

**RI Nepal Earthquake Response:  
Field Mission Report**

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| <b>Date of report: 10 May 2015</b>  |   | <b>Submitted to:</b> RI HQ, RI Region, RI Nepal Earthquake Response Support team |
| <b>Mission location:</b> Affected villages/VDCs (Village Development Committees) of Gorkha (Taple and Palungtar villages) and Lamjung (Dhimirikuwa village) where RI partner, CHES Nepal, will deliver relief materials.  |   |  |
| <b>Mission Date and Duration</b>  | <b>Type of Mission</b>  |  |
| 8-10 May 2015<br>three days   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of earthquake damage and urgent unmet needs of affected populations in Gorkha and Lamjung;</li> <li>• Understanding the coordination mechanism at district level</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Objectives of the mission were as follows:</b>   |   |  |
| <p>Conduct Assessment of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent and nature of damages in earthquake affected areas</li> <li>• Urgent needs of affected populations</li> <li>• District government procedures for delivery of relief</li> <li>• Activities being implemented by local partner CHES Nepal</li> </ul>  |   |  |
| <b>Meetings and Discussions</b>   |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RI team conducted assessments in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Village Development Committees (VDC) of Taple in Gorkha;</li> <li>○ Ward Citizen Forum of Appipal Village in the Palungtar municipality in Gorkha</li> <li>○ VDC of Dhimirikuwa in Lamjung district</li> </ul> </li> <li>• RI team met with the Disaster Relief Committee/ Govt. representatives in Gorkha and Lamjung districts</li> </ul> |   |  |

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| <b>Key Findings</b>   |
| <b>Key findings of the Field Mission to Gorkha and Lamjung districts are as follows:</b>  |
| <b>Extent and nature of damages in earthquake affected areas and situation on-the-ground</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>More than 90% of the houses in the assessed villages of Gorkha have been fully or partially destroyed.</b> Even partially damaged houses are not habitable and pose a great risk, especially in the event of continuing aftershocks;</li> <li>• <b>Geographical terrain.</b> The geographical terrain of the districts visited is mountainous/ hilly and road conditions make travelling slow and grueling. Most people are still living close to their destroyed homes.</li> </ul> |

- **Provision of Immediate Relief.** Affected households have received some immediate relief material in the form of food, blankets, tarpaulin, hygiene kits. In the village of Taple and the municipality of Palungtar, people received tarpaulin, food articles and hygiene kits and water purifier tablets.
- **People are living in emergency shelter arrangements,** made of tarpaulin and other kinds of plastic sheets that they received as relief material from agencies/govt. In Gorkha and Lamjung districts, the occupancy per temporary shelter is between 5 to 15 people (one or maximum three households). In the Kavrepalanchok district field trip, RI had observed that the occupancy per temporary shelter (that ought to house a max of 10 persons) stretched even up to 60 persons, thereby not adhering to international shelter standards.
- **Sanitation Status.** Most households had a toilet outside their homes before the earthquake. Although most toilet superstructures have been damaged, these are still being used with makeshift arrangements, like plastic sheets being used as walls. However, WASH standards are not strictly maintained, resulting in greater risk of ill health in the situation of damaged sanitation structures, especially for women, elderly and children.
- **Water status.** In some villages, access to water hasn't changed and in others, water sources have been contaminated, forcing people to walk atleast half hour for collecting water. People are concerned about the quality of water and fear contamination of water sources resulting from unmanaged debris.
- **Livelihoods and food stocks.** Households do not have long-term food stocks since they usually consume what they produce, with stocks lasting for 6 to 8 months. The death of some livestock during the earthquake has affected the food security situation to some extent.
- **Shortage of labour.** This is affecting the speed with which debris is being removed and the construction of temporary shelters.
- **Shortage of cash.** Since farming and livestock are the main sources of local livelihoods and most of the produce is consumed at a household level, people lack cash even in a normal situation. Most people have limited savings or access to cash and many are in debt of 50,000 to 400,000 rupees.
- **Access to public services and markets.** The assessed communities are 2-5 hour walking distance from the nearest commercial/market centre (at the district centre), which in turn is atleast 12 km distant from the district centre. The village health post is completely demolished. The nearest health facility is at the district centre, nearly three hours of walking distance for some of the closer villages. Lives of people, especially pregnant women, elderly, children, disabled, living in remoter villages of the affected districts will be at greater risk during the monsoons.
- **Schools are destroyed.** Almost all schools have been destroyed in the earthquake, so children are out of school. The re-opening timeline for schools is uncertain. Most children in the village have to walk at least an hour to reach even the nearest primary school. No agency or the govt. has started supporting the rebuilding of schools or mobilized the provision of tents for schools.
- **People are unsure about the next steps in rebuilding homes.** Most people are aware that they will have to live in temporary shelters for many months since they do not have ready availability of cash and will need to wait for government decisions on assistance and support. So, they want the temporary shelters to be as long lasting as possible. People no longer want to build the same

