

## Uniformed Women in the New Wars

Priyanka Bhide and Ambika Vishwanath

### Abstract

Climate change and related hazards, compounded by manmade elements, are changing the nature of security risks in South Asia. The complex nature of security calls for a response beyond the typical military security response that countries have trained for since the World Wars. Most countries in South Asia have assembled special teams to provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), where increasingly having gender balanced teams are found to be more effective in assisting vulnerable communities. Numbers however are not enough, and gender sensitization across personnel is important to achieve impact. Taking India as a case study, this paper looks to understand the role of women in disaster response teams, ‘why’ and ‘how’ more women in uniform are being involved, and the need for greater cultural sensitization of both men and women in these teams.

### Author Profiles

**Priyanka Bhide** is the Co-founder and Director of Kubernein Initiative — an independent, female led, geopolitical think tank/ advisory firm based in Mumbai (India). She co-leads Kubernein Initiative’s flagship program on gender and foreign policy. Priyanka comes from a strategy and communications background, with over a decade of experience working with the private, think tank, and non-profit sectors. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from St. Xavier’s College, University of Mumbai, and a Master’s degree in International Relations from NYU. Priyanka was a Schmidt Futures International Strategy Forum 2023 Fellow and an Australia India Youth Dialogue Delegate in 2023.

**Ambika Vishwanath** is a water security and conflict resolution specialist and has lead track two diplomacy efforts and consulted with governments and international organizations, both in India and around the world (MENA region, South Asia and Europe) for close to 20 years. She co-leads Kubernein Initiative. Her research focuses on the nexus between foreign policy, water security, conflict and diplomacy. She writes regularly and has been published in close to 50 global and Indian publications. She is an alum of the Munich Security Conference Young Leaders Programme and a recipient of the inaugural Maitri Fellowship by the Government of Australia.

## Uniformed Women in the New Wars

Priyanka Bhide and Ambika Vishwanath

### Introduction

Climate and related disasters are changing the nature of the security risks that countries must prepare for when considering the protection of their nations and citizens. A natural phenomenon becomes a disaster when it impacts human settlements. In South Asia, these impacts are compounded by manmade elements such as unplanned infrastructure development, depletion of natural ecosystems, as well as fragile social ecosystems (UNDRR 2022). The complex nature of security in such cases calls for a more nuanced response, beyond the typical military security response that countries have trained for since the world wars. Countries around the world have assembled special teams, deputed from their military and/or paramilitary forces which are trained to provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) during such crises. Standards and best practices have been developed domestically, and at times regionally through joint exercises and activities with friendly neighbours, as well as through the UN system.

In this paper we observe how gender balanced disaster response teams are more effective in assisting communities that are left vulnerable, yet how further gender sensitization is also required. We look at why participating of uniformed women in disaster management teams remains low. In India, for example, there are quotas and concessions to encourage entry, yet we find the numbers of women personnel in disaster response forces remain low, and as of March 2023, only 170 women personnel had joined the NDRF (Lok Sabha 2023). This is symptomatic of the socio-cultural factors that shape female participation in the workforce overall. In terms of career choices, the armed and paramilitary forces are associated with macho/masculine options, and it will take time for society to normalize the inclusion of uniformed women, especially in mixed gender teams. Further, it is found that the mere inclusion of women is not sufficient as the cultural context of where they are deployed could be unfamiliar to them. Hence, while it is vital that more women should be involved, this does not always guarantee better decision making in dealing with social situations on ground. So, gender sensitization across personnel through training modules for such teams becomes important.

In this paper we look at the evolution of disaster management mechanisms in South Asia, with a specific focus on India, to explore the evolving understanding of the need for gender and vulnerability considerations in disaster response, and within this context to analyze the undercurrents, evolution, and changing role of men and women in uniform. While the paper aims at understanding ‘why’ and ‘how’ more women in uniform are being involved in these missions,

we acknowledge the need to dig deeper and look at opportunities for greater cultural sensitization of these teams, which would include the sensitization and training of both men and women.

