



राष्ट्रिय अपाङ्ग महासंघ नेपाल
NFD-N

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE DISABLED – NEPAL (NFDN)

NATIONAL STATEMENT

Disability Must Be Visible in Nepal's Flood Rescue, Humanitarian Response and Recovery

6 September 2026 | Kathmandu, Nepal

The **National Federation of the Disabled – Nepal (NFDN)** expresses its deepest solidarity with the families and communities affected by the catastrophic Bhotekoshi–Trishuli flood of 26 August 2026 and acknowledges the continuing efforts of the Government of Nepal, security agencies, local governments, humanitarian organizations, volunteers and communities engaged in search, rescue, relief and recovery.

NFDN particularly acknowledges the Government's establishment of the **Rasuwa Flood Rescue Portal under the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (OPMCM)**, together with emergency hotlines, missing-person reporting, help requests, rescue information and government updates. This is an important step toward an information-led emergency response.

The Ministry responsible for disability affairs has also formally called for **persons with disabilities, older persons, children, pregnant and lactating women and others requiring additional protection to be prioritized in search, rescue and relief**, through DDMC and LDMC coordination. NFDN welcomes this commitment.

However, **our current observation from affected communities shows that an important gap remains between policy commitment and operational visibility of persons with disabilities.**



THE EVIDENCE IS ALREADY WARNING US

NFDN has been receiving information directly from affected persons with disabilities, relatives, local OPD leaders, community contacts and people reporting their situation through NFDN's disability emergency information system.

NFDN's current **Flood Strip Update** records:

- ☐ **83 persons with disabilities assessed**
- ☐ **47 currently displaced**
- ☐ **12 missing or uncontactable**
- ☐ **6 confirmed deceased**

Source: NFDN's Flood –Live Data Tracker

These figures are preliminary and dynamic. They represent cases that have reached NFDN's rapid-assessment and reporting channels and **must not be interpreted as the total number of persons with disabilities affected by the disaster.**

The same field information continues to point to urgent requirements for **tracing, accessible temporary shelter, evacuation support, accessible toilets, personal assistance, communication support, replacement of assistive devices, medicines and referral to health, protection and rehabilitation services.**

The scale of potential exposure is much larger. According to the 2021 National Population and Housing Census, **17,249 persons with disabilities live across Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading**, including 1,293 in Rasuwa, 6,939 in Nuwakot and 9,017 in Dhading. This is a planning baseline, not a flood-affected count, but it demonstrates why disability cannot remain a marginal consideration in the response.

These numbers should make us ask a simple question:

If persons with disabilities are missing, displaced, injured or requiring specific assistance, can our national rescue information system identify them and tell responders what support they require?



At present, the answer is not yet sufficiently clear.

A CRITICAL GAP IN THE GOVERNMENT RESCUE PORTAL

NFDN appreciates the establishment of the Government's **Rasuwa Flood Rescue Portal**, which enables people to request help, report missing and found persons, access emergency contacts and follow government rescue efforts.

At the time of NFDN's review, the portal itself was displaying **49 help requests, including 25 classified as extremely urgent**, demonstrating its growing importance as an operational emergency information mechanism. The portal appropriately cautions that its figures are dynamic and may contain duplicate reports.

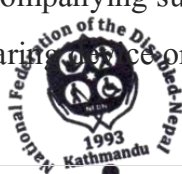
However, NFDN's review of the publicly displayed case information and reporting fields finds **no clearly visible disability identifier, disability type or functional support-needs field**. Publicly displayed help-request records contain information such as disaster type, assistance requested, number affected, urgency and location, but do not visibly identify whether an affected person has a disability or what disability-related support is required.

This is not a minor data issue.

If disability is invisible in the rescue system, disability-related rescue and support requirements can also become invisible.

NFDN therefore respectfully calls upon the **Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, NDRRMA and relevant ministries to immediately strengthen the Government rescue portal** by including, at minimum:

- whether the affected/missing person is a person with a disability;
- disability type, consistent with Nepal's recognized disability classification;
- functional assistance required for evacuation or rescue;
- preferred/required communication method;
- need for personal assistance or accompanying support person;
- wheelchair, crutch, white cane, hearing aid or other assistive-product requirement;



- medicine, rehabilitation or health-support requirement; and
- referral and follow-up status.

These fields should also be incorporated into relevant DDMC, LDMC, shelter, relief and recovery information systems.

NFDN stands ready to provide **technical disability-inclusion support** for this improvement.

NFDN is also operating its disability emergency reporting mechanism and encourages affected persons, relatives, OPDs and community members to report urgent disability-related situations. Timely reporting can support tracing, referral and coordination.

NEPAL'S FLOOD IS OCCURRING AT A HISTORIC INTERNATIONAL MOMENT

The present disaster coincides with an important development in international disaster law.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted **Resolution 79/128 of 4 December 2024**, advancing work toward a legally binding international instrument on the **Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters**.

This was followed by **UN General Assembly Resolution 80/169 of 15 December 2025**, establishing the process for a United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries to elaborate and conclude that legally binding instrument. The resolution was adopted without a vote.

