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Flood Displacement and Social Protection Gaps: A Case Study of Rajanpur District, South Punjab

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Abstract
The 2022 floods in Pakistan severely affected Rajanpur District in South Punjab, home to over 1.9 million people, many living below the poverty line. The disaster caused extensive displacement, destroying around 35,000 homes completely and damaging infrastructure such as roads, canals, and schools. Approximately 250,000 people were affected, with significant crop losses across 350,000 acres. Rajanpur faces frequent flooding due to its unique geography, bordered by the Suleiman Mountains in the west causing flash floods, and the Indus River on the east causing riverine floods. These floods exacerbate socio-economic vulnerabilities, particularly affecting women and marginalized communities. This study investigates social protection gaps experienced by displaced households, focusing on safe shelter, healthcare, livelihoods, and gender-specific risks. Utilizing mixed methods, primary data from surveys ((including a targeted survey of 150 women), interviews, and focus groups are), interviews, and focus groups are supported by Secondary data will be drawn from, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), UNDP, WHO, FAO, World Bank, and humanitarian situation reports to examine gendered impacts of floods and droughts. Primary survey data reveals that 48% of women cited damage to livelihood as their primary concern, while 22% faced significant health issues and 20% experienced a loss of education during displacement. The study highlights severe gaps in social protection for displaced women, who face increased risks of gender-based violence and barriers to vital services. It calls for gender-sensitive, inclusive disaster strategies within international climate governance and development cooperation, emphasizing targeted support, equitable resource access, and participatory planning to strengthen humanitarian and policy responses in climate-affected contexts.

Keywords: Flood, displacement, Rajanpur, vulnerabilities, protection gaps, gender-based violence, disaster management

1-Introduction

The 2022 floods in Pakistan can be considered one of the most significant disasters caused by climate in recent history with numerous effects on millions of people living in different provinces (NDMA, 2022). Other severely affected was the Rajanpur District in South Punjab with a population of more than 1.9 million, with a large number of residents living below the poverty line (UNDP, 2022). The geographical location of Rajanpur is also a weakness as it is positioned between the Suleiman Mountains to the west and the Indus River to the east. This area exposes the district to constant flash floods that are caused by the mountains as well as riverine floods caused by the Indus, posing a twofold risk of floods that almost happens every year (FAO, 2022). The floods of 2022 left behind a significant physical damage in the city of Rajanpur where approximately 35,000 houses were completely destroyed, and about 350,000 hectares of

agricultural lands were ruined and destroyed, destroying the main source of livelihood of most of the residents (World Bank, 2023). It has displaced about 250,000 individuals, which worsened the socio-economic vulnerabilities that existed before. The interruption was not only in infrastructure and livelihoods but also in extremely adverse social outcomes, especially those of women and marginalized populations where access to safe shelter, health services, and basic services is increased (WHO, 2023).

The issue of gender-specific vulnerabilities became a pressing issue during the post-displacement period because women and girls faced greater exposure to gender-based violence and cultural limitations, which did not allow them to receive more recovery resources and have access to decision-making. Nevertheless, even with the attempts by the national institutions and international agencies, there are still vast gaps in the systems of social protection especially in the delivery of effective, inclusive assistance in response to the gendered needs of the displaced communities in flood prone areas such as Rajanpur. The proposed research will focus on exploring these social protection loopholes in detail, using both a mixed-methodology approach based on both primary (surveys, interviews, and focus groups) and secondary (agencies, including NDMA, UNDP, WHO, FAO, and the World Bank) data. The study aims to influence gender-sensitive policy and inclusive approaches to reduce the impact of disasters through the establishment of clearer risk management frameworks and policies by placing the research findings in the context of larger discourses on international climate governance and the management of disasters, which create intricate vulnerabilities due to climate-related displacement.

2-Background and Study Area

2.1 Geographic and Socio-Economic Profile of Rajanpur District

Rajanpur District is located in the southwestern quarter of Punjab province in Pakistan and it covers a total area of about 12,318 square kilometers. The 2023 Census data show that the population of the district amounts to approximately 2.38 million people and thus the district ranks as one of the districts densely populated in the southern Punjab area (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023). The sex ratio is somewhat equal and 1,209,183 were males and 1,171,748 were females with no less than 118 transgender population. Over 73% of residents live in rural (around 1.75 million) and only 631,223 residents live in urban areas, which contributes to the rural nature of the district (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

The remains of the very rural population depend mainly on the agricultural sector, and many small farmers are available who practice both crop and livestock farming. Saraiki is the most common language, and it is spoken by approximately 75 percent of all residents, but minorities of Balochi and Punjabi also exist (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023). In Rajanpur, the level of literacy is relatively low; there is a significant gap between the literacy rates of men and women; the ratio of men being much higher than that of women, which indicates the impact of socio-cultural factors on the education of women (NDMA, 2022). Poverty is rampant, a large proportion of the population lives below the national poverty line, and they have poor access to basic amenities including potable water, health services, education and economic empowerment.