We begin with a brief overview of the evolution of disaster response mechanisms, followed by understanding the need for gender and vulnerability considerations, and the subsequent evolution of these considerations in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR). Next, we look at India as a case study to understand the role of women in disaster response teams. Finally, we seek to look beyond numbers to the socio-cultural inflections which both impede the full participation of women in roles traditionally considered masculine, and yet require a response that is more closely coordinated with communities on ground, a feature that is traditionally seen as feminine. We consider opportunities to reducing some of these unseen barriers.

### **The Evolution of Disaster Response**

Growing urbanization and ecological degradation combined with increasingly unpredictable weather patterns have resulted in higher instances of disasters worldwide. To respond more swiftly as well as build resilience for such events, countries have established special disaster response divisions, drawing in military or paramilitary personnel, under some form of a National Disaster Management Authority that works closely with nodal ministries in times of disaster. At the international level the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) steps in when requested by the government of the affected country to provide the required external assistance in a manner that is “principled, timely, effective, efficient and contributes to longer-term recovery”. (UNDRR: Policy Brief 2021)

Actions around disaster management are determined at a national level. In the case of India for example, disaster response and preparedness came to the forefront following a series of natural hazards that occurred in close succession: Orissa Super Cyclone (1999), Gujarat Earthquake (2001) and Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004). These resulting disasters coincided with evolving thinking and global discussions that culminated into the Yokohama Strategy Plan (1994), the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005 – 2015), and its successor the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030). India’s Disaster Management Act of 2005 has anchored disaster management policies, plans and guidelines. It paved the way for the creation of an enabling institutional mechanisms at the State and District level: the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister, and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by the Chief Ministers of respective states, as well as a District Disaster Management Authority in each district.

The NDMA in India has under its command the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), which is “the world’s largest rapid reaction force dedicated to disaster response” (Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) 2022). The NDRF functions

under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Organisational structures differ between countries, for example in the case of Sri Lanka, disaster management falls under of the Ministry of Defence. The Indian NDRF is available to be deployed in response to a disaster, and can also be “pre-positioned” for impending disaster situations. The NDRF over the years has prevented and minimised damage due to disasters that include floods, earthquakes, building collapse, damaged urban infrastructure, and CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Nuclear) challenges. The NDRF has also supported relief and rescue operation in neighbouring countries and beyond. They were first on ground after the Nepal mega earthquake of 2015, and have also assisted with rescue operation in Japan post the 2011 Tsunami, and more recently in Turkey post the 2023 earthquake.

### **Bringing a Gender/ Vulnerability Lens to Disaster Response**

Climate change has differentiated impact on women and the vulnerable. A 20-year study on the gendered nature of natural disaster shows that in societies where the socioeconomic status of women is low, natural disasters kill more women than men, both directly and indirectly through related post disaster events (Neumayer and Plümper 2007). Hence it is vital that these sections of society be key stakeholders in resilience building, and that teams deployed on ground, in addition to being gender balanced, are trained to be better prepared for the social conditions in their approach.

Existing gender-specific barriers, socially constructed roles and inequalities, lead to women and vulnerable groups experiencing higher risks of disasters, including loss of lives and livelihoods and a longer recovery time. Poverty, discrimination and constrained access to economic opportunities can influence the capacity needed for groups to adapt. Women also are particularly at risk of trafficking and sexual abuse and violence both in the immediate aftermath of disasters as well as due to the increase in economic burdens that result from disasters. (Jayaram 2022). In Nepal for example, after the mega earthquake in 2015, the incidence of human trafficking of women and children, went up by 15 per cent. (Khan 2016) The burden of rebuilding life was also greater on women, as a large section of the male population periodically leave the country for better livelihood opportunities. As per the 2011 Nepal census there are 796,422 more women as compared with men in Nepal, and 25 per cent of the households have at least one male member overseas. (Jackson, Fitzpatrick, and Man 2016). Women therefore are left with the responsibility to run the household, raise the children as well as look after the elderly. There is a growing awareness among disaster relief practitioners that the experiences of women and men are vastly different across all stages of disasters (preparation, during a disaster and in the aftermath), as well as in various aspects such as access to temporary relief facilities and content and the distribution of relief supplies. (Rajagopalan 2016)

**Gender Gap**

71 % of men receive early warning from a formal source while 51 % of women receive warnings through informal and social sources as per a study in Nepal (Brown et al. 2020).
77 % of men compared to 48 % of women plan to stay and defend their property in a bushfire event in Australia (Eriksen, Gill & Head 2010).
In Myanmar, 80% of the livestock lost to the 2015 floods belonged to women (World Bank 2015)
COVID-19 has disrupted 76 % of sexual health clinics in Asia and the Pacific (International Planned Parenthood Federation 2020).
Men account for 70 % of flood-related deaths in Europe and the United States primarily due to overrepresentation of men in rescue professions (World Bank 2021).

