

THE WOMEN-LED RECOVERY TOOLKIT

A Framework for Community-Led Disaster
Recovery and Climate Resilience



First Informants



Protection Architects



Operations Leaders



Accountability Stewards



Listen & Map



Protect & Stabilize



Partner & Mobilize



Deliver & Verify



Restore Resilience



Elevate & Influence

Jewel Daniels Radford

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The Women-Led Recovery Toolkit:
A Framework for Community-Led Disaster Recovery
and Climate Resilience

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INSPIRE AND SERVE

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A Framework for Community-Led Disaster Recovery
and Climate Resilience

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THE WOMEN-LED RECOVERY TOOLKIT



The Women-Led Recovery Toolkit is a practical resource designed to help organizations, policymakers, and community leaders integrate women's leadership into disaster response and recovery systems. Developed from Inspire and Serve's post-hurricane recovery work in Jamaica, the toolkit translates lived experience and cross-sector collaboration into a scalable approach for strengthening resilience in crisis-affected communities. The toolkit outlines a replicable framework for partnership-driven recovery, demonstrating how local women leaders, grassroots organizations, government agencies, and global partners can work together to accelerate equitable recovery.

It provides guidance on building cross-sector partnerships, mobilizing community leadership, strengthening protection systems for women and girls, and aligning recovery strategies with long-term resilience goals. Designed for Small Island Developing States and other climate-vulnerable regions, the toolkit helps leaders move beyond emergency relief toward recovery strategies that center dignity, inclusion, and sustainable community resilience.

This toolkit provides practical tools for designing and implementing gender-responsive recovery strategies that center women as leaders and strengthen community resilience.

The toolkit includes:

- Women-Led Recovery Framework Workbook
- Women-Led Recovery Readiness Assessment
- Community Resilience Action Planner
- Women-Led Recovery Impact Measurement Tool

Together, these tools help organizations move from crisis response to long-term resilience.

THE WOMEN-LED RECOVERY FRAMEWORK



The Women-Led Recovery Framework is a model developed by Inspire & Serve Global to support community-led disaster recovery that centers women's leadership, protection, and cross-sector collaboration.

The framework was developed through Inspire & Serve's work with community organizations, government partners, and global humanitarian networks responding to climate-related crises in Jamaica and other vulnerable regions.

The model is designed to be adaptable across different contexts, particularly in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and communities facing recurring climate shocks.

Organizations using this framework are encouraged to acknowledge its source and contribute learning that strengthens women-led resilience efforts globally.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

A practical workbook for designing post-crisis recovery that centers women as decision-makers, strengthens dignity and protection, and mobilizes cross-sector partners quickly—especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

This workbook translates the framework model into a programmatic methodology that participants can adapt to their own communities, institutions, and partnerships. It is designed for CSW attendees, NGOs, local government liaisons, funders, and humanitarian practitioners who want a concrete, women-led approach to recovery.

SECTION	WHAT WILL YOU FIND
1. Why this framework matters	Climate context, gender-responsive rationale, and the case for women-led recovery
2. The methodology	The 6-phase framework, outputs, and operational logic
3. Implementation tools	Listening circle prompts, role cards, quick-check lists, and reporting tips
4. Partnership blueprint	How to build the table fast in a small island context
5. Resilience lens	Decision filters for policy and funding
6. Jamaica case example	How trust-based partnerships informed response and recovery

- Use the workbook as a guide during planning, facilitation, or recovery huddles.
- Adapt the language to your local context, but keep the core principles intact.
- Treat community women’s knowledge as data; treat coordination as infrastructure.

1. WHY THIS FRAMEWORK MATTERS

In climate-vulnerable settings like Jamaica, disasters do not simply damage roads and roofs. They interrupt water access, food systems, health services, school continuity, and safety networks—pressures that women and girls often absorb first and longest.

- Climate shocks create layered risks: visible damage, hidden protection risks, and longer-term economic strain.
- Women often experience these impacts first because they manage caregiving, food systems, and household stability. Women often act as first informants, caregivers, organizers, and stabilizers before formal systems arrive.
- Recovery models that do not center local women miss critical intelligence, trust, and implementation capacity.