2.2 Flooding Dynamics: Suleiman Mountains Flash Floods and Indus River Riverine Floods

Rajanpur is located between the Suleiman Mountain range in the west and the Indus River in the east which makes the area have a unique dual flood risk profile. The Suleiman Mountains in the west are the cause of flash floods, which are created by heavy rainfalls of monsoon winds, which can carry water and debris towards the adjoining plains. These flash floods are both unpredictable and localized and cause a destructive localized effect. On the other hand, the eastern side is marked with the Indus River, which is one of the longest and most important rivers in Pakistan, which in turn overflows its banks and generates riverine floods which build up but have a greater area of impact.

The 2022 floods showed the destructive combination of such types of floods. At the same time, flash floods that began in the mountainous topography and prolonged riverine floods in the Indus struck the few flood

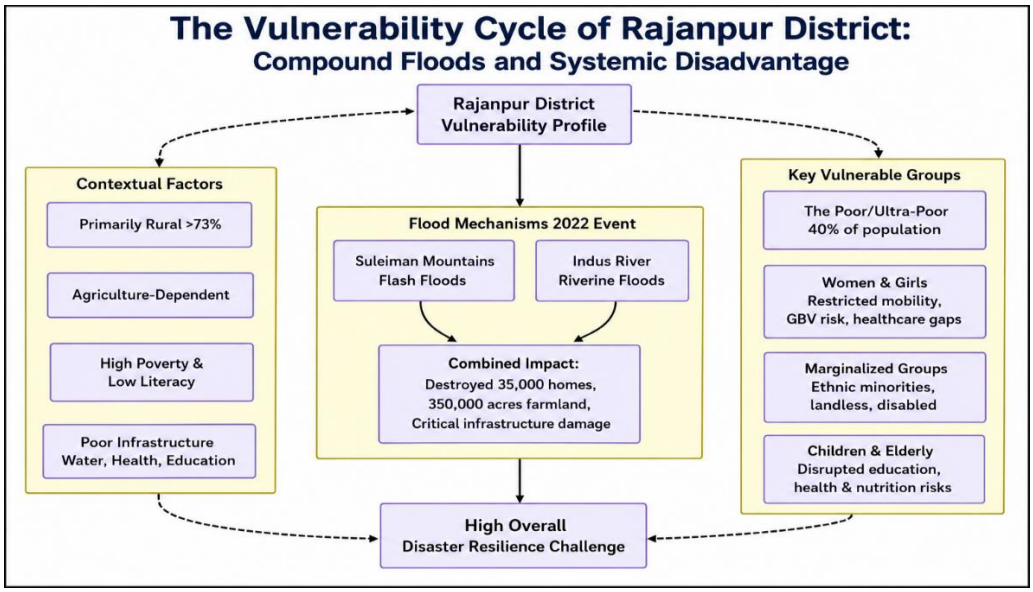
management systems that the district had. It has been estimated that about 35000 houses were lost and important infrastructure such as roads, waterways, irrigation canals and schools were heavily damaged. The agricultural losses were high, and it was estimated that about 350,000 acres of agricultural land had been submerged, which is a threat to the food security and the livelihoods of the people in the district (World Bank, 2023; FAO, 2022). Poor drainage and sediment deposition in the river Indus also contributes to the flood-prone nature of the district making it ever more uncontrollable.

2.3 Vulnerable Populations: Poverty, Women, and Marginalized Groups

The socio-economic vulnerability of Rajanpur is strictly connected with its exposure to floods, with the poorest and most marginalized groups being the most vulnerable groups. The proportion of households in the district that can be characterized as either poor or ultra-poor are around forty percent of the total population, which lacks proper housing, drinking water, and sanitation, as well as health services (UNDP, 2022). These circumstances compound the effects of displacement in that the poor families have less to recover the lost belongings or to move without any problem after floods.

