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The Evolution of Gender Equality in DRR

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What I plan to talk about



- The development of gender and disasters has been slow
- Learning from (playing catch up to) gender and development
- Similar phases to the developments in feminism
- Asking the question: how does/ can change happen?
- What is the relationship between:
 - The Academy
 - The Practitioners
 - The Grassroots
 - Governance/ Policy



Gender equality in DRR: a slow evolution; not a revolution



Looking back – hazard and disaster research & practice



- Many years (decades) of academic research, grassroots advocacy and practitioner knowledge sharing
- Starts with the dominant hazards and disaster approach
 - Technical rather than social; ‘hard’ science rather than ‘soft’
- Where was the gender?
- Slow influence of a political economy/ development studies approach with some reference to gender issues (Hewitt 1983; Blaikie, Cannon, Davis and Wisner 1994)
- Not until the 1990s that we begin to see gender and disaster as a standalone research subject



Looking back: a comparison: waves of Western feminism

◎ **First Wave** c1900-1960s

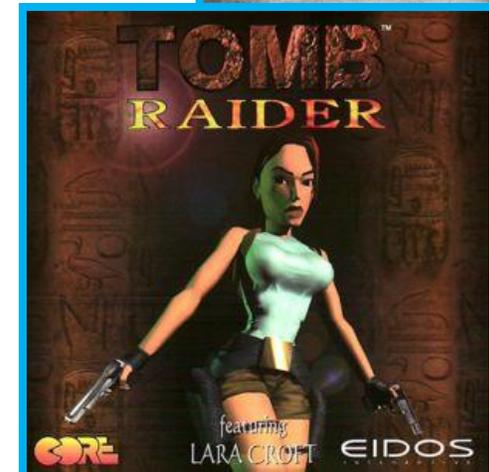
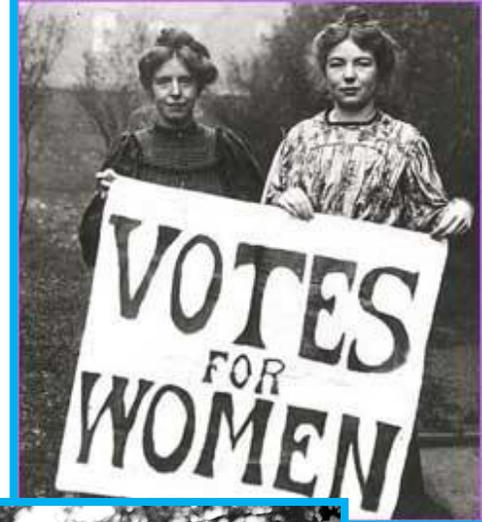
- **Recognition** – make women visible; access to the public decision-making domain; equality; Votes for women! female suffrage

◎ **Second Wave** c1965-1990

- **Redistribution of power**; political and social transformation; equity

◎ **Third Wave** c1990-now

- **Recognition**; the local; identity; backlash against feminism; brings men back to centre stage



gender etc.



Looking back: first wave gender & disasters - begins slowly: 1980s

- ◎ *Concepts*: It is about **Recognition** of women – make visible in disasters; access to the public, decision-making domain; focus on practical needs
- ◎ *Policy*: Women are the problem
- ◎ *Practice*: Woman as vulnerable; passive victims – helpless, lacking agency
- ◎ *Publication/Event*: J P W Rivers 1982 Women and children last: An essay on sex discrimination in disasters, *Disasters Journal*