Source: <https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/sendai-framework-action/gender>

The patriarchal nature and traditions of societies in South Asia result in women often lacking economic resources and rights, as well as access to information which inhibit them from being better equipped decision makers in times of distress. The expectation of women, in terms of their roles and responsibility in the household, also limit their exposure to activities that would build resilience. Critical learned skills such as interfacing with financial institutions and the official environment, as well as survival skills such as swimming/climbing trees are not considered to be appropriate for women. Studies on the impact of the 2004 tsunami for example, showed that more women died, because as per tradition they had not been encouraged to learn basic self-rescue skills such as climbing a tree or swimming that may have saved their lives (Oxfam International 2005).

Vulnerability is also increased due to the role played by women as primary providers of food, energy and water, which exposes them to the first impacts of natural disasters. Also, women that are pregnant or menstruating are more critically impacted by limitations of infrastructure and healthcare facilities that accompany disasters. Culture when combined with patriarchy adds another layer of vulnerability (Bhattacharjee 2019). Women often are not outspoken enough to ask for access or assistance to meet their basic needs, both during and post disasters. During a South Asia Regional Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange that Kubernein Initiative participated in July 12, 2023, we heard anecdotes from regional disaster response teams of instances where women would hesitate to hold the hand of male army personnel, even if it would make a difference between life or death, as their culture or religion did not permit such physical contact. Another incident shared was in the immediate response phase of a disaster, where the team did not yet have the mandate for rehabilitation, and as a result several women rescued from a disaster situation faced exposure to sexual violence and trafficking. Also heard resoundingly was the admission that as the training of military personnel was primarily oriented towards responding to danger, there

was need for the teams to be further trained for their interactions with the community in disaster relief and response.

All of these barriers result not only in greater vulnerability but also in women being excluded from having a voice and contributing to resilience and risk conversations. Due to the lack of adequate representation of women's point of view, the relief mechanisms often do not work well in serving their gender specific needs. Realising this as well as the value of having a more diverse make up of disaster relief teams in general, country level disaster management teams are now becoming more gender balanced in the region. More recently, trainings and exercises around disaster management are including gender sensitisation exercises, and modules that cover capacity building at the community level.

### **Evolution of Gender Considerations in Disaster Management**

The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015 recognized the need for countries to integrate a gender perspective in “disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training”. (UNISDR 2005). The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) went further to “promote gender equitable and universally accessible response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction” and participation of women in leading these response and resilience building measures. (“Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030,” n.d.). In 2012, through UN CSW (Commission on Status of Women) Resolution 56/2 gender mainstreaming was acknowledged as a core requirement for disaster programming at the UN. The 2015 UN global study reviewing the implementation of UNSCR 1325 pointed out the need for a gendered humanitarian response in disaster areas as well, and also recognized the role that women can play in building resilience (UNW-Global Study 1325 2015).

It noted:

*Principles of gender equality in humanitarian assistance are not limited to conflict-affected settings but equally relevant to natural disasters. Increasingly, natural disasters leading to emergencies and humanitarian crises have a complex relationship with conflict and gender inequality. Lack of access to information and resources, entrenched gender stereotypes and inequalities and cultural restrictions make women and girls among the most susceptible to natural disasters—particularly in conflict-affected settings.*

*Frequently, women are portrayed alongside children, either in pictures or in the pages of reports, and they are almost universally shown as defenceless and vulnerable victims. This has had an effect in policy and in practice. Our most urgent interventions to assist women and girls in crisis situations are focused on their protection rather than their empowerment.*

*They are unlikely to be consulted on programme design, let alone engaged as partners.*  
(UNW Global Study 2015, 86)

While the Women Peace and Security (WPS) body of work had grown since the Beijing Conference in 1995, it was only in 2015 that Climate Change and WPS Agenda were explicitly linked through the UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (Smith 2020).

