

Advocacy case studies

Bridging local voices with national public policy while developing a disaster management fund mobilisation guideline in Nepal

Country:

Nepal

Themes:

Governance; disaster risk reduction; environmental sustainability

Advocacy approaches:

Working in alliances and coalitions; community mobilisation; relationship building

Nepal is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. It is frequently struck by earthquakes, flooding, landslides, avalanches, wildfires, droughts and storms. The Tearfund Nepal team has supported the government in its mission to build resilient communities in this country. In 2015, when a strong earthquake hit, Tearfund responded in two districts alongside multiple partners to the resulting humanitarian needs. After the earthquake, Tearfund decided to build the resilience and capacity of local communities to respond to various natural disasters that are common in Nepal.

To influence the federal, provincial, and local governments and reach communities throughout the country, Tearfund worked in a coalition with national networks, the UN bodies, bilateral agencies and civil society organisations. At the national level, Tearfund also created avenues to reach the urban and rural communities through policies and strategic influence with the federal government. At the provincial and local levels, Tearfund also reached communities through working with the provincial and local governments, local faith actors and networks and national NGO partners.

Alongside this relationship building, Tearfund also supported the development of the federal government's disaster risk response (DRR) policy and strategic action plan. Tearfund collaborated with many other civil society actors through consultation workshops with government officials at all levels and organising technical working groups across various specialities (eg DRR, livelihoods).

Building on Tearfund's relational and technical capacity in this context, the network of organisations Tearfund was part of were keen to create guidelines that made DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA) a standard part of the local level development planning process. To accomplish this, Tearfund developed and signed an agreement with the Nepalese Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration to develop guidelines. As these guidelines were designed to act as a guidance note for organisations wishing to implement the Disaster Management Act, Tearfund created a steering committee with national government officials, including the Joint Secretary, who chaired it.

Following this, Tearfund created a technical working group that was coordinated by Tearfund's Resilience Adviser and organised responsibilities amongst different national government ministries and departments. The steering committee and the technical working group reviewed all existing disaster risk reduction and management (DRR/M) practices across Nepal. From this review, they created the Disaster Management Fund Mobilisation Guideline, which was reviewed in local and national level consultations. Finally, these guidelines were approved by the Nepalese government. Now, these guidelines are used by all 753 local government bodies.

Faith actors in Nepal are able to influence policies related to the disaster relief management fund as a result of these guidelines and action plans. DRR and CCA have become mainstreamed into the local level development planning process. Local faith actors are leading the local disaster response in their communities and contribute to the local fund as well. This provides the opportunity for local faith actors' capacity to be strengthened to meet these requirements effectively.

Throughout this experience, Tearfund Nepal has reaffirmed the value of relationship building with government officials and other key stakeholders so they are more likely to value and accept Tearfund's input to their policies and practices.

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