

INVITATION

High level conference on Gender-responsive and Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Policies and Management in the OSCE Region and the OSCE Partners for Co-operation

01 June 2022, Vienna, *(online)*

The OSCE Secretariat Gender Issues Programme has the pleasure to invite you to the upcoming OSCE-wide high level conference on Gender-responsive and Disability-inclusive DRR Policies and Management. This high level event (which was supposed to take place on 1 March but had to be postponed) is part of the WIN project (Women and men Innovating and Networking for Gender Equality), and will take place online on **01 June 2022**. There will be simultaneous interpretation from English into the following languages: Russian, Bosnian-Serbian-Montenegrin-Croatian, Albanian and International sign-language.

The conference will serve as a forum to discuss gender-responsive and disability-inclusive national policies, challenges and good practices for Disaster Risk Reduction. The participation of high-level officials will be instrumental in raising the profile of the issue. A set of recommendations will be shared with the participants and officials from OSCE participating States.

We hope that you will be able to participate and contribute with your valuable expertise and experiences on this crucial topic. If you already registered for the event in March, your registration is still valid. In case you have not registered yet, you are kindly requested to do so **until 30 May, 10.00 (Vienna time/CET)** by accessing the following link:

<https://events.osce.org/2022-gender-responsive-and-disability-inclusive-disaster-risk-reduction-policies-and-management/registration>

or the QR code below



Please note that it is possible for one person to register more participants using the same account. If you wish to register several persons, please tick "**group registration**" and then continue to avoid overtyping your account.

If **you are logging in for the first time** with this OSCE online events tool, you need to create an account with a password. If you logged in before for any other OSCE event, you can **use your existing account and provide your name and password**.

Once participants are registered, they will receive a confirmation email. After the list of participants has been reviewed, all registered participants will receive an email with technical information, the link and joining details after registration deadline

For any technical queries, please contact Giacomo Tirelli, Project Assistant (Giacomo.Tirelli@osce.org).

OSCE Office of the Secretary General / OSCE Gender Issues Programme

CONCEPT NOTE

High level conference on Gender-responsive and Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Policies and Management in the OSCE Region and the OSCE Partners for Cooperation

01 June, 2022
(online)

Introduction

The OSCE region has experienced a growing impact of natural and human made hazards, which have become more severe and more frequent. Often they cause devastation, destroy people's lives and livelihoods. As such, they constitute major security risks for the OSCE region.

People and communities are impacted differently according to their power and status in society, and women and girls often have increased vulnerability due to social norms, family duties and limited access to power and resources. Factors such as age, social class, ethnicity, disability etc. will multiply these vulnerabilities. Persons with disabilities face specific challenges during disasters. An inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) approach will ensure that different impacted groups are represented throughout the DRR cycle, from planning and preparing to response and recovery. The knowledge and experience gained by women and people with disabilities is often an untapped source of knowledge in DRR and its management. Including these perspectives will help address and respond to specific needs and identify capacities and competence, making DRR more inclusive and efficient.

In order to assist the OSCE in fulfilling its gender mainstreaming commitments in this area, the Gender Issues Programme, under its WIN project (*Women and Men Innovating and Networking for Promoting Gender Equality*), is organizing a **High-level conference on enhancing gender-responsive and disability inclusive DRR policies and management in the OSCE area and Partners for Cooperation**. The event was originally planned for March 1 2022, but rescheduled to 01 June.

Objectives of the Conference

This High-Level Conference will be the final conference in a series of events aimed at increasing the awareness among stakeholders about gender-responsive and disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction policies and management, enhancing sub-regional and international co-operation among relevant DRR government bodies and organizations working with disability and gender equality.

The Conference will serve as a forum to present and discuss the findings of a study on gender-responsive and disability inclusive policies and the outcomes of two expert roundtables in Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe conducted in November 2021. The participation of high-level officials will be instrumental in raising the profile of the issue. A set of recommendations will be shared with the officials and participants at the Conference for discussion.

The conference discussions will also touch upon the need for enhancing women's participation in DRR policies while addressing environmental degradation caused by the continuous fighting in Ukraine.

Background

OSCE participating States are strongly committed to promoting gender equality, first and foremost through the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and related decisions (MC DEC 14/2004). It states that:

"(..) equal rights of women and men and the protection of their human rights are essential to peace, sustainable democracy, economic development and therefore to security and stability in the OSCE region."

The overall strategy to achieve gender equality is gender mainstreaming: taking into account the different needs and perspectives of women and men when designing and implementing policies and programmes. The OSCE Secretariat's Programme for Gender Issues provides the OSCE executive structures and participating States with the expertise and operational tools they need to fully implement that commitment. It provides guidance and support to the work on gender equality in OSCE institutions and field operations across the Organization.

The OSCE with its comprehensive approach to security plays an important role in strengthening resilience to disasters. It enables the Organization to address disaster risks from different perspectives and at different levels. The Office of the Coordinator of the OSCE Environmental and Economic activities (OCEEA) is mandated to address disaster risk reduction and implements relevant activities to strengthen the disaster-risk reduction capacities in the OSCE area.

