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Information bulletin

Nepal: Landslides and Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Date of disaster: 14 August 2014	Point of contact: 1. Dharma Pandey, DM Manager, NRCS 2. Andreas Weissenberg, Operations Coordinator, AP Zone
Host National Societies: Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)	

This bulletin is being issued for further information as well as setting the basis for a DREF request to fund continued humanitarian assistance required in the coming days. It reflects the current situation, gaps and response operation required for the affected population. The Nepal Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has principally decided to make a DREF request as activities in support of the people affected by the disaster need to be scaled up considerably.

The situation

Heavy rain continued between 14 and 16 August 2014 causing massive floods and several landslides in 18 districts throughout the country. According to the Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) reports received from districts to date, a total of 34,760 families (173,800 people) have been affected, of which 5,936 families (29,680 people) are displaced, 100 people are still missing, 53 people confirmed dead, and 30 people were injured. The number of casualties is likely to increase.

The floods and landslides have damaged infrastructure such as parts of roads connecting district headquarters to the affected village development committees (VDCs), bridges, culverts, local



Inundation of villages in different parts of Nepal due to heavy rains.
Photo by NRCS.

markets, transport vehicles as well as livestock, crops and daily consumables. A total of 1,677 houses were damaged (1,242 houses fully destroyed and 435 houses partially damaged) in the affected districts. The communication network and electricity supply are greatly restricted due to falling of electrical and telecommunication poles. Highways, linking Bankey to Bardia, Nepalgunj to Surkhet and Surkhet to neighboring districts, have been blocked due to landslides and floods. Further, floods have swept away five suspension bridges in Surkhet that caused challenges for local people for their daily movement as well as gaining access for first responders of government as well as NRCS in five VDCs. Drinking water supply systems have been

disrupted in Surkhet valley. Similarly, hand pumps have been contaminated in southern plain area due to water inundation.

Following the disaster, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) district chapters immediately deployed their trained volunteers to conduct rapid assessments and provide relief services to the affected people. However, their access to the affected areas has been restricted due to the inundation in the entire villages and destruction of roads. Also, volunteers have been facing problems in identifying and managing the temporary evacuation centers due to low availability of public places and safe places in comparison to the large number of displaced people.

Government security personnel (Nepal army, armed police force and Nepal police) and NRCS volunteers evacuated affected families from high-risk areas to shelters in the schools and public places. Some families are still living in open places.



Inundation of villages in different parts of Nepal due to heavy rains.
Photo by NRCS.

The rainfall is declining gradually since 17 August and water inundation has started to recede in some places. With the decline of rainfall, the water level in Babai, Rapti, Narayani and Koshi rivers have receded below the warning level. However the water level remained above the warning level in Karnali River of mid-western region, according to the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology.

NRCS has provided non-food relief items (NFRIs) to the displaced people in the Sindhupalchowk district. There is need of transitional shelter which the government is planning to meet. The situation in this area is being closely monitored as the water from the artificial dam has not drained out completely, and there is still risk of the dam collapsing which may cause flash floods to the downstream.

This is the second major disaster related to the ongoing monsoon season. In early August, massive landslides from the hillside in Jure, Mankhaa Village Development Committee of Sindhupalchowk district in Nepal killed 33 people with 123 people missing and declared dead by the government of Nepal. The landslide created a 2.5 kilometre long artificial lake that posed a severe risk for flash floods. An [Information bulletin](#) has been issued on 3 August to report on the situation and humanitarian actions for both Nepal and India. The floods and landslides during the ongoing season (since June) have resulted in 256 deaths and 185 people missing. The monsoon season is expected to last until September before moving into dryer weather by October.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Nepal Red Cross Society

NRCS has been coordinating all relief efforts from its Emergency Operation Center (EOC) at national headquarters. NRCS has regularly been taking part in the emergency meeting of Central Natural Disaster Relief Committee (CNDRC) called by the Nepal Government. The National Emergency Operation Centre and Local Emergency Disaster Management Authority (LEMA) have been activated and NRCS has also been representing in both levels. NRCS participated in National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) on 16 August 2014. In the meetings, the government requested all humanitarian actors to provide immediate ready to eat food, staple food, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and emergency shelter to the affected people.

Immediately with the start of disaster events, more than 170 volunteers and more than 40 staff have been mobilized to help with evacuations, rapid assessments, relief distributions and logistics management in the affected districts. Immediately after the disaster, NRCS regional warehouses dispatched non-food relief items to the affected areas for 900 families.

