

The International Symposium on Multi-hazards Warning & Community Resilience (MWCR 2022), 25-26 October 2022

Kobe University UNESCO Chair:

Focusing on the importance of taking a gender sensitive approach to disaster

Ronni Alexander, Kobe University



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KOBE UNIVERSITY UNESCO CHAIR: THE BEGINNING

- Kobe University Gender Equality Office
 - Responsible for faculty & staff work-life balance and increasing women faculty members
 - 2016 1st UNESCO Chair application
- Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (1995)
 - Importance of gender perspective, women's perspective
 - Lack of gender analysis in university disaster research
- Japan's low ranking on Global Gender Gap Report - 116th out of 146 countries (World Economic Forum, 13 July 2022).
 - Importance of increasing number of women researchers at Kobe University
 - Importance of thinking about 'gender' throughout the university



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3 ANOTHER CONSIDERATION: ASIA IS PRONE TO DISASTERS



- <https://floodlist.com/asiaFlood> List 2022 (Asia)



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KOBE UNIVERSITY UNESCO CHAIR

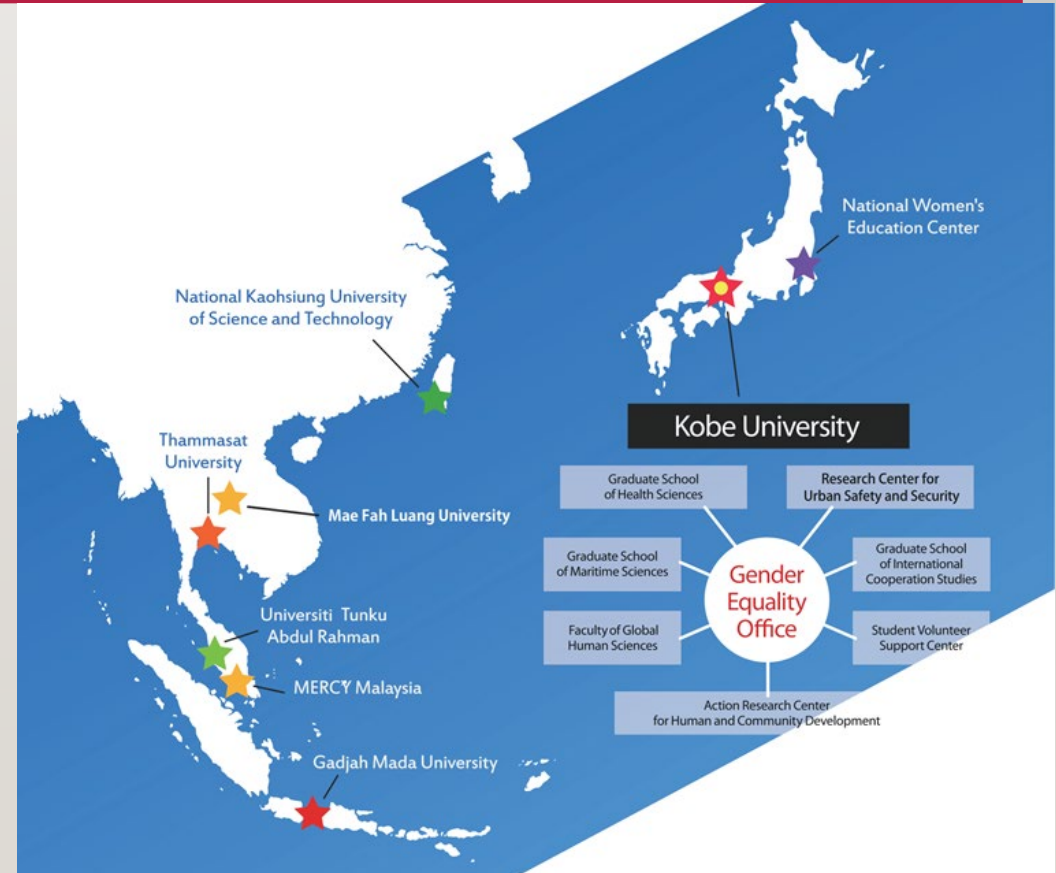
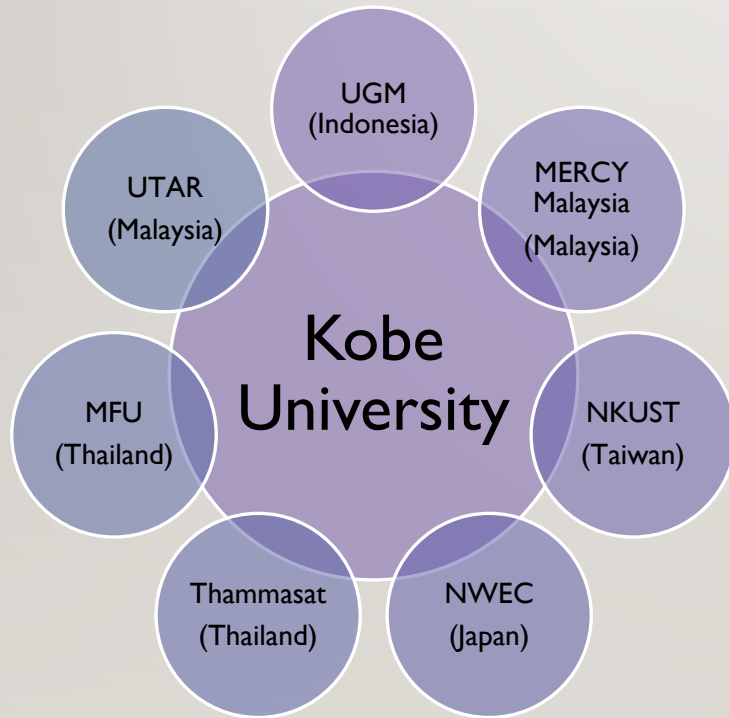
and Well-being