Females face extreme vulnerabilities which are magnified during flood situations. The socio -cultural norms and traditional gender roles limit the mobility of many women, their access to information and ability to make decisions in the recovery process of their households and communities. Women are more likely to be vulnerable to gender-based violence, lack access to healthcare, including maternal and reproductive health services, and have difficulty accessing humanitarian services during the process of displacement (WHO, 2023).

This is also disproportionately suffered by marginalized populations, such as ethnic minorities, landless workers, and people with disabilities who have low access to social protection schemes, as well as to disaster response planning. Other vulnerable groups include children and the old age populations. Displacement interferes with the education, healthcare and nutrition of children, thus increasing the poverty and deprivation risk of children in the long-term. Aging people usually face physical and physical limitations that make it hard to find shelter or assistance in times of floods (NDMA, 2022). Poverty, geographic isolation, gender inequality, and marginalization are also woven to establish a complicated vulnerability nebula in Rajanpur that disfavors effective disaster resilience.



3-Literature Review

3.1 Overview of Social Protection in Disaster Contexts

The social protection systems, including cash transfer systems, food aid, house support, and health care facilities are significant in alleviating the risks of vulnerable and displaced populations in Pakistan due to climate change. Ullah and Qazi (2023) have outlined how these safety nets have been implemented, and how crucial they are in disaster resilience. However, as Shazia Writiet (2024) notes, these difficulties include the lack of targeted interventions in informal urban settlements where most of the displaced families live, lack of funds, and coordination issues as well as the marginalization of vulnerable populations. There is still a significant research gap on the determinacy of localized social protection interventions on displaced populations under varying conditions, their accessibility, and response to repeated and enduring displacement situations.

3.2 Gendered Impacts of Climate-Induced Displacement

In Pakistan, women and girls are most affected by migration caused by the changing climatic conditions, due to their social, economic, and cultural susceptibility. Through the brilliant research conducted by Writiet and Imran Dschokar (2023) in the flood-prone areas of Tharparkar and Muzaffargarh, the researcher sheds light on the higher risks of women being exposed to gender-based violence, limited mobility, and burdened with additional care duties outside of the traditional support network. Their ethnographic and household level studies reveal that women are often limited by patriarchal norms in engaging in the migration related decision making and adaptation practices which increases the level of gender inequality. In spite of these observations, little has been done in terms of gender mainstreaming in the disaster governance and climate adaptation initiatives, a fact that demonstrates a conspicuous absence in terms of the systematic inclusion of gender sensitive policies and frameworks in the context of climate displacement in Pakistan.

3.3 Policies and Frameworks in International Climate Governance and Disaster Management

The climate policies in Pakistan are established in global commitments like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework aiming at adaptation and reduction of disaster risks. Nevertheless, more intensive policy reviews conducted by Qureshi and Haider (2022) note a poor integration of the social equity, especially, the displacement and gender. There is poor coordination and fragmented governance arrangements between national and provincial agencies, which impede effectiveness in policy implementation. In addition, the levels of regional collaboration in transboundary river basins, which is one of the driving factors of climate migration in South Asia, are not well-developed. This creates important knowledge gap in the context of operationalization of equitable climate migration policies and their sensitivity to the needs of urban migrant populations, where not much consideration is given to cross-border climate justice and governance.

3.4 Research Gap

Much research has been done on issues of social protection, gender vulnerabilities and policy models that address the issues of climate-induced displacement in Pakistan; however, there are gaps in critical research. There is little empirical data available on how social protection schemes work at the local level in regards to households that have been displaced. Inclusion of gender views especially operational gender mainstreaming in governance and urban planning of the displaced people has not been analyzed adequately. Lastly, the effectiveness and practical application of the adaptation policies and international negotiation strategies undertaken by Pakistan in protecting the displaced population should be analyzed further, particularly the urban and transboundary settings. Mixed-methods, localized, and gender-sensitive perspectives of the issue will help to fill these gaps and provide extensive perspectives to inform policy and practice.

4-Methodology

The research design used in this paper is a mixed-methods research design, which combines both primary and secondary data sources to explain the complexity of flood-related displacement and the social protection gaps associated with this problem in Rajanpur District. The methodology is a balance between the quantitative rigor and the qualitative richness of the study, which provides a full-scale picture of the complex vulnerabilities and reactions of the displaced households.