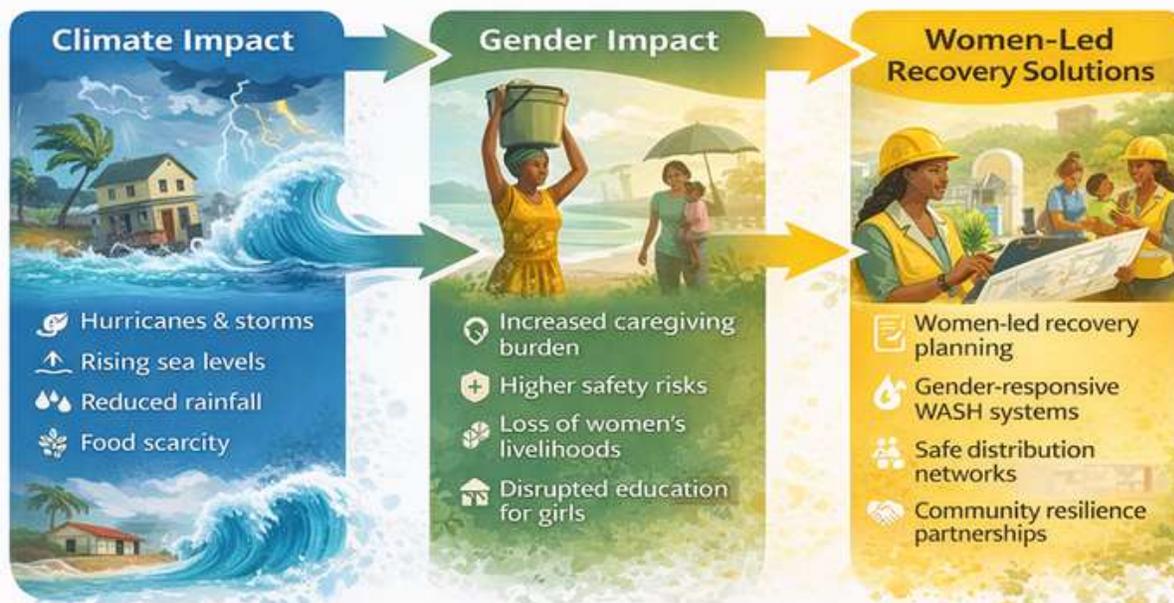
What makes this framework different is that it does not treat women as a vulnerable add-on. It positions women as first informants, protection architects, operations leaders, and accountability stewards.

Framework Ecosystem



2. CLIMATE AND GENDER SNAPSHOT

Jamaica ranks among the top climate-vulnerable small island states*



* World Bank | Jamaica Climate Change Policy Framework | UNDP Small Island Developing States reports

Climate Impacts Drive Gendered Risks

In climate-vulnerable countries like Jamaica, environmental shocks often create cascading impacts on women and girls — increasing caregiving burdens, safety risks, and economic vulnerability. Women-led recovery approaches help communities respond more safely, equitably, and sustainably.

Jamaica ranks among the top climate-vulnerable small island states.

- Hurricanes and tropical storms have caused damage exceeding 25% of GDP in major events.
- Climate projections indicate up to 30% reduction in rainfall in some regions by 2050.
- Rising sea levels threaten over 60% of coastal infrastructure and tourism zones.

Why Gender-Responsive Recovery Matters

CLIMATE IMPACT	HOW WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE AFFECTED	WHY GENDER-RESPONSIVE RECOVERY MATTERS
Water scarcity	Women and girls often responsible for household water collection	Ensures water systems and sanitation programs address household realities
Food insecurity	Women frequently manage food preparation and family nutrition	Supports women-led agricultural recovery and food distribution systems
Economic disruption	Women disproportionately work in informal or service sectors	Enables programs that restore livelihoods and support women-led businesses
Safety risks	Displacement increases risks of gender-based violence	Integrates protection measures into disaster response planning
Care burdens	Women often care for children, elderly, and injured	Recovery systems must support caregiving responsibilities

Why Gender-Responsive Recovery Is an Issue of Justice, Dignity, and Resilience

Climate disasters are often framed only as humanitarian needs — food, water, shelter, and infrastructure repair. While those needs are critical, recovery that fails to address gender dynamics risks reinforcing the very inequalities that make communities vulnerable in the first place.

Gender-responsive recovery is therefore not only about meeting needs. It is about ensuring justice, protecting dignity, and strengthening resilience.

Justice

Women and girls frequently experience the most severe social and economic impacts of disasters despite contributing significantly to community recovery.

Examples include:

- increased caregiving responsibilities
- loss of livelihoods in informal sectors
- heightened risk of gender-based violence
- limited representation in decision-making spaces

Justice requires that women are included as leaders in recovery planning, not merely recipients of aid.

Dignity

Recovery programs must protect the human dignity of those they serve, especially women and girls who may face increased vulnerabilities during crises.

Dignity-centered recovery ensures:

- safe and equitable access to resources
- privacy and protection in distribution systems
- culturally respectful engagement with communities
- recognition of women's leadership and knowledge

When dignity is prioritized, recovery efforts become more trusted, more effective, and more sustainable.

Resilience

Communities are more resilient when the knowledge, leadership, and networks of women are fully integrated into disaster response and recovery systems.

Women often serve as:

- caregivers
- community organizers
- informal support network leaders
- educators and health advocates

When these roles are supported and empowered, communities are better prepared to respond to future crises.

Why Women's Leadership Matters in Disaster Recovery

Research consistently shows that women's leadership strengthens disaster response, accelerates recovery, and improves long-term resilience outcomes.

