

# **Disaster Situation Report**

**Nepal, 2008**



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## Disaster Situation Report 2008

### Background:

The year 2008 remained troublesome because of different huge disaster incident related to flood and landslide. Especially the Nepalese people faced greater problems and many of them lost their lives in flood and landslide in monsoon season. Recurrent landslides in the hilly district and flood in the terain plains caused the damages of different infrastructures and resulted the loss the property of millions rupees. The landslides in Bajura, Kalikot, Dhading, Bajhang and Jajarkot district and the devastation of Koshi flood in Sunsari and Saptari, inundation of Kailali, Kanchanpur and Bardiya areas made thousands of people homeless. Thousands of flood and landslide displaced people are living their refugees lives in the tents. Hectares fertile land and the crops got damaged and changed into the sand. Roadways and communication links have been obstructed in many districts. All the sectors like; health, education, development, transportation and so on have been badly affected due to the flood and landslide this year.

In this year, about 270 Nepalese lost their lives from flood and landslides (Disaster Watch Nepal, [www.nepaldisaster.org](http://www.nepaldisaster.org)). The major districts, which beared major disaster in the year 2008, are Kailali (36 death) and Sunsari (35 death). Both of these districts are still struggling to overcome the rigours of flood. Saptari (13 death) and Kanchanpur (12 death) were also badly ravaged by the flood this year. Bajura faced huge human loss from landslide in the year 2008 with the death toll of 21. Kalikot (16 death), Dhading (12 death), Bajhang (9 death) were other landslide hit districts.



Floods in Koshi River and the inundation of the mid and far western districts are the major devastating disaster incidents of this year which have reduced hundreds of houses into the rubbles and thousands were rendered homeless. The loss in the property and livelihood would continue to haunt flood affected population for many years.

Landslides and floods are regular phenomenon in Nepal. Flood, landslide, and drought are the major forms of natural disaster in Nepal. Nepal is affected by the water induced disaster from mid July. Eastern Terai, Western and Mid-Western Terai and Hilly districts are being suffered from landslides and the floods. Earthquake, food crisis and famine, fire, cold waves, hailstorms etc are other disasters that hit Nepalese this year as well.

Loss of lives in this year is lesser than last year though the number of displaced and affected families is higher due to flood and landslide. In the year 2007, 291 Nepalese lost their life from flood and landslides. The districts like; Baglung, Gulmi and Bajura had suffered of landslide while the Banke, Rauthat, Bardiya and Sindhuli lost many people in flood.

Similarly, 90 people were killed due to landslide and flood in 2006. All these data show the critical situation of disaster in Nepal. Nepal has huge threat of natural disaster. According to the global report on disaster risk, Nepal ranks 11th in terms of earthquake and 30th in terms of water induced disaster in the world. The biggest disasters in Nepal are: Earthquakes of 1990/2045, floods and landslides of 2050 that damaged 4 billion which is equal to 13% of the total budget at that time. Human loss by disaster from 1983 to 2003 is 21195 and around 1000 died each year from disaster and disaster induced circumstances.

In this disaster situation report 2008, the disaster incidents and its impacts is presented by separating it into different categories as Flood and landslide, cold wave and winter, fire, food scarcity, windstorm, lightening and so on others. The major incidents related to these titles are discussed here.

### **Flood/Landslide:**

The landslide and flood destruction killed about 270 people in this monsoon. In different parts of the nation frequent landslide and flood caused the losses of lives and property and made many people homeless. Major incidents of flood and landslide are as follows.

At least nine persons, six of them from a single family, were killed in a landslide triggered by monsoon rain in Khalanga VDC ward-4 in Jajarkot district on 31st July night. The deaths occurred after a massive landslide swept away the house of Amrita Shahi at Bohora Gaun, adjacent to district headquarters. Similarly, Including four of a family at least nine persons were killed and in a landslide in Brahmatola VDC-2, Amkot Gaun, Barjhayana in Bajura district on 7th August, morning. The landslide caused by the incessant rainfall has buried four houses affecting other 12 houses.