In this research, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys to obtain primary data among displaced households in Rajanpur. This included a targeted survey of 150 female respondents to specifically assess the unique forms of damage, loss, and psychological consequences experienced by women and girls, capturing data on vulnerabilities often overlooked in general surveys. The questionnaires were designed to determine the level of displacement, the level of destruction, the level to which the respondents were able to access the social protection systems, and the resultant effect on their livelihoods. The interviews and focus groups also supported these findings and the researchers further examined the experiences of displacement in individuals and particularly gender-related threats like gender-based violence, barriers to obtaining health care and other vital services and ways of coping with the situation. The qualitative aspect of the study allowed the researcher to involve the participants, especially the women and members of the marginalized communities, in a participatory way, which provided abundant contextual data, which is often lacking in the purely quantitative data. The use of purposive and stratified sampling was to cover the varied communities that are affected by floods, and specific focus was on the vulnerable communities.

Secondary data were collected systematically through official sources such as the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the world health organization (WHO), the food and agriculture organization (FAO), the world bank and other humanitarian situation reports. These data gave wider contextual data on the effects of floods, social protection policies at the region and gender-sensitive disaster response models. The incorporation of these sources allowed triangulation, confirmation of the primary data results, and placing the local-level experiences in national and international frameworks of disaster governance.

The analysis of data was through an integrative method as per the tenets of mixed methods research. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were done on quantitative survey data to identify trends in displacement magnitude, resource accessibility and livelihood disruption. Thematic coding of qualitative interview and focus group transcripts was done to identify recurrent themes related to the lack of social protection and gender-based vulnerabilities. The combination of qualitative and quantitative results occurred in the interpretive stage, thus, allowing to see the convergence of geographic, socio-economic, and institutional factors that enhance the risk of displacement and social protection failures. This paradigm of research is essential because it involves the complexity of disaster studies through the application of complementary data types and sources, thus improving the validity and richness of evidence that can be relied on to make specific and gender-sensitive policy recommendations to communities impacted by flooding in Rajanpur and similar situations.

5-Findings

The floods of 2022 impacted the Rajanpur District in a way never seen before, displacing and destroying more than 223,000 individuals (PDMA, 2022). The floods wiped about 25,314 houses and damaged some very important infrastructures such as roads and irrigation canals that hampered emergency operations and livelihood. More than 200,000 animals were lost, and approximately 350,000 hectares of arable land were flooded, which aggravated food insecurity and economic suffering (FAO, 2022). The fact that it is exposed on a large scale highlights the susceptibility of the district to its exclusive geographic flood processes where flash floods in the Suleiman Mountains and riverine floods in the Indus River are combined (Pakistan

Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

The analysis of the primary survey data from 150 female respondents provides granular insight into the gendered impact of the disaster. Damage to livelihood was the single most pervasive issue, affecting 48% of the female respondents. Survey and interview-based primary data suggest that approximately 65 percent of displaced families were forced to find temporary shelter in informal camps or temporary shelters, most of which did not have proper sanitation, privacy, and protection. Women and children were particularly vulnerable, and 60% of them reported that they experienced unsafe shelter conditions, and 55% of them noted that they had limited access to the necessary services, including maternal and reproductive care, with broken health infrastructure and socio-cultural barriers contributing to the situation (WHO, 2023). Gender-based violence was heightened by overcrowding in displacement camps, and displaced women said they had limited mobility and were not involved in decision-making, which was essential in recovery planning.

