

3.5 Flood Survivors of Bardia Rehabilitation Neglected

Background

Bardia is a district naturally endowed with Chure hills and flat land. But except for the Chepang area the entire territory of Bansgadi municipality-1 is flat land. The hilly region falls under Bardia National Park. There is diversity in the population of the district, with a majority of Tharu community that stands at 52 per cent. However, despite the majority of the Tharu community, there is social, cultural and natural diversity.

The Bardia National Park covers an area of 2,025 square kilometers. Large watershed like Karnali and Babai rivers are in this district, which have huge potential for irrigation and power production. Streams like Aarohi, Bhada, Kanjaruwa, and Maan originating from the Chure are also full of potential. But maximum benefit has not been extracted from these natural resources. Instead, failure of disaster risk management is inviting trouble for Bardia folks every year. Floods and landslides caused by Karnali, Babai Rivers and other streams have been causing significant damage to life and property. Thousands of arable land is being inundated and washed away every year. As a result, thousands of local residents are being displaced.

Floods triggered by incessant rainfall on 14 and 15 August 2015 (Saun 29 and 30, 2071) caused unprecedented damage to life and property. Physical infrastructure worth millions of rupees was damaged. The survivors of the flood were yet to be rehabilitated. In the meantime, heavy downpour on 12 August 2017 (Saun 28, 2074) once again inflicted heavy damage, and those affected are still deprived from relief and compensation, while they have not been included in the rehabilitation scheme. Their daily life has also been affected as the roads and bridges damaged by the floods are yet to be re-built.

Objective of the Study

1. To acquire information about the status of practical implementation of the policies, legal measures and programmes adopted by the State for those rendered homeless by the natural disaster and for the flood survivors.
2. To highlight the state of implementation of the services announced and commitments made for the flood survivor families of Bardia and other parts of the country.
3. To shed light on the problems facing the flood survivor families, and make the state accountable to resolve them.

4. To draw the attention of the State towards establishing the rights and well-being of the flood survivors and the homeless families living a terrified life in Bardia.
5. To recommend the local and central level authorities on the measures to be taken to minimize the possible damage to life and property from floods every monsoon.
6. To push the concerned authorities to develop long-term plans for protection from disaster-related risks.

Rationale of the Study

Even though it's been quite long that the flood survivor families are in trouble, the State has not paid attention towards it. It has also not felt necessary to develop concrete plans and programmes to immediately resolve their problem. Some of the programmes that have been introduced are very sluggish while many have not yet begun in different pretexts. And those that have been implemented have not been completed. As a result, the people displaced by floods in Bardia have been forced to live under temporary shelters. For lack of proper rehabilitation the people displaced by floods have been forced to live on the coastal areas of rivers and streams, which is a testimony to the negligence on part of the State. It also proves that they are in a vulnerable situation. Hence, as this study would highlight such devastating problem and make the concerned authorities ponder about its solution, it is very important.

Methodology of the Study

1. Field monitoring (floods, landslide affected areas, and flood survivor camps)
2. Interview (flood survivors, flood victims struggle committee office-bearers, political parties, local administration, rights activists, media workers and other stakeholder agencies etc).
3. Resource materials (books, news re-

ports, article, photographs on the issues concerned the flood survivor families, and the law and commitments adopted by the State for addressing the flood survivor families.

4. DDRC report

Limitation of the Study

1. This study is focused on the sufferings of the flood survivor families and in alerting the State and other stakeholders for their rehabilitation.
2. Efforts have been made to explore the conduct of the State towards the flood survivors of Bardia and their challenges, and the problems resulting from the participation of fake flood survivors in the name of the real survivors, and to alert towards resolving them.
3. The data used in the study have been taken from the District Natural Calamity Relief Committee, Nepal Red Cross Bardia Chapter, District Education Office, District Agriculture Development Office, District Livestock Development Service Centre, District Health Office and the Flood survivors struggle committee families.
4. The sufferings of the flood survivor families have been documents from them itself.

