



Manifesto For Gender-Sensitive Earthquake Relief in Morocco

Urgent action is needed in response to the recent 7-magnitude earthquake in Morocco with additional aftershocks further worsening the situation in places that were already affected. Many villages near the epicenter have been destroyed, resulting in nearly 2,500 deaths and injuries. Some of the locations haven't received relief yet as the roads are blocked and many are crying for help. A **gender-sensitive approach** is crucial, especially for **marginalized groups** like women and girls in rural areas and belonging to indigenous communities. Women in Zanite Lalla Aziza village, close to Chichaoua are in critical condition, some are currently pregnant and need urgent help. [Politics4Her](#) stands with Morocco, particularly focusing on the **unique challenges faced by women and girls during disaster relief**, including their **sexual and reproductive health needs**.

Here are some of the challenges women and girls encounter during earthquake relief efforts:

- **Lack of Privacy and Dignity:** Temporary shelters may not provide adequate facilities for maintaining privacy and dignity even during menstruation. This lack of privacy can lead to discomfort and even shame, especially in a culture where periods are taboo and *hchouma*.
- **Limited Access to Menstrual Products:** In disaster relief, vital supplies often lack menstrual products such as pads, tampons, or reusable panties, forcing girls and young women to use unsanitary alternatives, risking infections and discomfort.
- **Unsafe Environments:** In disaster-affected areas, there can be an increased risk of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and assault. Women and girls may be afraid to access essential services due to safety concerns.
- **Disrupted Healthcare Services:** Earthquakes disrupt healthcare infrastructures, making it challenging for women and girls to access sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including prenatal and postnatal care.
- **Psychological Stress:** The trauma of surviving an earthquake, coupled with the lack of appropriate support, can have a profound impact on the mental health and well-being of women and girls.



Let's integrate the solutions to ensure that the unique perspectives of women and girls are considered in earthquake relief through sustainable policy recommendations:

- **Access to Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare:** Guarantee accessible maternal care, menstrual care, and comprehensive sexual education for women and girls during disaster recovery efforts.
- **Safe Housing and Shelter:** Prioritize safe gender-sensitive shelter options, support survivors of gender-based violence, and promote eco-friendly rebuilding in disaster recovery efforts.
- **Community-Led Disaster Preparedness:** Promote community-led disaster preparedness initiatives that actively involve young people, especially young women and girls.
- **Psychosocial Support Services:** Establish gender-sensitive psychosocial support services to address the trauma and mental health needs of young women and girls survivors.
- **Representation and Leadership:** Promote the participation and leadership of women and girls in all levels of decision-making related to disaster response and recovery efforts.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Use media channels to reach a broad audience, including mainstream media, social media, and community engagement initiatives highlighting the specific challenges faced by women and girls during disaster relief.
- **Partnerships with Civil Society:** Collaborate closely with civil society organizations and grassroots movements, including those focused on women and girls, to ensure that policies and programs in disaster relief are responsive to their unique needs and challenges.
- **Comprehensive Gender Transformative Education:** Provide unbiased and stereotype-free educational materials, train teachers to address gender-related issues, and raise awareness of young women's needs during disaster situations.

By integrating these recommendations, we can create a more holistic and effective approach to disaster response and recovery that is sensitive to the specific needs of young women and girls.