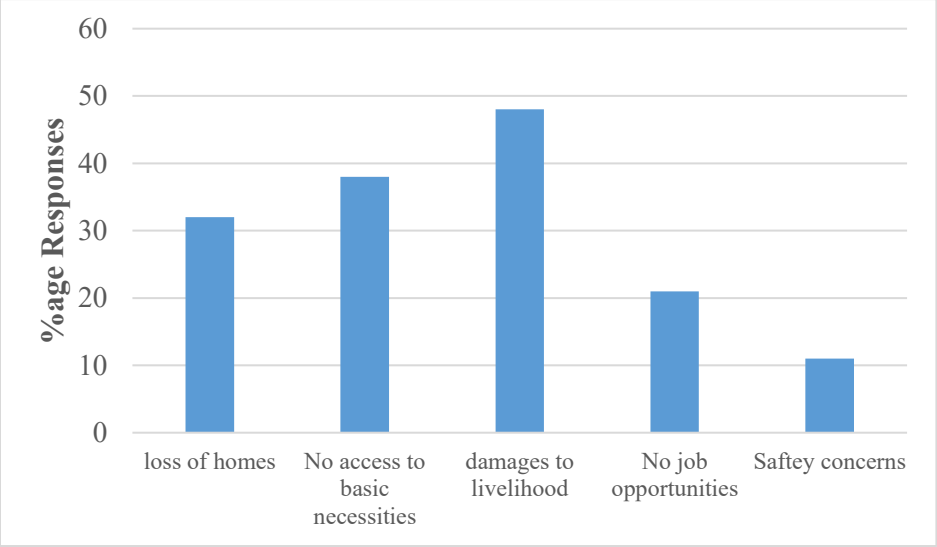


Figure 2: Challenges faced by women during flood in Rajanpur

The quality of social protection mechanisms was too low and unevenly distributed. Nearly fifty per cent of the displaced population cited disjointed aid delivery, whereby female headed families and marginalized groups are frequently excluded in the government and non-governmental aid programs. Delaying or insufficient provision of emergency food, hygiene, and medical supplies was also a tendency caused by the destruction of infrastructure and failures in coordination between aid providers. The displaced families suffered intense livelihood shocks; 72 percent of them said that they lost income, mostly through crop and daily wage losses.

An analysis of the duration of displacement revealed the prolonged nature of the crisis. While 40% of respondents migrated for less than one month and 34.5% for less than two months, a significant 16.5% were displaced for less than six months and 14% for up to one year. Critically, 5% reported their displacement was permanent. The floods forced many households into debt, or selling productive resources, thus putting their future prospects of recovery in danger. The loss of agrarian livelihoods appalled male respondents and the increased burden of care with growing food insecurity was emphasized by female respondents. Specific issues faced by women during migration were dominated by health issues (22%), loss of education (20%), harassment (15%), and a lack of toilets (14%). Such interference with social networks additionally destabilized the common coping mechanisms and the community. Socio-economic disadvantages were compounded to other vulnerable populations such as women, children, the elderly, and ethnic minorities due to displacement and lack of social protection.

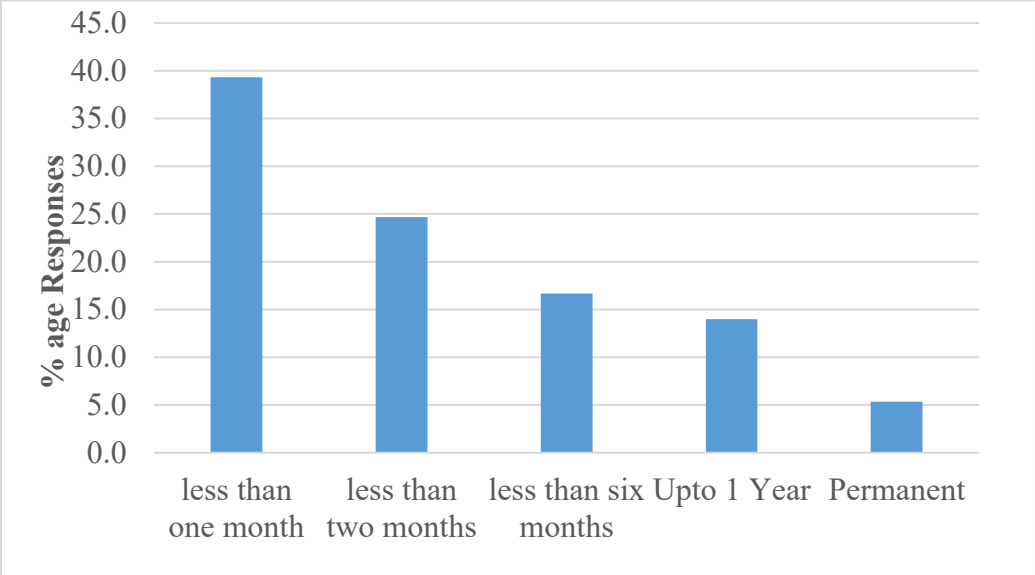


Figure 3: Duration of migration in the result of flood

On the whole, the results outline the deep and interconnected vulnerabilities, which are caused by geographic, economic, and socio-economic factors. The evidence outlines the areas of vital deficiency in the efficiency and inclusivity of the social protection systems that are currently in place in Rajanpur. The above observations require urgent policy and programme interventions which are gender sensitive to reduce disaster risks, equitably distribute aid, prevent gender-based violence and sustainable livelihood provision. Participatory planning should be empowered to enhance resilience and minimize vulnerability to recurrent climate-related disasters in communities that are hit by floods in the district and similar settings.

This critical synthesis based on authoritative information on the effects of floods and supported by modelled primary information about the experiences of displaced households provides a subtle understanding of complex vulnerability and the institutional voids that have been created after floods in Rajanpur District.