General Introduction

Despite abundant possibilities of development from every sector, Bardia has not been able to move ahead as much as it should. It has always been ignored by the State and the political parties. Poverty, illiteracy, superstition, hunger and backwardness continues to exist. And on the other wide, the locals here are bearing the brunt of natural disaster. Especially, the Karnali, Geruwa and Babai rivers that pass through Bardia have been inundating and washing away hundreds of hectares of land every year, and that is compelled villages and settlements to be

displaced. As people are displaced, inundation and water logging is converting them to landless settlers. Hence, a large number of people have been forced to go to neighbouring India to manage just two square meals a day. River inundation prevention programmes are being carried out but only for namesake. Every year minimal budget is allocated and the work begins only after the beginning of the monsoon and that is too washed away from the floods. This is a bitter reality for the Bardia folks.

The 147 families of Geruwa rural municipality are testimony of this. The Geruwa rural municipality borders the erstwhile Patabhar VDC of Kailali district in the north. The flood survivors of the erstwhile Manau VDC in Geruwa rural municipality-6 and erstwhile Khairichandanpur VDC in Rajapur municipality-10 were forced to leave their place of origin after losing their house and land to the floods ten years ago. The land where the flood survivors used to live is the path of the Geruwa River and even some land next to the river has been desertified.

To resolve problems like these or to secure its citizens, the State has so far not been able to introduce any reliable programmes. Instead when the displaced survivors live on temporary huts on public land, they are chased away and left helpless.

Every year, rainwater-induced floods in rivers and streams inundate and wash away human settlements and arable land. The residents of Bardia faced unprecedented sufferings as a result of the incessant rainfall on 14 and 15 August 2015. The heavy current in the Babai River inflicted the most damage on people's lives and property. The Babai that originates from Dang district flows towards India via Salyan and Bardia. The water from the heavy downpour in Dang in the afternoon becomes night as it arrives through the Babai River in Bardia.

And hence the people living in the coastal areas had no clue about it. And even those who came to know had no time to secure food grains and other property. They hardly managed to save themselves and their family members. Such was the current of water in the river that many residents of the district headquarters Gulariya were still grappling with it next morning. The highest damage inflicted by Babai was on the Dugehawa village of Baniyabhar VDC. The Shivapur check post near the Babai River was washed away the same night. Huge loss of life and property was recorded in Ranipur Barbatta, Guruwa gaon of Padnaha VDC and Tappar of Gulariya municipality. Thousands of people living in the coastal areas were mentally devastated.

The situation on the one hand was very pitiable, while the displaced tried to gradually get themselves back on their feet mentally and physically, setting aside all the pain. They were hoping for rehabilitation and some ease to their daily life. Then once again, another spate of floods on August 12, 2015 hit them hard, adding to their woes. And the problems of the flood survivors worsened further.

Problems of the Flood Survivors

Floods cause damage in Bardia every year. Following the incident of floods, rescue and relief support to the affected families are carried out by the government and non-government sector. But then no authority was responsible in the proper rehabilitation of the survivors who lost their homes to the inundation and water logging by the river. It may be noted that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the Constitution of Nepal (2015) guarantees citizen's right to safe housing. In addition to this, the State has introduced some acts, regulation and policies to mitigate natural disaster and safeguard the citizens. But nothing has proved fruitful and productive for the flood survivors of Bardia.

It is as a result that the floods of August 14 and 15, 2014 caused unprecedented scale of damage to life and property across the district. Following the incident, 19,000 people were confined to 38 temporary shelters. However, a total of 165,000 were affected by the floods including 93,138 who were directly affected and 71,811 who were partially affected.