In the South Asia region traditionally the institutionalized Disaster response mechanisms have been male dominated, this is especially so for India and the Maldives. The women, if present, have been there in civil capacity, or relegated to roles that were considered less risky such as that of providing medical assistance. Until the last three decades, this gendered protectionist practice of excluding or relegating uniformed women to non-hazardous action has been the practice of the Indian armed forces. In 1958 women were allowed into the Indian Army Medical Corps (Shukla 2024), and it was only in 1992 that women were first commissioned for short five-year periods in certain streams, like the Army Education Corps and the Corps of Engineers (Khan 2024). Since then, there has been a realization that the teams that are deployed on missions relating to natural disasters need to be more gender sensitized and inclusive.

During, as well as after disasters, community tensions and socio-economic fault lines deepen due to various reasons including scarcity of resources and access to amenities. The social and economic aspects of life that disasters impact can vary between men and women, but also between sections of society. Hence, it is vital to consider who is being deployed at the time of disaster, as well as local capacity building engagement for the creation of more resilient societies.

### **Women in India's Evolving Disaster Management Teams**

India's NDRF constitutes of personnel on deputation for a period of seven years from the following paramilitary forces --Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), Assam Rifles (AR), Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) (Lok Sabha 2023); Since its constitution in 2006, the NDRF has grown from 8 Battalions to 16 Battalions, each with 1149 personnel and 18 self-contained specialist search and rescue teams that include engineers, technicians, electricians, dog squads and medics/paramedics.

The NDRF was an all-male force until 2021, when the first batch of over 100 female recruits were inducted into the force (*The Hindu* 2021). The Union Ministry of Home Affairs directed the CAPFs to nominate 108 women personnel for every NDRF battalion. Each NDRF Battalion is composed of 06 Coys/teams and each Coy consists of 03 teams. The recommended deputation of women personnel within each battalion is organised as under (Lok Sabha 2023):

Inspector (GD)/Sub Inspector (GD)	06 (01 per Coy)
Head Constable (GD)	18 (03 per 4 Coy)
Constable (GD)	84 (12 per Coy)

The NDRF has also released an SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) on the ‘Role and Tasks of *Mahila* (Women) Rescuers in the NDRF’, as a guideline for the inclusion of women rescuers across all NDRF activities such as planning, preparation, mitigation, response and rescue and relief operations (NDRF n.d.). While the training for male and female personnel is uniform in the NDRF, according to the SOP, women are to play a pivotal role in Community Based Disaster Management (CBDM), especially regarding making communities disaster resilient. The SOP also specifies that women rescuers deployed for operations duty with their male counterparts will go in one to three pairs of women rescuers per team, creating a buddy system at all times (NDRF n.d.). This ensures both that women are an integral part of these rescue teams, but also that they have a gendered support system within the team.

The number of actual recruits remains low, and as of March 2023, only 170 women personnel had joined the NDRF (Lok Sabha 2023). To begin with the participation of women in the CAPFs, from where women are recruited, is low and stood at 3.69 percent of the total force in Dec 2021 (Tripathi 2022). This is despite the introduction of gender quotas since 2016, whereby 33 percent posts at Constable level in CRPF and CISF and 14 to 15 percent posts at the Constable level in the border forces (BSF, SSB and ITBP) are reserved for women (PIB 2021). Benefits from recruitment to retention also exist such as relaxation of physical standards tests and provision of child care and maternity leave, creches and day care centres. (PIB 2021)

### **Digging Deeper, Going Beyond Numbers in Representation**

The lack of women’s participation in forces such as CAPF and thereby NDRF boils down to the general tradition of patriarchy, where family and society do not encourage women to take on roles and responsibilities that have historically been considered masculine and in this case also dangerous. This not only deters women from joining the forces, but also leads to chauvinistic working environments both within the forces and on the ground at the community level. A study of women security personnel in Nepal gives a glimpse into the persistence of prejudice and gender bias. Drawing upon anecdotal evidence, the study details instances such as a female police officer recalling the frustrating experience of her instructions being disregarded even by highly educated civilians, and compared it to the experiences of her male counterparts (Racovita 2018). It reflected entrenched social conditioning and mind-sets that are at times hard to define and quantify. Countering such prejudicial attitudes requires a multi-pronged approach that often cannot be measured in numbers but through observational evidence of incremental gains.