When women are positioned as decision-makers rather than beneficiaries, recovery efforts become more equitable, more trusted by communities, and more sustainable.

Women frequently serve as the first organizers and stabilizers in crisis situations, coordinating caregiving networks, community support systems, and local response efforts before formal institutions arrive. Recognizing and supporting these leadership roles improves both the speed and effectiveness of disaster recovery.

EVIDENCE	IMPACT
Women lead approximately 70% of community response networks globally	Communities mobilize faster through informal support systems
Women reinvest up to 90% of income into families and communities	Strengthens household recovery and local economies
Communities with women in leadership roles experience more equitable recovery outcomes	Resources are distributed more fairly and reach vulnerable populations
Gender-responsive disaster planning improves community survival and resilience outcomes	Stronger preparedness and faster recovery after disasters

Data Sources: World Bank Gender Data Portal, UN Women Disaster Risk Reduction Research, UNICEF Community Resilience Studies, UNDP Small Island Developing States Research

Women-Led Impact Pathway

Women's Leadership Action	Community Impact
Women coordinate caregiving and	Families stabilize more quickly
Women manage local communication	Faster distribution of information and
Women lead community organizations	More inclusive recovery planning
Women manage household economic	Faster restoration of livelihoods

Why This Matters for Climate-Vulnerable Countries

In small island states like Jamaica, women often manage:

- household water access
- family nutrition and food preparation
- caregiving responsibilities
- informal community support networks
- education continuity for children



When disasters disrupt these systems, women become central to restoring stability.

Investing in women's leadership therefore strengthens:

- household recovery
- community coordination
- economic resilience
- long-term preparedness.

When women lead recovery efforts, communities rebuild faster, resources reach families more equitably, and resilience systems become stronger.



Moving Quickly from Data to Community-Grounded Solutions

While data is important for understanding the scope of the problem, effective recovery requires moving quickly toward community-grounded solutions.

This means prioritizing:

- local leadership
- trusted relationships
- culturally informed strategies
- partnerships that strengthen existing systems

Instead of imposing external models, recovery efforts should build on the knowledge and leadership already present within communities.

Examples from Inspire and Serve

Inspire and Serve's work in Jamaica illustrates how community-grounded solutions strengthen recovery efforts.

Community Partnership Networks

Through long-standing relationships with organizations such as:

- boys' homes
- girls' homes
- crisis centers
- teen pregnancy support organizations
- faith-based institutions

Inspire and Serve is able to identify community needs quickly and coordinate effective responses.

These trusted relationships ensure that recovery efforts are responsive, culturally informed, and community-driven.

Rapid Community Support Initiatives

Following crises, Inspire and Serve mobilizes partnerships to provide:

- food and essential supplies
- medical outreach and wellness support
- programs for children and youth
- resources for families experiencing hardship

Because these efforts are coordinated with local leaders and organizations, they reach communities more quickly and effectively.

Restoring Hope and Emotional Well-Being

Recovery is not only about rebuilding infrastructure; it is also about restoring emotional stability and hope within communities.

For example:

Inspire and Serve partnered with community organizations to provide over 800 toys and treats to children during the Christmas season, helping families and children affected by crisis experience moments of joy and normalcy.

This type of initiative supports psychological recovery, which is often overlooked in disaster response.

Key Message

Gender-responsive recovery is not simply about meeting immediate needs.

It is about building systems that ensure:

- justice in decision-making
- dignity in service delivery
- resilience in communities facing future crises

By centering women's leadership and strengthening partnerships, recovery efforts can create lasting improvements in the wellbeing of communities.

3. THE WOMEN-LED RECOVERY FRAMEWORK AT A GLANCE

Climate Reality in Jamaica

Jamaica is one of the most climate-vulnerable Small Island Developing States. Stronger storms, flooding, drought and sea-level rise threaten livelihoods, infrastructure and community stability.

Communities at the Center

Disasters affect families, women and children first. Community leaders and trusted local partners are essential to delivering rapid, culturally-informed recovery.



The Women-Led Recovery Framework. What it is

A replicable, step-by-step model for designing and running post-crisis recovery that centers women as decision-makers, strengthens dignity and protection, and mobilizes cross-sector partners quickly—especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

What makes it “women-led”

Women are positioned as:

- First informants (the earliest, most accurate needs and risk data)
- Protection architects (safety, dignity, and care structures)
- Operations leaders (distribution, coordination, community communication)
- Accountability stewards (fairness, transparency, and trust)

Core Principles

1. Dignity first (aid with respect; no extractive storytelling)
2. Local women are the experts (community knowledge is treated as data)
3. Partnership is infrastructure (coordination is as important as supplies)
4. Protection is part of recovery (not a separate “extra”)
5. Speed + trust (rapid response that doesn’t bypass local leadership)

Framework at a Glance

The Women-Led Recovery Framework is a practical model for community-led disaster recovery that centers women as decision-makers, strengthens protection and dignity, and mobilizes cross-sector partnerships quickly. Developed through Inspire & Serve's work in climate-vulnerable communities, the framework recognizes that women are often the first organizers and stabilizers during crises. By positioning women as leaders rather than beneficiaries, recovery efforts become faster, safer, and more resilient. The framework combines four leadership roles with a six-phase recovery pathway that guides communities from rapid needs assessment to long-term resilience and policy influence.

