

# Awareness & Sensitization Session for Women on CBDRMC's and Issues faced by Women during Disasters

Madaklasht, Chitral  
25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021



An output report on the session held in Madaklasht, Chitral for women about Community Based Disaster Risk Management Committees and the issues specific to women that arise due to disasters



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# **Awareness & Sensitization Session for Women on CBDRMC's and Issues faced by Women during Disasters**

**Madaklasht, Chitral  
25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021**

## **Introduction**

**Madaklasht, Chitral:**

The valley of Madaklasht is home to approximately 5000 individuals who are part of the progressive Dari-Khowar speaking rural community. The valley has also been identified as a highly vulnerable site to potential GLOF events as per the assessment of Pakistan Metrological Department (PMD), and therefore has been included as a target site for the GLOF II project.

The population of the valley comprises of various backgrounds including students, small-business owners, farmers, and tourism practitioners. Majority of its people depend upon agriculture and livestock and although the literacy rate is high, the region is still marred by poverty and joblessness. Madaklasht valley is connected with rest of the Shishako valley and main Darosh-Chitral Road through a jeep-able track of around 52 KM. Majority of the communities residing on both side of main river Dara Kalan are linked with main track through small bridges mostly made of ropes, wood and stones. There are seven social groups including Ustad Mohammad Baqa, Qumbari, Uzbaki, Kurgi, Ghiz (Ghazni), Ashori and Qurbani. The main river called Kalan Dara is the outcome of 16 small and medium size rivers and streams crosses the valley. The only Jeep-able track passes through the side of rivers in slope mountainous terrains prone to land sliding. This track is crossed by few of the streams at different places. The land is fertile and crops like Maize and wheat are grown in the area. Peas, potato, and other vegetables are grown for domestic use. The area is rich in fruit production. Many varieties of apples, apricots, persimmons, and walnuts are produced in the area.

**Awareness & Sensitization Session for Women:**

The need to involve women in all aspects of disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction is crucial to the capacity building and resilience of any community threatened by natural disasters.

This is even more crucial given the fact that women tend to be the first respondents at home when a disaster strikes, as men are usually occupied at work outside of their homes. This tends to put women at a higher disadvantage as they are likely to have limited or no access to early warnings. Therefore, there is a dire need to ensure that women are equally trained in the process of being able to survive a natural disaster as well as coping mechanisms after it. Moreover, women of the community require sensitization of how their opinion matters when devising Disaster Risk Management (DRM) plans, hence, the role played by women in the established Community Based Disaster Risk Management Committees (CBDRMC's) needs to be highlighted. Considering the above, a session on women's role in CBDRMC's as well as the issues specific to women which may arise due to disasters was held on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 in Madaklasht, Chitral, which was organized and executed by Ms. Amal Durrani - Awareness & Sensitization Consultant (KP). To ensure that the session was kept interactive, it was further facilitated by Ms. Mariam Zafar – Knowledge Management Consultant (KP) as well as Ms. Navroza Sher Ali – Communication & Reporting Assistant, Chitral.

### **Objectives of the Session**

1. Ensuring maximum participation of women while adhering to COVID-19 SOP's
2. Ensure participants are made aware of why it is essential to equally involve women in the process of Disaster Risk Management and Reduction (DRM & DRR)
3. Ensure participants are aware of the critical role women play as first respondents
4. Ensuring participants are given refresher information about the GLOF-II Project as well as concepts of DRM, DRR, climate change, disasters, and the process of preparedness and responsiveness
5. Ensure participants are made aware of the importance of the established Community Based Disaster Risk Management Committees (CBDRMC's) as well as the crucial role played by women within these
6. Providing a safe space for women to freely discuss issues faced by women before, during or after a disaster, which would otherwise not be discussed due to social and cultural norms in the region
7. Providing input to women of how the aforementioned issues can be addressed and gaining feedback from the participants.

8. Ensuring participants are made aware of the projects Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), allowing them to route their concerns and/or complaints through the appropriate channel

### **Detailed Proceedings of the Session**

Time: 11:00 am

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

Location: Madaklasht, Chitral

Number of Participants: 27 women

#### **Sessions Commencement:**

The session was commenced by Ms. Navroza Sher Ali – Communication & Reporting Assistant, GLOF-II project, who welcomed the participants and elaborated the agenda for the session. This was followed by a brief introduction of the project and then calling upon participants for recitation of the Holy Quran.

#### **Community Based Disaster Risk Management Committee's:**

The Awareness & Sensitization Consultant (KP), Ms. Amal Durrani proceeded further by welcoming the participants to the session and giving a brief introduction of the GLOF-II project, its objectives and what it aims to achieve through such sessions. The consultant highlighted the need to conduct awareness and sensitization sessions in order increase the resilience and capacity building of the locals who are vulnerable to potential disasters. It was further elaborated why it is essential to impart equal knowledge to women in order to ensure they are fully equipped to reduce the risks that they may have to face during a disaster, as well as how best to tackle the disasters aftermath and ensure they have access to livelihood sources.

