Topic: Gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction

Executive Summary:

Gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction (DRR) has gained considerable global attention recently.1 Despite this, many countries, even global leaders in DRR like Japan, still lack gendered perspectives in their DRR policies. Thus, our task force aims to mitigate women’s vulnerability during and post-flood disasters by recommending policies to prefectural governments in Tohoku, Japan.

To create effective and comprehensive policy recommendations, we first analyse the problems women in Tohoku face during and post-flood disasters. A summary of our **identified problems** can be found below:

1. **Traditional Sociocultural Norms**

1. **Lack of Women Visibility in Flood Disaster Management**
2. Lack of Women in Prefectural Disaster Governance
3. Lack of Gender-Responsiveness in Flood Disaster Preparedness
4. Lack of Women Leaders in Evacuation Shelters

Following this, we draw inspiration from overseas case studies to tackle these issues through a multi-pronged approach, where we will educate and address the symptomatic problems. A summary of our **policy recommendations** can be found below:

            Short-term policies should be implemented *first* because they directly target the root cause (i.e. traditional sociocultural norms) contributing to our identified problems. Specifically, they seek to do so by **educating** the population of Tohoku. These policy recommendations will be enacted as gender-responsive disaster risk reduction initiatives in collaboration with research centres:

1. **Elevating Women’s Voices through Disaster Storytelling** – Establishing an online storytelling platform that encourages Japanese women to share their lived disaster experiences and challenges actively will **educate** the Japanese population on women’s vulnerabilities and needs during and post-flood disasters.

1. **Sowing Seeds of Change: Empowering Women through Eco-DRR Projects** – Enhancing the flood resilience of women in the Tohoku region by building their adaptive capacity by integrating gender-responsive **educational** measures into Eco-DRR initiatives.

1. **Youths as Cultural Catalysts** – Establishing youth-led panels to devise solutions to improve gender responsiveness in flood disaster management policies would **educate** youths on the importance of including women’s perspectives.

Subsequently, long-term policies will be implemented to tackle the symptomatic problems of traditional sociocultural norms through enhancing **legislation** and **addressing women’s needs in evacuation shelters**.

1. **Redefining Vulnerability** – Establishing a standardised framework that will aid prefectural governments in Tohoku in curating solutions in disaster contexts.

1. **Enhancing Gender Diversity Targets** – Establishing more ambitious female representation goals and implementing a multiple-vote share system for female representatives during voting for flood disaster issues concerning women.

1. **Mandating Quotas in Evacuation Shelters**– Mandating women’s leadership quotas in evacuation shelters to address the root cause of the problems women face in evacuation shelters.
2. **Enhancing Women-Sensitivity in Evacuation Shelters** – Implementing gender-specific private spaces in evacuation shelters to make women less susceptible to vulnerabilities within these shelters.

1. **Collaboration between Women’s Centres and Evacuation Shelters** – Collaborating with women’s centres to provide caregiving services and counselling in evacuation shelters.