

Ensure that Reconstruction of Houses Meets Women's and Family Needs

Consult women about their housing needs and requirements related to the design of houses:

- type of house, design and size depending on the family size
- houses must have toilets, bathrooms and kitchens
- houses must have water supply and sanitation systems and electricity
- houses must ensure security, privacy and dignity of women
- the design of houses must take into account lifestyles, livelihoods and occupations of women.
- Adequate housing must allow access to employment options, healthcare, schools and other social services. There must not be excessive financial demands on the household with respect to transportation.
- Women's special requests should be taken into consideration in the allocation of land and housing such as cluster housing for extended families
- Prevent bias, favouritism and discrimination by officials - at national, local and village levels - responsible for the allocation of permanent housing.

Aceh (Indonesia),

The delay in housing construction was caused by several factors, including: (1) The government at the earlier stage showed its reluctance to start the housing construction in villages allegedly related to GAM (armed separatist group); and (2) Lack of coordination between the government and NGOs constructing houses. In addition, there had been no women's involvement in the process since on November 2005 BRR stopped using the community driven approach to housing construction.

In Lampuuk village, the construction process commenced only in November 2005 after a long competition process between several international NGOs was over. In Seibun Ketapang, 80 houses had been built by Mercy Corps. However, the houses were built on the location of the old residential area that has been inundated by water since the tsunami. The surface of the land had sunk after the tsunami. The houses have no kitchen, bathing/latrine facility and water supply system. Therefore, many residents, especially women, were reluctant to move to the new houses from the barracks. The water pockets became mosquito breeding grounds. Similarly, in Lham Lhom village, new houses were not equipped with kitchens, bathrooms, and water supply systems.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in Aceh





The house of a Dalit woman rebuilt by DFDL, Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India

Thailand

The government constructed houses without prior consultation with the beneficiaries and did not study the livelihood patterns of the local communities before undertaking the construction. The outcome is a general dissatisfaction of the people who believe they deserve better quality of assistance. "The government provided us with a permanent home built by the military. Its size is about 6 x 6 metres for a family of 4 people. It's very small. The kitchen of my old house was the size of this entire house. I have requested the government to build an extension because it is extremely crowded for such a big family like mine. Nonetheless, we will never know when this will come through. Many of us here cannot rely on the government anymore. My children do not have a room to play or any privacy like they used to. Our lives have changed from white to black," said Mrs. Woranuch Chantalor, a widow with three children from Kam Kem village, Phang Nga province who lost her husband in the tsunami.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in Thailand

Enure Women's Equal Ownership Rights to Land, House and Property

- The Government must prioritise allocation of land to communities that have to relocate from disaster affected land.
- Create laws and policies that guarantee women's equal rights to ownership of land and property allowing them to own and inherit land from their husbands/fathers.
- Ensure that wives and daughters inherit the land and property in societies with strong religious or customary laws where property inheritance rights go to the deceased husband's brother in case of absence of a son.
- Ensure that dowry property belonging to women prior to disaster is maintained.
- Ensure a total rejection of the 'head of the household' concept as it could result in women losing their rights to land they owned prior to the disaster.
- Recognise the right of spouses to joint ownership of land, house and property. New policies made in the aftermath of disasters should break existing patriarchal norms. For instance, land allocated to replace land lost to disaster, should be registered in joint ownership of husband and wife, rather than giving full claims only to the (male) head of the household.
- In dispute situations that tend to occur in post-disaster situations, the government must respect land, property and housing rights of women and protect them from violence and eviction.
- People living in rented accommodation prior to disaster must also be provided with housing.



India

Introduction of a buffer zone restricting construction and reconstruction of buildings within 500 metres from the shoreline with the well-intended purpose of protecting coastal communities from future tsunamis meant that some communities had to relocate. Identifying land for construction of permanent housing for relocated communities turned out to be a major problem. The Government was not willing to provide or acquire alternative land expecting aid agencies to purchase land for the communities. Most aid agencies did not have funds to purchase land. Others, such as TATA LEAP, a construction company, had to buy land from the government and construct houses at its own expense.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in
India

Sri Lanka

In the post-tsunami context, most of the land made available for re-housing was state land. Since state policy in relation to land ownership is informed by the categorisation of the male as the 'head of the household', the consequence is that women are clearly discriminated against when State land is allocated for families. Deprived of legal ownership of the land, women become vulnerable to eviction from their home; this makes them also more vulnerable to domestic violence. Lack of title also makes it impossible for female heads of household to use the land as collateral with banks.