Framework Leadership Roles

The framework identifies four critical roles women play in effective recovery systems.

First Informants

Women identify urgent needs, emerging risks, and community priorities, providing the earliest and often most accurate information about the realities families are facing.

Protection Architects

Women design response systems that protect dignity and safety, ensuring that recovery programs reduce risks such as gender-based violence, unsafe distribution practices, and exclusion from resources.

Operations Leaders

Women coordinate response networks, manage communication channels, and help organize the distribution of resources through trusted community structures.

Accountability Stewards

Women help track outcomes, monitor fairness in resource distribution, gather community feedback, and strengthen trust between communities, partners, and funders.

The Six-Phase Women-Led Recovery Pathway

The framework translates these leadership roles into a practical six-phase recovery process.

1. Listen & Map

Engage community women leaders to identify urgent needs, hidden risks, and existing local assets.

2. Protect & Stabilize

Ensure safety, dignity, and basic stabilization through coordinated services and protection measures.

3. Partner & Mobilize

Activate cross-sector partnerships involving community leaders, government agencies, NGOs, and global partners.

4. Deliver & Verify

Implement coordinated response activities while maintaining transparency, verification, and community feedback systems.

5. Restore Resilience

Strengthen long-term recovery through programs that rebuild livelihoods, support community wellbeing, and reinforce local leadership capacity.

6. Elevate & Influence

Document lessons learned and translate community experience into policy insights, funding strategies, and global advocacy for women-led resilience.

Why This Model Matters

When women lead recovery efforts, communities rebuild faster, resources reach families more equitably, and resilience systems become stronger. The Women-Led Recovery Framework provides organizations with a practical structure to turn community knowledge into coordinated action and long-term resilience.

The Six Phases Defined

Phase 1 — Listen & Map (48–72 hours)

The Listen & Map phase focuses on understanding the realities of the community before designing any response. This stage involves listening to local leaders, women's groups, service providers, and community organizations to identify immediate needs, existing resources, and vulnerabilities affecting women, girls, and families. Mapping includes identifying key institutions such as shelters,

schools, health centers, and grassroots organizations already serving the community. This phase is critical because effective recovery begins with trust and accurate information. By grounding response efforts in lived experience and local knowledge, organizations can avoid duplicating services, ensure culturally appropriate solutions, and build recovery strategies that truly reflect community priorities.

Goal: Capture real needs, risks, and assets—fast.

Key Actions

- Convene a Women’s Recovery Listening Circle of 10–15 trusted local women leaders.
- Create a Rapid Needs + Risks Map covering urgent needs, hidden risks, and community assets.
- Identify trusted distribution channels, safe locations, and first partner contacts.



Primary Outputs

- One-page “What women say is needed now” brief
- Risk flags covering safety, exploitation, displacement, and health
- First partner list + safe points of contact

Discussion Prompt

What are women and girls saying they need now that formal data is not yet capturing?

Quick Check

- Do we know what women say is needed?
- Have we built in safety and dignity?
- Are roles clear and accountable?

Phase 2 — Protect & Stabilize (Week 1)

The Protect & Stabilize phase addresses the immediate safety and wellbeing of affected populations, particularly women, children, and vulnerable groups. During crises, risks such as displacement, lack of sanitation, food insecurity, and exposure to gender-based violence often increase. This phase focuses on restoring basic dignity and safety through coordinated support such as food distribution, safe spaces, hygiene resources, health services, and protective measures for women and girls. Stabilizing communities quickly helps prevent long-term harm and creates the conditions necessary for recovery. Ensuring safety and dignity at this stage is essential because recovery efforts cannot succeed if communities remain in crisis.

Goal: Ensure safety, dignity, and basic stabilization.

Key Actions

- Prioritize protection in every operational decision: lighting, privacy, safe lines, referrals.
- Activate a Dignity & Care Package plan that includes supplies, access pathways, child support, and wellness check-ins.
- Use ethical, consent-based communications only.

Primary Outputs

- Protection checklist used at every site/activity
- Dignity-focused distribution standards

Discussion Prompt

Where could our response unintentionally increase risk or reduce dignity?

Quick Check

- Do we know what women say is needed?
- Have we built in safety and dignity?
- Are roles clear and accountable?