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- Title: Gender and Vulnerability in Disaster ~~Risk~~ Reduction Support
 - Purpose:
 - Share experience of disaster from Kobe University to the world
 - Deepen connections with other countries, institutions to create a safer and more inclusive world
 - Duration: 4 years; 2018.4~2022.3; 2022.3-2026.2
 - Only UNESCO Chair on gender & disaster
 - Under supervision of UNESCO Women's Division
 - Part of a Global Network of UNESCO Chairs on Gender (23 chairs)

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KOBE UNIVERSITY UNESCO CHAIR PARTNER INSTITUTIONS



KOBE UNIVERSITY UNESCO CHAIR

6	1st Term	2nd Term
	2018~2021	2022~2025
	Gender and Vulnerability in DRR Support	Gender, Vulnerability and Well-being in DRR Support

Research	Edited volume of case studies	Research	Collaboration with partners, Kobe Univ. Colleagues: COVID 19 in university
Education	2-week summer program, online seminar, etc. (40-50 students)	Education	Add well-being to existing education program
Network	Building trust, networking with our partners	Network	Expand our network for DRR with the community
		Curriculum materials	Develop teaching materials based on our work
Outreach	Reports in archive, on HP, etc.	Outreach	Information, Community lectures, etc.

7 EDUCATION PROGRAM



2018, 2019

- 2-week program at Gajah Mada University, Indonesia
- Participation: total of about 40 students from UGM, NKUST, KU
- Lecturers: Chair partner universities and others
- Field study (Merapi Volcano)
- Students are given a problem to solve and present their solution

2020, 2021, 2022

- Online program focused on COVID-19
- Participation: 60 students from UGM, NKUST, UTAR, MFU, KU
- Country reports
- Group task → discussion → presentation
- More students are able to participate, but they can't be together in person or experience a new country, etc.