Dhading is also one of the landslide affected district where four members of a Dalit family died in Dhading district after the mound caved in, following heavy downpour. The incident occurred in remote Tipling VDC of the district on last week of June, which is three days far from district headquarter Dhadingbesi. Similarly, on 2nd week of July five persons died, four others got severely injured in the landslide caused by incessant rain in Katunje of Dhading District.

In Solukhumbu, three persons of the same family died when their house was brought down by a landslide at Odu village of Kanku VDC-5, on 18th July at midnight.

Similarly, Six persons (three of a family and three relatives) were killed in a landslide triggered by the incessant rainfall on the last week of July at Khalanga-4; Boharagaun in Jajarkot district. The heavy rains swept away a house belonging to Amrita Shahi at 2 pm night.

Two family members were killed in Baglung on 3rd April when the clay hump suddenly buried them at Mashurabasi Dharmashala of Painyupata of the district in course of collecting red clay for painting their house. In a different accident one woman died and three others were injured as a soil mound buried them at Dhanauri VDC in Dang district on 28th April. The mound caved in while the women were digging in a bid to fetch soil for daubing their house. For the further detail information about the flood and landslide incidents, please visit the pages of disaster watch news newsletter (nepaldisaster.org) by Co-Action Nepal.

A huge loss of lives and property has been caused due to the collapse of Saptakoshi barrage spurs in the mid August. The primary report of the technical team over the saptakoshi flood shows the 70% flow of the Koshi River was diverted toward neighboring villages breaching its embankment, said a preliminary report of the Government. The report estimated that paddy, jute and vegetables in about 10,000 hectares of land were destroyed by the flood. The Koshi River has started damaging another spur located 13.6 kilometers north of the Koshi Barrage, making it a new breaching point. "Three spurs positioned at points of 26.40 kilometers, 26.80 kilometers and 27.10 kilometers from the barrage need to be immediately constructed to stop further damage," said the report.



Two spurs with a length of 190 meters and 1.5-kilometer embankment have been breache. The flow of 168,000 cusecs [cubic feet per second] of water was recorded in the river at that time. Also, the river's velocity was recorded at 3 meters per second.

Meanwhile, many stranded passengers stuck on the highway after Saptakoshi River breached the embankment, have begun using alternative Chatara route of Udaypur. Over 15,000 of them have already set out to the east and west via Rampur Basaha of Udayapur and Phattepur-Kanchanpur of Saptari, according to area police post, Rampur. However, they have to use boats to cross the swollen Saptakoshi River at Shisaulighat before catching another vehicle. The transportation entrepreneurs in Biratnagar started sending passengers using Indian land--via Jogbani-Raxaul-Birgunj route-- to Kathmandu. Whose distance is, double that of the

usual route. Passengers have also been compelled to pay as much as 1,800 rupees while the usual fare stands at just 700 rupees.

A total of 40,378 people and 7,102 households were completely displaced because of the collapse of Koshi embankment 12.10 and 12.90), as per the preliminary assessment of the Home Ministry. The locals of four VDCs— Haripur, Sripur, Laukahi and West Kushaha—of Sunsari district were completely displaced due to the flood caused by Shaptakoshi embankment collapse, the Home Ministry said. Similarly, three other VDCs—Narshinga, Basantapur and Dhuski- were badly affected by the flood.

The flood damaged around 7,000 houses, 5, 500 hectares of cultivable land, around 12 kilometer road, 13 meter long culvert and two pipe culverts. The flood has completely destroyed irrigation projects, drinking water projects, school buildings, local industries and other infrastructures.



Patients have been facing a shortage of medicines, food and medical personnel. According to Dr Bindeshwar Prasad Yadav, an epidemiologist at the EDCD, doctors at the Sagarmatha Zonal Hospital, the only hospital in the area, have been finding it difficult to look after patients. "In five days, the hospital treated 4,440 patients," he said, urging the authorities concerned to address the shortage of manpower, medicines and food.