In the Muslim community in the East there is a customary practice of bestowing land received by mothers as dowry or inheritance to daughters. Given the male bias implicit in much of the post tsunami relocation programmes, there were concerns that if land alienation was not done sensitively, it would have a negative impact on the land rights that girls and women have traditionally enjoyed. Lobbying for policy change that would ensure joint ownership between spouses in the process of land allocation has been a critical demand of CATAW and other women's groups working with tsunami-affected women.

The government's policy was to replace a house for a house which benefited house-owners. Thus, people who had lived in rented premises were not entitled to any kind of compensation of re-housing, even though they had lost all their possessions and been displaced. In the case of extended families who had lived in one large family home, only the chief householder was registered as entitled to a replacement house. Thus, even during the time of the interviews, almost 14 to 16 months after the tsunami, families were living in transitional shelters without any guarantee of permanent housing or even compensation.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in
Sri Lanka

Aceh (Indonesia)

The tsunami brought up the issue of women's ownership rights to land. According to Islamic inheritance laws and Acehese tradition, land is transferred from a man to his son or to his brother. A woman can only have land certificate under her name, if she does not have a son and her husband does not have brothers. After marriage, a woman's land certificate can no longer be under her name, it is changed to her husband's. Acehese women generally follow the very strict Acehese tradition based on the Islamic male inheritance laws. Opposing the tradition can be considered as opposing the family, Islam, custom and even God's will.

In post-tsunami reconstruction, Islamic inheritance laws are clearly preventing women who lost husbands from registering as potential beneficiaries of housing assistance. The village government made a list of tsunami survivors, who needed houses and registered a man's name as the landowner. The land previously registered to the man's name cannot be automatically changed into woman's name. As a consequence, widows had to constantly go back and forth to the land administration in order to get land.

In Lampuuk village with over 90% of its 6,500 population killed in the tsunami, there were many land disputes with claims by family members of victims living outside of Lampuuk, making widows vulnerable to eviction and poverty. Many family members of the dead victims consider that inheritance of land does not automatically fall into the hands of women but should be transferred to the family of their deceased husbands. Widows, therefore can no longer manage agricultural land around the village because the land has been claimed by many other interested parties.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in
Aceh

Thailand

Entire communities were unable to return home after the tsunami because of pre-tsunami land disputes. Out of 418 villages affected by the tsunami, 81 had insecure land ownership rights. The claimants took advantage of the disaster situation, when people had to flee their houses, and tried to prevent them from returning to their homes. One of the most violent takeovers took place in Lam Pom Community, Phang Nga province, a seaside settlement of ex-labourers in the tin mine. When the mining concession ended, they established their own community, which villagers have called home for more than 40 years. From living in thatched-roof huts with no roads and electricity, they developed their homes and community and had their houses registered with the province administration in 1990. The land dispute started in 2001 when a powerful businessman presented the villagers with a land ownership document and ordered them to leave. The community refused to do so. One day after the tsunami struck, his company made claim to the land by sealing off the area using a group of hired armed men. "We could not get into the area to look for the bodies of our missing family members. Electricity and water were cut off. In February, we managed to come back. Someone from the company came to take our photos. We heard gunshots that night. I begged them in tears to let me in so I could find my daughter and my relatives. They threatened: 'if the tsunami did not take your life we will take it,'" said Ratri Kongwatami, a 32 year old woman who has been in the forefront of the community's struggle.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in
Thailand

Ensure Women's Equal Access to Livelihood Opportunities

In post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction, employment and income generation assistance for women must facilitate their food security, women's access to natural resources and poverty alleviation at the community level.

Reconstruction programmes must have a special focus on women's economic empowerment and offer them income generating opportunities. In disaster situations, women who lost their husbands/breadwinners face difficulties accessing income generating assistance because the existing opportunities normally target men.

