

EVIDENCE FOR INTEGRATING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT IN MEXICO

A project funded by Southern Voice

Summary of the Project and Key Result

The project aims to **advance gender equality and integrate a gender perspective into Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Mexico** by identifying and analyzing the differentiated impacts of disasters on women. Its specific objectives are to:



Generate quantitative evidence to measure and characterize the differentiated impacts of disasters on women, including those related to gender-based violence – one of the most frequent impacts identified in the literature.



Provide information and recommendations that facilitate the incorporation of this evidence into the *National Strategy for Integrated Disaster Risk Management (ENGIRD, per its acronym in Spanish)* and share it with key decision-makers.



Promote evidence-based policymaking that integrates a gender perspective into the design of strategies, plans, and programs for comprehensive disaster risk management.

The project's **policy impact** will be reflected within the *ENGIRD*, along with specific policy proposals to address the identified challenges.

Background and Justification

Mexico faces **recurring and complex disaster risks**, including earthquakes, hurricanes, and extreme rainfall, which result in significant human and economic losses every year. Climate change is intensifying these events, as illustrated by **Hurricane Otis**, which struck Acapulco on October 25, 2023, as a Category 5 storm – the strongest hurricane ever recorded on Mexico’s Pacific coast. With winds reaching 270 km/h, Otis devastated entire neighborhoods, disrupted communication networks, and displaced thousands of families. The event underscored the growing intensity of tropical cyclones in the region and the urgent need for **inclusive, risk-informed, and climate-resilient urban planning**.

Disasters in Mexico are not only environmental but also **deeply social**. Their impacts are magnified by structural inequalities – poverty, gender-based violence, and unequal access to resources. Women, in particular, face **disproportionate risks**: 70.1% of Mexican women aged 15 and older have experienced violence, and their labor force participation rate (46%) remains far below that of men (76.3%). These structural inequalities heighten vulnerability before, during, and after disasters, exacerbating physical, social, and economic insecurity.



Despite this, **quantitative data on the gender-differentiated impacts of disasters remain scarce** in Mexico. Critical aspects such as the duration of effects, psychological consequences, and indirect socioeconomic costs are still understudied. The project addresses this gap by generating robust, gender-sensitive evidence to inform and strengthen public policy for inclusive disaster risk governance.

Policy Context and Opportunities

This initiative builds upon national and international efforts to **mainstream gender in environmental and disaster governance**. A key example is the **Inter-Institutional Group on Gender and Climate Change (GIGCC)**, created in 2020 to integrate gender considerations into climate change policies. The GIGCC – comprising the *National Secretariat for Women (SEMujeres)*, the *Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT)*, and the *National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change (INECC)* – works to strengthen public policies for climate change mitigation and adaptation from a gender perspective. Notably, it has led initiatives such as the *Climate Dialogue on Gender, Human Rights, and Climate Change*, promoting cross-sectoral approaches in national planning.

The **new federal administration**, in office since October 2024, has expressed strong commitment to advancing a **gender-responsive policy agenda**. Concurrently, the **National Center for Disaster Prevention (CENAPRED)** is developing Mexico's first national policy instrument on disaster risk management – the *National Strategy for Integrated Disaster Risk Management (ENGIRD)* – and has shown openness to **mainstreaming gender considerations** throughout its design and implementation.

Together, these developments present a **strategic opportunity** to embed gender equality in Mexico's disaster risk management framework, ensuring that future policies and programs are inclusive, data-driven, and resilient to the social and environmental challenges of the 21st century.