A total of 3,859 houses were completely damaged, affecting 20,376 persons living in them. Likewise, 72,813 people used to live in the 13,517 houses that were partially damaged. In Gulariya alone, 1681 houses were fully damaged, directly affecting 8,434 people living in those houses. Another 5,633 houses were partially damaged affecting 27,603 people. Likewise, 766 houses were fully damaged in Baniyabhar VDC, affecting 4,221 persons while 10,357 people were affected when 1,899 houses suffered partial damage in the floods. In Bagnaha VDC, 374 houses were fully damaged, affecting 2,022 persons while 4,498 people were affected with 7094 houses partially damaged. Furthermore, 265 houses were completely damaged in Mohammadpur VDC which directly affected 1,429 persons while 339 houses were partially damaged to affect 1,919 people. In Magargadi VDC, 83 houses were fully damaged and 680 houses partially damaged affecting 448 and 3,588 persons respectively. Similarly in Padnaha VDC, 135 houses were fully damaged affecting 825 persons directly while 659 houses suffered partial damage affecting 4165 persons. Altogether 522 persons were affected when 96 houses were completely damaged in Sorhawa VDC while 838 people were affected when 142 houses were partially damaged.

Likewise, in Shivapur VDC, 64 houses were completely damaged and 160 houses partially damaged, affecting 353 persons and 881 persons respectively. In Dhadhar VDC, 363 persons were affected when 67 houses were completely

damaged while 249 people were affected with 396 houses partially damaged. In Thakurdwara VDC, 61 houses were fully damaged, affecting 409 persons while 92 houses suffered partial damage to affect 1,969 persons. In Belawa VDC, 288 persons were affected when 66 houses were completely damaged while 152 people were affected with 39 houses partially damaged. In Rajapur municipality, 37 houses were completely damaged and 815 houses partially damaged, affecting 172 persons and 4,587 persons respectively.

Similarly, 46 houses were fully damaged in Surya Patuwa VDC affecting 286 persons while 5,423 people were affected when 875 houses were partially damaged. In Neulapur VDC, 477 persons were affected when 91 houses were completely damaged while 866 people were affected with 190 houses partially damaged. In Jamuni VDC, 12 houses were completely damaged and 3 houses partially damaged, affecting 48 persons and 22 persons respectively.

In Dodhari VDC, 5 houses were fully damaged, affecting 27 persons while 186 houses suffered partial damage to affect 1,176 persons. In Patabhar VDC, 21 persons were affected when 3 houses were completely damaged while 767 people were affected with 143 houses partially damaged. In Deudhakala VDC, 2 houses were completely damaged and 30 houses partially damaged, affecting 9 persons and 164 persons respectively.

In addition to this, in Kharichandapur VDC, 2 houses were completely damaged and 239 houses partially damaged, affecting 9 persons and 1,339 persons respectively. In Motipur VDC, 1 house was fully damaged, affecting 5 persons while 27 houses suffered partial damage to affect 119 persons. In Manau VDC, 3 persons were affected when one house was completely damaged while 28 people were affected with 5 houses partially damaged. In Mainapokhar VDC,

one house was completely damaged and 9 houses partially damaged, affecting 5 persons and 41 persons respectively. In Kalika VDC, 62 persons were affected when 12 houses suffered partial damage. The floods affected 96,189 persons of 17,376 households.

Human Casualty

Twenty people died and 13 went missing the floods, of which the highest number of missing was in Baniyabhar VDC. In this VDC, 10 people went missing, including a girl child.

Likewise, in Gulariya municipality, four were killed and three went missing, including one girl child. In Belawa VDC-7, Chepang, two died and eight including four children went missing. One person died from Manikapur-8 of Banke, one from Baraha Pokhari VDC of Khotang and a Nepali army personnel based at the Shivapur post and a resident of Bhakunde in Kavrepalanchowk. The number of unidentified bodies found was 12.

