

Title

Disaster Response Strategies of Earthquake Affected Households in Nepal

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Abstract

This study is about how earthquake affected households integrate relief efforts into their personal disaster response strategies and draws on the example of the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal. When determining the scope of their disaster relief efforts, (International) Non-Governmental Organizations ((I)NGOs) and governments only take into account the immediate household needs that were caused by the recent disaster. This narrow perspective will be challenged by showing how households negotiate their normal and emergency spending needs, and highlights that suitable relief efforts must take both these short term and long term needs into account. The research was conducted in the villages Kattike and Halide located in Kavre, one of the 14 most affected districts in Nepal. This study is based on a mixed-method approach where semi-structured interviews and surveys amongst earthquake affected households provide the most primary data, and are augmented with expert interviews from various national and international organizations active in the earthquake relief efforts.

The study argues that it is important to understand the normal spending needs of earthquake affected households in order to assess how they can and will integrate relief efforts. This study will show that especially (I)NGOs need to better plan their disaster relief activities to successfully contribute to the disaster response strategies of earthquake affected households. Hitherto, the relief efforts have only indirectly supported the livelihoods and financial disaster response strategies of households by providing an additional source of income without assessing and matching the needs and wants faced by earthquake affected households. The findings of this study can be used by policy makers and practitioners worldwide to gain a better understanding what kind of disaster response strategies are applied by earthquake affected households and how governments and (I)NGOs can contribute to them in a suitable and meaningful way.