Flooding of the East-West Highway has affected industries along the Sunsari-Morang corridor. Unable to supply products to Kathmandu and markets in the western region for 10 days, industries have cut down their production by 70 per cent.

The Biratnagar Custom Office (BCO) is bearing a loss of Rs 10 million daily as industries are not importing raw materials from India and other countries. Before the flooding, the BCO used to collect Rs 1.6 crore as import tax every day. After the Saptakoshi disaster, the collection has gone down to Rs 55 lakh for a week.

Due to the displacement after inundation more than 11 thousand schoolchildren in the Koshi area have been deprived of school education. The displaced parents are worried about their children's future as they have witnessed damages of the school and displacement of the teachers as well. Nonetheless, with the bleak hope they believe government will arrange education for their children ([www.nepaldisaster.org](http://www.nepaldisaster.org)).

According to the District Education office Sunsari, there are 1946 children under the age of five year in the displaced camps. District Development Committee of Sunsari has initiated for the schooling of the displaced children along with the long term rehabilitation. Guru Prasad Subedi, Local Development Officer of Sunsari informed that the international organizations like UN, Save the Children, World Vision and others have pledged to provide support for the education of these displaced children.



The ministries have presented a budget of Rs 2.5 billion for relief and reconstruction. It needs Rs. 320 million for repairing the damaged road, two culverts and other transport infrastructure. Around 12 kilometers of the East West highway has been completely damaged by the Koshi flood. Infrastructure under the Water Resource Ministry worth Rs 570 million was damaged in the floods, according to Shankar Koirala,

secretary at the Ministry of Water Resources. This includes Rs. 345 million in irrigation canals, Rs. 185 million in spurs and Rs 32.5 million in electricity poles, transmission lines and other things. Agriculture also has suffered a heavy loss. All the farmland in four villages in western Sunsari was submerged, 30,000 head of cattle were affected and 400 perished in the flood.

The Flood and landslide in mid and far western districts also have been caused similar destruction. Death toll due to the flood and landslides triggered by continuous rainfall in the far western region was 45 on 22nd September. Twenty-six have died in **Kailali**, 10 in **Kanchanpur**, six in **Doti**, one each in **Bajhang**, **Dadeldurra** and **Darchula** districts.

Around 40,000 people have been displaced in those districts as more than 4000 houses failed to escape the flood fury. The transport sector has been paralyzed in the hilly districts. Vehicular movement has been disrupted from Dhangadhi and Mahedranagar to the east as one km-long breach has been made on the lifeline, East-West Highway, at Pahalmanpur VDC in Kailali. Traffic is out of bounds at Bhimdutta Pant Marg, Dasrath Chand Marg, Jayprithvi Marg, Dadeldhura-Safebagar Marg. Hundreds of candidates for the Public Service Commission examination are stranded at Dipayal following halt in vehicular movement (see [www.nepaldisaster.org](http://www.nepaldisaster.org))

Kailali experienced the maximum rainfall this year, estimated at 299 mm. "Flood has affected around 10,000 houses in Kanchanpur district. Bagbani, Bhagatpur, Aithpur, Bhansi and bazaar areas of Mahendranagar Municipality and several VDCs, including Sripur, Belauri, Rampur, Shankarpur, Gulariya, Suda, Dodhara, Tribhuvanbasti, Chandani, Pipaladi and Jhalari, are facing the flood fury. The Doda River has displaced 200 families in Shankarpur and freed kamaiyas in Krishnapur VDC. Six hundred people

are staying in a makeshift camp at Kanchanjunga Secondary School. The police and army personals were mobilized in the rescue operation. Meanwhile, heavy snowfall began in three northern VDCs in Manang district from 20th September. Early snowfall this winter is caused due to continuous rainfall in Nar, Phu and Khangsar VDCs from the last two days.