Looking back: second wave gender & disasters: 1990s – 2000s

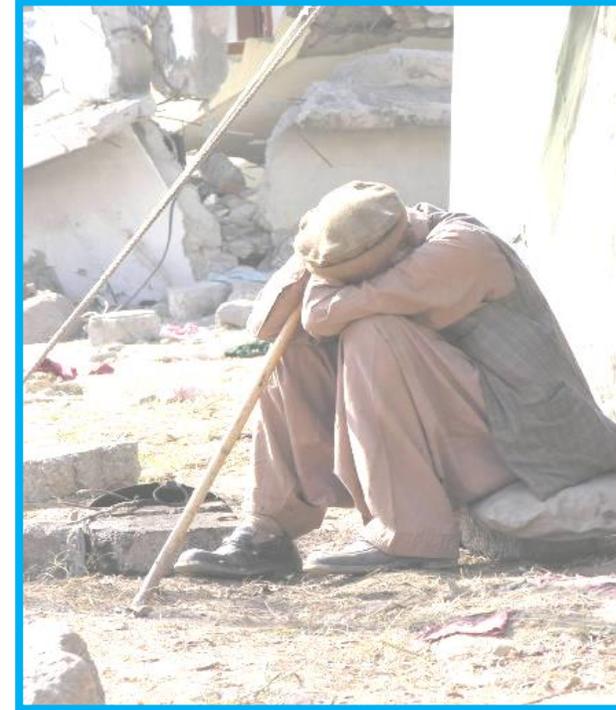
- ◉ *Concepts: Redistribution* of power – as a political project; equity; strategic interests
- ◉ *Policy: Men are the problem*
- ◉ *Practice: Women's capacity and agency*
- ◉ *Publication/Event: 1991 Bangladesh cyclone shows extreme female fatalities: Bern et al 1993*
- ◉ Enarson and Morrow (1998) *'The Gendered Terrain of Disasters'*
- ◉ International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters Vol 17 (1) 1999 *Special Issue: women and disasters*
- ◉ Launching of the *Gender & Disaster Network* in 1997





Looking back: third wave gender & disasters: 2000s - NOW

- ◎ *Theory*: **Recognition** – again as identity politics; the risk: post-feminist backlash - brings men back to centre stage
- ◎ *Policy*: the inclusion of men – but without real engagement with political domain
- ◎ *Practice*: women's resilience and men's vulnerability recognized; broader understanding of gender (beyond the binary)
- ◎ Publication/Event: 2004 Tsunami – focus on men who lost women
- ◎ Oxfam 2005 The tsunami's impact on women, *Oxfam Briefing Note*. March 2005



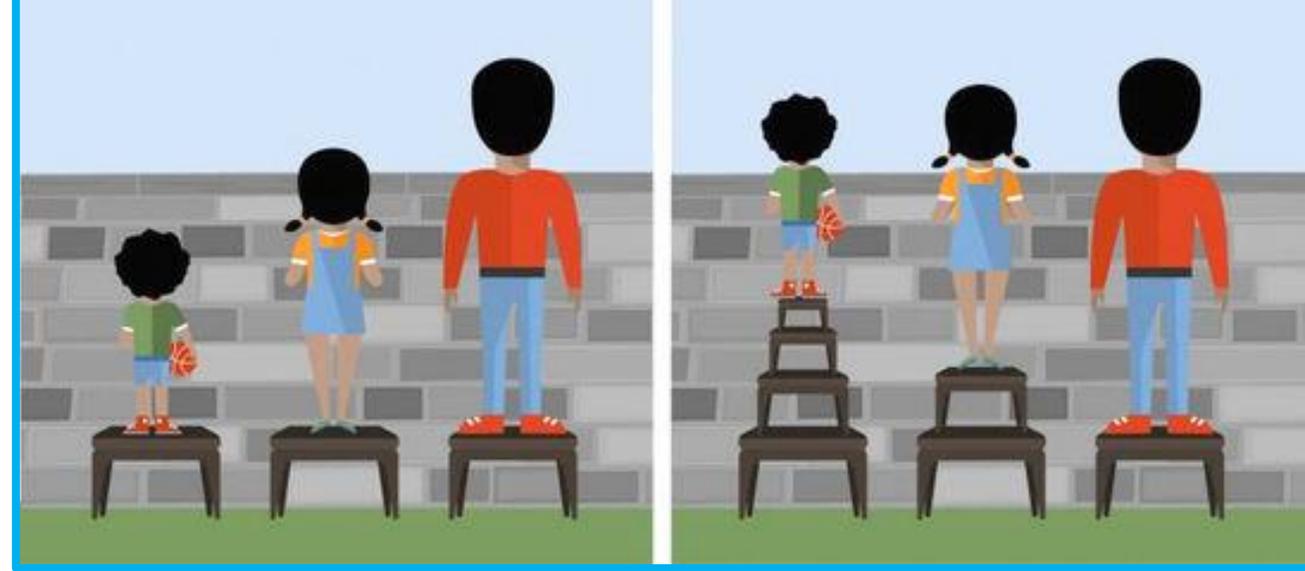
http://www.preventionweb.net/files/1502_bn050326tsunamiwomen.pdf



Conclusions/ Recommendations/ Lessons Learned



Equality or Equity?



Equality is the goal

but Equity is the way to reach it

- This is why we continue to **focus on women and girls** whilst also recognising the importance of gender relations and men's inclusion
- Let us not go back to a WID approach where we just include a few women here and there
- Or replace that with a few men here and there!



