Starting from non-structural measures like awareness raising activities to structural measures like construction of shelters and culverts, Practical Action is working in DRR with special focus on preparedness and early warning.

If communities are not made aware of the importance and the function of EWS, little could be done to reduce the loss of life and property. Likewise, awareness and knowledge alone may not suffice to protect themselves and their valuables as the community may lack the means of safer evacuation routes even after receiving early warning.

Hence, complementing non-structural intervention with structural intervention is considered not just an option but a must to reduce the impact of flood. Thereafter, several low-cost, replicable mitigation activities were prioritised by SEWIN Project. These activities have been considered important to build confidence of the vulnerable people, especially at the time of response after receiving early warning for flood.

“Last year I held on to a tree for days with my son in one hand because I did not know where to go as I didn’t know how to swim. I was scared the tree branch I was holding on to might break any time and the fear of snakes was petrifying. Thank god nothing happened to us. I hope this will not happen again because this time I know where I must go. If flood comes I will immediately take my son as well as my belongings to the shelter. We have constructed a bridge, shelter, and a bio dyke. Now that we have all the means for safer evacuation I just hope we receive the warning on time,” Khali Devi Khatri, Binauna - 9 Alinagar.

The entire community members were involved in the construction of one or other small-scale mitigation activities. For instance, in Bardiya, the DMC formed a construction committee which would complete one activity at a time. Division of labour and time management of each person was sorted out by the committee itself after discussion with the community. Moreover, DMC’s were also responsible for facilitating the community in identifying the site for construction and ranking of the identified sites for construction, purchasing of goods, and for project monitoring at the local level.

SEWIN Project is aimed at building the capacity of people to cope with flood. In this regard, the project has identified several mitigation activities such as bio dykes, culverts, bridges, machans and retrofitting of buildings and shelters, which will help the community to become more resilient and cope with flood in all its working districts - Banke, Bardiya, Chitwan and Nawalparasi. These small-scale mitigation structures are necessary not to control flood but to manage their detrimental effects.