

KOSHI FLOOD RESPONSE UPDATE

16 April 2009
Sunsari District

This Koshi Flood Response Update is based on information received from the weekly Koshi Flood General Coordination Meeting, chaired by the Sunsari Chief District Officer (CDO), Government of Nepal District Offices, UN Agencies and relief partners.

1. General Situation Update

Background: Approximately 42,807 Nepalese (7,572 households) were affected by the Koshi floods in Sunsari and Saptari Districts on 18 August 2008, in addition to an estimated 11,000 Indian nationals (2,328 households), according to the Government of Nepal (GoN) assessment.

Situation Update: The majority of Koshi flood-affected displaced households have returned to their place of pre-flood origin over the past fortnight. An estimated total of 1,240 households (HH) having 3991 population were verified as residing in the remaining 12 camps, over fifty per cent are landless. However, the flood displaced households are returning to the flood-affected land with limited shelter, access to basic facilities or livelihood support. In particular, the households returning to red areas, where once fertile land is covered with several feet of sand brought by the flood waters, require continued relief support. The WSSDO has committed to ensuring tube wells are established throughout the return areas and the DHO committed to reviewing the health centres. A number of livelihood support programmes are also underway. Shelter remains the gap.

Return Package Update: The Assistant Chief District Officer (A.CDO) Sunsari updated the GCM on the progress of the government Return Package. The Government of Nepal Return Package of NPR 50,000 was distributed from 15 March from the District Administrative Office (DAO) Sunsari. A total of 4,600 families applied for the Government Return Package, as of 16 April. A total of 1,914 families from the flood affected area received the sum, as of 16 April. The registration for the Return Package is continuous and opened for the IDPs residing in the Jhumka Camp since 16 April. The A.CDO added that the process of providing return package is rather slow due to insufficient number of staffs in DAO, Government holidays and KVSC strike programme obstructing work.

Protests and Access: The protest programme of the Koshi Victim Struggle Committee (KVSC) continues to obstruct general transport movement along the East-West Highway between Laukhi VDC and the Koshi Barrage in Sunsari District. KVSC warned of further plans to blockade the alternative route of East-West Highway via Kanchanpur-Chatara section. The DAO will meet with the KVSC later this day in an attempt to resolve the current protest problems and re-open the road.

2. Update from Camps

a. Updated Camp Data: IOM completed the re-verification of camps last week, a total of 1,240 households (HH) having 3991 population were verified as residing in the remaining 12 camps with the minimum of 4 families in Mahendra Highway Camp C. Out of this total, 79% of households (HH) are from Shreepur, 17% HHs from Paschim Kusaha and 4% HHs from Haripur VDC. 76% HHs stated they intend to return to their place of pre-flood origin as soon as possible. 99% of the surveyed households have not received the Government Return Package. 92% of residual population are from the red areas and 53% are landless.

b. Issue Discussion:

Jhumka Camp: As per the decision of central government, construction of women prison inside the Jhumka Prison camp is ongoing since 10 April. The construction directly affects 84 HHs, mostly Mushar indigenous group, residing within the construction site area. Damaged toilets and other WASH facilities will be replaced by the contractor, according to the A.CDO. The DAO opened registration for the Government Return Package in Jhumka camp as of 16 April, with DAO staff present in the Jhumka camp to ensure the residents are informed of the options. By midday on 16 April, 42 families had applied for the Return Package. The local government is developing a plan for the voluntary relocation of the displaced households that will remain in the camps after the Return Package is distributed. Transportation for relocation will be managed from DDRRC budget, details of which will be determined in the next DDRRC. The Lauki Border Custom Camp was identified as a suitable relocation site. The government's relocation plan will incorporate site planning, and ensure that health, education, WASH facilities are functioning adequately. Relief partners also encouraged the need for livelihood support activities for income generation to be initiated for the site. Lauki Border Custom Camp has sufficient space capacity to voluntarily relocate the flood-affected displaced families from Sunsari Khola, Jhumka and Mahendra Highway Camp C for which DDRRC will determine the timeframe. WASH facilities are sufficient in Lauki Border Custom Camp, according to the WSSDO. Once the timeframe and transportation is determined by the DDRRC, there will need to be an active information dissemination and interaction with the flood-affected displaced families to ensure households are informed of options.