### **Cold waves/ winter:**

Cold wave sweeping the terai plains in southern Nepal has killed at least 36 people and rendered dozens ill since 1st January to 14th December 2008. Especially the districts like; Siraha, Bajura, Mugu, Bara and Nawalparasi have been affected. Temperatures began dropping since first week in January and more effect has been seen in the sunny plain districts of eastern Nepal. The victims are also among the poorest, and the lack of warm clothes and proper accommodation.

Life in himalayan districts like; Humla and Mustang have been badly affected due to the heavy snowfall on third week of January. The continuing snowfall forces people into their homes while livestock risked of dying of cold. Snow fall as high as three feet has accumulated in Mustang and the district headquarters of Humla and Simikot. Similarly, the air service in different districts also stooped due to the unfavorable weather and snowfall. People are seen huddling around fire in order to keep themselves warm and avoid catching cold. Dozen of schools were closed down in the northern district.

### **Fire:**

Fire destruction also was one of the major causes of loss of lives and property throughout the nation. Most of the fire destruction incidents remained common from January to April. Among the affected districts like; Panchthar, Udayapur, Makawanpur, Siraha, Chitwan, Morang, Bhojpur, Saptari, Mahottari, Nawalparasi and Kanchanpur the Saptari district has been found the most critical. Most of the cases of firing have been occurred due to the carelessness of the people and the children. Somewhere the houses and the factories destroyed in fire caused by the electric shot. In the case of Bhojpur three children of a family were killed in the fire. For further detailed information the disaster watch newsletter [www.nepaldisaster.org](http://www.nepaldisaster.org) can be downloaded.



**Food scarcity/Famine:**

More than 3.8 million poor Nepali people have been put in a vulnerable position because of the poor harvest and losses of fertile land and monsoon crops due to the flood and landslides. “Many of the extremely poor households in the food-affected areas, mainly in the far western region, are struggling to cope with the long-term effects of food insecurity. As poor families are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain food, the number of households with one member going away to work has increased from 35.8 to 48.6 percent in 38 districts in western and far western Nepal.

About 50,000 people in Bajura, Dailekh, and Jajarkot were already facing in an acute food shortage. Since the beginning of June, people living in Kalikot, Humla, Mugu, Dolpa, Bajura, Achham, Dailekh, Rukum and Jajarkot are facing deteriorating food security with little possibility of recovery. The acute shortage of foodstuff in remote villages is also caused of the road blocked for long months as badly damaged by flood and landslide in the rainy season.

People are in the condition of dying of hunger in most of the remote villages. Women in Bajura district have demanded food grains from the government, failing which they threatened to commit mass suicide. Rural folk of remote VDCs in the north-eastern part of this remote district have long been reeling under famine.

**Windstorm:**

Windstorm is also one of the major causes of destruction of lives and property this year. Heavy rain with hailstorms occurred in plenty caused the heavy of loss in agriculture and other sectors.

Among those huge losses, hailstone with storm that took place on January 26 has destroyed standing wheat and vegetable in the rural area of Myagdi district. The hailstone that occurred in Barangja, Okharbot, Takam, Bhakimli Gaushwara including other VDCs of Myagdi district destroyed wheat, potato, cabbage, tomato and other seasonal and off-seasonal vegetables worth around Rs. 500 thousands. Winter crops in rural parts of Myagdi district were destroyed by the sudden hailstorm on the afternoon of March 15 too. Over an hour-long hailstorm damaged the wheat, pea and mustard crops worth thousands of rupees nearing harvest in various villages of the district including Takam, Barangja, Dole and Kuhun, according to the local farmers. Similarly, it has been reported that the crops planted in various places of Baglung and Parbat were also damaged by the hailstorm. The repeated hailstorms have damaged winter crops worth Rs. 500,000 as in various villages.

