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## Disaster-Ready Guide 3

# Is your community disaster-ready?

This document is designed to be read onscreen  
as it contains hyperlinks

*This leaflet is designed to inspire Zonta clubs to find out more about their community's disaster preparedness and response plans and how the plans meet the needs of women and girls.*

Disasters can strike at any time, and they can have devastating impacts on the lives and livelihoods of people, especially women and girls.

Zonta International calls on governments to include women in the formation of disaster preparedness and response plans that:

- Recognise the unique needs of women and girls.
- Prioritize their health and safety.
- Include responses to gender-based violence.

Do you know what happens in your community before, during, and after, a disaster? Does your community's disaster and preparedness response plan adequately address the needs of women and girls? How can your club support local disaster response initiatives?

*Meet with your local government or emergency service representatives and ask them these questions. Invite them to attend a meeting to share their knowledge and experience with members.*

## 1. What does your organization know about the community?

- **Types of disaster:** What are the main types of disaster that affect the community and how often do they occur?
- **High risk areas:** Which areas are prone to fires, floods, or other extreme weather events?

- **Data collection:** Do you know where vulnerable people are located? How do you measure the impacts that disasters have on the community's health, safety, environment, economy, and social well-being? Do you collect any gendered data?
- **Early warning:** When and where are early warning systems used and how do you know they have reached everyone?
- **Testing response plans:** How are disaster preparedness and response systems tested? Are evacuation procedures practised? Are local communities involved?
- **Funding:** How is disaster planning, response and recovery funded? Is disaster relief funding available for affected community members?

## 2. How does your organization include women in disaster preparedness and response planning?

- **Stakeholder engagement:** How do you involve women, women's groups, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of disaster response plans?
- **Women's participation and leadership:** How many women and men are involved in your disaster planning processes? How many women are in decision-making roles?

- **Needs assessment:** How do you assess the gender-specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls in your community before, during, and after a disaster? For example,
  - ◇ How do you address the specific needs and challenges of women and girls who are menstruating, pregnant, lactating, or are caring for young children or elderly people in disaster situations?
  - ◇ How do you prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in disaster settings?
  - ◇ How do you support the poor who cannot afford cooling/heating and the homeless?

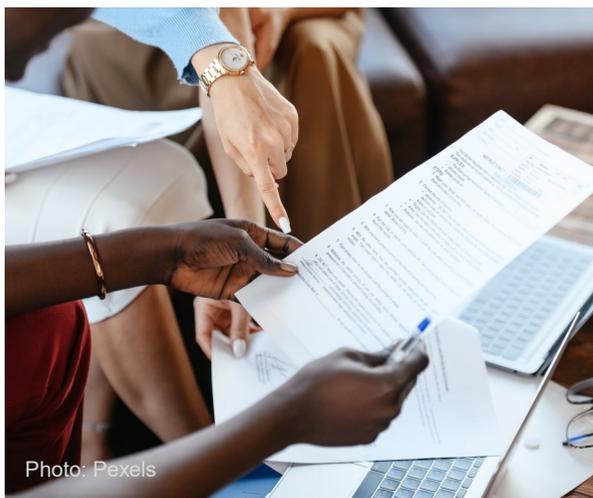


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The Zonta Says NOW [Disaster-Ready Guides](#) support *Action Guide 02: Disaster Preparedness and Response*.

See also Disaster-Ready Guide *Where are your local disaster organizations?*

## What can our club do to raise awareness of disaster preparedness?

### 1. Gather the facts:

- Invite local emergency services, local disaster management groups, NGOs and Red Cross or Red Crescent agencies to speak to the club to:
  - ◇ Describe local disaster management planning processes.
  - ◇ Explain how local disaster plans cater for women's safety, menstrual health, incontinence, disability, and child and elder care.
  - ◇ Describe how women feature in their agencies' goals, strategies, and disaster plans and whether there are women on their board or in senior roles.
  - ◇ Suggest how Zonta may best advocate and provide support to the community's disaster planning processes.
- Invite women who have been impacted by climate change-related disasters to share their stories at meetings e.g., women from a refugee agency.

### 2. Lead by example:

- Encourage members to:
  - ◇ Prepare a household disaster readiness plan.
  - ◇ Undertake physical and psychological first aid training.
- Include a disaster readiness session at a club meeting, area workshop or district conference.

### 3. Use our voice:

- Share what we have learned about disaster preparedness and the actions we have taken, with

our family, friends, neighbours, work colleagues and on social media.

- Develop a guide/video/podcast to raise awareness of local disaster management agencies and useful websites.

### 4. Advocate:

- Advocate to local disaster management committees to:
  - ◇ Safeguard women's health and safety during an emergency.
  - ◇ Involve women in the management of shelters and refugee camps.
- Advocate for adequate funding and resources for local disaster management agencies to prepare and support their communities before, during and after a disaster.

### 5. Collaborate:

- Work with members of other Zonta, Golden Z, and Z clubs to host a community event on local disaster response initiatives and careers.
- Work with other service organizations, e.g., Soroptimists, Rotary to raise awareness and advocate for disaster management issues.
- Create an alliance with an emergency organization.

## Further reading

[A practical guide to gender-sensitive approaches for disaster management](#)

[Tool 18: Gender Responsive Disaster Preparedness](#)