

A photograph of a woman wearing a patterned headscarf and a purple and white striped shirt, holding a baby in a grey sling. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other people.

En “Gendered Vulnerability”
Feminine Perspective in the face of Disaster

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Key Issues

A woman wearing a headscarf and a patterned shawl is carrying a young child on her back. The child is wearing a blue and white patterned hat. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a public setting.

Are women and other vulnerable groups more exposed to natural and technological hazards and risks?

Are women and other vulnerable groups further exposed to secondary hazards and risks such as trafficking, violence within and outside household, health and economic opportunities

Is the vulnerability to disaster linked to the socially evolved role of being men and women?

Do the women have access to and control of resources?

What are the possible policies and measures to improve resilience and to reduce the risks?

Who are the Vulnerable

- *Poor and low-income households*
- *Single-parent households.*
- *Socially isolated households.*
- *Recently arrived residents, immigrants, foreigners.*
- *Senior citizens, children and young people.*
- *People with a disease or a mental or physical disability.*
- *Undocumented residents; refugees; war veterans.*
- *Indigenous populations and subordinate ethnic groups.*
- *Institutionalized populations; homeless residents.*
- *Women.*

(Source: Enarson and Morrow (1998))

Vulnerable among the vulnerables are *Women* who are;

- *Poor and low-income*
- *Elderly*
- *Having a disability or disease*
- *Heads of household*
- *Homeless*
- *Indigenous*
- *Immigrants*
- *Isolated*
- *Rural*
- *Affected by violence*



Vulnerability

A woman wearing a brown headscarf and a gold nose ring is holding a baby in a grey sling. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other people.

Vulnerability is the exposure and susceptibility to losses and/or harm (Physical, Mental, Psychological, Social, Biological)

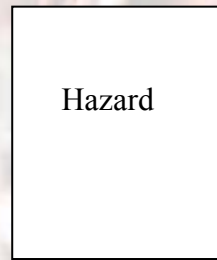
Vulnerability is dynamic; It changes with the magnitude of disaster

Three indicators of vulnerability are:

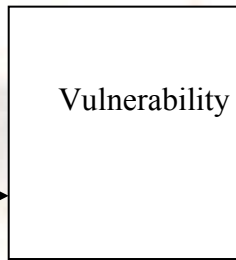
- **Through *loss of assets***
- **Through *loss of entitlements***
- **Through *social exclusion***

Linkages of Vulnerability to Disaster

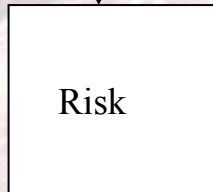
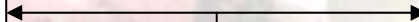
Physical and human induced causes