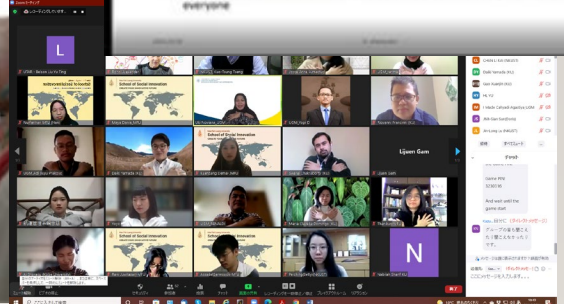
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EDUCATION PROGRAM (2018, 2019) @ GADJAH MADA UNIVERSITY



Why Kobe University UNESCO Chair is having a COVID-19 Conference?

- The COVID-19 Pandemic is a global disaster
 - Serious social, economic implications at all levels: individual to countries, regions & the entire world
 - Global cooperation is necessary to overcome the pandemic
- The current crisis is not the first health emergency, nor will it be the last
 - Spanish Flu, HIV/AIDS, SARS, MERS, Ebola ...
 - With increasing natural and human disasters, awareness and preparedness are essential
- A gender perspective and focus on vulnerability can help to make a safer world
 - If the world is safer for the most vulnerable in our communities, it will be safer for everyone





RESEARCH PROGRAM: MAKING DISASTER SAFER: A GENDER AND VULNERABILITY APPROACH (IN PROGRESS)

Table of Contents (2022.1.10)

- **Introduction:** Gender, Vulnerability and Disaster (Ronni Alexander)

Part I Focusing on Local Women

- **Chapter 1:** A critical introduction to gender and disaster: Learning from women survivors in Northeast Japan
- **Chapter 2:** The vulnerability of indigenous women and their roles in rebuilding a resilient community after a disaster (Jih-Sian Sun, Huilung Yu, Junko Okada)
- **Chapter 3:** Health Literacy about Covid 19 Prevention among Women in Low-Income Family in Indonesia (Lely Lusmmilasari, Uki Noviana, Melza Perdana, Ariani Arista Putri Pertiwi)
- **Chapter 4:** Mainstreaming Gender into Disaster Recovery Policy and Practice: The case study of post-earthquake in Yogyakarta Special Province, Indonesia (Maya Dania)

- **Part II Focusing on Local Policies and Authorities**

- **Chapter 5:** The Disaster Occupational Recovery at Local Level: Policy direction and practical guidelines in Chiangrai Province, Thailand (Wanwalee Inpin)
- **Chapter 6:** Local Government Initiative Practice on Post Tsunami in Coastal Community in West Java, Indonesia (Reni Juwitasari)
- **Chapter 7:** Emergence of Unconventional Risks and Hazards: Building coping capacities for most at-risk communities in cities (Hafiz Amirrol)

- **Part III Focusing on Alternative Actors and Practices**

- **Chapter 8:** Toward Climate Resilient Development and Management: Developing indicators of climate hazards, Malaysia (Kok Weng Tan, Yuk Feng Huang, Phui Nying Loh)
- **Chapter 9:** Voluntarism and Disaster Relief at Local Level in Thailand: Institutional design (Thanikun Chantra)
- **Chapter 10:** How can we see the invisible? Alternative expressions of the March 2011 disaster (Ronni Alexander)
- **Conclusion:** Looking Forward: Making Disaster Safer (Siriporn Wajjwalku)



10 CONFIRMING THE PROBLEM

- Avg. **45,000** people/year, globally.
- Women, boys and girls: **14** times more likely to die (Peterson, 2007)
- 1991 cyclone disasters in Bangladesh: women - **90%** of the 140,000 victims (Ikeda, 1995).
- Women, **especially expectant mothers**, are highly vulnerable to water-borne diseases, thermal and other extreme events.
- More women than men died during the 2003 Europe heat wave. France: most deaths were among **elderly women** (Pirard et al., 2005).



