



# Whose *voices are heard* matters: inclusive strategies for climate-resilient WASH and water

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## The key challenge

“Inclusion is key to building community resilience as our climate changes around us.

Whose voices are heard and whose problems are shared provide local government with the tools and information to make the right decisions around Water and WASH.”

- Ami Reza, Country Director, SNV in Nepal

# Beyond the Finish Line programme in Bhutan, Nepal, and Lao GEDSI strategies

1. Engaging in evidence-based advocacy and research
2. Building and nurturing strategic partnerships
3. Transformative leadership
4. Economic empowerment and agency
5. Institutionalising GEDSI



# 1 Evidence-based advocacy and research

*Formative research is used to guide approaches and support advocacy with the government*

- Research on disability-inclusive WASH services with people with disabilities in three countries, e.g., it's reflected in the National Sanitation and Hygiene Policy in Bhutan
- Unlocking critical WASH contributions to care and domestic work recognition and redistribution for a feminist-led economic recovery to COVID-19 in Nepal



Cassava exercise, Sarlahi

## 2 Strategic partnerships with Rights Holder Groups

### *Strengthened disability inclusion in institutional WASH programming in Bhutan*

- Ability Bhutan's disability inclusion leadership and advocacy paved the way for more OPDs to become members of Bhutan's WASH cluster
- Strengthened people with disabilities' voice to articulate their WASH needs that were not being met
- Increased government understanding of people with disabilities' WASH needs



Menstrual Health and Hygiene Day, Nepal,

### 3 Transformative leadership for inclusive WASH

*Leadership that changes gender and disability inclusion norms*

- Diverse and meaningful participation in planning and decision-making creates more resilient planning
- Transformative leadership research conducted by ISF-UTS and SNV with inspirational WASH leaders focused on COVID-19 responses to inspire change
- Leadership for change training, mentoring and networking supported by a women's disability advisory group



Women with disabilities, participants of leadership for change training in Bhutan

## 4 Women's economic empowerment and agency

*(Economic) inclusion is key to building community resilience to climate changes*

- Leadership Development and Business Strategy Development training modules for women entrepreneurs
- Better availability of WASH products in the local market
- Increased livelihoods and resilience of women entrepreneurs
- Made women entrepreneurs partners of our behaviour change communication activities



Woman entrepreneur visiting 200 households per day and earning a daily net income of NRs 800, Ramnagar Sarlahi

## 5 Institutionalising GEDSI

*Making GEDSI approaches in government planning and decision-making a norm*

- Some examples:
  - ✓ Conducted gender self-assessment and developed action plans: collaboration between local government and external partners
  - ✓ Established help desk for people with disabilities funded by municipalities
  - ✓ Formulated inclusive WASH Coordination Committees (WASH-CCs) in Nepal
- Examples above increase resilience of governments to climate change by ensuring that responses leave no one behind



Disability Help Desk at Mahabu RM, Dailekh



# Concluding remarks: Strengthening climate resilience through inclusive WASH

Gender and social transformative approaches in practice must be accelerated to develop climate-resilient and inclusive WASH systems

Redistribution of care and domestic roles, promoting shared decision-making, and building community support networks build intra- and inter-household/community harmony and resilience to climate change impacts

Work continuously with local governments and communities to deepen the understanding of gendered and socially diverse nature of climate impacts on WASH

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