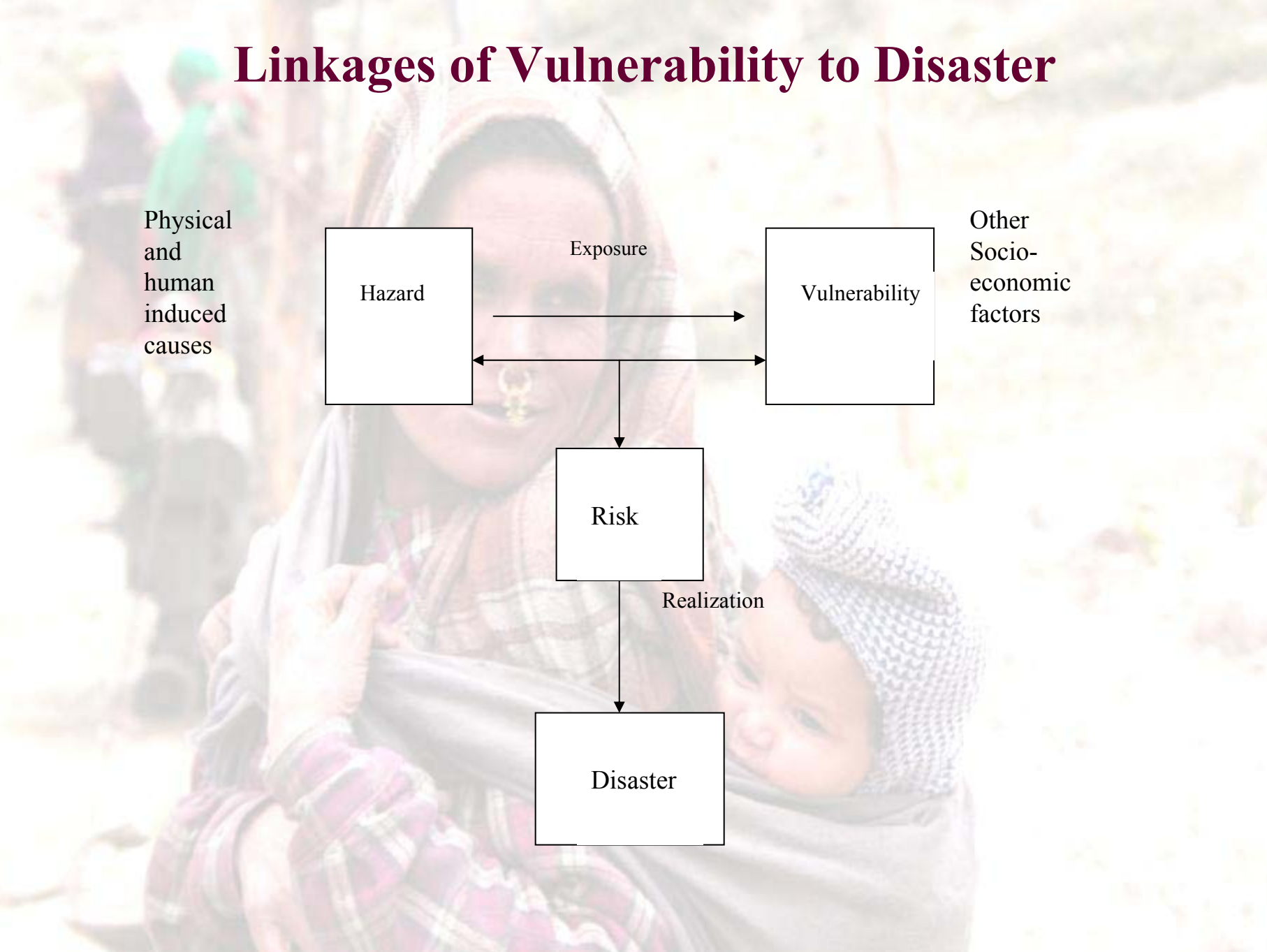
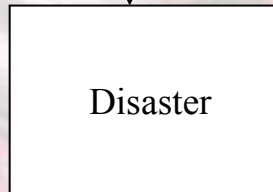
Exposure