- Provide small grants for women to help restore income generating activities they were involved before the disaster: food processing, cooking food for sale, sewing, lace and rope making etc.
- Give women easy access to working capital, materials and resources for income generating activities, technical and marketing assistance.
- Offer training in new skills for women aimed at facilitating their access to new areas of income earning activity.
- Facilitate women's access to bank loans for small business development.
- Banks and other finance, trading and business institutions should be supported and encouraged to create special structures for providing financial aid and investment advice to small and medium women entrepreneurs in the disaster-affected areas.
- Support to employment generation must be monitored and evaluated to make sure that access to loans and credit do not lead to increased indebtedness and overexploitation of natural resource towards commercialisation.
- Banks and other lending institutions must grant loan repayment holidays to persons who obtained loans prior to the disaster.

- Governments must provide livelihood alternatives to relocated communities. Ensure that in relocated areas communities have access to employment options, healthcare, schools and other social services.
- Women should have complete control of their livestock in camps and temporary shelters so that they can access milk from their dairy cows.

Sri Lanka

Restoration of livelihoods constitutes a large segment of the post-tsunami reconstruction programmes. Much of the focus has been on support for large-scale economic development programmes, often oriented towards men on the basis that they are the head of the household and the primary breadwinner. Thus, there was widespread distribution of motorised fishing boats, nets and other fishing equipment, reconstruction of big public markets. The Sri Lanka Donor Forum, for example, called for investment in housing, transportation, infrastructure and livelihood restoration for fishermen, small farmers and small and micro enterprises, with almost no reference to gender based livelihood needs and the specificity of women's work in the informal sector. The small scale but essential activities that women traditionally engaged in, such as processing fish, making and selling foodstuffs, lace-making, making rope, mats and other household items from coconut husk fibre have been largely ignored even though they constituted a critical part of the family economy.

In addition, women were still held responsible for repayment of loans obtained from banks prior to the tsunami, even though their means of livelihood had been clearly destroyed and they were not generating any income. Banks and other lending institutions insisted that they keep up with their repayment schedules. Several of the women in Galle and Hambantota had obtained loans from Fisheries Cooperatives or from the Samurdhi Bank (State-sponsored Poverty Alleviation programme) and were under great pressure due to the repayment dilemma.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Human Rights Violations in Sri Lanka

Aceh (Indonesia)

Gender blind disaster management prevented women from receiving adequate assistance from the government and NGOs. Even organisations under the United Nations, such as Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and various other international organisations, were weak in their assessments of women's needs. The assistance was male-biased and some support, such as business capital assistance for poultry or fishing, even strengthened patriarchy and discrimination against women. Poultry assistance, in fact, targeted mainly men, rather than supporting women headed households struggling to survive. Excluding women from assistance programmes increased their multiple burdens because they were forced to look for work outside their village/houses and look after their children, elderly and sick as well as manage household chores. Families' food security worsened gradually as the high level of inflation after the tsunami increased the main commodities prices up to 40%. Public transport operators even had to stop their business.

By 2005, women in the Lham Lhom village were generally incapable of restoring their economic activities due to the lack of business capital. The government and some NGOs provided grant for equipment and capital to men. Women were disregarded and did not receive any direct aid or working capital. Some organisations provided sewing machines or working capital to help women resume their pre-tsunami work. However, the assistance could not help much as they have lost access to markets.

Two months following the tsunami, some women managed to set up food shops at their homes. However, such activities were prohibited by the village authority under the pretext that all commercial activities should be carried out in market places to ensure rehabilitation of village markets. However, the actual reasons behind the prohibitions are that the local authority has a vested interest in collecting taxes from the traders. Secondly, husbands disapprove of their wives working outside home instead of attending to their husbands.

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in
Aceh

Pakistan

Some camps had specific space allocated for livestock which the earthquake affected people had brought with them. In two of these camps, it was observed that although community members were looking after their livestock, they did not have control over the milk from them. Army personnel would allow them to access milk once in maybe two or three days. Milk was such a needed food item, especially for women with young children, but even then they were not allowed access to milk which was from their own livestock.

Earthquake Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights
in Pakistan



Raising Women's Awareness of their Human Rights

Women's groups should use post disaster reconstruction processes to break the old patriarchal norms and educate women about their human rights: from right to have national identity cards, separate bank accounts to land and property rights.

