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Unequal Impact: Gender-Based Violence in Climate Disasters

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Abstract:

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a pressing issue exacerbated by climate disasters, impacting individuals globally. This study delves into the nexus of GBV and climate disasters, shedding light on underlying mechanisms, reporting challenges, and effective interventions. It elucidates how cultural norms, fear of reprisal, and limited access to support services contribute to post-disaster GBV silence. Promising interventions, such as survivor-centric approaches and community resilience initiatives, are explored, alongside key takeaways and areas necessitating improvement. The research emphasizes the critical need to address GBV within disaster contexts, urging collaborative efforts across sectors to bolster resilience, empower survivors, and advocate for policy reforms.

Keywords: *Gender-Based Violence, Climate Disasters, Resilience, Survivor Centered Approaches, Community Empowerment*

Introduction

Planet Earth has experienced an escalating surge in numbers and magnitudes of climate change-induced disasters, including hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and droughts, whooping at the same time. These disasters not only destroy communities and scatter ecosystems but also make the already unfolding situations worse, especially as for the most *marginalized groups* of society. The list is *long and gender-based violence (GBV)* appears as the least spoken problem that spreads everywhere, in addition to facing climate change; people already suffer in many ways from climate change effects. **Climate change presents an impending danger to India's massive population, particularly to the over 60% who rely on agriculture for their livelihood (Zhimomi & Chhura 2023).** Droughts, floods, heatwaves, storms, rising sea levels, warming oceans, and melting glaciers – all consequences of climate change – directly threaten India's agricultural sector and food security. This dependence on climate-sensitive sectors makes India exceptionally vulnerable to the disruptions caused by a changing climate. **The collision of climate catastrophizes and gender-based violations makes the vicious circle of the issue even more complex, and therefore, requires immediate action.** With the progress of our consideration, the intricate situation of the **climate change impact** becomes **known**. It is not just neutral gender. The gendered nature of disaster risk exposes women, girls, and gender minorities to more forms of violence, as they deal with a higher degree of threats after the disaster. Learning the root dynamics and preventing the root causes of GBV in this sense is imperative to build stronger and more uniting communities and for women's empowerment

To begin, we arrive at acknowledgment that GBV during disasters is not a direct consequence of natural forces per se, but rather it isolates as a structural factor rooted in existing discriminations and uneven power relations. Just like a snake, it exists in many different shapes, such as intimidating partner violence, rape, traffic, and bullying, and to exacerbate the issue, there is a strong stigma and embarrassment regarding it, which makes it hidden behind closed doors. Because disasters related to climate, and the subsequent chaos and upheaval create an ideal ecosystem for abuse perpetrators to expand their control, the circles of abuse and trauma will continue. Beyond physical capabilities, health is a positive term encompassing social and personal resources, further emphasizing its multi-faceted significance (Bashir, et al 2023)

This research is concerned with peeling the veil from the undisclosed trauma of the individuals and communities that are victims of GBV during climate disasters. In this way, we are going to make it clear and known what an unseen epidemic of violence it is, and this will empower the survivors to speak their pieces, challenge the social acceptance of violence, and demand a serious reaction that will ultimately protect those in need.

The *objectives* of the present research project are much more comprehensive as the spectrum of climate-related events, both sudden-onset disasters, such as storms and earthquakes, and gradual transformations, like desertification and sea level rise, are taken into consideration. It also pays attention to people from diverse geographic landscapes, appreciating that the interlinkages of climate change and GBV are in a way different in almost every location and culture.

Key objectives of this research include: Key objectives of this research include:

- Analyzing the prominent role and the basis of GBV in climate-related emergencies.
- COVID-19 has widened existing inequalities and created barriers to reporting and tackling GBV after disasters, including cultural norms, institutional failures, and systemic injustices.
- Investigating the case studies as well as the best practices and interventions that are known to help prevent and respond to GBV in areas with dangerous disasters.
- Support to policy reform and collective action to address the causes of gender-based violence (GBV) and contribute towards the development of gender-inclusive strategies of climate change adaptation.