II OUR GENDER FOCUS

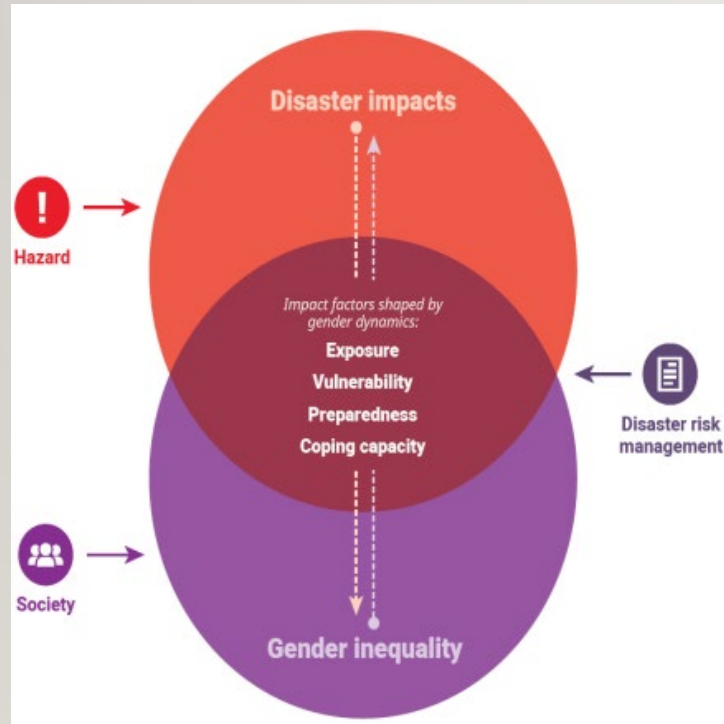
- **Socially constructed rules and expectations** for women and men that underlie **social institutions and relations**
- Gender includes **multiple masculinities and femininities, expressions of gender and gender identities**
- **Gender binaries** (men/women) **prioritize masculinity** over femininity and deny equal opportunities to women, marginalized masculinities and gender identities
- **Binary approaches exclude the full spectrum** of SOGIESC (sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics)

12 A GENDER SENSITIVE APPROACH IS IMPORTANT

- Women and marginalized genders may be vulnerable and/or **excluded by virtue of their gender**
 - **Gendered social institutions** (Ex: women are not able to sign legal documents or certain rights and privileges are not extended to sexual minorities).
 - **Assumptions and expectations:** care work increases in emergencies and needs of women are often sacrificed to the needs of men
 - **Lack of awareness of intersectionality:** overlook the needs of women or other groups or the special needs of intersecting vulnerabilities, such as the needs of minority women or disabled women as being distinct from those of minority or disabled men.
- **Gender underlies all social categories and relations**
 - a gender sensitive approach is important for all genders
 - Recognition of the special vulnerabilities of women and other marginalized gender categories.



13 ACCESS TO INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT



- Women in particular face **barriers to access information and resources** needed to adequately prepare, respond and cope to a disaster — including **access to early warning and safe shelter**, as well as to bank accounts to protect savings from disasters and stable income.