In India, for example, the government's push towards women-led development highlights such a "multi-pronged approach to address issues of women on a life-cycle continuum basis encompassing educational, social, economic and political empowerment, so that they become equal partners in fast paced and sustainable national development" (MWCD 2023). In the case of gender inclusiveness in the armed services, efforts are being taken in all spheres, including encouraging girls to train early towards a career in the forces, by opening up admissions to girl children in *Sainik Schools* since 2020-21. Already, some 698 girl students are studying there as boarders. (MoD 2022). Also, the NDMA has conducted Gender Sensitization Workshops for its employees to drill in a professional code of conduct (including speech and body language) to improve the working environment for women in the office, as well as in operations on the ground (NDMA n.d.). These trainings also provide information on legal recourse for female employees in case they face any harassment. While these are important first steps, it will be some time still before the social conditioning and the prejudicial mind-set of people changes and it becomes more socially acceptable for women to take up roles and careers traditionally regarded as masculine.

### **Beyond Mixed Teams: Community Integration for Stronger Disaster Response**

Integrating women into disaster management teams is long overdue. However, female representation alone is not enough to affect the necessary outreach with the local and contextual situation which is required for rescue missions to provide communities and the women on ground, support in times of crisis. Women are not a homogeneous group, and so being a woman does not automatically enable a greater understanding of the social or community context. Anecdotal evidence exists to show that even when women are involved in rescue missions, they may not necessarily be familiar with the complexity of the ground level social systems (North 2015). Thus, alongside the induction of women, there is an increasing realisation that teams need to be sensitized to the needs of communities and women on the ground, especially in vulnerable disaster risk areas. The National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) in India has developed a Training Module on 'Gender and Disaster Management' (Walia 2015). Gender sensitization trainings are provided regularly to both men and women personnel in the CAPFs at various ranks, as well as the NDRF (MoH n.d.). A possible model is Thailand, which has gone one step further in terms of institutionalising some of these practices by having gender equality focal points within the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation at various levels (ASEAN n.d.).

Additionally, given the complex nature of disasters there is a growing need for closer civil military coordination. In India, the NDRF is mandated to provide civilians training in disaster management through engagement with *Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathans* (NYKS), an autonomous organization under the government's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The countrywide network includes young women and men (NYKS n.d.). As of March 2023, around 8266 youth from NYKS had been trained in disaster management across India. This database is maintained by the NDRF to mobilise when required. (Lok Sabha 2023).

There are also volunteer organisations outside of the official mechanism that are making important strides, where there could be scope for more formal integration. For example, the Indian NGO ‘Mahila Housing Sewa Trust’ (MHT) engages with women from low-income households, through Community Action Groups, to educate them on the impacts of climate change and strengthen community resilience. Their work spans seven cities in India, Bangladesh and Nepal. Thus far 25,000 low-income families have benefited and over 1,500 women *climate-saathis* have been trained to share their knowledge within the community in local languages (UNFCCC n.d.).

Disaster response mechanisms can be strengthened by coordinating more closely with the communities that are impacted, and importantly including their voices in decision making. In Vietnam for example, since 2013 the Viet Nam Women’s Union has an official space on decision-making boards of the Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control at national, provincial, and commune levels (ASEAN n.d.).

### **Conclusion: The Way Forward**

It is unlikely that the pace of development will slow down in young and emerging economies of South Asia. It is also unlikely that the tide of the changing climate can be reversed. As the occurrence of natural hazards becomes more frequent and the resulting impact more complex and unpredictable, assessing risk, building resilience, and strengthening response mechanisms will require a whole of society approach. There are three critical elements to making progress in this regard. First, internal strengthening of teams, where through mandatory trainings and other mechanisms, the culture within existing teams, regardless of which territory they are deployed in, normalises the active participation of women. While there is no doubt that the rules and regulations are equal in institutions, we need to take steps that bring a shift in the mind-set of both men and women in their approach towards roles that are traditionally considered masculine in nature. Second, hazards increase the socio-economic and socio-cultural vulnerability of communities on the ground. Therefore, it is vital that the teams deployed are sensitized to existing and changing social realities on the ground. This will ensure a swifter response with the potential to save many more lives. Third, communities are often in a stronger position to mobilise local networks for quick response. Further, there is a wealth of traditional knowledge on local solutions that is increasingly lost in the spurt of modernisation and development. Institutionalisation of periodic civil-military engagement, and creation of a repository of traditional knowledge can strengthen existing capacity at the community level to enhance response.