Understanding Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an intensive phenomenon that manifests in a multi-faceted direction with the sole focus on each group that is affected irrespective of *age, race, socioeconomic status, or geographical location*.

Gender-based violence is a wide spectrum and covers many types of violence, among them *physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse, and that which is directed against individuals because of their sexual identity or gender role*.

The noting out of the GBV features elements is essential because only then it will be possible to identify its further processes and also the implementation of an intervention applied.

A. Definition and Types of GBV

GBV extends from physical violence raging at a sexual dimension which is the result of *unbalanced forces between men and women*. These types of behaviours are manifested in different ways, which can be considered as different forms like intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual harassment, rape, female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, and trafficking. Violence is portrayed in various ways using domestic abuse, physical violence, and psychological violence, all of these forms of violence result in immense suffering for those that are implicated and the imitation of the process of bullying and discrimination.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment includes various behaviors ranging from sexual imposition, unwanted requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome conduct of sexual nature. It happens in many places such as workplaces, schools, or public spaces, and individuals find it very troubling and it involves creating an intolerable atmosphere that disregards one's sense of safety and self-respect.

Rape and Sexual Assault: The rape and sexual assault can include either unwanted physical touch to full penetration, and they are referred to as non-consensual sexual acts or intercourse. In most of these cases, the abductors deprive them of freedom and threaten them with physical force, harm or even death, leaving mental scars for the victims that last a lifetime.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM, namely the cutting of some or all of the external female genital organs for non-medical reasons, is common in many societies. It is a time-honoured custom, which is still very persistent in many communities. This makes the culture that is embroiling harmful gender norms and causes irreversible physical and mental harm to girls and women.

Child Marriage: The definition of child marriage is that it is a relationship between couples when one or both are under 18, especially girls. The underlying cause is the denial of children the possibilities of learning, health, and independence, rendering them vulnerable to violence at home, teenage pregnancy, and poverty—poor circumstances that imperil their futures.

B. Reasons for GBV's existence

GBV is not merely determined by an individual man, an interpersonal relationship, or a societal factor, or a structural factor but rather a complex interplay of all of the above. Recognizing such elements is one of the significant

steps toward comprehensive prevention and intervention actions.

Gender Inequality: GBV proliferates in spaces where gender traditional imbalances exist, empowered by gender discriminatory laws, social norms as well as cultural systems that put women and girls in positions of subordination. This echelon of power reinforces patriarchal systems that thicken the soil for violence against women and work in the fertilization of the harmful gender roles about masculinity and femininity.

Socioeconomic Disparities: Education deprivation, and socio-economic factors puts women and girls from disadvantaged groups at a heightened risk for these crimes. Exploited economically by abusive partners, unsafe and insecure living conditions, as well as a lack of essentials for employment or education lead individuals to remain in the same dangerous situation, depriving them of any prospect for seeking help.

Cultural Norms and Beliefs: Female genital mutilation and bride price are often advocated by local customs and beliefs, that further deepen gender discrimination and unbalance of power between genders. These norms are often very strict and entail rigid expectations about gender, scaring the survivors who fear being stigmatized or working against them thus preventing survivors from speaking out or seeking support.

Structural Inequities: The images, which are all based on real events, vividly depict the atrocities that befall our present society, portraying it in its most raw and unfiltered form. In many instances, survivors, however, encounter barriers in their path to healthcare, legal aid, and reintegration, which leads to them being in danger of getting victimized again.

C. GBV's influence on individuals and groups

GBV is typically a vicious circle whose repercussions manifest endless damaging effects on survivors, their families and communities, and which continue into future generations too.

Physical Health Effects: GBV survivors are mostly left with physical injuries, frontal headache, lengthy health complications, and few suitable permanent care options after the abuse. For instance, the force of physical violence may lead to fractures, concussion, and internal injuries while the innuendo of sexual violence may predispose one to sexually transmitted infections such as STI's, unwanted pregnancies, and reproductive health complications.