Phase 3 — Partner & Mobilize (Week 1–2)

The Partner & Mobilize phase focuses on activating partnerships that expand the reach and effectiveness of recovery efforts. No single organization can address the complex challenges that follow disasters. This phase brings together local NGOs, government agencies, faith institutions, international partners, and community leaders to coordinate resources, expertise, and logistical support. Strong partnerships help mobilize funding, volunteers, supplies, and technical knowledge while ensuring that local leadership remains central to decision-making. This stage is important because collaborative networks enable faster response, reduce duplication, and create a stronger ecosystem capable of sustaining recovery over time.

Goal: Build a coalition of action with clear roles.

Key Actions

- Convene a Cross-Sector Recovery Huddle: local government, NGOs, faith partners, global donors/logistics.

- Assign simple roles: convener, logistics, community liaison, protection lead, data/story capture lead.
- Set one-team rules: no duplication, shared plans, shared reporting.

Primary Outputs

- Partner roles sheet
- Shared distribution schedule + responsibility map
- Facilitator Prompt

Discussion Prompt

Which partner is missing from our current table—and what does that absence cost us?

Quick Check

- Do we know what women say is needed?
- Have we built in safety and dignity?
- Are roles clear and accountable?

Phase 4 — Deliver & Verify (Week 2–6)

The Deliver & Verify phase ensures that assistance is delivered effectively and reaches the communities it is intended to serve. During this phase, programs and resources are implemented through coordinated distribution systems and community partnerships. Verification mechanisms are used to track the impact of interventions, ensure transparency, and confirm that aid is reaching the most vulnerable populations. This may include monitoring community feedback, documenting program outcomes, and evaluating whether resources meet the intended needs. This phase is essential because accountability builds trust with communities, partners, and funders while ensuring that recovery efforts produce meaningful and measurable results.

Goal: Deliver resources with accountability and trust.

Key Actions

- Distribute using local women-led teams whenever possible.
- Use verification routines: photo inventory logs, delivery confirmations, and short recipient feedback.
- Capture quick learning: What helped? What missed? What's next?

Primary Outputs

- Proof-of-delivery + inventory tracking
- Feedback summaries for learning and sponsor trust

Discussion Prompt

Workbook prompt: How will we know aid reached the right people in the right way?

Quick Check

- Do we know what women say is needed?
- Have we built in safety and dignity?
- Are roles clear and accountable?



Phase 5 — Restore & Build Resilience (Month 2–6)

The Restore Resilience phase moves recovery beyond emergency response toward long-term stability and preparedness. This stage focuses on strengthening community systems that support sustainable development, including education, livelihoods, health access, and local leadership capacity. Programs may include economic recovery initiatives, community preparedness training, mental health support, and rebuilding infrastructure in ways that reduce vulnerability to future crises. This phase is important because resilience ensures that communities are better equipped to withstand future shocks and recover more quickly when disasters occur.

Goal: Move from relief to resilience.

Key Actions

- Launch women-led resilience projects such as income restart, school return support, mental wellness supports, and preparedness.
- Build a community resilience partner list for longer-term solutions.
- Translate recovery work into local capacity and leadership strengthening.

Primary Outputs

- Two to three resilience initiatives with local ownership
- Skills + leadership strengthening plan

Discussion Prompt

Which short-term activity should become a longer-term resilience investment?

Quick Check

- Do we know what women say is needed?
- Have we built in safety and dignity?

Are roles clear and accountable?

Phase 6 — Elevate & Influence (Ongoing)

The Elevate & Influence phase focuses on using lessons learned from community recovery efforts to inform policy, advocacy, and global dialogue. By documenting successes, challenges, and best practices, organizations can help shape policies that strengthen disaster preparedness and gender-responsive recovery strategies at national and international levels. This phase may include sharing frameworks, publishing research, presenting at global forums such as CSW, and engaging policymakers to improve systems that affect vulnerable communities. This stage is important because scaling knowledge ensures that effective models of women-led recovery can benefit other regions and contribute to stronger global resilience strategies.

Goal: Convert lived experience into policy and funding shifts.

Key Actions

- Package lessons into a Recovery Learning Brief.
- Bring women leaders into decision spaces: local councils, NGO forums, and CSW/UN platforms.
- Ask funders to invest in women-led systems, not just supplies.

Primary Outputs

- Women at the Helm learning brief
- Fundable model narrative + data points

Discussion Prompt

What evidence and stories can we elevate now to influence policy and funding?

Quick Check

- Do we know what women say is needed?
- Have we built in safety and dignity?
- Are roles clear and accountable?

4. Partnership Blueprint for Small Island Contexts

Effective disaster recovery depends on coordinated partnerships that combine community leadership, government alignment, and global resources. A layered partnership model that ensures community knowledge leads, local institutions coordinate, and global partners strengthen—not replace—local leadership.



Women-Led Partnership Ecosystem

This layered partnership model ensures that community knowledge (decision-making, local institutions coordinate response systems, and global partners provide resources and technical support without replacing local leadership).

A. Global Logistics, Technical Partners & Funders

These partners strengthen local recovery efforts by providing resources that are often unavailable within small island contexts.