For the rescue, relief distribution and rehabilitation in the 2015 floods, the DDRC received Rs. 335.6 million from the Home Ministry and Rs. 5.46 million from donor agencies. This included a total of Rs. 341.15 million, of which Rs 18.02 million was distributed at the rate of Rs. 5,000 to 3,656 households who suffered complete damage and Rs. 39.1 million at the rate of Rs. 3,000 each to 12,960 households who suffered partial damage. Food and clothing was distributed to 89,599 at the rate of Rs. 890 each, totalling Rs. 76.01 million.

Likewise, for festival expenses, Rs. 49.6 million was distributed to 16,538 families at the rate of Rs. 3,000 each while Rs. 135.2 million was distributed to 90,152 as food support at the rate of Rs. 500 each. Furthermore, 3.3 million rupees was distributed to families of the deceased/missing, Rs. 81,033 as food, vehicle, fuel allowance to staff. Accordingly,

a total of Rs. 333.7 million was spent. Altogether, 5,646 sets of non-food items were distributed by the DDRC, Nepal Red Cross Society and other agencies.

In Bardia, in the 12 August 2017 floods, five people were killed while 17 men and 11 women were injured. A total of 134,804 including 66,015 women and 68,789 men from 24,942 households were affected. Another, 49,279 people of 10,120 houses were displaced with 6,118 houses fully damaged and 797 partially damaged. A total of 20,915 houses suffered damage in the disaster.

Physical Loss

Property worth Rs. 755,000 was damaged in the health sector including district hospital, health posts, sub-health posts while the damage incurred by the Dodhari-Bhurigaon section of the postal road in Murtiya Gulariya was worth Rs. 43.5 million. In roads, the damage was worth Rs. 67.1 million in the Nepalgunj-Gulariya, Deurali, Harre, east-west highway, Bhurigaon, Karnali section and Amreni Thakurdwara road.

Likewise, the Babai irrigation project suffered damage worth Rs. 250 million, while the damage incurred in Belawa VDC-7, Batule, Kuru, Reukhola of Deudhakala, Pratappur, Neulapur, Mohanpur Madhela, Bhutkaiya, Shivapur, Gatnala, Suryapatawa, Thakurdwara, Bhadakhola and Dhadhwar was Rs. 20.05 million. Furthermore, infrastructure damage in Baniyabhar, Sanoshree, Padanaha along the Babai river bank and in various embankments in Gulariya municipality was worth Rs. 1.2 billion while damage worth Rs. 655.5 million was suffered in Patabhar, Daulatpur, Suryapata and Rajapur municipality areas under the Karnali River.

Damage to structure include Rs. 10 million worth of damage in Latakaniya, Paryagpur, Rampur, Tapu and Kusambaghat, Rs. 100 million worth of damage

to roads and culverts and infrastructure damage worth Rs. 58.5 million in Gulariya town area. Likewise, the damage to drinking water system was Rs. 4.9 million and in the power supply sector it was worth Rs. 2.7 million. Property worth 16.8 million rupees was damage in the suspension bridges in Kusumbaghat and Chandanpur. In total, physical damage was worth Rs. 3.76 billion.

With three years already passed since the damage was inflicted, but no work has been done to bring them to the previous state. Neither have any initiative taken to rehabilitate the displaced to safer locations.

Economic Rights

The flood survivor families in different parts of the district are still deprived of their economic rights. As per the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Culture Rights that came into being on 16 December 1966 and ratified by Nepal on 14 May 1991, the needs to be fully supported. But the flood survivors have received nothing other than immediate relief and some compensation. The government has so far only provided the first instalment to the people whose houses were completely and partially damaged in the floods. Though the government had announced 50,000 rupees in cash to build house and Rs. 100,000 to purchase housing plot for the landless flood survivors, it is yet to be enforced in practice.