Climate Catastrophise and the Dynamics of the Sexes

One of the major threats associated with climate change is that extreme weather patterns, like hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and droughts, are becoming more common and more severe, impacting local communities everywhere worldwide. Recognizing the gender dynamics within the disaster crises is a fundamental step toward recognizing the

disturbing imbalance in the lives of women, men, and also gender minorities.

A. Synopsis of Climate Events and Growing Intensity and Intensity (repeat instead of severity)

Recent weather events have a bigger toll because of global warming and changes in overall climate patterns. This has made natural disasters more frequent and severe all around the world. Rising temperatures are directly confronted with events of extreme drought such as Typhoons, hurricanes, and heat waves while melting ice caps and sea levels, are increasing possibilities of coastal flooding and storm surges. These disasters cause huge losses, leading to deaths, loss of homes, destruction of infrastructure, suspension of food supplies and medical care, as well as water distribution.

B. Climate Change and Disasters - Women's Vulnerability in a Gender Context

Women, men and gender minorities confront climate extremities in varying manners because of the pre-existing gender inequalities as well as the social norms that are gendered and define the roles, duties, and resources according to each one's gender. Women very often are disproportionately at risk, as they are underrepresented and more prone to experience poverty, illiteracy absence of public services, and lack of skill in the decision-making process. Also, during natural disasters, old gender roles usually confine women to caregiving and other domestic jobs, which heightens their risks of dislocation, food shortage, violence, and attacks by other people.

Furthermore, women's reproductive health needs are not paid much attention towards the disaster response efforts, which only expands inequalities and makes them more vulnerable to militantly related deaths and reproductive diseases. While women may face the pressure of fulfilling traditional gender roles such as bearing children and caring for their family thus in the post-disaster period, men can often be subjected to increasing stress and mental health problems emanating from expectations of masculinity such as providing for their family and protect their community. Besides inserting second sentence, this group of people include LGBTQ+ individuals who have a higher exposure to discrimination and isolation. These individuals have additional barriers when it comes to receiving support services and resources.

C. The Overlap between Climate Disasters and GBV is Demonstrated in the Case Studies

The multiplicity of the studies from around the world has a proof of such a conversation taking place between the climate disasters and gender-based violence. It is further noted that women, men and gender minorities often have their own challenges in a colonized community. As a case in point, the time after Heavy Hurricane Katrina is seen as the one during which sexual assaults and domestic violence

increased in evacuation shelters. It led to a conclusion that women could be exposed to increased risks during crisis situations.

Just like in the case of the 2010 Haiti earthquake there were many rape cases against girls and women at the disaster camps, indicating that in a relief effort discrimination of GBV need to be prioritized. Elsewhere in Bangladesh, studies have demonstrated that cyclones and flood incidents are often followed by a surge in child marriages and trafficking cases, thereby, underpinning how climate disasters worsen already existing inequalities and vulnerabilities.

This example brings to the fore the pressing requirement for gender-sensitive methodology in safeguarding women, men and other genders during disaster preparation, reaction and recovery processes, with focus on protection and the empowerment of the girls, boys and those of other gender identities. The community has an opportunity to struggle with climate disasters and gender-based violence by providing solutions that strengthen lives as well as attain gender equality in the face of environmental threats.

Components of Gender-Based Savagery Post-Disaster

Within the consequence of climate fiascos, gender-based savagery (GBV) frequently escalate due to a combination of components that compound existing vulnerabilities and control elements inside communities. Understanding these components is pivotal for creating viable mediations to relieve the chance of GBV and bolster survivors in revamping their lives.

A. Uprooting and Misfortune of Assets

Disturbance of Social and Financial Structures: Climate catastrophes can result in far reaching relocation as communities are constrained to clear their homes or lose get to to basic administrations and assets. Relocation disturbs social and financial structures, worsening existing imbalances and vulnerabilities. Ladies, men, and sex minorities may confront expanded dangers of GBV in relocation settings, where packing, need of protection, and constrained get to to assets make conditions conducive to abuse and mishandle.