c. Camp Cluster Updates

WASH:

- WEL and two local NGOs with support from UNICEF are conducting hygiene promotion activities in Sunsari camps. The maintenance of WASH facilities is continuous; however difficulties have arisen in the mobilizing of human resources due to the on-going strikes and road blockades.
- A total of 130 latrines were constructed to date (including 1 permanent latrine), 123 are functioning and 33 hand pumps are functioning in total of 42 in the Lauki Boarder Camp (3 lost, 5 head removed and stored, one requires maintenance).
- After technical problems with the boring in Jhumka camp, WSSDO is continuously supporting with shifting the location of boring to get permanent aquifer and will finish the installation of deep tube well this week.
- Save the Children plans to mobilize the Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) from flood affected areas in coordination with the DHO to promote health and hygiene promotion in flood affected areas.

Protection:

- The vulnerable flood-affected displaced families remaining in the camps are at risk of food scarcity of food, in particular female-headed households and landless households. Recent visits indicated an increase in lending and selling of personal items to procure food for the families.
- The A.CDO noted that some landless displaced households informed him that they intend purchase a small piece of land by pooling the Return Package funds and to construct a shelter.
- UPCA plans to conduct child rights training for peer groups in Inaruwa with support of Save the Children, from 16-17 April 2009.

Food Security: DDRRC will determine a detailed plan for the distribution of “cash-for-food” to the disadvantaged groups focusing to landless, disabled, elderly IDPs in the camps after the completion of distribution of the Government Return Package. Cash-for-food will be available as per the size of the family.

Education:

- DEO is planning to disburse cash grant at the rate of NPR 1,000 per student to the Sunsari Multiple Campus to support 61 students from flood affected VDC studying in grade 11 and 12 for the purpose of free education to the flood affected students.

- DEO will request the Department of Education (DoE) to release per child funding (PCF) for those students in primary schools from flood affected VDCs where there are more students than the flash-1 report of last year. This funding will enable DEO to mobilize extra teachers in flood affected area for next session based on the increased number of students enrolled after flooding.
- The 4,400 UNICEF student kits were distributed to primary school students of flood affected schools, Madrasa and temporary schools. Save the Children will distribute student kits in the next round to students that did not receive the kits during the previous distribution. World Vision International (WVI) and United Mission to Nepal (UNM) will also fill any gaps for the provision of student kits.

Shelter/NFI:

- NRCS distributed 6,500 toolkits to the flood affected households last week.
- NRCS will distribute tarpaulin to the camps after receiving re-verification data from IOM.
- NRCS also distributed 4,300 sets of sleeping mats and blankets to the displaced households with the support of Plan Nepal.
- Save the Children distributed utensils set for 72 families in Jhumka Camp and plan to distribute for the remaining families.

3. Recovery and Reconstruction

Returns Area Rapid Assessment. The multi-sector rapid assessment of return areas was postponed due to increased tensions of the KVSC protests. The rapid assessment is expected to resume surveying the remaining settlements next week. To date, the Multi-Inter Sectoral Rapid Assessment of the Return Areas in Red Zone has been completed in 50% of the total settlement in Koshi flood affected area of Paschim Kusaha and Shreepur VDCs on 6-7 April. Major findings include the following: 89% of the flood affected population of red zone returned to the place of pre-flood origin. The majority of the land is casted with sand except in Milanchowk. Livelihoods are not resumed in settlements except in Milanchok of Paschim Kusaha VDC. All returnees stay overnight in area of origin under basic shelter and there is a need for tarpaulins and tin sheets. Lack of WASH facilities. Returnees suffer from eye infections, wild animals, local threats, wind, heat, cough and fever. Lack of police patrolling in the return areas. Need to improve health service and schooling facilities in the return areas.