## References

- ASEAN. n.d. "Guidelines for Operationalising the ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management: A Prioritisation and Planning Toolkit." The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). [https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/FINAL\\_Guidelines-for-Operationalizing-PGI-in-Disaster-Management\\_20220617.pdf](https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/FINAL_Guidelines-for-Operationalizing-PGI-in-Disaster-Management_20220617.pdf).
- Bhattacharjee, Mayuri. 2019. "Menstrual Hygiene Management During Emergencies: A Study of Challenges Faced by Women and Adolescent Girls Living in Flood-prone Districts in Assam." *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 26 (1–2): 96–107. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971521518811172>.
- CFEDM. 2022. "INDIA. Assisting State Disaster Management Reference Handbook." Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance. <https://www.cfedmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=RW7bbCh1b2w%3d&portalid=0>.
- Jackson, Ruth, Daniel Fitzpatrick, and Prabin Man. 2016. "Building Back Right: Ensuring Equality in Land Rights and Reconstruction in Nepal." Community Self-Reliance Centre Nepal, Himalayan Conservation Group, Humanitarian Accountability Monitoring Initiative, National Network of Community Disaster Management Committees. Nepal: Oxfam. <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/606028/bp-building-back-right-nepal-210416-en.pdf?sequence=1>.
- Jayaram, Dhanasree. 2022. "India Needs a Gender-Responsive Climate Diplomacy." In *Applying a Feminist Lens to India's Foreign Policy A Compendium of Essays*. Kubernein Initiative and The Asia Foundation, India Office. <https://kuberneininitiative.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Applying-a-Feminist-Lens-to-Indias-Foreign-Policy-A-Compendium-of-Essays.pdf>.
- Khan, Hamza. 2016. "Nepal: 'Since Earthquake, 15% Spike in Human Trafficking.'" *The Indian Express*, April 26, 2016. <https://indianexpress.com/article/world/world-news/nepal-since-earthquake-15-spike-in-human-trafficking-2771820/>.
- Khan, Khadija. 2024. "SC Terms Woman Military Officer's 1988 Discharge 'Illegal': How Courts have Ruled for Women in Armed Forces." *The Indian Express*, February 27, 2024. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-law/sc-woman-military-officers-armed-forces-9184035/>.
- Lok Sabha. 2023. "Review of National Disaster Response Force Action Taken by the

- Government on the Recommendations Contained in the 13th Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Estimates]. Twenty Fifth Report, Committee on Estimates (2022-23). New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat. [https://loksabhadocs.nic.in/lsscommittee/Estimates/17\\_Estimates\\_25.pdf](https://loksabhadocs.nic.in/lsscommittee/Estimates/17_Estimates_25.pdf).
- Ministry of Defence. 2022. “Ministry of Defence - Year End Review 2022.” Ministry of Defence, Government of India. December 17, 2022. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1884353>.
- Ministry of Home Affairs. n.d. “Annual Report 2021-22.” Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. [https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/AnnualReport202122\\_24112022%5B1%5D.pdf](https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/AnnualReport202122_24112022%5B1%5D.pdf).
- Ministry of Women and Child Development. 2023. “Government of India Committed to Gender Justice and Promoting Women’s Empowerment.” Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, December 20, 2023. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1988601>.
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. n.d. “Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan.” Government of India. <https://nyks.nic.in/aboutus/About-nyks.html>.
- National Disaster Response Force. n.d. “Role & Tasks of Mahila Rescuers in NDRF.” NDRF, Ministry of Home Affairs. Government of India. <https://ndrf.gov.in/sites/default/files/Role%20%26%20tasks%20of%20Mahila%20Rescuers%20in%20NDRF.pdf>.
- National Disaster Management Authority. n.d. “Gender Sensitization Workshops in NDMA.” National Disaster Management Authority. New Delhi: Govt. of India [https://d15k2d11r6t6rl.cloudfront.net/public/users/Integrators/BeeProAgency/785923\\_769680/Proceedings%20of%20Gender%20Sensitization%20Workshop.pdf](https://d15k2d11r6t6rl.cloudfront.net/public/users/Integrators/BeeProAgency/785923_769680/Proceedings%20of%20Gender%20Sensitization%20Workshop.pdf).
- Neumayer, Eric, and Thomas Plümper. 2007. “The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: The Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy, 1981–2002.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97 (3): 551–66. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.2007.00563.x>
- North, Rosemarie. 2015. “Regional Female Disaster Response Staff Helps Communities in Nepal -Nepal.” *ReliefWeb*. September 1, 2015. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/regional-female-disaster-response-staff-helps-communities-nepal>.

