Hakikazi Catalyst, Tanzania
The Hakikazi Catalyst in Tanzania is an advocacy organisation committed to economic and social justice. It believes that knowledge can stimulate action for change, and therefore spreads knowledge about important policies to as many people as possible. Hakikazi is well known for its pioneering use of plain-language guides. It has produced various guides on the Tanzanian PRSP, including an easy-to-read report on progress, with implementation benchmarks. It has also published guides on the millennium development goals, land, forest, agricultural and trade policies. These guides encourage people to learn about and engage with the policies that affect their lives and they encourage those who are usually engaged from policy debates to get involved. The guides are carefully written to avoid jargon, and make use of cartoons to get their message across.[3]

ENDNOTES

1 For example, the work of our Indian partners, National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights and Women's Collective in India, in challenging caste-based discrimination of relief efforts to the Asian tsunami and the Gujarat earthquake.
2 ITDG South Asia and Rural Development Policy Institute, *Livelihood-Centred Approach to Disaster Management: A Policy Framework for South Asia*, 2005.
3 Taken from Oxfam website www.oxfamhaiti.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/georgia/budget.htm
4 These guides are available at www.hakikazi.org/plain_language.htm

Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action at a local level

Ten practice notes for community-led policy monitoring for disaster risk reduction

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Note 10
Final recommendations

Recommendations for Christian Aid

- Hold national-level consultations with key partners, policy-makers and practitioners on developing a national action plan for HFA.
- Systematically document, analyse and collate partners' experience of community policy monitoring on DRR and develop mechanisms for communicating and disseminating this to all partners and wider civil society.
- Work with partners to produce popular and accessible training materials for local government officials.
- Prioritise support, resources and cross-organisational commitment to the BDRC programme from both staff and partners – to work with programme staff on implementing existing activities outlined in the existing BDRC in all countries where Christian Aid works.

Recommendations for local organisations

- Lack of popular materials for working with local governments. Partners campaigning on DRR at local and national levels lack relevant case studies and evidence. Materials on the importance of DRR are needed, written in an accessible style, without development jargon, that can be easily translated into local languages.
- Partners sometimes struggle to turn ordinary people's understanding and local knowledge into legitimate evidence, and link this to the often scientific and technical language of DRR. Christian Aid can provide partners with mechanisms to combine community wisdom with 'expert evidence'. For example, documenting partners' work on climate-proof solutions in Bihar, northern India, where embankments have been built to connect villages during floods, has enabled it to be shared with international development experts and academics working on climate change.
- When attempting to demonstrate large-scale policy solutions, partners are rarely able to start working at a macro level. For example, partners working on emergency community shelters in Orissa found that it was better to develop a strong model of good practice at a smaller level, and then to lobby for change at a policy level, letting the local government bodies also own the problem and work out the solutions themselves, while learning from the existing models they had developed.
- When partners bring communities together to analyse and monitor policies it can mobilise communities to realise their collective strength.[1] Awareness-raising and building leadership qualities during the process can then motivate communities to work together in the future on other aspects of community development, and then demand further services due to them from local government.[2] The UK Overseas Development Group, in its analysis of what DRR can contribute towards meeting the millennium development goals, indicates that collective action to reduce risk by households and communities provides an entry

point for women and other marginalised social groups to organise for other purposes too, providing a catalyst for economic and social empowerment.

- Achieving successful legal cases in court has been one tool that partners have used to bring governments to account. However, partners in India working on issues of natural resource extraction felt that they can't work on their own and need to be supported by other community actions that keep the issue on the agenda, sustain pressure and monitor the implementation of the court decision.
- Christian Aid's experience in monitoring the participation of civil society and our partners in poverty reduction strategy (PRSP) processes throughout Africa and Asia has demonstrated that with sufficient political will, a process that includes a broad range of people – from the poorest communities to NGOs and government – can be created. However, the opportunity to really involve citizens in participatory policy-making and monitoring is then lost, because governments and international agencies come into the PRSP process, working under a model of consultation based on predetermined policies, and with the perception of poor communities as holders of poverty information, rather than owners of innovative solutions for tackling poverty.

Examples of activities and direct action

Activities	Direct action
Media events or press conferences Taking journalists/celebrities on fact-finding trips Photography exhibitions Websites Email or mobile phone messaging Community meetings Publishing costs on the difference between DRR and the price of disaster relief Producing posters, calendars, wall charts, newsletters, pamphlets and books Placing editorial/articles in newspapers Drama, music and oral testimonies Community theatre	Marches or processions Mass demonstrations Picketing Stunts Civil disobedience Sit-downs and obstruction Publicising individuals' activities Group silence (eg audience refusal to engage). People's public hearings and courts Refusal to pay taxes until budget decisions changed Reverse strike (e.g. carrying out DRR work unpaid in order to draw attention to the needs of communities)

Examples of successful policy monitoring

Association of the Disabled Women and Association of Young Economists, Georgia[3]

In eight villages in Zugdidi district, the Association is helping local people to increase the **transparency of government budget processes**. They are enabling people to claim and use the funding and resources that exist, and to which they are entitled. In Inguri village, the group discovered that their village budget wasn't receiving its proper share of taxes, paid into the district budget by local businesses. The village budget should receive a percentage, totalling 500 Lari (£150) per month, which could be invested in village amenities. The group has alerted local business and is now monitoring the tax payments.

'Before the group began, we were always asking ourselves: "Where do the taxes go?"' said group member, Rubin Karchava. 'Teachers would say: "I'm sure there is funding available, but where is it?" Now, people know how much money is available and what it is spent on. The group examines the local budget, and if figures don't match up, they query them with the village governor. We also hold village meetings to hear about people's problems. We act as an information source for the village governor. It hasn't always been this simple though. Before, we tried to look at the budget, but the door was closed to us. Now we are a strong force. We did radio shows and produced leaflets about people's rights to examine the budget, and then our relationship with the local governor began to improve. In the beginning, getting communities involved was also a challenge. We faced sceptics who didn't believe they could improve things; and others who criticised people for all their problems, but lacked knowledge and concrete evidence about the causes. There was a lot of hard work and training, but people began to see small changes – such as getting an amendment in the local budget so that the library could afford newspapers. It doesn't sound that special, but most people can't afford to buy papers themselves. The group has received training in economics and budget processes, how to interact with local government officials, and how to conduct questionnaires in the community. Some of our community groups know more about the budget process than local government officials do! So we also work with local governors and offer them training. The result of this is that when they are asked to approve the district budget – they are more likely to speak up on behalf of their village.'