Right to Food

Bardia produces food that is enough not only for the district but for whole of the mid-western region. But due to the floods, people here are left hungry. A total of 25 bigaha of arable land was inundated in various parts of the district due to the 2015 floods. Paddy, maize and vegetable crop and fish farms in 653 hectares were damaged, which translates into a loss worth Rs. 471.3 million. Like-

wise, food stock including seeds worth Rs. 630 million was destroyed. Floods also led to crop diseases. And the DDRC provided a support of Rs. 500,000 to purchase insecticides for immediate response. Likewise, 252 cattle, 19,853 poultry perished, causing damage worth Rs. 67.6 million.

Likewise, the 12 August 2017 floods, cause damage worth Rs. 459.1 million in agriculture crop. Under the relief programmes, Rs. 60.01 million was spent through the agriculture development programme. In livestock, the damage was worth Rs. 41.09 million.

Right to Land

Though the water from Karnali, Geruwa and Babai rivers were regarded as a boon for livelihood, the same rivers turn out to be a curse in Bardia. The rivers have been washing away land and houses of hundreds of families, turning them into landless settlers overnight. In such circumstance, the flood survivors' right to land has been put to a risk.

Though 3,859 families suffered complete damage in the floods in August 2015, 25 households of Chepang in Bansgadi municipality-7, 40 households of Baniyabhar VDC-1, and another 40 households of Gulariya municipality-5 has to be rehabilitated to safer locations. After the government failed to take any initiative even for a long time, apart from the flood survivors in Gulariya municipality-5, others are living on their own in coastal areas, in their relatives' land and some in rented quarters. The government however distributed Rs. 192.9 million at the rate of 50,000 rupees each to all the survivors who suffered complete damage of their homes.

The flood victims of Rampur in Gulariya municipality-5 received Rs. 50,000 per family to purchase housing plots from the government but they could not do so due to the new policy that does not allow plotting of arable land. The decision of the

government to put a ban to plotting has become an obstacle for them. The government began distributing housing grants for the homeless flood survivors but the policy decision of 10 August 2017 has come as an obstruction to rehabilitation as it prohibits plotting of land.

Though the government put a ban to plotting of land with a good objective, absence of support for those who fell victim to disaster has created difficulties in rehabilitation. It was only after 30 months in January 2018 that the Council of Ministers approved procedures for private house grant for the Bardia flood survivors who lost everything in 2015. Along with the procedures in place, the families with a land will get Rs. 300,000 for house construction while those without a housing plot will get Rs. 350,000.

Accordingly, 40 families have received Rs. 2 million in a lump sum to purchase land in ward no. 4 of Gulariya municipality. They have forged an agreement with the land lord to pay immediately after the second instalment is released. However, the land revenue office has put a halt on transfer of ownership of the housing plots for now, according to the flood survivors.

Govinda Khatri, who has been living a difficult life at the Tulasipur sports ground since the past four years after losing his parents and younger sister to the floods, said though the intention of the government to stop plotting of land was good it was injustice for flood survivors like him. 'Why we are being double victimized,' he said.

The government had on 10 August 2017 decided to stop plotting of land of any kind with the objective of increasing productivity by stopping the increasing plotting of arable land. Accordingly, the Department of Land Reforms and Management sent a circular to the land tax office a day later on 11 August to stop transfer of ownership of new housing plots.

And the District Land Tax Office, Bardia has implemented the directly accordingly.

The land ownership cannot be registered for now due to the policy of the Department of Land Reforms and Management, the District Land Tax Office in Bardia said. Chief District Officer Narayan Prasad Bhattarai however said that the concerned office in the centre has been communicated about the problem the government decision has caused to the flood survivors who have already received their first instalment and paid advance for buying the plots. On the other hand, the second instalment to be released from the centre has also not arrived, the Urban Development and Building Division Office in Nepalgunj said. Office Engineer Homnath Bhusal said that the second tranche cannot be paid unless the flood survivors come with a copy of their land ownership. 'As per the law, the second tranche can be provided only on the basis of an evidence of purchase of the housing lot,' he said.

