



Enhancing Flood Preparedness in Nepal

Monsoon-induced flooding occurs annually in Nepal, resulting in deaths; population displacement; and damage to crops, houses, and infrastructure. Although monsoon rainfall is vital for agricultural production, heavy rains also increase risks for vulnerable populations.

Since Fiscal Year 2014, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) has supported Practical Action to establish a flood early warning system, enhance emergency response capacity, increase community awareness, and facilitate collaboration between local and national government entities in Nepal's flood-prone Kamala and Kankai river basins. In addition, Practical Action has facilitated private sector engagement with Nepali telecommunication companies to further disseminate flooding warnings through text message alerts.

In advance of the 2017 monsoon season, Practical Action supported flood drills in three vulnerable villages to enhance community preparedness and ensure effective use of early warning systems.

During the drills, communities rapidly mobilized response teams and relocated community members and their livestock to safe areas. Additionally, text alerts reached



80 percent of households in targeted areas. In the case of flooding, these text alerts will allow for the efficient transmission of life-saving information.

“The drill taught us how we should always be prepared and demonstrated what actions will help our community when we have unexpected flooding,” an early warning leader in Milanbasti village reported.

During late July flooding, the community put this preparedness knowledge to use and, thanks to the alerts from Practical Action's early warning system, the population evacuated safely and there were no casualties reported.

Communities continue to benefit from Practical Action's support in advance of the 2018 monsoon season, with the organization supporting drills for 40 communities in June. By increasing awareness and leveraging private sector engagement, Practical Action is saving lives through preparedness in Nepal.