Typical contributions include:

- Funding and philanthropic support
- Large-scale logistics and humanitarian supply chains
- Technical expertise in areas such as health, WASH, and disaster response
- Global advocacy and visibility
- Equipment and specialized resources

Examples from Inspire & Serve partnerships:

- World Vision
- Operation Blessing
- Global Empowerment Mission
- Organization of World Leaders
- Zonta International

These partners play a critical role in mobilizing resources and expanding the reach of local initiatives while respecting community leadership

B. Local Government, Faith & Community Institutions

Local institutions serve as the coordination backbone of community-based recovery. Their knowledge of local systems, infrastructure, and trusted networks allows resources to move safely and effectively.

Typical contributions include:

- Coordination with public services and emergency response systems
- Access to trusted community infrastructure
- Local credibility and public communication
- Support for distribution and community mobilization
- Alignment with national and parish-level priorities

Examples from Inspire & Serve partnerships:

- St. James Municipal Corporation / City of Montego Bay
- Jamaica Defence Force
- Bob and Rita Marley Foundation

These partners help ensure that recovery efforts remain aligned with local governance structures and community priorities.

C. Community Women Leaders & Local Implementers

Community women leaders are the core intelligence and trust network of the recovery model. They provide direct insight into household needs and ensure that assistance is delivered safely and respectfully.

Typical contributions include:

- Trusted community intelligence about evolving needs
- Direct understanding of family and household realities
- Distribution oversight and accountability
- Protection awareness for women and girls
- Real-time feedback about what is working and what must change

These leaders ensure that recovery efforts remain community-driven rather than externally imposed.

Why This Blueprint Matters for Small Island Developing States

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face structural challenges that make coordinated partnerships essential.

Common constraints include:

- Limited infrastructure and storage capacity
- Small social networks where trust moves faster than systems
- Media attention that spikes during disasters and quickly disappears
- Logistics and shipping constraints, including customs delays
- Repeated exposure to storms and climate shocks
- The partnership blueprint creates a structured way to mobilize support quickly while maintaining local leadership and trust.

Setting the Table: Who Must Be in the Room

Effective recovery coordination requires the presence of key actors from the beginning.

1. Women-led community leaders (formal and informal)
2. Local government liaison (parish or city-level coordination)
3. Trusted community-based NGO partners
4. Faith-based organizations with strong local reach
5. Global logistics and resource partners
6. Technical partners in health, WASH, and social protection

When these stakeholders collaborate early, responses become faster, safer, and more effective.

Operating Rules for Trust-Based Partnerships

To maintain trust and accountability across partners, the model follows several core operating principles.

- No surprise distributions — all activities are coordinated with local leaders.
- Women's safety is non-negotiable in all planning and implementation.
- One shared reporting rhythm ensures transparency across partners.
- Consent-first storytelling protects the dignity of communities served.

These principles help ensure that partnerships remain disciplined, transparent, and community-centered.

5. Resilience Lens for Policy and Funding Decisions

This decision lens helps funders, policymakers, and implementing organizations quickly evaluate whether a proposed response strengthens community resilience, protects women and girls, and builds systems for future crises — rather than delivering short-term relief alone.

The resilience lens helps decision-makers invest in what actually strengthens resilience, not what only looks good on paper. It can be used by funders, policymakers, NGOs, and local coalitions to test whether a proposed response is women-led, protective, and system-strengthening.

How to Use the Resilience Lens

The Resilience Lens can be applied during:

- disaster response planning
- grant proposal review
- funding decisions
- program design workshops
- partnership coordination meetings

If a proposed intervention cannot clearly answer these questions, the plan should be revised before implementation.

Decision Questions	Decision Questions
Who is already leading?	Are women leaders at the table before decisions? Are community women compensated and resourced rather than treated only as volunteers?
What protects dignity and safety?	Does the plan reduce gender-based violence, exploitation, or unsafe distribution practices?
What strengthens systems, not dependency?	Will this investment improve preparedness, coordination, or local capacity so the community is better prepared for the next crisis?
How do we know it worked?	Is there a clear feedback loop and simple monitoring approach beyond counting items delivered?
Are partnerships structured or informal?	Are roles defined and coordinated with local government, community institutions, and implementers?

When applied consistently, the Resilience Lens helps shift funding and programming toward women-led leadership, stronger local systems, and safer recovery for communities facing climate and disaster risks.

In Jamaica, applying this lens meant prioritizing trusted community relationships, coordinating with local government partners, and ensuring recovery initiatives protected the safety and dignity of women and girls.

6. Rapid Implementation Tools for Women-Led Recovery

These tools help practitioners quickly organize a coordinated response during the early stages of recovery. They are designed to strengthen community leadership, ensure safety and dignity for women and girls, and maintain accountability across partners.

These rapid tools help recovery teams organize coordinated response systems within the first weeks following a crisis.

