Nepal’s Climate-Relevant Budget increases seven-fold over five years

7 August 2017
KATHMANDU

A Citizens Climate Budget unveiled in Kathmandu on Sunday shows an increase in government allocations on programmes that seek to address the impacts of climate change.

“Nepal’s Citizens Climate Budget: where is Nepal’s money being allocated?” is the first publication of its kind that visualizes budget figures and trends in a set of simplified infographics for the public. It uses information from the Ministry of Finance and other government agencies to provide the public with insights into how the national budget is being allocated to address climate change and its effects.

"It is a tool that helps citizens understand where the money is going so that they can ask public officials the right questions," said Taranath Dahal, Executive Director Freedom Forum. "This is a process that can help improve governance and make public spending more accountable," he added.

The Citizens Climate Budget unveiled by Freedom Forum and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) showed a seven-fold increase in spending on climate-relevant development activities in the last five years.

It highlighted that a significant amount of funding is allocated to climate-related activities, reflecting the government’s priority in this area. Of Nepal’s total annual budget in fiscal year 2017/18, activities related to climate change accounted for 30.7 per cent of the allocations or about NRS. 393.33 billion. The increases in 2017/18 represent a continuing upward trend of climate allocations in Nepal.

“This information, however, has to be interpreted carefully because the increase also reflects allocation towards reconstruction, and also allocations to local government bodies in light of the restructuring of the state, only parts of which are climate relevant,” said Krishna Sapkota of Freedom Forum.
The Citizens Climate Budget presents the way in which the Government of Nepal has allocated its own resources to respond to the effects of climate change. While this data is available through various financial management systems, and databases of the Ministry of Finance and entities such as the Financial Comptroller General’s Office, it is not available in a format citizens can necessarily understand or analyse. The clear visuals, and extraction of key information in the Citizens Climate Budget makes that information accessible.

“Accessing information related to public resources is a first step in increasing accountability between citizens and the government” said Sujala Pant, from the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub. “Due to its high climate vulnerability, Nepal will be spending increasingly more in the coming years to address climate risks, and therefore, it becomes even more significant for people to know where the money is going”.

Vijaya Singh of UNDP Nepal further reiterated that “an important aspect that this Citizens Climate Budget has shown is that climate relevant budget touches every sector. It’s not just an environmental issue. And this is a very important given that whatever progress we make on addressing climate change, we will directly be contributing to the overall SDGs agenda, because you can’t separate the two.”

Nepal’s Citizens Climate Budget was prepared by Krishna Sapkota of Freedom Forum, with technical inputs from UNDP, and financial support by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID).

For a full version of the Climate Citizens’ Budget please visit (Download Here).

For additional information please contact Krishna Sapkota Freedom Forum on info@freedomforum.org.np or Hamish Wyatt at Hamish.wyatt@undp.org or visit www.cfade.org, or www.asia-pacific.undp.org

* * *