The consultant went on to highlight the importance of the establishment of CBDRMC's and the role these committees play in mobilizing the community which is crucial to the success of the project. Participants were made aware of the criteria upon which these committees have been formed, the responsibilities that fall under the committee's jurisdiction, the eligibility of becoming a member, as well as the roles and responsibilities of each member within the committee.

Participants were also made aware of the fact that women play an equal part in the committee's formation as well as its operations. This point was stressed upon to ensure that women could gain confidence in the knowledge that the GLOF-II project attempts to take into equal account the opinions and concerns of women in the community.

Participants were informed that the formation of CBDRMC's will serve the communities in the long-run, allowing them to use its structure to mobilize the community for potential future projects as well. Thereby, aiding to sustainable development in the region where the communities can take on the ownership of their progress and living conditions. Participants were keen to know all the tasks that fall under the established CBDRMC's and were departed the required knowledge such as its role in implementation of the ongoing project, proper record keeping of project activities in the region, identifying and resolving issues within the community, developing linkages with the government, non-government organizations and other stakeholders.

#### Issues faced by Women:

The Awareness & Sensitization Consultant (KP) proceeded further by moving on to a discussion about issues which are specific to women and girls only, which may arise during or after a disaster. The valley of Madaklasht was an ideal valley to start such a discussion as the project had already built rapport with the community and the locals had already been familiarized with the project and its objectives on numerous occasions. A safe space was provided to women to speak freely without fearing judgement or societal pressures which would have been present had the session also included men. A series of questions were asked from the participants which would allow the discussion to touch upon other relevant topics as well. This not only allowed input to be gained about how much knowledge the participants already have about the project and its activities, but it also provided insight into what the local women were hopeful for as well as their input and concerns.

The following were the key finding points of the discussion:

- Participants were mostly aware of the project's objectives, the surrounding glaciers, as well as the different concepts of disasters, risks, vulnerabilities capacities.

- A few women had attended previously held trainings by the project, such as the Disaster Risk Management training in Chitral, which allowed them to become aware of basic search & rescue skills and first aid skills. They further imparted this knowledge to other members of their community.
- Women were aware of the soft component of the project which included the know-how of community mobilization as well as the hard component which includes building of infrastructure in the area.
- Women claimed that they are equally involved (50% representation) in the GLOF-II project activities and their opinions/concerns are taken into consideration.
- When asked about any prevalent local indigenous practices to detect disasters, women responded that continuous rains in the area can lead to floods, which alerts them of potential flooding or land sliding.
- Women also mentioned that they are sometimes warned through circulars sent by Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) regarding potential disasters; allowing them to be more vigilant. Additionally, they also claimed that as technology and telecom services had made their way into the community, they also keep themselves up to date about the upcoming weather through forecasts.
- Participants claimed that during disasters there is general inaccessibility of telecommunication and they do not wait for help to arrive, rather as first respondents in the area they take the lead and have somewhat defined roles and responsibilities which are set upon mutual agreement based on their skill-set.
- During and after disasters, women are generally assigned the tasks of tending to the sick and injured, as well as the elderly, disabled and children. They also have the responsibility of ensuring there is food and clean clothing for those who require it.
- Upon inquiring about what issues they feel are specific and pertinent to women alone, they were unable to answer. Hence the topic was probed further to gauge their thought process regarding matters of premature labour caused by the shock or impact of disasters. Women agreed that they would be unable to tackle an issue such as this as health workers are generally located further away from their village. They were at a consensus that if potential trainings were given on the matter to certain members of the community, it would allow them to be better prepared in the future.

- When inquired about whether women were equipped to lead their households in the unfortunate event of losing male members of the family – who are responsible for income generation – due to a disaster, they were in general agreement that they would not be able to do so in more than the very basic of capacity as they lacked the required skills to generate income.
- Based on the aforementioned points, the following recommendations were put forth by the participants:
  - i. Training for emergency response of premature labour.
  - ii. Technical and vocational training specific to women for income generating activities and building linkages to markets.
  - iii. Further sessions for women only, allowing them to speak freely without fear of judgement and societal pressures.

Several observations were noted by the consultant and the facilitators which included the following:

- i. Women and girls in the valley of Madaklasht were mostly aware of the projects aims, objectives, activities, and initiatives.
- ii. Women were actively involved in discussions regarding the project and its activities.
- iii. Women felt comfortable and confident discussing sensitive topics such as issues specific to women.
- iv. Women were more outspoken and confident during the discussion and not hesitant to put forward their views and concerns.
- v. Women of the valley require further sessions which are designed specifically for them and which address issues such as premature labour and potential livelihood opportunities.

Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM):

As per directives of the project, participants were made aware of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). They were made aware of the purpose of the mechanism, which would allow them to report complaints so as to ensure their timely resolution. Participants were informed that



the mechanism was open for all and would allow them to identify and report any environmental and social concerns, thereby allowing relevant authorities to address the matter in a timely manner. The modes through which they can reach out were also highlighted (i.e. website, via phone, written letters to PMU, PIU or FO). The requirements and the GRM procedure were highlighted as well as the 5-tier solution to any given issue. Participants were appreciative of the introduced mechanism as they claimed it would allow the process to be simplified and more transparent.

# ANNEX I - Pictures













## ANNEX II – Attendance sheet

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<h3>GLOF-II Project</h3> <h3>Focus Group Discussion Consent Form</h3>			
<p><b>Purpose</b> You have been invited to participate in a focus group discussion sponsored by the GLOF-II Project under UNDP on 25-04-21 held in <del>Mahabadda</del>. The purpose of this focus group is to understand the concerns, feedback, and knowledge that women have regarding the GLOF-II Project, as well as their experiences about any disasters that they may have encountered. The information learned in this focus group will be used to further improve the content of the project for future interventions, taking into account the perspective of women.</p>			
<p><b>Procedure</b> As part of this study, you will be placed in a group of ____ individuals. A moderator will ask you several questions while facilitating the discussion. This focus group will be audio-recorded and a note-taker will also be present. However, your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in the final report, unless otherwise given permission by yourself.</p>			
<p>You can choose whether or not to participate in the focus group, and you may stop at any time during the course of the study. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to focus group questions. The representatives of the GLOF-II Project want to hear the many varying viewpoints and would like for everyone to contribute their thoughts.</p>			
<p>Out of respect, please refrain from interrupting others. However, feel free to be honest even when your responses counter those of other group members.</p>			
<p><b>Benefits and Risks</b> Your participation may benefit you and other women in the many GLOF vulnerable valleys. However, no risks are anticipated beyond those experienced during an average conversation.</p>			



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### Confidentiality

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to respect the privacy of other focus group members by not disclosing any content discussed during the study. Researchers within the GLOF-II Project will analyze the data, but—as stated above—your responses will remain confidential unless permission is given by yourself.

*I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above.*

	Name	Occupation	Contact Number	Consent for the Focus Group Discussion	Consent for mentioning name in potential documents
1.	Alia Naz	Social Worker	0346-0910224	Alia	Alia
2.	Asia	W.S.O	0348-7972338	ASIA	ASIA
3.	Tebba Sum	Teacher	0345-2602639	Te	Te
4.	Zaiba Gul	House Wife	03486815286	Zaiba	Zaiba
5.	Hashma Hamid	"	03459077844	Ha	Ha
6.	Sangita	"	0345294428	Su	Su
7.	Zahida Nissa	"		Zahida Nissa	Zahida Nissa
8.	Zulfi Bangal	"	03470146965	ZULFI-BANGAL	ZULFI
9.	Shakor Hayat	"	03405720485	Shakor Hayat	Shakor Hayat
10.	Noor Pari	"	0347-9271596	Noor	Noor
11.	Rukhsana	"	03499703970	Rukh	Rukh
12.	Usmania	"	0343-9882058	usmania	usmania
13.	Zeenat Gul	"	0346-2803439	Zeenat	Zeenat
14.	Ponveez Hayat	"	0340-2883027	Ponveez	Ponveez
15.	Aneela Jehan	"	0343-6563952	Aneela	Aneela



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*I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above.*

	Name	Occupation	Contact Number	Consent for the Focus Group Discussion	Consent for mentioning name in potential documents
1.	Khalida zia	House wife	03419300528	Khalida	Khalida
2.	Misbah shabeen	BS. Nursing	03441908447	Misbah	Misbah
3.	Naghara Hamid	student	03418395599	Naghara	Naghara
4.	Huma shabeen	House wife	03439860538	Huma	Huma
5.	Zahir Dana		03429134864	Zahir	Zahir
6.	No-huda Bashir		03453497055	No-huda	No-huda
7.	Sheveen Toj	Metric Housewife	03482155486	Sheveen	Sheveen
8.	Mariyam	Hus wife	03402567734	Mariyam	Mariyam
9.	Fahima Aull	5	03490128308	Fahima	Fahima
10.	Amal Durani	Consultant - GLOF-II Project	03415267866	Amal Durani	Amal Durani
11.	Nuzra Sher Ali	Comm. & Rep. of President (UNU)	03408918128	Nuzra	Nuzra
12.	Mariam Zafar	Consultant GLOF-II	0332998539	Mariam	Mariam
13.					
14.					
15.					