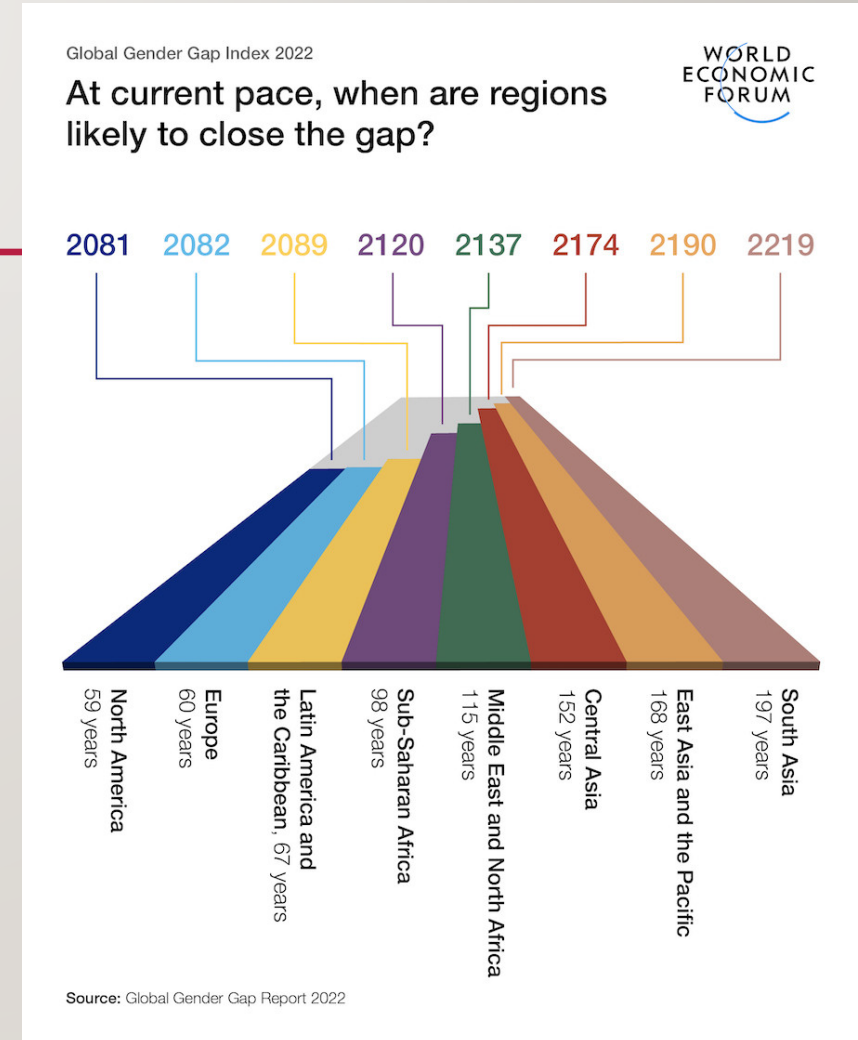
14 BEING A WOMEN MAKES IT MORE DIFFICULT TO COPE AFTER A DISASTER

- Care responsibilities increase
 - Less access to resources for relief and recovery
 - Fewer formal (and informal) opportunities for making their needs known
 - Education and IT access and literacy
 - Adversely affected over longer times
 - Gender-based violence increases
- COVID-19 is similar
 - Care responsibilities, telework, children out of school
 - Frontline workers
 - Lay-offs
 - Domestic violence
 - Lack of information or ability to evaluate true/false info



15 WHAT WE KNOW

- ➔ underlying inequalities make women vulnerable
- ➔ hierarchal and binary gender relations block achievement of gender equality.
- ➔ gender inequalities underly and/or combine with other vulnerabilities, visible and invisible, to make women more vulnerable during and after disasters

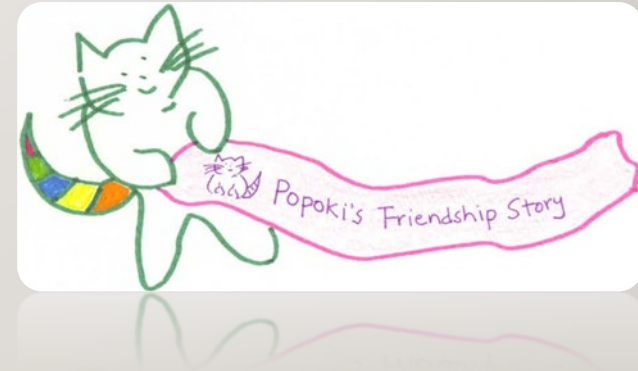




16 WHAT WE WANT TO LEARN

- More specific guidelines to reduce the vulnerability of women based on different case studies
 - Contribute to disaster research that includes sexual minorities
 - Develop some curriculum materials
- COVID-19
 - Comparison of response in the different partner universities
 - Comparison of pre- and post- disaster plans in the partner universities
 - Try to find ways to help universities develop inclusive guidelines and to help youth, particularly vulnerable youth

17 A WORD ABOUT MY OWN WORK: WE MUST CONSIDER FEELING SAFE, TOO



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THANK YOU