Tool A — 60-Minute Women’s Recovery Listening Circle

Purpose

This facilitated conversation helps identify the most urgent needs affecting women and girls immediately following a crisis. It ensures that recovery priorities are informed by community leadership rather than external assumptions.

How to Use

1. Invite 10–15 trusted women leaders, including caregivers, NGO staff, youth leaders, and faith leaders.
2. Facilitate a 60-minute discussion using three prompts
 - What is most urgent for women and girls right now?
 - What risks are increasing in the community?
 - What local strengths or networks can we activate immediately?
3. Document insights under three categories:
 - What is visible
 - What is hidden
 - Who is trusted

Outcome: A rapid community intelligence map that can guide the next steps in recovery planning.

Tool B — Role Cards for the Cross-Sector Huddle

Purpose

This tool helps organize a multi-partner coordination meeting so that roles are clear and duplication is avoided.

How to Use

During the first coordination meeting, assign functional roles to participants:

Convener

Keeps the meeting focused and aligned.

Implementer

Responsible for on-the-ground delivery.

Supplier / Logistics Lead

Coordinates supply chains and resource movement.

Protection Lead

Ensures safety, dignity, and referral pathways for women and girls.

Data & Impact Lead

Tracks outputs, outcomes, and community feedback.

Communications Lead

Manages ethical storytelling and donor communication.

Outcome: A coordinated response structure where each partner understands their role.

Tool C — Delivery Verification

Purpose

Ensures transparency, accountability, and trust in distribution efforts.

How to Use

Track all deliveries using:

- Photo inventory logs
- Delivery confirmation records
- Short recipient feedback surveys
- Weekly “one-team” progress updates

Outcome: A simple but credible accountability system for donors, partners, and community members.

7. Planning and Measurement Tools

These planning and measurement tools help organizations move from emergency response toward long-term resilience and accountability. Additionally, these tools help organizations prepare for women-led recovery, assess readiness, and measure the long-term impact of resilience investments.

Tool 1 - Women-Led Recovery Readiness Assessment

Purpose:

Helps organizations determine whether they are prepared to implement a women-led recovery approach.

*Used before a crisis or early in recovery planning.

Tool 2 - Community Resilience Action Planner

Purpose:

Helps organizations translate insights into concrete recovery actions and partnership roles.

*Used after listening circles and coordination meetings.

Tool 3 - Women-Led Recovery Impact Measurement Tool

Purpose:

Tracks the long-term impact of recovery investments on:

- women's leadership
- community resilience
- safety and dignity
- strengthened systems

*Used after implementation to evaluate outcomes.

Women-Led Recovery Readiness Assessment

Purpose

The Women-Led Recovery Readiness Assessment helps organizations and communities evaluate how prepared they are to implement gender-responsive disaster recovery efforts.

It allows participants to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities to strengthen their systems before the next crisis occurs.

This tool aligns with the core principles of the Women-Led Recovery Framework, which emphasizes local leadership, community trust, cross-sector collaboration, and protection for women and girls.

Instructions

For each statement below, rate your organization or community on the following scale:

- 1 – Not in place
- 2 – Limited capacity
- 3 – Moderate capacity
- 4 – Strong capacity
- 5 – Fully established

Participants should answer honestly. The goal is not to achieve a perfect score, but to identify areas for growth and strategic improvement.

Assessment Table

Category	Assessment Question	Score (1–5)
Leadership	Women leaders are actively involved in disaster planning and response decision-making.	
Community Engagement	Community women and girls are consulted when identifying recovery priorities.	
Partnerships	Our organization collaborates with government, NGOs, and community groups during crises.	
Protection	Systems are in place to address gender-based violence risks during disaster response.	
Communication	Information about services and support reaches women and vulnerable groups effectively.	

Category	Assessment Question	Score (1-5)
Logistics	Our organization has systems for distributing resources fairly and safely.	
Data & Learning	We collect data and feedback from communities to improve recovery programs.	
Funding	Financial resources exist to support gender-responsive recovery initiatives.	
Capacity Building	Staff and volunteers receive training on gender-responsive disaster response.	
Sustainability	Our programs support long-term resilience rather than only short-term relief.	

Scoring Guide

40–50 points

High readiness. Your organization has strong systems in place and may be ready to scale or mentor other organizations.

25–39 points

Moderate readiness. You have important foundations but may need to strengthen partnerships, protection mechanisms, or coordination.

10–24 points

Early-stage readiness. Your organization has an opportunity to build systems that support women-led recovery.

Reflection Questions

Participants should discuss:

- Which area received the lowest score?
- What resources are needed to improve readiness?
- Which partners could help strengthen your capacity?

Community Resilience Action Planner

Purpose

The Community Resilience Action Planner helps participants translate workshop insights into specific actions that can strengthen community preparedness and recovery systems.

