

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## **NEPAL: FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES**

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*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: None*

*This Bulletin is for information only. The last years investment in Disaster Preparedness has enhanced the Nepal Red Cross capacity to respond to the humanitarian needs by distributing relief and family kits from it's disaster preparedness (DP) stocks. Earmarked cash contributions to the Nepal Red Cross Annual Appeal (01.55/2003) for replenishment of the DP stocks are most welcome and encouraged.*

### ***The Situation***

During the past weeks the onset of the monsoon in Nepal has intensified causing widespread flooding and landslides. The flooding has been accompanied by severe landslides and river erosion. The monsoon had started on 10 June this year. But the heavy rain that started on 30 July has caused further floods and landslides. This latest increase in flooding and landslides has further aggravated the suffering of the thousands of people affected by this year's monsoon. To date, 53 out of 75 districts of the country have been severely affected. Many villages and some cities have also been submerged in rain water. According to the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, the heavy monsoon rains from 30 July to 2 August were the highest recorded in the past three decades, exceeding the record of the last year. The floods and landslides have killed 244 persons, and injured 310. 44 persons are reported still missing. Some 9,063 families have been badly affected throughout the country. 1,288 houses are completely destroyed and 2,071 are partially damaged. Thousands of people



*Mountains are ravaged by landslides*

have been forced to live in the open without any shelter. It has been difficult to reach and even get information from the affected areas because of the lack of transportation and communications.

Increased incidence of diseases such as typhoid, dysentery and encephalitis have been reported in some affected districts such as Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Udaypur, Siraha, Mahottari, Rautahat, Makwanpur, Chitwan, Nawalparasi and Banke.

In the flat area of Nepal, riverbank erosion and water logging has led to food insecurity for the majority of the affected, and in the mountainous areas landslides and flash floods are causing high loss of life and destruction of properties.



Landslide damaged a home of Jyamsire WRL, Mahottari in Makwanpur district.

*A whole community in Makawanpur has been made a debris*

### **Affected districts**

Taplejung, Ilam, Tehrathum, Jhapa, Morang, Saptari, Udaypur, Okhaldhunga, Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, Sunsari, Khotang, Sarlahi, Dhanusha, Mahottari, Makwanpur, Siraha, Rautahat, Bara, Parsa, Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Kapilvastu, Rupandehi, Dang, Gorkha, Dhading, Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk, Kavre, Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Sindhuli, Myagdi, Baglung, Parvat, Tanahun, Lamjung, Kaski, Syangja, Gulmi, Humla, Rukum, Jajarkot, Pyuthan, Banke, Kailali, Kanchanpur and Baitadi are the districts affected by massive floods and landslides.

Major highways of the country have been damaged and swept away in many places and transportation has been disrupted. The capital, which only relinked with the rest of the kingdom after a week long blockage, is cut off again due to the landslides on 17th and 18th August. The only highway that links the country from east to west has been blocked. A flood in Jhahare Khola (river) at Rajahar VDC in Nawalparasi district has swept away a 30 meter stretch of road obstructing transportation along the Narayanghat-Butwal section of the East-West Highway. Many other link roads have also been damaged. The only means of transportation is by air and to only a few places in the country. In many remote places, patients are forced to live in their homes without any treatment. Infrastructure such as electricity, water supply, and irrigation systems have also been badly affected.



*Low lands are submerged in water*

With the increase of floods and landslides, the water supply systems in Hetauda municipality have been damaged by the floods and landslides in Samari and Rapti rivers and there has been no water supply for two weeks. People are fetching water in their bicycles, rickshaws and other vehicles from the contaminated local brooks. The water supply in Budhabare village of Jhapa, Butwal municipality, and Gaur Municipality of Rautahat district is badly affected. Moreover, since most cities in the flat lands use underground water, there has been a scarcity of drinking water as the cities are submerged in water. The reduced water supply has increased the possibility of a potential outbreak of waterborne diseases such as cholera, fever, typhoid etc. Food scarcity has forced many persons to survive with local donations of food items. NRCS local district chapters along with

some NGOs and Clubs have been collecting food items, and are providing supplies to the affected people. As the disaster swept away standing crops in many places, food scarcity is a probability.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Nepal Red Cross Society, the leading relief agency in the country, immediately started its rescue and relief service to the affected people mobilising local resources. NRCS district branches immediately sent assessment teams with relief materials to the area. NRCS NHQs dispatched relief materials to regional warehouses. Likewise, district chapters mobilized Red Cross volunteers and staff for rescue, first-aid and other relief services. They are also preparing detailed survey reports. Warehouses located at strategic points have dispatched packages of relief materials to district branches. Most of the district branches are now distributing food items to the worst affected people.



A NRCS disaster Assessment team visited different landslides areas in Gorkha and Chitawan.

Following last year's appeal for flooding and landslide, the Nepal Red Cross is better prepared with the relief material as well as disaster preparedness skills. The warehouses have 50% more stock and the two trucks purchased last year have been of great support in transporting the relief materials. As a result, until now Nepal Red Cross has been able to cope with the present situation though many lives and much property have been destroyed and thousands of families are affected.

**Co-ordination:**The NRCS has coordinated well with the government, GOs, NGOs, INGOs, Foreign Embassies, the Federation as well as the ICRC and other sister National Societies. In Nepal, there is a Disaster Management Committee under the chairmanship of Minister of Home Affairs at central level. Similar committees are formed in each of 75 districts under the chairmanship of the Chief District Officers (CDO). Nepal Red Cross Society is nominated as a member in both the committees. A network of organizations that are involved in the field of disaster as well as development (DP-Network) activities was formed in 1998. The secretariat of the DP-network is at the NRCS. So, Nepal Red Cross is working in close coordination with all the other related organizations in the country.



Community people work to check the flooding

The Ministry of Home Affairs mobilized army and police personnel for rescue operation as well as the Government has assisted the disaster victims by distributing cash. Government sent rescue teams immediately to the floods and landslides affected areas. The government has formed a committee for the

emergency management of the damaged infrastructures, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Physical Planning and Housing.

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*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org> and also <http://www.nrcs.org>.*

*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.*