- Support human rights awareness education programmes for women within the camps and in their homes if it is not possible to meet elsewhere convenient to women
- Provide women with necessary skills to face new challenges as heads of households due to male family members death, disappearance or incapacitation.
- Provide male family members with the necessary skills to take on new responsibilities of child care due to the death, disappearance or incapacitation of female family members
- Support young female orphans with advice on looking after themselves due to death of parents or adult family members.
- Awareness programmes must emphasise that forced marriage of girls under the age of eighteen is illegal and attracts penalties.
- Support ongoing gender awareness programmes for camp officials and security personnel.

Mobilise and Empower Women to Advocate for their Human Rights

Mobilisation and empowerment of disaster affected women is important for protection of their rights, especially in conservative patriarchal cultures with women's seclusion norms. In Aceh and Pakistan, religious leaders further marginalised women by blaming them for invoking disasters with their 'immoral' behaviour. Furthermore, in Aceh, they enforced stricter Islamic laws with shariah police beating women for failure to wear a headscarf. As a consequence, women are intimidated even to come out of their houses, let alone, voice their needs and concerns.

Ensure that:

- Women's organisations set up coalitions/alliances to advocate for human rights of women in disaster situations
- Women affected by disaster are organised among themselves to advocate for their rights and support each other.
- Advocate for removing laws restricting women's movement and conduct.



Sri Lanka

As a response to the tsunami and to the needs of women survivors, Sri Lankan women's groups came together to set up the Coalition for Assisting Tsunami Affected Women (CATAW). Providing direct assistance to build the capacity of locally based women's organisations to deal with the day to day issues of tsunami recovery and rehabilitation efforts, CATAW acted as an advocacy centre to ensure that women's concerns are met and women are included in decision-making positions and processes at the local, regional and national level. Key issues were those of protection for women and girls affected by the Tsunami and to lobby for a gender responsive rights-based approach to post Tsunami assistance.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Human Rights Violations in Sri Lanka

Aceh (Indonesia)

After visits and relaxed discussions, the main researchers encouraged a number of women to make three to four "small groups" (often called "cell"). The discussions started from these small groups and then followed with sessions. At the next stage, a focus group discussion was created by involving various cells and discussed issues that had been discussed in the cells. The Focus Group Discussions were not only for identifying issues based on common experiences but also as a means to learn and build awareness together. It also provided a platform to build a consensus for future common actions. The Focus Group Discussions were followed with small group discussion for in-depth understanding on specific issues. It continued with several group discussions until they understood the problems faced, roots of the problems, their impact to women and society, and the important factors that affect problems faced.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Rights Violations in Aceh