NRCS district chapters in the affected areas have been coordinating closely with District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC) and other local organizations for relief management. The main highway between Banke and Surkhet is interrupted and there is no surface transportation facility available at the moment. According to the Department of Roads, it will take couple of days to reopen the road. Hence NRCS requested Government of Nepal support for transportation of relief materials to Surkhet from Regional Warehouse located at Banke. A helicopter has been

made available and in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs, relief materials for 100 families have been sent to Surkhet district.

Upon request from Bardiya and Surkhet district chapters, the NRCS NHQs has deployed three National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) trained staff for coordination, assessment and relief distribution.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The IFRC has been supporting NRCS for preparing situation reports and providing inputs to coordinate relief operation to ensure fulfillment of immediate humanitarian needs on the ground. Likewise, the IFRC is participating in different meetings, including CNDRC. IFRC has also been coordinating with shelter cluster members. The IFRC team in the country is closely monitoring the situation together with the NRCS and closely coordinating with all in country Partner National Societies (PNS).

Other humanitarian actors

The Government of Nepal has been calling emergency meeting of Central Natural Disaster Relief Committee regularly. The National Emergency Operation Centre and Local Emergency Disaster Management Authority have been activated. All three security forces (Nepalese Army, Armed Police Force and Nepal Police) have been deployed for immediate search and rescue.

The security forces located at district level were mobilized, alerting people to be evacuated and assisting them to move to safer locations. The government has also mobilized private and government owned helicopters to transport affected people to safer places as well as injured people to hospitals. Two helicopters are in standby at Nepalgunj in Banke.

National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) called a meeting on 16 August 2014. The meeting was chaired by joint secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs and participants included NRCS, UN agencies and other humanitarian organizations. In the meeting, Government emphasized on immediate needs of the affected people and requested all the humanitarian actors to provide ready to eat food, staple food and transitional shelter along with the NFRI materials.



NRCS and IFRC staff coordinating the relief operation from Emergency Operation Center at headquarters.
Photo by NRCS.

Needs, gaps and challenges

According to Initial Rapid Assessment report received from district chapters, there is a clear gap for ready to eat food, transitional shelters, NFRI and WASH as an immediate humanitarian needs for more than 13,500 families (67,500 people) in the affected districts. However, the number of reported people affected by the disasters is still increasing. Hence, relief services will be needed for additional people. The affected and displaced population is struggling to manage daily food, shelter and water required to sustain their lives. Since source of drinking water is contaminated due to inundation from flood water, the availability of safe drinking water is very limited.

NRCS warehouses have been dispatching relief materials regularly to the affected districts, which has depleted the stock of relief items. At the moment, NRCS has stock of around 5,000 NFRI sets throughout the country which is insufficient to meet the need. The NRCS NHQs has been getting requests from affected districts to send additional NFRI sets to meet the need of displaced population.

Assessments are still being carried out in all affected areas in the 18 districts and further information will be obtained in the coming days.

As the affected areas are scattered and located in remote area, logistical arrangement remains one of the key challenges. This is clear from the fact that assessment team and responders are reporting several challenges to gain access in the areas affected due to roads being blocked and continuous rain.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Nepal Red Cross Society:**
 - Dharma Raj Pandey, Head of Department, Disaster Management; phone:+977 98511 30168, email: dharna.pandey@nracs.org
- **IFRC Country Office, Nepal:**
 - Ritva Lahti, Country Representative, phone: +977 98510 47071, email:ritva.lahti@ifrc.org
 - Frank Kennedy, Acting Head of Delegation, phone: +977 98 13 101 434, email: fkennedy@redcross.org.uk
- **IFRC South Asia Regional Office, India:**
 - Olivera Burgess, Programme Coordinator, phone: +91 88 26 688 542, email: olivera.burgess@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Asia Pacific Zone Office:**
 - Andreas Weissenberg, Operations Coordinator, mobile phone: +60 12 230 78 95, email: andreas.weissenberg@ifrc.org
 - Alka Kapoorsharma, Zonal Procurement Coordinator, mobile phone: +60 12 225 1160, email: alka.kapoorsharma@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Geneva:**
 - Christine South, office phone: +41 79 308 9824, email: christine.south@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- **IFRC Asia Pacific Zone Office:**
 - Peter Ophoff, Head of PMER, phone:+60 3 9207 5775, email: peter.ophoff@ifrc.org



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All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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