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## Advocacy case studies

# OBTAINING CLEAN DRINKING WATER IN NEPAL

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<b>COUNTRY:</b>	<b>Nepal</b>
<b>THEMES:</b>	<b>Children and education; governance; health; water, sanitation and hygiene</b>
<b>ADVOCACY APPROACHES:</b>	<b>Community mobilisation; government officials; lobbying</b>

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In the Surkhet district of Nepal lies the village of Gadi. Like many other villages in the region, it had its own Village Development Committee (VDC), but the village was one of the least developed in the area, so the community struggled to meet their basic needs. One of the biggest challenges they faced was obtaining clean drinking water.

Tearfund partner International Nepal Fellowship (INF) began working on community health and development in Gadi, with a view to helping improve conditions for the villagers. As part of its work, INF helped establish several self-help groups (SHGs), which met to discuss the issues in their community each month.

The Pariwartansil SHG identified drinking water as their priority. Most of the year, villagers spent between two and three hours a day collecting contaminated water from a nearby stream. As a result of drinking the dirty water, villagers frequently contracted water-borne diseases. School attendance was low as parents often sent their children to collect the water.

The SHG developed a plan to address the situation. Through regular contributions, the group collected 2,000 Nepalese Rupees (NPR) from each household, and then approached government and non-government organisations for financial support to add to their fund.

Using the money they had collected, the group began to build a pipe line from a clean water source (a stream 7km away) to their village. However, before the project could be completed, the money ran out. Disappointed but undeterred, the group made regular visits to the VDC office to present their case and try to secure further funding.

After persevering with their advocacy efforts, the SHG finally obtained 54,000 NPR from the VDC, as well as 600m of plastic water piping from the District Development Committee. INF also contributed 900m of piping and four bags of cement to construct a water tank.

Contrary to many people's expectations, the SHG achieved its goal of bringing clean water directly into the village, providing drinking water for 17 households, with enough left over for their cattle as well. This meant that children in the community were able to start attending school regularly, and villagers' health improved significantly.