination among the Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and Ministry of Secondary Education so that CSS is included in the National Plan for Disaster Management as an effective means to make education safe from disasters.

2. Promote knowledge management, and build capacity of national governments for ensuring the continuity of adolescent girls' education by assuring their contribution to, and participation in the DRM, CCA and CSS program interventions and activities.

- Develop educational and campaign materials to raise public awareness around harmful gender norms and stereotypes that deepen the impact of disasters and climate crisis on children, especially girls.
- Continue to develop and roll out training manuals/tools/guidelines on gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS that build capacity of government responsible stakeholders at all levels.
- Facilitate learning and sharing of best practices and lessons learnt on gender transformative DRM, CCA and CSS as platforms for leadership for girls, with opportunity to share their experiences in DRM, CCA and CSS initiatives.
- Work in collaboration with NGOs and UN agencies to remove gender barriers that deny girls (especially marginalised girls) from accessing schooling and participating in school-based disaster risk management activities.

3. Carry out further research on the hidden struggles of LGBTQ+ children in accessing education and how their identity increase their vulnerability in a changing climate and disaster context in collaboration with Government of Bangladesh and Nepal and other development partners.

- Due to the absence of relevant studies in Nepal and Bangladesh, the factors that affect the education of LGBTQ+, and associated issues such as dropout, poor performance, absenteeism etc. are poorly understood. A study to understand the experiences of LGBTQ+ children/students, especially in the context of disaster and climate change would be helpful to identify and appropriately address these hidden concerns.

4. Facilitate to design practice based hands-on training curricula and impart life skills trainings to boys and girls based on their group-specific vulnerabilities, local needs, context and priority of the local governments in coordination with the Government of Bangladesh and Nepal and other development partners.

- Conduct life skills training to children based on their group-specific vulnerabilities, local needs, and context, e.g. swimming skills for girls living in flood risk areas, self-defence training, positive thinking, and life motivation training for children with disability in coordination with women/children desk of local government through mobilization of print and electronic media in local language.
- Impart education, training, awareness raising and information programs to address the vulnerability and risk of gender-based violence, sexual abuse and trafficking in the context of disaster-prone areas.

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DEFINITIONS OF TECHNICAL TERMS

Adaptive capacity (in relation to climate change impacts) is the ability of a system to adjust to climate change (including climate variability and extremes) in order to moderate potential damages, to take advantage of opportunities or to cope with the consequences (IPCC AR4, 2007).

Community-based disaster risk management promotes the involvement of potentially affected communities in disaster risk management at the local level. This includes community assessments of hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities, and their involvement in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of local action for disaster risk reduction (UNDRR 2017).

Climate change refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity (IPCC AR4, 2007)

Climate Change Adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change. In simple terms, countries and communities need to develop adaptation solution and implement action to respond to the impacts of climate change that are already happening, as well as prepare for future impacts.²⁹

Disaster risk management is the application of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies to prevent new disaster risk, reduce existing disaster risk and manage residual risk, contributing to the strengthening of resilience and reduction of disaster losses (UNDRR 2017).

Gender reflects the norms, expectations and beliefs about the roles, relations and values associated with different genders, including woman and man, in a specific society. Gender plays a significant role in defining relationships and power dynamics between and among people, and in shaping people's barriers and opportunities. In most societies, there is a binary understanding of gender (with just two options - 'woman' and 'man', or 'feminine' and 'masculine'). This does not accurately reflect people's diverse identities and tends to make invisible some of the specific forms of exclusion faced by LGBTIQ+ people (Plan International 2020).

Gender equality means that all persons, regardless of their sex, enjoy the same status in society; have the same entitlements to all human rights; enjoy the same level of respect in the community; can take advantage of the same opportunities to make choices about their lives; and have the same amount of power to shape the outcomes of these choices (Plan International 2020).

Gender equity. If all people receive the same support regardless of their situation, they are being treated equally. But if people receive support according to their needs so they can be in an equal position, they are being treated equitably (Plan International 2020).

²⁹ <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/the-big-picture/what-do-adaptation-to-climate-change-and-climate-resilience-mean>

Hazard: A process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation (UNDRR 2017).

Mitigation: The lessening or minimizing of the adverse impacts of a hazardous event (UNDRR 2017).

Preparedness: The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters.

Prevention: Activities and measures to avoid existing and new disaster risks (UNDRR 2017).

Plan International definition of Gender transformative approach: To tackle the root causes of gender inequality, particularly unequal gender power relations, discriminatory social norms and legislation, Plan International aims not only to improve the daily condition of girls of all ages but also to advance their position and value in society. We work together with girls, boys, women, men and other gender identities to achieve these objectives. While our projects benefit girls and boys of all ages, adopting this transformative approach ensures that our work results in positive changes and sustainable outcomes for girls (Plan International 2020).

Reconstruction: The medium- and long-term rebuilding and sustainable restoration of resilient critical infrastructures, services, housing, facilities and livelihoods required for the full functioning of a community or a society affected by a disaster, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and “build back better”, to avoid or reduce future disaster risk (UNDRR 2017).

Recovery: The restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disaster- affected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and “build back better”, to avoid or reduce future disaster risk (UNDRR 2017).

Rehabilitation: the restoration of basic services and facilities for the functioning of a community or a society affected by a disaster (UNDRR 2017).

Resilience: The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management (UNDRR 2017).

Response: Actions taken directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected (UNDRR 2017).

Sex Refers to what we are biologically born with: girl/boy/intersex³⁰. It is the physical and biological characteristics that distinguish men, women and others. Ex. Women have ovaries that produce egg and women can become pregnant (Plan International 2020).

Structural and non-structural measures: Structural measures are any physical construction to reduce or avoid possible impacts of hazards, or the application of engineering techniques or technology to achieve hazard resistance and resilience in structures or systems. Non-structural

³⁰ Intersex refers to individuals who are born with sex characteristics e.g. chromosomes, hormones and genitalia that are not exclusively man or woman as defined by the medical establishment in society

measures are measures not involving physical construction which use knowledge, practice or agreement to reduce disaster risks and impacts, in particular through policies and laws, public awareness raising, training and education (UNDRR 2017).

Mainstreaming or integration: The integration of (adaptation) objectives, strategies, policies, measures or operations such that they become part of the national and regional development policies, processes and budgets at all levels and stages (Lim and Spanger-Sieghard, 2005).

Vulnerability: The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards (UNDRR 2017).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Bangladesh Research Country Report

Appendix 2: Nepal Research Country Report

Appendix 3: Summary of key findings in English and Bangla

Appendix 4: Summary of key findings in English and Nepal

Appendix 5: Summary of interview notes, memos, and transcripts in English, Excel file detailing the compilation of research themes, sub themes and codes, Bangladesh

Appendix 6: Summary of interview notes, memos, and transcripts in English, Excel file detailing the compilation of research themes, sub themes and codes, Nepal

Appendix 7: Inception Report

Appendix 8: List of documents for desk review

Appendix 9: Consent forms from Bangladesh and Nepal

Appendix 10: The lists of research participants from Bangladesh and Nepal

Appendix 11: The field schedule in Bangladesh and Nepal