Protect Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

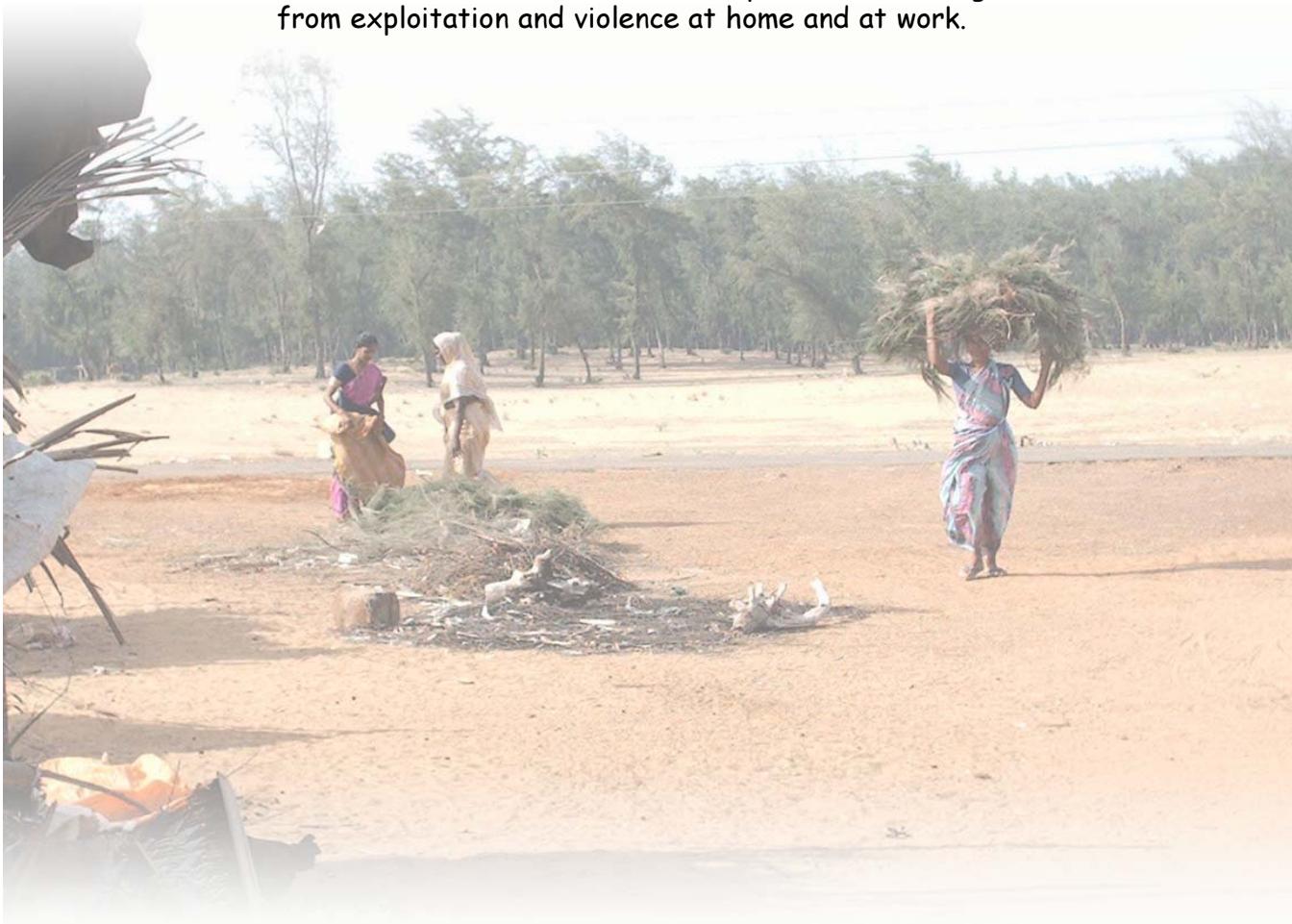
States have an obligation to promote, respect and fulfil fundamental human rights of people affected by disasters irrespective of gender, race, caste, class, ethnicity, citizenship, religion, migration and registration status and other factors.

Ensure that:

- Disaster relief is based on a humanitarian and human rights approach.
- Government and aid agencies engage in relief operations and reconstruction activities without discrimination based on gender, class, ethnicity, religion, age and other factors.
- Government and relief organisations make a special effort to reach out to marginalised groups such as migrants, Dalits, ethnic and religious minorities, sex workers, workers in the informal economic sector (small fisherfolk) to ensure they have access to basic needs as food, water, shelter and health services.
- Women should be mobilised to advocate for policies that secure the rights of vulnerable groups of women such as migrant workers, Dalit women, stateless persons, women belonging to different ethnic groups, sea gypsies, women in service sectors etc

Protect Migrant Workers

- Ensure that in disasters, migrant workers are not discriminated against, whether they are documented or undocumented workers and have access to relief assistance: food, shelter and health services.
- Governments must not arrest and deport migrant workers during disasters.
- Governments must protect migrant workers' rights by reviewing the existing laws and registration processes to ensure that migrant workers have access to registration and legal status.
- Governments must take measures to protect women migrant workers from exploitation and violence at home and at work.



Thailand

The tsunami exposed the plight of migrant workers in Thailand, mostly from neighbouring Burma. In the immediate after of the tsunami, they had to hide in the forest for fear of arrest as their identity cards and registration documents had been washed away by the tsunami. They could not even come out to recover dead bodies of their family members. Since they had lost ID and registration documents they were denied access to government assistance and health services.