kind of house structures that were damaged but don't know what and how of building their homes.

- **Poor and lower caste communities face a greater food insecurity situation.** The food security situation of people who had permanent homes and farms earlier hasn't changed in terms of food security. They have been able to extract food stocks out of debris.
- **Debris management.** Villages are facing a massive problem in managing the existing debris and are concerned about the monsoon season when partially damaged houses could fall, creating further debris that contaminates water sources.

### Agencies on the Ground

Agency mapping information is attached for Gorkha

### Urgent Needs of the affected populations

#### Need for Temporary Shelter

- With the onset of monsoons around 15<sup>th</sup> June, **each household with a partially/fully destroyed home** (partially demolished homes are no longer inhabitable), **urgently needs temporary shelters**. These shelters must be semi-permanent and must protect people through the monsoons and last until people make their own dwellings. **Shelter is considered as the most urgent need** also because of greater risk of exposure to ill health and disease, especially amongst children, pregnant women, and elderly people, in emergency shelters like tarpaulin that cannot protect people from heavy monsoon showers.
- As per discussions with people and govt., **there is urgent need is for shelter material** that comprises CGI sheets, and tool kits for salvaging material as well as floor mats/thick plastic to save the shelter base from water. Silpaulin sheets (thick plastic sheets used for greenhouses) may not be the right solution for these villages since they do not follow greenhouse practices and thus may not be able to reuse the same. People have expressed their willingness to add on local materials like bamboo, salvaged wood, etc. to complete the shelter if they received assistance of CGI sheets (since cash availability is limited). Most agencies continue to distribute immediate relief materials like tarpaulin, food material, hygiene kits. Agencies have not yet started addressing the rapidly evolving needs among the local population - of temporary shelter.
- In the case of being provided with cash for shelter, people have expressed their willingness to go to markets of neighboring districts and buy material for temporary shelters so as to be better prepared for monsoons.

**Need to construct temporary structures and tents** for public services like schools, health posts, community centers.

**Need to increase people's knowledge** on building shelters and on shelter/ demolition related "do's and don'ts"

**Continuing need for basic health and hygiene kits.** Since health centers are distant and monsoon poses a greater risk of exposure to disease and ill health, people would require basic health and hygiene kits,

**(including water purifiers),** especially for pregnant women and children

**Management of Debris.** Heavy monsoon showers could result in partially damaged structures falling, increasing risks for human lives and livestock as well as contaminating water sources.

#### **District government procedures for delivery of aid**

- In Gorkha and Lamjung, we witnessed good coordination between DDRC and stakeholders. DDRC coordinates different cluster meetings in order to identify needs of affected populations, make sure aid is not duplicated and that it responds to the real needs of affected communities.
- The DDRC comprises the following sub-working groups/committees/departments: Police, women and child development dept., Child Rights Officer (CRO), Local Development Officer (LDO), Chief District Officer (CDO), Health dept., media and other stakeholders.
- The district level procedure for aid delivery includes:
  - Reporting to the DDRC (LDO or CDO) to inform of intention to provide relief;
  - Registering with DDRC on the quantity and kind of material available for distribution and/or register the total fund allocation available for relief work;
  - If DDRC accepts the organizational mission, plans and material, then it shares its own needs assessment as per geographical area;
  - DDRC guides and assigns a geographical area and requests organization to conduct further assessment/ validate assessment;
  - Organizations conduct detail assessment and report back to DDRC on assessment findings.
  - Organizations share information on materials distributed with DDRC (with beneficiary village, name, kind of material, etc.) and submit monitoring and final report to DDRC