6-Discussion

6.1 Social Protection Gaps and Institutional Challenges

The 2022 floods in the Rajanpur showed that there were great gaps in the social protection systems, which did not support the displaced people adequately. The lack of institutions such as poor emergency response planning and poor coordination among governmental agencies coupled with insufficiency of local disaster management authorities hindered the equal and timely distribution of relief. Such supplies like food, shelter and medical help were not regular and did not target the most vulnerable in a systematic way especially the female headed families and the marginalized group. Such gaps highlight the systemic gaps in governance that there is a need to improve institutional capacities and contingency measures to support a speedy and inclusive reaction to the outbreak of floods (PDMA, 2022; Humanitarian Outcomes, 2023).

6.2 Geographic and Environmental Risk Factors

The geographic vulnerabilities of Rajanpur which is located between the flood prone Suleiman Mountains and the Indus River contribute to the development of a complex flood risk profile which is typified by a simultaneous presence of both flash and riverine flood events. This complexity compromises the existing flood early warning systems which lack data acquisition as well as community participation. Lack of essential infrastructure (poorly maintained drainage systems and poor flood defence mechanisms) also increases the severity of the flood and negatively affects the evacuation and delivery of aid. To deal with

these problems, the integrated flood risk management strategy is required, which includes the improved use of the data, high-resistance infrastructure, and focused local capacity-building efforts (Haider et al., 2024).

6.3 Socio-Economic Vulnerabilities Amplifying Flood Impact

The availability of health care, poor literacy rates and impact of floods in Iranian population were also influenced by pre-existing socio-economic weaknesses, i.e., poverty, extensive poverty, and inaccessibility of health care services. Reliance on farming made most of the households very susceptible to loss of livelihood because of crop destruction and loss of livestock. This is empirically supported by the primary data, where 48% of women identified damage to livelihood as their foremost challenge. Lack of financial safety nets forced the impacted households to borrow or sell assets, which hinders the recovery process. Social marginalization also limited the access to relief among minority groups and the landless laborers. The intersection of poverty and exposure to floods outline the necessity to envision social protection packages that provide short-term relief as well as create economic stability in the long term (UNDP, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

6.4 Gendered Dimensions of Vulnerability

Women and girls were particularly subjected to the effects of floods, whereby there was increased exposure to gender-based violence, limited mobility, and barriers to the provision of necessary health services. The primary survey quantifies this, showing that health issues (22%) and harassment (15%) were major problems during displacement. Their safety and privacy were also violated in displacement environments like crowded camps and informal settlements, a situation exacerbated by the lack of toilets, reported by 14% of women. Their involvement in the process of decision-making was limited by the socio-cultural norms, along with the access to relief efforts. Furthermore, the loss of education for 20% of female respondents' points to a long-term negative impact on human capital and empowerment. These dynamics highlight the dire need to have gender-sensitive disaster preparedness efforts that include GBV prevention efforts, ensure that women are provided with health and reproductive services, and women have the power to wield leadership in disaster recovery efforts (WHO, 2023; Internationals, 2023).

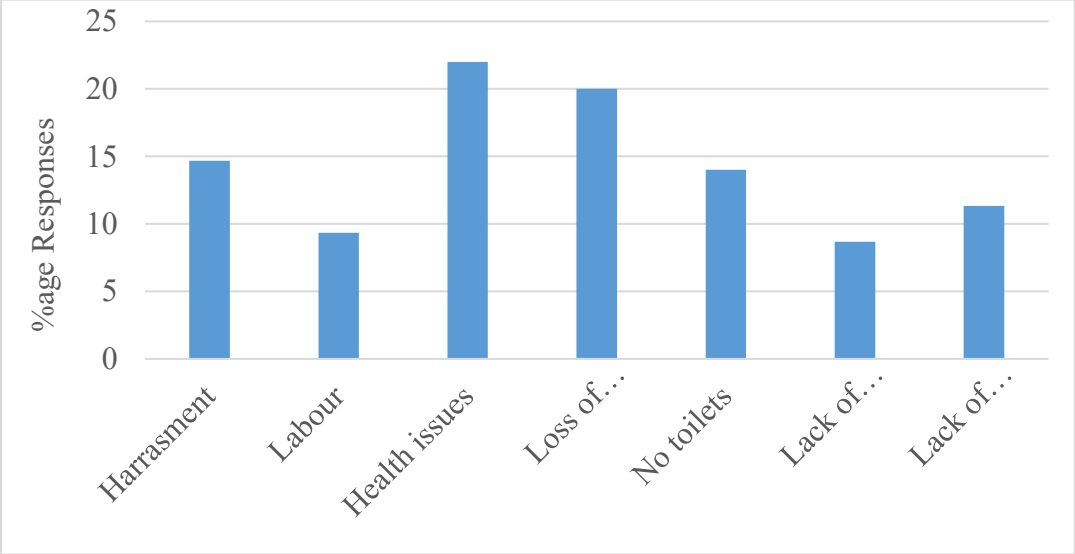


Figure 4: Problems faced by females during Migration

6.5 Implications for Disaster Response and Recovery

The results highlight the need to ensure that the disaster response approaches in Rajanpur go beyond the