Looking back, ahead and underneath!

- Currently, gender in disaster straddles Second and Third Waves in its evolution, depending on the cultural and political context
- We risk losing the advantages gained by the politics of the second wave if we simplistically add men
- We need to an inclusive approach of recognition *and* redistribution
- Men 'stand up to be counted' at the Gender Equality & Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop, 2004, Hawai'i





How did we arrive at this point?



- We have seen a slow and patchy conversion of G&D into policy and action on the ground
- The 'Hyogo Framework for Action' identified **inequality** as one of the underlying disaster risk drivers
- Within the new Sendai Framework there is **potential** for transformative change if advocacy is strong and coordinated around key messages, and if prominent and influential people and agencies provide active support

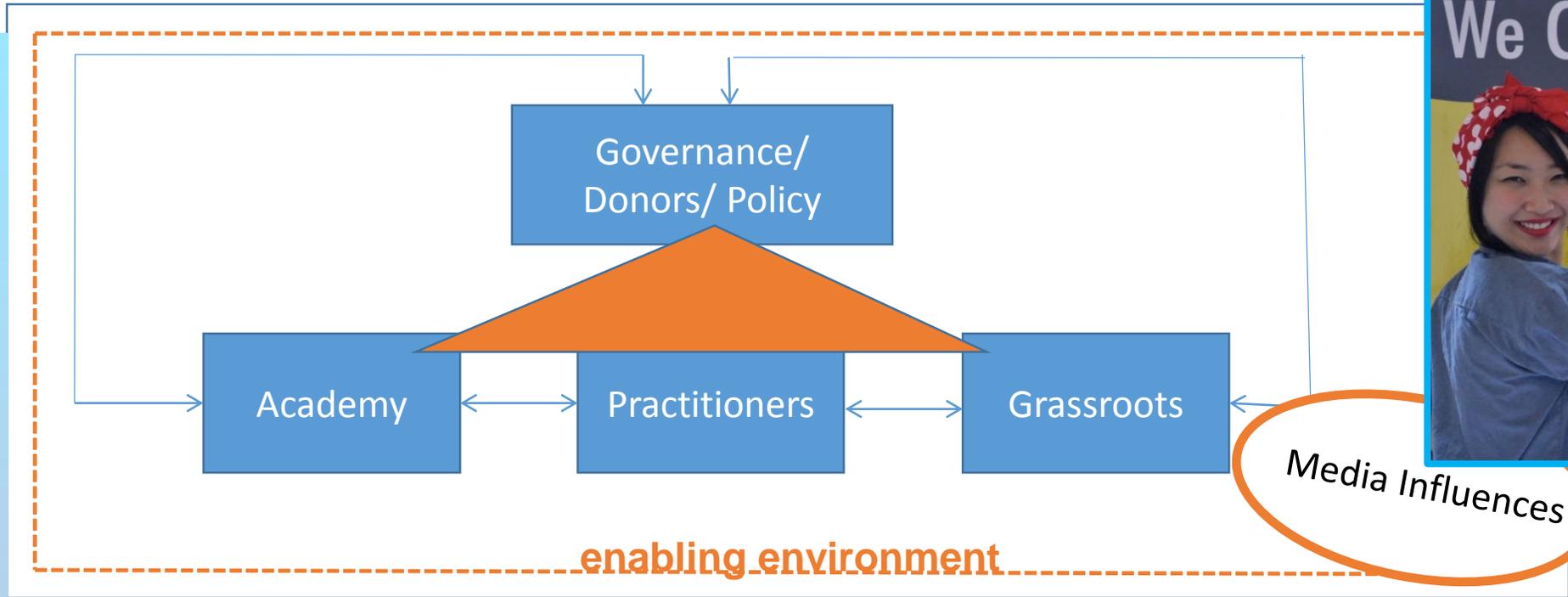
Priority 4 of the Sendai Framework includes:

- Empowering women and persons with disabilities to publicly lead and promote gender equitable and universally accessible response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction approaches is key

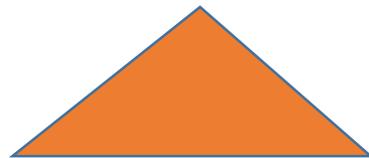


How does change occur? organizing; collaboration; positive enabling environment

This meeting brings all these groups together. We should aim to leverage external support and change



What is the role of/interactions between these groups?





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