Other Socio-economic factors

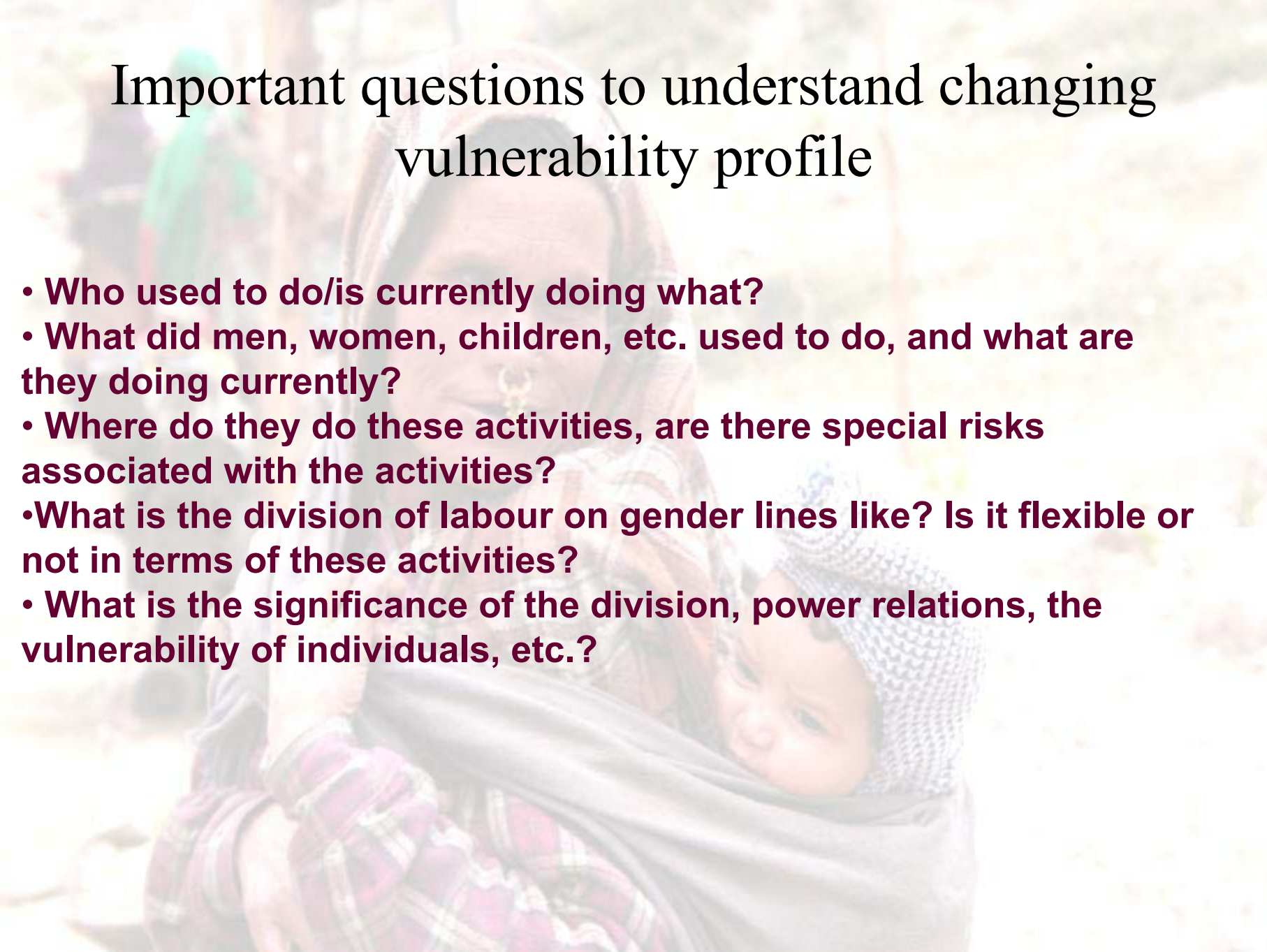


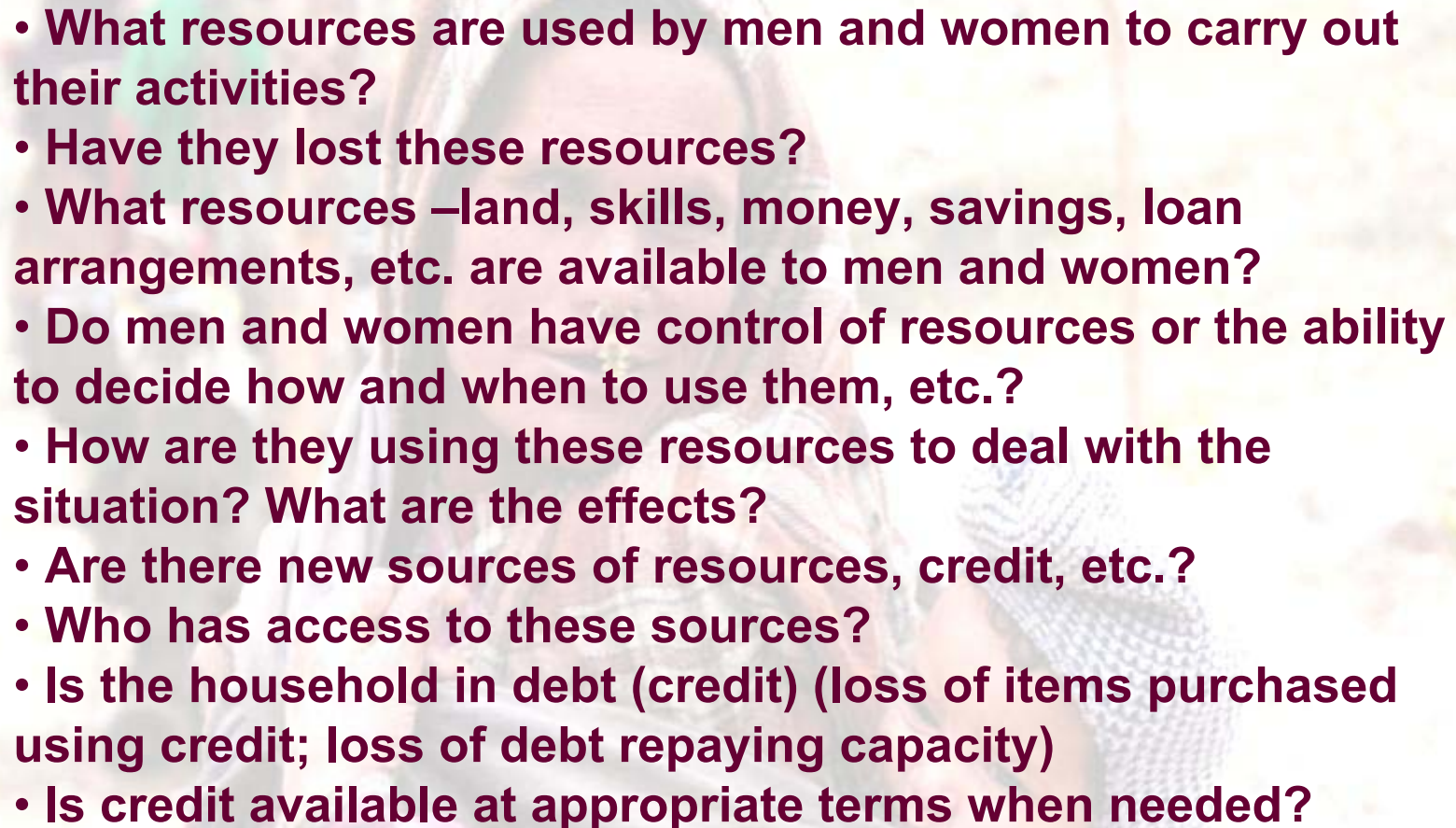
Realization



Important questions to understand changing vulnerability profile

- **Who used to do/is currently doing what?**
- **What did men, women, children, etc. used to do, and what are they doing currently?**
- **Where do they do these activities, are there special risks associated with the activities?**
- **What is the division of labour on gender lines like? Is it flexible or not in terms of these activities?**
- **What is the significance of the division, power relations, the vulnerability of individuals, etc.?**



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- A woman wearing a red and white patterned headscarf is walking outdoors, carrying a large, heavy bundle on her back. The bundle is secured with straps and appears to contain various items, including what looks like a blue and white patterned bag. She is wearing a dark-colored top and a patterned skirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a natural setting.
- **What resources are used by men and women to carry out their activities?**
 - **Have they lost these resources?**
 - **What resources –land, skills, money, savings, loan arrangements, etc. are available to men and women?**
 - **Do men and women have control of resources or the ability to decide how and when to use them, etc.?**
 - **How are they using these resources to deal with the situation? What are the effects?**
 - **Are there new sources of resources, credit, etc.?**
 - **Who has access to these sources?**
 - **Is the household in debt (credit) (loss of items purchased using credit; loss of debt repaying capacity)**
 - **Is credit available at appropriate terms when needed?**

Gender Dimensions of Vulnerability

- **Differentiated impact on men and women**
- **Different strategies adopted by them to deal with crisis situations**
- **Understanding the societies, their traditions and the power relations based on gender, age or social class .**
- **Questions about violence within and outside the household**
- **Women's rights**
- **Women's attitudes as regards stereotypical roles**
- **Partaking in Decision making**
- **Women among the highest groups who are uninsured**
- **Women carry additional workload and burden**
- **High cost of healthcare increases discrimination against women and girls.**

Gendered Role

A woman wearing a headscarf and a nose ring is holding a baby in a sling. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other people.

- *reproductive* (childbearing, nurturing and maintenance of households)