- Oxfam International. 2005. "The Tsunami's Impact on Women." Oxfam International. <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/115038/bn-tsunami-impact-on-women-250305-en.pdf;jsessionid=3BF0E15247A24DCD34A73E93512B7522?sequence=1>.
- Press Information Bureau. 2021. "Women in CAPF." Press Information Bureau. Government of India. February 2021. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1694507>.
- Racovita, Mihaela. 2018. "Women in State Security Provision in Nepal: Meaningful Participation?" *Small Arms Survey*. <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-BP-Nepal-Women-State-Security.pdf>.
- Rajagopalan, Swarna. 2016. "Chapter 1: The 1325 Resolutions: From Thought to Action." In *Openings for Peace: UNSCR 1325, Women and Security in India* edited by Asha Hans and Swarna Rajagopalan. New Delhi: Sage.
- Shukla, Neeshu. 2024. "From World War to Agniveers; Here's the Complete Journey of Indian Women in Armed Forces." *Financial Express*, March 19, 2014. <https://www.financialexpress.com/business/defence-from-world-war-to-agniveers-the-complete-journey-of-indian-women-in-armed-forces-3430662/>.
- Smith, Elizabeth. 2020. "Scope for Improvement: Linking the Women, Peace and Security Agenda to Climate Change." SIPRI. June 5, 2020. <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/essay/2020/scope-improvement-linking-women-peace-and-security-agenda-climate-change>.
- The Hindu*. 2021. "India Gets Its First Women's Team in Disaster Combat." PTI. *The Hindu*. January 5, 2021. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-gets-its-first-womens-team-in-disaster-combat/article33500975.ece>.
- Tripathi, Rahul. 2022. "Only 3.69% Women as Central Armed Police Forces Struggle to Meet Quota Target." *The Economic Times*, November 9, 2022. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/only-3-69-women-as-central-armed-police-forces-struggle-to-meet-quota-target/articleshow/95411009.cms?from=mdr>.
- UNFCCC. n.d. "Rural Community Leaders Combating Climate Change India." United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/women-for-results/rural-community-leaders-combatting-climate-change>.

- UNDDR. 2022. “The Early Engagement of the United Nations in Disaster Risk Reduction (1970-2000): A Brief History.” Geneva, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. <https://www.preventionweb.net/media/78789/download?startDownload=true>.
- UNDRR. 2021. “Policy Brief: Gender-Responsive Disaster Risk Reduction.” Geneva, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. [https://www.undrr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Policy%20brief\\_Gender-responsive%20disaster%20risk%20reduction.pdf](https://www.undrr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Policy%20brief_Gender-responsive%20disaster%20risk%20reduction.pdf).
- UNDRR. n.d. “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030.” United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Geneva. [https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291\\_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf](https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf).
- UNISDR. 2005. “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.” United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR). <https://www.unisdr.org/2005/wcdr/intergover/official-doc/L-docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf>.
- UNW Global Study -1325. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace. A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.* Helmed by Radhika Coomaraswamy, New York: UN Women. [https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/globalstudywps\\_en\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/globalstudywps_en_web.pdf).
- Walia, Ajinder. 2015. “Gender and Disaster Management: A Training of Trainers (ToT) Module.” *National Institute of Disaster Management.* New Delhi. <https://nidm.gov.in/PDF/modules/gender.pdf>.