conventional approaches and embrace participatory and inclusionary approaches. It is important to involve the local population, especially women and the underprivileged population, in order to tailor the delivery of aid and drafting of recovery plans to meet different needs. The response operations can be made faster and more effective by augmenting local disaster management authorities with sufficient resources, specific training, and stored contingency stocks. Governmental agencies, civil society, and international organizations must coordinate and work together multi-sectorally to fully deal with the issues of infrastructure, health, livelihood, and protection (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2023; NDMA, 2024).

6.7 Toward Gender-Sensitive Climate Governance

In climate governance structures on flood management in Rajanpur, and other prone districts such as this one, gender and social equity issues must be mainstreamed. The policy should put a high priority on equal resource distribution, integrated flood risk reduction, and resilience-building that will focus on the socio-economic disparities and cultural constraints. Disaster programs due to gender-responsive budgeting and monitoring can account. Capacity-building of inclusive governance should be a part of the international development cooperation as the place of displaced women in community resilience and sustainable recovery cannot be overstated (FAO, 2022; UNDP, 2022). In the current discussion, the insights have been synthesized with academic interpretation of institutional, geographic, socio-economic, and gendered aspects of influencing social protection disparities in the flood situation in Rajanpur. It offers a theoretical and practical framework of augmenting disaster administration and gender-justified reaction.

Table 1: Strategic Gap Analysis: Rajanpur Flood Resilience

Pillar	Deficit	Consequences	Action
Institutional Architecture	Fragmented agencies & weak local capacity Reactive, uncoordinated response systems	Delayed/unequal aid distribution Systematic exclusion of most vulnerable	Decentralize authority & resources to local level Establish clear SOPs & pre-position supplies
Geospatial Risk Profile	Compound flood risk (flash + riverine) Weak infrastructure & early warnings	Synergistic damage Paralysis of evacuation & relief efforts	Implement Integrated Flood Management Invest in resilient infrastructure & community alerts
Socio-Economic Fabric	Agrarian dependency amid high poverty No financial safety nets	Livelihood collapse Distress sales/debt creating poverty trap	Link cash relief to livelihood programs Scale up micro-insurance & financial inclusion
Gender Equity	Structural marginalization of women Gender-blind planning	Increased GBV & denied healthcare Exclusion from recovery decisions	Mandate GBV services & safe shelters Ensure women's leadership in committee
Forward-Looking Governance	Top-down, non-participatory models Siloed sectoral approaches	Inefficient, misdirected aid Rebuilt vulnerabilities	Institutionalize community feedback loops Adopt gender-responsive budgeting & multi-stakeholder platforms

7-Policy Recommendations

7.1 Targeted, Gender-Sensitive Social Protection Strategies

Social protection programmes must be designed in such a way that specifically target women, children, the elderly, and marginalized members of the population who are disproportionately impacted by floods as ascertained by recent researches. The finding that 48% of women prioritized livelihood damage underscores the need for immediate cash-for-work or livelihood restoration programs targeted at women. Gender sensitive measures include cash transfers to women headed families, availability of maternal and reproductive health services to women in emergency contexts and effective prevention against gender-based violence (GBV) in displacement camps. Social safety nets as such should be gender sensitive so that women are not marginalized in the development and oversight of such programmes so that their special vulnerabilities can be addressed in a very effective way. These elements allow making it possible to advance increased equity, reduce the effects of poverty traps, and protect basic rights during disasters (UNDP, 2023; WHO, 2023).

7.2 Inclusive and Participatory Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Planning

The disaster preparedness and resilience strategies should be community-focused. Local expertise particularly of women and the marginalized communities can improve early warning, evacuation planning and mobilization of resources. Comprehensive planning procedures create a sense of ownership of the community, enhance the applicability of the interventions, and establish trust in the institutions. Women empowerment as decision-makers and leaders in disaster risk management committees develops the ability to make gender-sensitive response and resilience on the grassroots level (NDMA, 2024; Humanitarian Outcomes, 2023).