- *productive* (livelihood support, food production, survival strategies)
- *social* (integrating family and community as a whole)
- *psychological* (stabilizing personal relations and emotions)
- *cultural* (historic memory of family, clan and village)
- *socially* the female work force is taken for granted and considered without or with less economic value

Gendered Spaces

The symbolic distribution of space assigns;

The male the public sphere

The women the private

It is this social construction of stereotyped gendered space that puts the women at risk and makes them vulnerable



Importance of Feminine Perspective in Disaster Risk Management

A background image showing a woman wearing a headscarf and a plaid shirt, holding a baby wrapped in a grey blanket. The baby is wearing a blue knit hat. The scene is outdoors, possibly in a rural or disaster-affected area.

Women participation

- Reduces gender related social vulnerability
- Improves hazard resilience
- Increases the survival chances of the whole community
- Reduces gender violence and insecurity before, during and after disasters
- Enhances risk communication

Importance of Feminine Perspective in Disaster Risk Management

A woman wearing a headscarf and a nose ring is holding a baby in a sling. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a public setting.

Local knowledge of women whose extensive social roles, community and family work and economic activities make them **experts on tackling risk** at the household, neighborhood, and community levels.

Neglecting the views of half the society leads to

“Gender Blind” research that overlooks differences and inequalities that are highly relevant before, during, and after disasters.

For a Resilient Society

- **Integration of gender analysis into capacity and vulnerability assessments**
- **Disaster projects (all phases of disaster cycle) must be gender-sensitive and equitable in their effects**
- **Government, International and local bodies should be gender sensitive in all its plans and implementations.**
- **Women must be full and equal partners in all disaster planning and programming.**
- **Disaster response and reconstruction must promote social justice, equity and sustainable development through women's empowerment.**

A photograph of a woman in a headscarf holding a baby in a sling. The woman has a nose ring and is looking towards the camera. The baby is wearing a grey knit hat. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other people. The text "Thank You..." is overlaid in the center in a bold, italicized, dark red font.

Thank You...