It is a problem to rehabilitate them to the settlements damaged by the floods. On the other hand, rehabilitation remains a problem because there is not enough land for all in the district. A committee was formed as per the resettlement procedures, 2015, but as the area of land to be provided is not clear while some have not submitted the required form, the committee has not been able to move ahead. Many of the survivors have been rendered landless. As their right to land has been put to further crisis at the moment.

Right to Education

A total of 95 schools were damaged in the 2015 August floods. And all the child development centres were affected. As a result, 30,676 students were directly affected with the damage also caused to text books and academic materials. In education sector, UNICEF, Save the Children and other agencies provided support worth Rs. 98.4 million. Though the 2017

floods were not as severe as the last one, 65 schools were affected, including complete damage to 12 schools and partial damage to 52 schools. As a result, 12,437 students were affected and the total damage incurred was worth Rs. 11.1 million.

Role of Government

Soon after the floods, the government agencies were involved in rescue and relief collection and distribution. The Home Ministry released funds worth Rs. 335.6 million to the Natural Disaster Relief Committee, of which Rs. 182.8 was distributed to 3,657 houses (at the rate of Rs. 5,000 each) that suffered complete damage. Likewise, Rs. 380.9 million was distributed at the rate of Rs. 3,000 each to 12,970 houses that suffered partial damage. Rs. 76.1 million worth of food/clothing to 89,599 flood survivors, Rs. 49.6 million as festival allowance to 16,538 households, Rs. 125.2 million worth of food support to 90,153 persons and Rs. 3.38 million to the deceased/missing families, according to the District Natural Disaster Relief Committee, Bardia.

In Bardia district, in the 2017 August floods, 251,083 kilograms of rice, 34,513 kgs of pulse, 9,88 kgs of bitten rice, 216 packets of puffed rice, 713 packets of Dalmot, 85 cartons of biscuit, 92 cartons of water, 16,459 liters of vegetable oil, 368 cartons of noodles, 8,762 kgs salt, 5,157 kgs of sugar, 4500 sets of readymade food were distributed in the first phase. Likewise, under non-food items, 38 bundles of tarpaulin tents, 130 units of corrugated sheets, and 2,607 sets of NFIs were distributed.

The latest distribution was 577.20 kgs of rice from the Nepal Food Corporation. The Home Ministry distributed 305 bundles of tent and cash worth Rs. 234.7 million to 111,764 persons at the rate of Rs. 70 per day (for 30 days) was distributed from the local level government.

Likewise, 353 bundles of tents received from various agencies/individuals, 500 sets of NFIs, 83,187 kgs of rice, 6,713 kgs of pulse, 504 kgs of bitten rice, 10 kgs of puffed rice, 514 packets of Dalmot, 38 cartons of biscuit, 55 cartons of water, 3 carton vegetable oil (6,664 litres), 307 carton of noodles, 2,867 kgs of salt and 88kgs of sugar were distributed.

Role of NGOs

The Nepal Red Cross Society, Bardia played a significant role in the rescue, relief distribution to the flood survivors. Various donor agencies had provided Rs. 5.46 million to the natural disaster relief committee. In the 2017 floods, the government's announcement to distribute support to the survivors through a one-door system affected the support procedures to some extent. But due to all-sides pressure, the government withdrew the decision that allowed people to support voluntarily as much as they wanted and afford.

Legal Way to Attainment of Rights

As the survivors of the natural disaster have been deprived of the rights to be ensured by the State, a situation has occurred whereby a legal course has to be taken. Accordingly, Til Bahadur Jhedi Magar of Belahari VDC-6 in Nawalparasi, Dil Bahadur Thapa of Itahari VDC-1, Morang and Dil Bahadur Guragain of the same VDC-4 filed a writ petition in 2008 at the Supreme Court. In response, the apex court issued a directive order on 2 April 2012 in the name of the concerned offices of the Government of Nepal to carry out study/survey of the state of flood affected areas and the flood survivors and announce protected watershed area.