It encourages participants to think about:

- short-term actions
- medium-term initiatives
- long-term resilience strategies

The goal is to move from discussion to implementation.

Action Planning Table

Priority Issue	Proposed Solution	Key Partners	Resources Needed	Timeline

How to Use This Tool

Participants should first identify a priority issue affecting women and girls in their community.

Examples might include:

- lack of clean water after disasters
- limited access to maternal healthcare
- economic insecurity among women-led households
- unsafe shelters for displaced families
- lack of education continuity for girls

Step 1

Identify the Priority Issue

Participants should define the challenge clearly and explain how it affects women and girls.

Example: *“Women in rural communities face limited access to clean drinking water after hurricanes.”*

Step 2

Propose a Solution

Participants should identify a realistic strategy that could address the issue.

Examples:

- installing community water filtration systems
- establishing women-led disaster preparedness committees
- creating mobile health clinics
- developing emergency childcare networks

Step 3

Identify Key Partners

Participants should identify organizations that could help implement the solution.

Examples:

- local government
- community NGOs
- women's organizations
- private sector partners
- international donors

Step 4

Identify Resources Needed

Participants should identify what resources are necessary, such as:

- funding
- technical expertise
- volunteers
- training
- infrastructure

Step 5

Set a Timeline

Participants should determine whether the action can be completed within:

- 3 months
- 6 months
- 1 year

This helps transform ideas into **measurable commitments**.

Facilitator Reflection

At the end of the session, ask participants:

- Which action could realistically begin within the next 90 days?
- Which partnerships are most critical to achieving success?
- How can women's leadership remain central to implementation?

Women-Led Recovery Impact Measurement Tool

Purpose

The Women-Led Recovery Impact Measurement Tool helps organizations track the **real** outcomes of recovery efforts led by women and community partnerships.

This tool ensures that recovery initiatives move beyond counting activities (such as the number of supplies distributed) and instead measure meaningful improvements in the lives of women, girls, and vulnerable families.

It aligns with the Women-Led Recovery Framework by focusing on four key dimensions of impact:

- leadership
- protection and safety
- community resilience
- systems strengthening

Organizations can use this tool to:

- evaluate program effectiveness
- improve future recovery initiatives
- communicate impact to donors and partners
- support evidence-based advocacy

How to Use This Tool

Organizations should identify indicators that measure the results of their programs across four key areas.

These indicators can be tracked quarterly, annually, or after a recovery intervention.

Both **quantitative data** and **qualitative feedback** should be collected whenever possible.

Impact Measurement Table

Impact Area	Indicator	Measurement Method	Data Source	Frequency
Women's Leadership	Number of women serving in leadership roles within recovery initiatives	Participation tracking	Program records	Quarterly

Impact Area	Indicator	Measurement Method	Data Source	Frequency
Women's Leadership	Percentage of recovery decisions informed by community consultations with women	Meeting documentation	Program reports	Quarterly
Protection and Safety	Number of programs incorporating gender-based violence prevention measures	Program assessments	Field reports	Biannual
Protection and Safety	Percentage of women reporting improved safety during recovery efforts	Community surveys	Participant feedback	Annual
Community Resilience	Number of women-led initiatives supporting economic recovery	Program tracking	Partner reports	Annual
Community Resilience	Increase in access to essential services (water, healthcare, education) for women and girls	Community surveys	Local government data	Annual
Systems Strengthening	Number of cross-sector partnerships supporting recovery initiatives	Partnership agreements	Organizational records	Annual
Systems Strengthening	Amount of funding mobilized for women-led recovery programs	Financial reports	Donor records	Annual

Additional Indicators Organizations May Track

Organizations may also track outcomes such as:

- number of women trained in disaster preparedness
- number of households benefiting from recovery programs

- access to clean water and sanitation services
- school re-enrollment of girls following disasters
- improvements in maternal and reproductive health services
- reduction in gender-based violence incidents

These indicators help demonstrate how recovery programs contribute to long-term community resilience.

Qualitative Impact Documentation

Quantitative data alone does not fully capture the impact of women-led recovery.

Organizations should also collect **qualitative evidence**, such as:

- personal stories from women leaders
- testimonials from families benefiting from recovery programs
- case studies of successful partnerships
- community feedback on program effectiveness

These narratives can help illustrate how recovery initiatives improve dignity, safety, and opportunity for women and girls.

Impact Reflection Questions

Organizations should periodically reflect on the following questions:

- How has women's leadership influenced recovery outcomes?
- Which partnerships contributed most to program success?
- What barriers continue to limit gender-responsive recovery efforts?
- How can programs be improved to strengthen long-term resilience?

Reporting Impact to Partners and Donors

Organizations can use the data collected through this tool to produce:

- annual impact reports
- donor updates
- advocacy briefs
- presentations at international forums such as the Commission on the Status of Women

Demonstrating measurable results helps strengthen credibility and attract further support for women-led recovery initiatives.