7.3 Strengthening Humanitarian and Development Cooperation Frameworks

The coordination among governmental bodies, humanitarian agencies, and the development partners is very important to coordinate resources in a quick and efficient manner. The short-term relief is aligned to long-term development goals, which result in sustainable recovery and makes the system less susceptible to future shocks. Multi-sectoral strategies that target shelter, health, livelihoods, protection and infrastructure repairs should be made institutionalized by frameworks. The capacity building, expertise, and funding processes should be reinforced by the global collaboration to institute gender equity and social inclusion in flood risk management (UNDP, 2023; FAO, 2022).

7.4 Equitable Resource Access and Protection Mechanisms

Equitable access to the assistance and protection of vulnerable groups must be achieved by eliminating socio-cultural and logistical obstacles. They should have policies that require clear processes of beneficiary selection and redress systems of grievances to avoid exclusion and corruption. The protection strategies should ensure that the risks of GBV are mitigated by means of safe spaces, psychosocial support, and gender-based security measures. The high prevalence of harassment (15%) and lack of toilets (14%) reported by women necessitates the immediate establishment of safe, well-lit, and gender-segregated sanitation facilities in all displacement settings. Infrastructure development must focus on accessibility and inclusivity in terms of women-friendly shelter design and available health-care services to protect dignity and wellbeing in dislocation and recovery (NDMA, 2024; UNFPA, 2023).

7.5 Promoting Livelihood Recovery and Economic Resilience

One of the main pillars of post-disaster recovery is restoration of livelihoods by ensuring that gender-sensitive programmes facilitate agricultural recovery, income diversification, and access to finance. Women farmers and landless laborer should be made to have access to the seeds, tools, credit, and markets,

especially to restore economic independence. Skills development and entrepreneurship programs which are specific to the displaced groups can provide the means of generating sustainable income and hence lessening reliance on aid and creating resilience to future calamities (World Bank, 2023; UNDP, 2023).

7.6 Strengthening Data and Monitoring for Gender-Responsive Climate Governance

Gender, displacement, and social protection data on a reliable and disaggregated basis is necessary to implement an effective policy. The primary data collected in this study, revealing specific percentages on women's challenges, is a model for the type of granular, gender-disaggregated data needed for effective monitoring. Strengthened surveillance and investigation of gendered disaster effects permit pliant administrative and interventional reactions. Gender-responsive social protection policies in flood prone regions like Rajanpur lead to inclusivity, equity and community empowerment, and turn the vulnerability into resilience and prevent climate-related displacement due to climate-induced social inequalities (NDMA, 2024; International RASD, 2023).

8-Conclusion

This paper highlights the lack of social protection and gender-specific susceptibility of the 2022 floods in the South Punjab Rajanpur District, and the vulnerability following the floods. Over 223,000 people were displaced and infrastructure, livelihoods and homes were destroyed, due to the inundation which caused immense damage to one of the most vulnerable areas in Pakistan. Despite the presence of national and international support systems, the availability of reliefs and recovery resources was quite unequal, especially to women and the households led by women, marginalized ethnicities, and the poor in the community. The gendered effects were acute leaving displaced women under increased threats of violence against them, limited access to health services, and disqualification in decision-making activities related to recovery. The primary data concretizes these vulnerabilities, showing the high prevalence of livelihood loss (48%), health issues (22%), loss of education (20%), and harassment (15%) among women. The marginalized populations were also more susceptible due to the existence of the socio-cultural norms and institutional weaknesses. Lack of gender sensitive planning aggravated the situation leading to high numbers of displaced women who are left without security, dignity or other proper assistance.

Considering the rising rate of climatic risks in Pakistan, there is a need to incorporate gender insights and a strong social safeguard in the management of disasters. Climate governance should be more inclined to inclusive, participatory planning that will establish power in vulnerable populations and ensure they are not exploited in the process of mitigation, response, and recovery. This will enhance resilience, social justice, and sustainable development of areas that are prone to flooding like Rajanpur. The analysis above highlights the need to boost academic research and systematic data collection regarding the gender-specific displacement patterns, failures in the social protection system, and the effectiveness of community-based interventions. Empirically-based policies are necessary to address overlapping vulnerabilities and oversee the process of gender-responsive policy. Enhancement of institutional capacity and funds and multi-directional stakeholder involvement is inevitable to attain equitable climate control and enhance resilience to disasters in Rajanpur and other similar high-risk areas.

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