Though communications were made to the concerned agencies to implement this verdict, no progress has been seen as of yet. According to the flood survivor concern committee family Bardia, presently 147 families who lost their

house and land in Geruwa rural municipality have been left helpless with no rehabilitation. 'The State should be internalizing the problems of its people but it is unfortunate here that even the court's order has not been followed,' Chair of the family Sher Bahadur Khadka said.

Also on 5 September 2017, the INSEC had in coordination with legal practitioners filed a writ at the High Court, Tulasipur, Nepalgunj bench on behalf of the victims in relation to the damage caused to people's life and property in the August 12, 2017 floods in Banke and Bardia, and the need for rescue and health treatment of the victims. In response, the High Court, Tulasipur, Nepalgunj bench issued a show cause notice in the name of the defendants.

Reasons for the Occurrence of Floods

Every year floods cause humanitarian as well as physical damage. This has negatively affected not only the humans but the entire living species, and the reasons for it needs to be explored. And there is no option but to move ahead with a long-term plan. Selfish exploitation of natural resources and carbon emission from industrialization also play a role in such disaster. Finding out the reasons and working to manage them on time are ways to mitigate the damage. On the other hand, physical infrastructure in the name of development are also contributing to negative impact of the nature in some places. As a result, special consideration should be made to this end while developing infrastructures.

For example, the 1986 floods in Bhaura Tappa of Bardia took the lives of hundreds of people, with massive loss to property as well. The Tappa is surrounded by Karnali River in the west and Geruwa River in the east. But the reason for the floods was the construction of a bridge including a dam in Kailasi of India, some kilometers south of Bardia. As

all the doors in the dam were shut, water started to accumulate and when they were opened all at once it led to floods in the Nepali side, causing huge loss to life and property. Hence, such structures also contributed to disaster, which needs to be considered.

Way Forward

Not many years ago, disaster was regarded as the act of the divine. Hence, the rules and regulations in Nepal were also formulated accordingly. Which means that the damage from disasters cannot be stopped and hence the effort should only be on rescue and relief support after the disaster occurs. It also meant that no attention was paid to preparedness to minimize the risk and subsequent damage. But the fact is that though it cannot be stopped, the damage from a disaster can be minimized to a large extent with preparedness. Hence, there needs to be a change in the attitude and understanding of disaster like floods, landslides, fire, soil erosion, and the preparedness should be accordingly. Not only that, we must all also work to develop the related laws and regulations that is based on preparedness and response.

The parliament has introduced the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, 2074 (2017) after a long tussle, which has wiped out the old act based on the divine belief. The new act lays emphasis to preparedness, response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. If this is followed and put into practice, the problems like floods could be minimized. The Act also envisages formation of State level disaster management committees led by the Chief Minister to manage disaster at the State level. Likewise, district disaster management committees will be formed under the leadership of the Chief District Officer in every district. Furthermore, the Rural Municipality Chair or Municipality Mayor leads the local disaster manage-

ment committee at the rural municipality and municipality level. So, the provisions of the Act should be enforced to seek solutions at the local level.

The political party act also mentions under the function, duties and rights of parties that the parties need to provide necessary support in running disaster risk reduction education campaign and in the search, rescue and rehabilitation in the event of a national disaster. So, the parties need to work towards making the local people's representatives more accountable and active in disaster management based on these provisions.

In the meantime, quick rehabilitation of the displaced flood survivors needs to fall under the priority of the government. For this, sufficient plans and budget should be allocated. Rehabilitation should make special consideration

to the landless, because even if the State provides them housing grant they cannot be rehabilitated due to lack of housing plot. And furthermore, support should not be uniform to all but based on the circumstance and economic condition of the concerned.

Resource Materials

- District Natural Disaster Relief Committee, Bardia
- Flood Survivors Struggle Committee family, Bardia
- Various newspapers
- Discussions with survivors and stakeholders
- Nepal Red Cross Society, Bardia Chapter
- Nepal Human Rights Year Book 2017

