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Environmental Disaster Risk, Political Conflict and Governance: A Case Study from Nepal

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Abstract: The concept of governance is as old as human civilisation. The UN defines governance as “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)”. The term “governance” can be used in several contexts including corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Recently the term governance is being increasingly used in development literature, and value judgements are increasingly being made about the methods of implementation. Major cash donors and international financial institutions are increasingly rendering their aid and loans conditional, requiring the developing countries to implement reforms ensuring good governance. This research paper explores the meaning of “governance” and “good governance” in relation to environmental disaster risk in the disaster prone underdeveloped world that is facing additional political disaster since last two decades. With special reference of Nepalese case study, this paper seeks to analyse the relationship between governance and the progression of vulnerability to environmental disaster risk. It also analyses how the decisions made by one of the governance actors increases the vulnerability of marginalised peoples to risk from environmental disaster. Additionally this research paper makes proposals for activities to ameliorate and relieve vulnerability to environmental disaster risk.

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