Misfortune of Jobs and Financial Autonomy: Climate fiascos regularly crush employments and sources of salary, especially in agrarian communities dependent on cultivating and angling. Ladies, who are excessively locked in in casual and unstable work, may confront increased financial uncertainty and reliance on male relatives or accomplices for survival. This reliance can increment their powerlessness to abuse and GBV, as they may be less able to attest their rights or take off injurious connections.

B. Breakdown of Social Support Networks

Disruption of Community Cohesion: Climate disasters can dismantle social support networks and community cohesion as individuals and families are displaced or struggle to survive in the immediate aftermath of the disaster.

Displacement and the loss of communication infrastructure may further isolate survivors, making it difficult for them to access support services or seek help from friends, family, or neighbours.

Stigmatization and Social Marginalization: Survivors of GBV may face stigmatization and social marginalization within their communities that prevent them from seeking help or reporting their experiences. Cultural norms and gender stereotypes could place blame on survivors for their victimization, perpetuating a culture of silence and shame that dissuades reporting and perpetuates cycles of violence.

C. Power Dynamics Exacerbating Violence

Reinforcement of Gender Inequalities: Climate disasters can reinforce existing gender inequalities and power dynamics within households and communities. Traditional gender roles and expectations may dictate women's subordinate status and men's control over resources and decision-making, exacerbating tensions and conflicts in the aftermath of disasters. Power imbalances within relationships can increase the risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) and coercive control, as perpetrators seek to assert dominance and maintain control over their partners.

Hush and Shame

Obstructions to Detailing and Tending to GBV

Despite the predominance of gender-based viciousness (GBV) in the wake of climate calamities, survivors frequently confront critical boundaries to announcing and getting to bolster administrations due to unavoidable hush and disgrace encompassing these issues. Understanding the basic variables that contribute to this hush and disgrace is basic for creating viable procedures to address GBV and bolster survivors in looking for offer assistance and recuperating.

A. Social Standards and Societal Desires

Standards of Gendered Behaviour: Social standards and societal desires shape demeanors towards sex parts and connections, frequently fortifying generalizations that normalize savagery against ladies and young ladies. In numerous communities, patriarchal values prioritize male specialists and control, propagating the idea that ladies ought to be tame and submissive to their accomplices. These standards create a culture of hush around GBV, where survivors may feel embarrassed or dreadful about talking out against their abusers due to the societal weight of maintaining conventional sex parts.

Stigmatization of Survivors: Survivors of GBV may confront disgrace and social alienation inside their communities, quieting their voices and disheartening them from looking for offer assistance. Social demeanors that fault and disgrace survivors for their victimization contribute to a culture of victim-blaming, where survivors may internalize feelings of blame and self-blame, dreading judgment and dismissal from their peers and family individuals.

B. Fear of Reprisal and Need to Believe in Specialists**Fear of Striking Back:**

Survivors of GBV may fear striking back from their abusers if they talk out or look for offer assistance, especially in little, close-knit communities where culprits may have social or familial associations. Dangers of advance savagery hurt cherished ones, or misfortune of budgetary bolster can install a sense of fear and powerlessness in survivors, catching them in injurious circumstances and disheartening them from looking for help.

Need to Believe in Specialists:

Doubt of law requirements and equity frameworks can moreover prevent survivors from announcing GBV and getting back administrations. Past encounters of separation, victim-blaming, or insufficient reactions from specialists may dissolve survivors' certainty in looking for offer assistance, driving them to accept that announcing will not result in important security or equity. Moreover, concerns about protection, secrecy, and the potential results of association with the legitimate framework may prevent survivors from looking for formal help.

C. Restricted Get to Back Administrations**Geographic and Financial Obstructions:**

Constrained get to bolster administrations, counting covers, counselling, and legitimate help, can pose critical challenges for survivors, especially in countries or farther ranges with meagre assets. Geographic obstructions, such as the need for transportation or framework, may prevent survivors from getting to administrations, whereas financial limitations can restrain their capacity to manage or prioritize looking for offer assistance.