Importantly, **Nepal was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.6/80/L.14**, which became Resolution 80/169.

And just two days before this NFDN statement, the UN **Preparatory Committee on Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters concluded its meeting in New York on 4 September 2026**. The process has now produced the consolidated negotiating text **A/AC.303/2026/L.8** that will feed into the forthcoming diplomatic conference.

Nepal therefore has a unique opportunity.

Our experience from Bhotekoshi–Trishuli should inform Nepal's international position on the future disaster convention.



THE GLOBAL DISABILITY MOVEMENT HAS ALREADY IDENTIFIED THE GAPS

In April 2026, the **Thematic Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action under the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities**, hosted by the **International Disability Alliance (IDA)**, issued a policy brief on the emerging international Convention on Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters.

Its findings are disturbing:

84% of persons with disabilities surveyed lacked personal disaster preparedness plans.

56% lacked access to disaster-risk information in accessible formats.

Only 8% reported that local disaster-risk-reduction plans addressed their needs.

The disability movement has consequently called for the emerging treaty to explicitly address: **meaningful OPD participation, accessible early warning, inclusive evacuation, accessible shelters and services, disability-disaggregated data, reasonable accommodation, dedicated budgets, assistive technology, disability focal points and protection against segregation or institutionalization during disasters.**

These recommendations are directly relevant to what NFDN is observing today in Nepal.

NFDN CALLS FOR SEVEN IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

1. Make disability visible in every disaster information system

Immediately add disability and functional-support information to the Government rescue portal, missing-person database, shelter registration, rapid assessment, relief and recovery databases.

What is not identified cannot reliably be reached.



2. Trace missing persons with disabilities as a specific priority

NFDN's preliminary strip data alone identifies **12 persons with disabilities as missing or uncontactable**.

Verified cases should be rapidly connected with local government, Nepal Police, APF, Nepal Army, NDRRMA/NEOC and community-level search mechanisms.

3. Make every rescue and evacuation disability-inclusive

Search-and-rescue teams must receive information about mobility, communication, intellectual, sensory and personal-assistance requirements before deployment wherever possible.

A deaf person may not hear a warning.

A blind person may not independently identify an evacuation route.

A wheelchair user may not cross debris or inaccessible terrain.

A person with intellectual disability may require familiar support and accessible communication.

Equal treatment alone is not enough. Reasonable accommodation saves lives.

4. Make temporary shelters accessible now

Accessibility should not wait for reconstruction.

Temporary shelters, toilets, water points, food distribution, health services, information desks and complaints mechanisms must be accessible. Alternative arrangements and personal assistance must be provided where immediate structural modification is impossible.

5. Protect continuity of assistive devices, health and rehabilitation

Loss of a wheelchair, crutch, white cane, hearing aid, medicine or personal assistance can transform displacement into a life-threatening situation.

Assistive products, rehabilitation and disability-related health support must be classified as **essential humanitarian assistance**, not secondary welfare support.



6. Put OPDs inside the response architecture

Persons with disabilities and their representative Organizations of Persons with Disabilities must participate in **assessment, coordination, rescue planning, shelter monitoring, relief, recovery and reconstruction**.

This is required by the spirit and obligations of the **CRPD, particularly Articles 4, 9, 11, 31 and 32**, and by the Sendai Framework.

Nothing About Us Without Us must operate during emergencies, not disappear during emergencies.

7. Build Back Accessible

Every school, health facility, public building, road, shelter, WASH facility and community infrastructure reconstructed with public or humanitarian resources must meet accessibility and universal-design requirements.

Nepal must not spend recovery resources rebuilding yesterday's barriers.

NFDN'S NATIONAL CALL

NFDN calls upon the **Government of Nepal, OPMCM, NDRRMA, relevant ministries, provincial governments, DDMCs, LDMCs, security agencies, UN agencies, humanitarian organizations, donors and development partners** to recognize disability inclusion as a core operational requirement of the current response.

Our national legislation, the **CRPD Article 11**, the **Sendai Framework 2015–2030**, the **IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action**, the emerging **PPED Convention**, and the recent IDA-hosted disability movement recommendations all point in the same direction:

Disability inclusion cannot begin after being rescued. It must be part of a rescue.

- ☐ A warning system that cannot reach everyone is not an effective warning system.
- ☐ A rescue system that cannot identify disability-related support requirements is incomplete.



- ☐ A shelter that cannot be entered or used by everyone is not a safe shelter.
- ☐ Data that does not see disability cannot guide an inclusive response.
- ☐ And recovery that rebuilds inaccessible communities cannot be called **Build Back Better**.
- ☐ NFDN calls upon Nepal to use this tragedy as a turning point, both **nationally and internationally**, and to demonstrate that the rights, safety, dignity and leadership of persons with disabilities remain non-negotiable even in the most difficult humanitarian emergency.

No Person with a Disability Left Unidentified.

No Person Left Behind in Rescue.

Nothing About Us Without Us.

Issued by:

National Federation of the Disabled – Nepal (NFDN)

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