



## CASE STUDY

# Nepal: Prioritising water in climate through GWL's support to the NDC Partnership

## Summary

*The Global Water Leadership in a Changing Climate Programme (GWL)* strategy for achieving a stronger water focus in national climate policies and plans in Nepal has centered upon participating as a support agency to the government through the NDC Partnership.

Within this context, the GWL team organized a series of provincial-level workshops. The workshops were concluded with a follow-up meeting where the recommendations on improvements to climate change policies were presented to the Honorable Minister for Forests and Environment. Through this work, GWL was able to impress upon province and central level actors that water needs to be more present in forthcoming climate policies and plans.

## Background

### What is the Global Water Leadership Programme?

Effective and equitable water management is becoming increasingly complex, and increasingly important, as climate change impacts add new uncertainty to policy decisions and financial investments. The GWL is working intensely in ten countries, bringing together key stakeholders and decision makers from two water management pillars – water resources and water and sanitation – to develop holistic, integrated policies and plans to enhance national water and climate resilience and raise the profile (and prioritization) of water in climate conversations. Funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the GWL is implemented by Global Water Partnership (GWP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership (SWA) and the World Health Organization/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP).



In Nepal, activities undertaken to address climate change, including the development of critical climate policies and plans such as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), are managed through the Climate Change Management Division (CCMD), a division of the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE). The consolidation of climate policymaking within MoFE has unintentionally resulted in non-participation from the water community, which deals primarily with the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation (MoEWRI) and the Ministry of Water Supply (MoWS).

### **Joining the NDC Partnership to influence the conversation**

In 2021, the CCMD issued a Request for Support Letter (RSL) to the NDC Partnership that outlined 10 specific action areas over the course of three years. GWP committed to participate in the NDC Partnership response through the GWL by leading Activity 6 (RSL 6): Strengthening coordination mechanisms for the implementation of NDC, NAP and Climate Change Policies. The team assessed that actively facilitating the communication and coordination of the most critical climate conversations, and working closely with the CCMD secretariat in so doing, was a strategic opportunity to get water issues featured more prominently on the agenda, and therefore in the minds, of the climate change stakeholders.

### **Actions taken**

The GWL team leveraged their role as the facilitator for strengthening the coordination

mechanisms for Nepal's NDC, NAP, and climate change policy implementation to elevate the importance of water management for climate resilience with the stakeholders who lead the formulation of critical climate policies and plans. To be effective in that effort, they simultaneously made use of other programs, tools and opportunities to ensure not only that the climate community was willing to further focus upon water in forthcoming policies.

### **Building an evidence baseline for water within climate: the AAC Water Tracker**

In parallel with ongoing GWL activities, the GWP-Nepal team facilitated an introduction between the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) and GWL's lead government partner, the Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS), so that AGWA could offer Nepal the opportunity to conduct the Adaptation Action Coalition (AAC Water Tracker for National Climate Planning) (aka the Water Tracker). The Water Tracker is a diagnostic tool to help governments review critical climate policies and assess where and whether water is adequately addressed, and GWL has encouraged its implementation across all countries. The tool was applied to Nepal's 14 climate change and water resources policies and plans.

### **Seven Province-level workshops under the NDC Partnership**

GWP's primary contribution to the NDC Partnership efforts in Nepal took the form of organizing and facilitating a series of province-level workshops across the country – one in each of its seven provinces, funded by the GWL programme. The purpose of conducting these workshops was multifold:

#### **Outcomes**

While full inclusion of water within climate policies and plans is likely to take more time, the GWL team has leveraged several opportunities to embed water concerns into climate actions.

#### **Seven Provincial Workshops**

As a direct result of supporting the seven provincial workshops and steering the agenda to the role of water in climate action, around 280 participants representing approximately 195 organizations (three tiers of government, professional groups and NGOs) started to think more deeply about the role that water plays in their climate policies.

#### **Lessons Learned**

When participation as a facilitator for the NDC Partnership was initially proposed, there was skepticism about how much influence GWL would be able to have and whether the budget would be better invested in proper "water" activities. However, embedding itself within the leading climate policymaking entity in Nepal was the most efficient way to elevate water within the climate action agenda.

Instead of starting at the national level, building the case for more strongly integrating water with the province-level personnel first was an effective strategy. Having the calls for greater integration reflected in their feedback to their leadership is a great method for building internal buy-in.

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