Recovery Sector Updates:

WASH:

- There are a total of 129 tube wells in stock (out of which 48 were installed in returned areas), which could be used to address the immediate need of drinking water in returned areas. UNDP is ready to support with cash to install those tube wells as WSSDO has a shortfall of funds for that purpose. WSSDO, UNDP and WFP will coordinate to address the immediate need of drinking water in the returned areas.
- As OXFAM already handed over their activities to WSSDO Sunsari (WASH activities conducted in the camps in spur area), there are total of 55 trained WASH facilitators (from IDP communities) who could be mobilized in the returned area.
- WEL, partner of UNICEF repaired total of 345 tube wells in returned area of Shreepur, Haripur and Paschim Kusaha VDC. In the mean time, mobilizing its volunteers, WEL is observing the movement of people in the camps, updated information will be made available to WASH cluster on regular basis. In the mean time, WEL and other partner NGOs are going to conduct behaviour change survey in the IDP camps, will share the result as soon as the survey is completed.
- WSSDO, WEL, Pariwartan Nepal and Community Development Organization are going to conduct a survey on WASH facilities in returned area. WEL will conduct this survey in Haripur, WSSDO in Shreepur and Pariwartan Nepal and Community Development Organization in Paschim Kusaha VDC, this survey will enable WASH cluster on the immediate need of WASH facilities in the returned area. This survey will be completed within a week.

- Numbers of relief agencies are being involved in construction of WASH facilities in the IDP returned areas, so that WSSDO Sunsari is planning to establish quality standard of construction materials, appropriate depth for hand pumps and quality assurance through water testing for the uniformity and improvement in quality of the WASH facilities.

Food Security:

- DEPROSC-Nepal (A partner NGO of WFP) has implementing total of 37 schemes on “Food-for-Work” (FfW) in the return areas of 3 VDCs benefiting 4,363 people (1,905 HHs). There are 10 schemes in Shreepur (1-4) covering 757 HHs, 17 schemes in Haripur (1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8) covering 991 HHs, 1 scheme in Lauki-9 covering 37 HHs and 2 schemes in Paschim Kusaha-4 covering 120 HHs.
- A total of 34.920 MT of rice and 4.365 MT of lentils were distributed to 873 HHs through DEPROSC Nepal.

Health and Nutrition: NTR (DHO not present in GCM).
Update required on health facilities in return areas.

Education: Save the Children has a school support programme that will be coordinated with DEPROSC-Nepal and education cluster to minimize duplication.

Agriculture and Livestock:

- Sunsari: Compounded feed and rice straw of livestock is yet to be distributed and stopped due to the bandh by KVSC. The collected EOI is sent to Kathmandu FAO office for selection process.
- Saptari: Compounded feed of livestock is in distribution process through DLSO Saptari. DLSO is planning to organize one day animal service camp to use the remaining medicines.

Livelihood Programmes:

- Face Board (A partner NGO of UNDP MEDEP) is designing a livelihood programme and identified 178 HHs in Haripur-6 for vegetable and banana farming.
- Coordination between MEDP and DEPROSC-Nepal is on-going.
- ADB funded programmes are ready to support enhancing the livelihood of the people in the return areas that is in the process of finalization.
- DDC/QUIPSI prepared a plan to support in small Income Generating Activities (IGA) that will be implemented with revision as per need of the community with the priority on labour intensive activities.

Shelter/NFI:

There is a gap in the provision of shelter support for households in red return areas.

4. Any Other Business

- The LDO requested that all supporting organisations provide the information of programme and expenditures made in Koshi Flood response to the DDRC rather than providing or communicating with KVSC individually.
- DDRC Sunsari will organize an information-sharing meeting between support agencies working on the Koshi flood response, Political Parties and KVSC in the coming week at which discussion will be made on activities supported, budget and expenditures incurred.
- Need assessment performed by the various sectors in the return areas will be compiled by UNDP to ensure partners have access to the information.

Up-Coming Meetings:

Koshi Floods Sector/Cluster Meeting Schedule in Sunsari, as of 16 April 2009				
Meeting	Day	Next Meeting	Where	Remarks
Koshi GCM	1300 hrs Every Wednesday	Wednesday, 22 April	DDC Meeting Hall, Inaruwa	
Education	1100 hrs Every Thursday	23 April	DEO Office	
Protection/ Child Protection	1300 hrs Monday (fortnightly)	27 April	Women Development Office, Inaruwa	
WASH	1100 hrs Tuesday (fortnightly)	21 April	WSSDO, Itahari	

For more detailed and updated information please visit the Nepal Information Platform (<http://www.un.org.np>) or contact:

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