Social and Phonetic Availability:

Bolster administrations may not be socially or phonetically available to survivors from different foundations, advance marginalizing as of now powerless populaces. Dialect boundaries, social cold-heartedness, and the need for mindfulness are almost accessible assets that can prevent survivors' capacity to get to the bolster they require, compounding sentiments of separation and distance.

Tending to the obstructions of hush and shame encompassing GBV requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of viciousness, challenges hurtful sex standards, and fortifies bolster frameworks for survivors. By advancing mindfulness, building belief, and extending access to socially competent administrations, communities can make more secure spaces for survivors to look for offer assistance and break the cycle of hush and disgrace encompassing GBV.

Engaging Survivors and Communities

Engaging survivors of gender-based viciousness (GBV) and cultivating flexibility inside communities are basic components of comprehensive endeavours to address and anticipate viciousness in the wake of climate catastrophes.

By prioritizing survivor-centered approaches, fortifying community bolster systems, and pushing for arrangement changes, communities can make more secure situations and back frameworks that advance mending and equity for survivors.

A. Significance of Survivor-Centered Approaches**Centering Survivor Voices:**

Survivor-centered approaches prioritize the voices and encounters of survivors, recognizing their organization and independence in decision-making forms. By tuning in to survivors' needs, inclinations, and needs, benefit suppliers can tailor back administrations to meet their interesting circumstances, inclinations, and social foundations.

Trauma-Informed Care:

Trauma-informed care emphasizes understanding the effect of injury on survivors' lives and giving services in a way that's touchy, compassionate, and non-retraumatizing. Making secure and steady situations that approve survivors' encounters and advance recuperating can enable survivors to get to bolster administrations and lock in within the recuperating handle.

All-encompassing Bolster Administrations:

Survivor-centered approaches recognize that survivors may have differing needs past prompt security, counting get to lodging, healthcare, legitimate help, and financial strengthening openings. By giving comprehensive and coordinated back administrations, communities can address the multifaceted impacts of GBV and advance survivors' long-term well-being and independence.

B. Fortifying Community Strength and Back Systems**Building Social Cohesion:**

Fortifying community strength includes cultivating social cohesion and solidarity inside communities, empowering people to bolster one another in times of emergency. Community-based activities that advance sympathy, common help, and collective activity can fortify social systems and create a strong environment for survivors to look for offer assistance and get to assets.

C. Arrangement Proposals and Backing Endeavours**Legitimate Changes:**

Supporting for lawful changes that strengthen securities for survivors of GBV and hold culprits responsible is basic for tending to exemption and advancing equity. This may incorporate sanctioning and implementing laws that criminalize GBV, set up security orders, and give survivors with get to to lawful help and representation.

Financing and Assets:

Satisfactory financing and assets are fundamental to bolster GBV avoidance and reaction endeavours, counting financing for emergency hotlines, covers, counselling administrations, and community-based organizations. Governments and benefactors should prioritize contributing to GBV programs and administrations that are survivor-

centered, socially responsive, and open to all survivors, including those from marginalized communities.

Collaboration and Coordination:

Multi-sectoral collaboration and coordination among government agencies, respectful society organizations, and community partners are fundamental for maximizing assets, sharing ability, and planning reactions to GBV. Interagency errand powers, coordination components, and associations can facilitate information-sharing, streamline benefit conveyance, and advance responsibility over divisions.

By prioritizing survivor-centered approaches, reinforcing community strength, and pushing for arrangement changes, communities can make situations that bolster survivors of GBV and anticipate viciousness within the consequence of climate calamities. Engaging survivors and communities to break the cycle of viciousness requires collective activity, solidarity, and a commitment to equity and balance for all.

Case Ponders and Illustrations

Looking at case ponders and illustrations of intercessions and activities pointed at tending to gender-based viciousness (GBV) within the repercussions of climate calamities offers profitable bits of knowledge into effective methodologies, lessons learned, and zones for enhancement and advance inquiry.