After the tsunami, the migrant workers, especially those employed in the commercial fishing industry and service sector, including the entertainment sectors, were affected badly. There was no accurate data on how many had died. For those who survived, they faced loss of employment, and loss of legal documents such as identification cards and other proof of registration. As there is no baseline data available on the population of migrant workers, it was difficult to confirm the number of deaths.

Human rights violations and violence against migrant workers were rampant in Thailand before the tsunami. Migrants were abused by Thai government officials, local communities and employers, including delayed payment of wages, denial of compensation for overtime work, underpayment, a lack of life insurance, rape, robbery, assault and etc. Women are more subject to abuse. They are at risk from sexual harassment and sexual assault at workplace, at home, and in the community. Especially, women working on rubber plantations face sexual abuse by both Thai and Burmese men. Undocumented migrant women normally do not report abuse to the police for fear of arrest and deportation. When they do report to the police, no legal action is taken by the police because they are illegal workers. In some cases, the woman is forced to marry her assaulter. In cases, where Thai men raped Burmese women, they have a very big chance to escape and never held accountable for their crimes

Tsunami Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights in Thailand

Reach out to Widows and Women Headed Households, Disabled and Elderly

Special efforts must be made to reach out to widows, women headed households, disabled and the elderly. In some cultures, widows face ostracism and abuse and can be left out of general assistance efforts.

Ensure that:

- Disabled, the elderly and women headed households in cultures where women's seclusion is practiced, have access to aid supplies.
- Housing, land and property rights of widows (widowed pre disaster and due to disaster) and women headed households are protected.
- In camps and temporary shelters, toilets and bathrooms have relevant facilities for use by people with disabilities
- If camps do not have facilities for disabled people, they should be provided shelter in existing specialised facilities for people with disabilities.
- Aids such as walking sticks, hearing aids, spectacles, should be provided as soon as possible.



Sri Lanka

Women faced a range of issues because of their single status: getting recognition from the state in terms of the benefits such as land allocation, housing allocation and so on, was not straightforward because of the systematic assumption of male as head of household. The social and cultural stigma attached to widowhood was also cited by many women as being an impediment to their ability to be self-reliant. Several women in both the east and the south said that they were blamed for the death of their husbands, and that they were told that it was their 'bad luck' that led to the untimely death of their husband. In several cases, women who had been living in joint family situations prior to the tsunami had to battle their husband's family for their due after the husband was killed in the tsunami. In the east, one woman said that she had been cast out of both her family and the family of her husband after he was killed in a politically motivated shooting 3 months after the tsunami. Looking at the cases in which women complained of sexual harassment, abuse and assault, it was single women who were most vulnerable.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Human Rights Violations in Sri Lanka

Pakistan

One of the interviewed women, who had lost her husband, four daughters, two sons and two grandchildren, had severe injuries to her legs and was unable to walk. . Right after the earthquake, she had been carried by her brother who was on foot himself. After reaching a more populated area, an army officer had given them Rs 300 to get a taxi to the hospital. Later she received Rs 25,000 (USD 420) as government compensation for her injuries. Apart from this monetary assistance, there was no help to provide her with a more comfortable place to stay in keeping with her medical needs, nor was transportation assistance provided to visit various hospitals. She was moved from the hospital to the tent camp carried on a bed (charpai). It had been raining in the past few days, and the tent camp had been a quagmire of mud and slippery, sliding pathways, an absolute death trap even for the able-bodied. It was clearly a gross violation of the woman's right to health care and safety. However, her transportation to such a highly dangerous site at that particular point in time was just one of the many abuses she had suffered since the earthquake. For the past six months she had been shifted from one hospital to another. In between, she had been staying with her brother in one of the camps. It needs to be pointed out that using squat toilets in the camp must have been a torture for a woman with a leg injury.

Earthquake Aftermath: Violations of Women's Human Rights
in Pakistan

Reach out to Low Caste People

In some cultures, caste discrimination is still strong and may prevent relief assistance reaching low caste communities.

- Government and aid agencies should ensure that relief and reconstruction activities are implemented without discrimination based on caste, class, ethnicity, religion, and other factors.
- Government and aid agencies should ensure low caste people have equal access to relief supplies - food, water, health services, compensation benefits and housing.

