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WOMEN IN EMERGENCIES, CHILD CARE

Give women bigger disaster responses



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About 3,000 Muslim women in Sai Buri district of Pattani province march in the district town to mark International Women's Day yesterday.

by disaster. The vulnerability to which women are exposed can be greater because of embedded cultural values that restrict their roles, he said.

This is reflected in the unequal work burden and limited facilities for education and employment.

Thanpuying Sumalee Chatikavanij, president of Thai Women Watch, said it is important to empower women in the decision-making process.

"Everywhere when there are disasters, women in families, in public administration, can help minimise the damage," she said.

People involved in accidents or emergencies should be given moral support at the community and national level. However, these essential works would not be well-organised without women.

She told of her experience when her organisation launched a school project in a fishing village in Ranong which was devastated by the tsunami.

"However, since all members of the school board are men, they gave less importance to the school project than to income-generating activities. Now 14 months have gone and there are only a few people interested in building the

school," she said. "This is proof that we need to increase women's ability to participate."

Siriporn Sakroba, chairwoman of the Foundation for Women was given the outstanding woman award by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security for her dedication to women's rights protection.

The award also went to journalist Meesuk Jaengmeesuk, MP for Chiang Mai Panintra Pakkasem, two National Reconciliation Commissioners, Malyum Samoh and Nari Chalernpolpiriya, and social activist Lamai Manakan, among others.