A. Highlighting Effective Mediation and Activities

The "Safe Spaces" Approach:

As a consequence of Tornado Idai in Mozambique, CARE Universal set up secure spaces for ladies and young ladies in uprooting camps, giving psychosocial bolster, counseling, and referral administrations for survivors of GBV. These secure spaces advertised a strong environment for survivors to get to fundamental administrations, interface with peer bolster systems, and take part in strengthening exercises, advancing recuperating and strength.

Community-Based Outreach and Instruction:

Within the Philippines, the Women's Instruction, Advancement, Efficiency and Investigate Organization (WEDPRO) actualized a community-based program to raise mindfulness almost GBV and advance sex correspondence in disaster-prone regions. Through community workshops, radio broadcasts, and outreach occasions, WEDPRO locked in community individuals in discourse approximately the root causes of GBV, challenged destructive sexual orientation standards, and enabled ladies to declare their rights and get to bolster administrations.

B. Lessons Learned and Best Hones

Survivor-Centered Approaches:

Fruitful mediations prioritize the wants and inclinations of survivors, ensuring that back administrations are open, socially suitable, and responsive to survivors' differing encounters and foundations. By centering survivor voices and encounters, organizations can construct beliefs,

cultivate strengthening, and advance recuperating inside communities.

Multi-Sectoral Collaboration:

Viable reactions to GBV require collaboration and coordination among government organizations, gracious society organizations, and community partners. By pooling assets, sharing skills, and leveraging systems, partners can maximize affect and address the multifaceted measurements of GBV, counting legitimate, well-being, psychosocial, and financial needs.

C. Regions for Change and Encourage Investigate

Information Collection and Investigate:

Constrained information accessibility and methodological challenges ruin endeavors to get the prevalence and designs of GBV within the setting of climate fiascos. More inquiry is required to record the intersectional impacts of GBV on diverse populace bunches, counting ladies, men, children, and sex minorities, and to recognize viable avoidance and reaction techniques.

Capacity Building and Preparing:

Building the capacity of cutting-edge responders, counting well-being laborers, social laborers, and community volunteers, is basic for recognizing and reacting to GBV in disaster-affected communities. Preparing programs should emphasize trauma-informed care, social affectability, and survivor-centered approaches, equipping responders with the information and aptitudes to back survivors viably.

Approach and Promotion:

Supporting arrangement changes and lawful changes is significant for tending to auxiliary boundaries to GBV anticipation and reaction, counting inadequate funding, frail legitimate systems, and crevices in benefit arrangement. By supporting authoritative changes, asset assignment, and organization bolster, advocates, can make empowering situations for GBV avoidance and survivor bolster at the neighborhood, national, and worldwide levels.

By learning from effective mediations, recognizing lessons learned, and prioritizing regions for enhancement and advance inquiry about, partners can reinforce endeavours to address GBV within the consequence of climate calamities, advance resilience within communities, and engage survivors to modify their lives with respect and equity.

In conclusion, the intersection of gender-based violence (GBV) and climate disasters presents complex challenges that demand urgent attention and concerted action. Throughout this exploration, key findings have emerged, highlighting the disproportionate impact of climate disasters on women, men, and gender minorities, as well as the pervasive barriers to reporting and addressing GBV in the

aftermath of such events. Cultural norms, fear of retribution, and limited access to support services all contribute to a culture of silence and stigma that perpetuates cycles of violence and inhibits survivors from seeking help and healing.

Looking ahead, future research and advocacy efforts should focus on filling gaps in knowledge and understanding of the intersectional impacts of GBV and climate disasters, as well as identifying effective strategies for prevention and response. This includes improving data collection and research methodologies, building the capacity of frontline responders, and advocating for policy changes that address the root causes of GBV and promote gender equality. By prioritizing GBV prevention and survivor support in the context of climate disasters, we can create safer, more resilient communities where all individuals can thrive with dignity and respect.

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