India

Dalits, or so called untouchables, are denied their basic human rights and face the most terrible forms of deprivation and abuse under normal circumstances. The problems of caste discrimination have added to the misery caused by the tsunami. Entire communities of Dalits were left out of government's and aid agencies' relief assistance for several weeks and suffered from severe hunger and thirst. Indian authorities discriminated in providing financial assistance to the families of deceased Dalits. Dalit areas have been the last to have electricity and water supplies restored during rehabilitation efforts.

At Muttukaddu relief camp; an Irula (low caste tribal group) was beaten up by fisher folk for demanding milk at a centre set up by an NGO. The relief materials designated Irulas and Dalits were diverted.

Women could not go near water pumps to get water as fisher folk scorned at them and drove them away.

Dalits' temporary shelters had no toilets and looked more like cattle sheds than human dwellings.

Women's Human Rights Concerns in Tsunami Affected Countries, APWLD

Ensure Stateless People's Access to Relief Support

- Government and aid agencies should ensure that relief and reconstruction activities are implemented without discrimination based on citizenship.
- Governments must grant citizenship to stateless people so that they can be protected and have access to relief assistance: food, water, shelter, health services, compensation and other support during disasters.

Thailand

In the tsunami affected areas, stateless communities are found in Ranong province. They were made 'stateless' as a result of the national border demarcation imposed by the British between Thailand and Burma, a British colony between 1824 and 1948. These people lived along the border of the two countries, normally in the hills or jungles, and were left out of the government surveys. This resulted in unclear nationality status. These people look like Thai and speak the Thai language. However, they have no birth certificates, no registration documents or IDs, no usual practice of death reports and no right to vote in the elections. Hence, they are not protected by the Thai laws, have no labour and property rights and no access to education. They are, therefore, practically non-existent in Thailand. There is no record of how many stateless people died during the tsunami.

"We the Moken in Tap Tawan village, never got any help from the government. When they came to distribute aid in the tent camp, we always waited for our names to be called. But we waited in vain. We even had identification cards but we were never included. I don't understand why. Our names were never on the list because we do not have Thai citizenship. During the first few days we stayed in a tent but they didn't give me temporary home so I went to stay in the mountains", said Lai, a sea gypsy, tsunami survivor in Thailand.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Human Rights Violations in Thailand

Protect Women - Victims of Disasters and Armed Conflict Situations

Women - victims of disasters in armed conflict situations are most vulnerable to deprivation, violence and abuse by conflicting groups. Efforts must be made to provide assistance and protection.

Governments and international aid agencies, especially UN, must prioritise reaching peace agreements between the conflicting parties, including:

- End all military actions in disaster zone
- Let humanitarian aid agencies into disaster zones
- Ensure free movement of people and distribution of relief
- Do not prevent people from accessing livelihoods sources to ensure food security: sea, forests, agricultural land.
- Do not station military personnel in IDP camps "for security reasons" if they are one of the conflicting parties. In Sri Lanka, government military presence in camps caused deaths of civilians when Tamil Tigers launched attacks on the government forces.



Aceh (Indonesia)

Lampuuk Village was reached by emergency assistance three days after the tsunami. The area is relatively easily reachable because its location is at the edge of the coast, while Seibun Ketapang and Lham Lhom villages, situated at the foothill, were reached only on day six. The delay in evacuation and relief assistance was caused not only by the debris, wood and sprawling bodies but also by TNI (Indonesian military). The three villages had been terrorised by TNI troops hunting after GAM members suspected to have come down from the hills to save their families. In the chaos of looking for missing family members and food shortage that followed the tsunami, the villagers were checked one by one to ensure that they were not GAM members. Women and men in Seibun Ketapang village were asked to make a line and questioned whether they were GAM members and about the location of their GAM family members. This made many volunteers and aid organisations providing relief supplies reluctant to work in Seibun Ketapang, Lham Lhom or Lampuuk because they did not want to have problems with the military. Moreover, the army used the momentum to search for weapons in the areas around the villages to replace those lost when the ammunition warehouse at the TNI Company base in Lhok Nga was destroyed by the tsunami.