The *1975 Helsinki Final Act* recognized the importance of co-operation on disaster risk reduction. This was followed by several OSCE political commitments that referred to disaster preparedness and management in the OSCE context, including the *2003 OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension*, and the *2007 Madrid Declaration on Environment and Security*. The *2014 Basel Ministerial Council Decision on Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction* is the cornerstone of OSCE activities in this field.

The OCEEA activities range from enhancing wildfire management capacities through regional fire management trainings and workshops in South Caucasus and Eastern Europe to facilitating transboundary water co-operation and strengthening capacities of national authorities and practitioners on flood risk reduction in South-Eastern Europe and Eastern Europe. In addition, the OSCE and UNDRR are collaborating to address the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on disaster preparedness measures and institutions in the OSCE area, in support of implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. In 2021, the OCEEA supported development of the report on gender-responsive practices in Europe and continues to integrate gender perspectives throughout its projects and activities.

The OSCE activities in disaster risk reduction are a part of the international effort to secure a more sustainable future for all and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development and to support participating States in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction is a priority. Participating States are encouraged to:

“(..) promote good governance and transparency in the field of disaster risk reduction, to incorporate local knowledge and information into national plans, taking into consideration the capabilities of both men and women and the specific vulnerabilities of children, women, the elderly, the poor, and the disabled, and to actively engage all relevant stakeholders, including where appropriate local authorities, civil society, the private sector, the media and academia in all phases of disaster risk reduction” (MC Decision No. 6/14 on the Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction)

The most recent relevant commitment was made at the Ministerial Committee in Stockholm in 2021, emphasizing:

“(..) the importance of the effective involvement of women in decision-making processes in the field of climate change, and the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, and also of girls where appropriate, in related programmes and activities, and mindful of reporting indicating that women and girls are overrepresented among those groups with less resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change and taking into account their needs in this regard,”

And calling upon the participating States to:

“promote the effective participation of women in decision-making processes on climate change prevention, mitigation and adaptation, and also of girls where appropriate, in related programmes and activities;”

(MC Decision No. 3/21 on Strengthening co-operation to address the Challenges caused by Climate Change)

Format and Programme

The Conference will address the role of the OSCE in promoting gender-responsive and disability-inclusive DRR policies, based on international commitments made by OSCE participating States and show case good practices. Moreover it will discuss evidence-based recommendations on how to make DRR policies, management and practices truly inclusive.

The event will take place online (via Zoom platform), on **01 JUNE 2022**, with two thematic sessions. Simultaneous interpreting will be provided from English into Russian, Bosnian-Serbian-Montenegrin-Croatian, Albanian and International Sign Language.

High level conference on Gender-responsive and Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Policies and Management in the OSCE Region and the OSCE Partners for Co-operation

01 June 2022 (10:30 – 13:15 hrs, CET)
Modality: On-line (Zoom)

Draft Agenda

AGENDA ITEM	OBJECTIVES
<p>10.30-11.00 Opening remarks</p> <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <p>Amb. Helga Maria Schmid, OSCE Secretary General</p> <p>Ms. Liliana Palihovici, Special Representative on Gender of the OSCE Chairpersonship</p> <p>Ms. Mami Mizutori Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (Video message)</p>	<p>Answer the “What”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set the stage - Highlight international (global and regional) commitments on gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion
<p>11.00- 11:50 Session 1 – Gender mainstreaming in DRR practices and DRR management policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of case studies <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <p>Ms. Shoko Fujita, Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office of the Government of Japan</p> <p>Dr. Karin Weber, DI, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&As to panelists • Presentation of the knowledge product: “Disaster Protection for all: A gender responsive and disability inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction” <p>Speaker: Ms. Bella Evidente, International Consultant</p>	<p>Answer the “Why”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show real impact and lessons learned from gender and disability-blind DRR policies, i.e. that gender mainstreaming is not “ideological”, but important for results on the ground. - The Great East Japan Earthquake was a turning point for Japan as presented at the expert roundtable in November and elaborated in the mapping study. Gender considerations were incorporated from then on.

Moderator: Amb. Igli Hasani, OSCE Coordinator of the Economic and Environmental Activities

11.50-12.00 Break

12.00-12.45 Session 2 - Gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion: Recommendations

Speakers:

Dr. Abul Hasnat Monjurul Kabir Senior Policy and UN Coordination Advisor, UN Women HQ

Representative of the Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (Name TBC)

Ms. Mariya Yasenovska, Human rights officer, European Disability Forum

- **Q&As to panelists**

Moderator: Amb. John MacGregor, Head of OSCE Centre in Ashgabat

Answer the “how”

- Share good practices, identify opportunities for introducing gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion, encourage and promote ‘responsive’ and ‘transformative’ approach, extract recommendations on several levels (CSOs, governments, international organizations, donors)
- Highlight the importance of regional cooperation and partnerships, and the regional DRR platforms for mainstreaming inclusiveness (European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction & Sub-Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia and South Caucasus)

<p>12.45-13.15 Session 3: Concluding remarks</p> <p><i>Speakers:</i> Amb. Tobias Lorentzson, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OSCE</p> <p>Amb. Petri Puhakka, Ambassador for Disability and Inclusion, Finland</p> <p>Moderator: Lara Scarpitta, Senior Gender Adviser, OSCE Secretariat</p>	<p>Wrap up the event</p> <p>Summarize key take-aways Point to the road ahead</p>
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