After the tsunami, the military unofficially declared particular regions as 'black, red and grey' zones. Black indicated areas of armed conflict between the military and GAM; red - areas of possible location of GAM forces; and grey zone was an area relatively free from GAM. People were restricted to go to black zones. Women of the Lampuuk village used to pick wild fruits, vegetables and herbs in the nearby hills declared 'black zone' after the tsunami. On March 7, a few villagers were shot dead at the foothill as suspected GAM fighters. The communities, who lost their livelihood sources from the sea, were now denied access to the forest - another livelihood source.

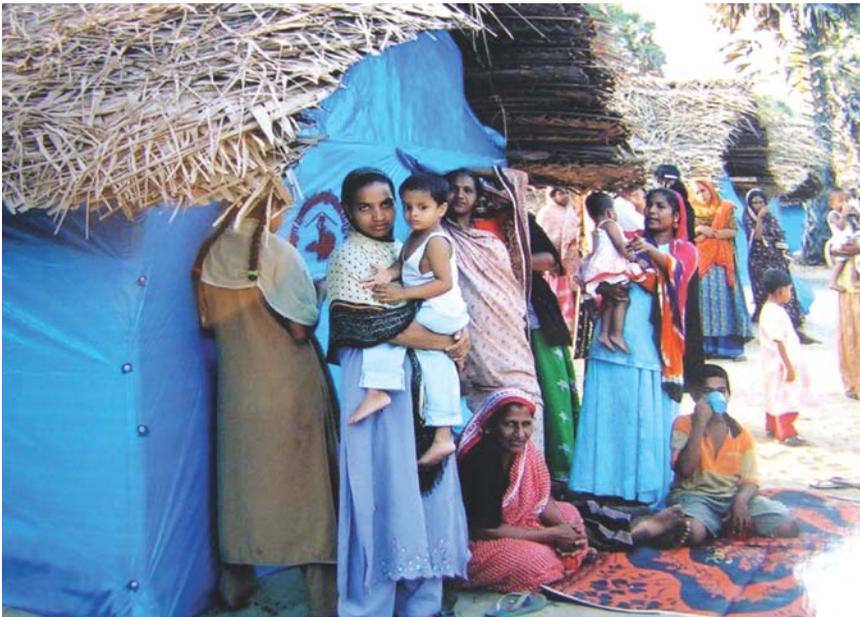
Most of the residential area and agricultural land were inundated by water and mud resulting in a loss of food supplies either in their farms or houses. The only hope was government or non-governmental organisation's assistance. The assistance finally got through to the villages after 4-5 days.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Human Rights Violations in Aceh

Sri Lanka

The tsunami was most severely felt by the eastern coast of the island, which is also the area which had already been devastated by the armed conflict for at least fifteen years prior to the tsunami. Thus, communities that had faced all forms of violence, severe human rights abuses, impoverishment, loss of livelihood and displacement in a systematic manner due to the conflict were once more subjected to deprivation and to the destruction of their communities, their lives and their livelihoods because of the tsunami. In fact, some of them referred to this as the 'second tsunami' while the conflict had been the first. The waves destroyed an already weak infrastructure, and impoverished already very poor communities. It created more widows in communities that already had a majority of female-headed households; it created more orphans in communities that already had abnormal numbers of parentless children.

Tsunami Aftermath: Women's Human Rights Violations in Sri Lanka



General Recommendations for Gender Sensitive Disaster Management

Global Response

- An international women's disaster response agency needs to be created which would reach out to disaster hit areas and provide advisory assistance for gender sensitive disaster management to governments of the affected country and aid agencies involved in relief and rehabilitation activities.
- Gender sensitive disaster management manuals need to be translated into various languages and distributed to governments.
- Officials of governments and aid agencies, including UN officials, need to undergo gender sensitive disaster management training.
- Gender sensitive disaster management policies should be mainstreamed into international government and non-government agencies involved in disaster management.

National Response

- In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, 'gender focal committees involving various stakeholders - government, aid agencies, international and local NGOs - should be set up to ensure women's needs are met and women's human rights are protected.
- Collect gender disaggregated data as soon as possible after the disaster so that necessary data is available in an accessible and user friendly format. Gender disaggregated data is essential to enable governments and aid agencies to formulate gender-sensitive relief and reconstruction programmes and plans.
- Provide legal support to women in processing documentation such as death certificates, land and other ownership disputes.

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