Crops in hundreds of bighas of land have been destroyed in Purchaudi and Barayal area of Baitadi district by the hailstones that lashed for two days continuously on 17th and 18th April. Wheat crops have been destroyed by hailstorm in Purchaudi area. Wheat in three hundreds bighas of land in seven VDCs in this area including Hat, Bhatana, Malladehi and Kotpetara were destroyed. Likewise, hailstones also occurred in Barayal

area in the middle of the district causing loss of wheat and vegetable in Shankarpur, Shikharpur, Rauleswor, and Bhauneli VDCs, said Haridutta Awasthi of Shankarpur- 5, Mulkhatali. The District Agriculture Office Baitadi said that hailstones damaged crops totally in some places.

A strong storm caused damage in twenty houses including a higher secondary school at Chanuwa VDC of Dhankuta district. Properties worth Rs 500,000 were damaged in the school.

In Dhading, hailstorm combined with windstorm caused extensive damage to vegetable crops and fruits, especially mango and litchi, and blew away roofs of six houses in Khari and Chainpur VDCs on 27th April, evening. Likewise the windstorm combined with hails weighing as large as 150 to 200 grammes damaged vegetable crops, mango and litchi. The extent of the damage is however yet to be assessed, said district agriculture development office.

The strong winds with hailstones on 29th April made a huge damage to seasonal vegetables grown by farmers of 12 VDCs of Makwanpur district. The hailstones destroyed vegetables including gourds, pumpkin, cucumber and tomato and caused 45 percent damages. The hailstones weighing up to 400 grams had fallen in various VDCs.

District agriculture development office, Mahottari, predicted a sharp fall in the production of summer fruits in the district after windstorm combined with hails damaged fruits planted in over 300 hectares of land in the district. According to the office, fruits like mango, litchi and jackfruits are grown in over 2,550 hectares of land in the district. Horticulture officer at the office Sitaram mandal said the windstorm caused more damage to the fruits in Aurahi, Sonamai, Hatisarwa, Bhangaha, Meghnath Gorahanna, Pashupatinagar and Kisannagar. In other areas, too, the crops have not fruited as expected. The office said 19,520 MT of summer fruits were produced in the district from 2,440 hectares of land last year but the production is expected to fall by over 60 per cent even though the area under fruit crops has grown by 110 hectares this year.

Rain combined with hailstorm lasted for three days in second week of July has damaged winter crops including wheat and vegetable in various parts of Bhaktapur district. More than 50 percent of the crops have been damaged in areas including Madhyapur Thimi, Nagadesh, Sipadole, Jhaukhel, Manohara and Hanumante, said a farmer Ram Krishna Prajapati of Nagadesh. Vegetables including cabbage, cauliflower, pumpkin, brinjal, bitter guard, cucumber, sponge guard, cowpea and greens suffered the most damage. Nearly 30 percent of standing wheat crop which was ready for harvest was damaged in areas including Thimi, Bhaktapur, Jhaukhel, Duwakot, Sipadole, Sudal and Tathali.

### **Lightening**

Frequent lightening during the summer and monsoon season killed more than 15 people this year. Among them the major incidents are of Morang (3), Siraha (3), Makawanpur (3) and Nuwakot (3) districts.

## **Conclusion:**

The year 2008 is unforgettable in the history of disaster of Nepal. Especially the outburst of Koshi embankment and resultant havoc can be hardly forgotten by this generation. Koshi flood has taught lesson that disaster mitigation efforts should be the key of development activities and it would be disastrous if overlooked. It has also buttressed on the need of transboundary co-operation, greater co-ordination among the disaster related GOs and I/NGOs and community based disaster mitigation initiatives.

Disaster incidents have created opportunities for integrated action against it. It makes authorities and people to be more sincere on pre-emptive measures against impending doom. Government's commitment for comparatively more attention in this issue and interest shown by public and private sector augurs well for disaster risk reduction campaign in Nepal. It is a good sign that the role of the government agencies which is limited to immediate rescue and relief has now gradually transforming into preparedness and post-disaster activities as well.

## **Recommendations:**

For the betterment of the situation and save the lives and property from being maximum loss the special programs and planning should be done before, during and after the disaster incidents.

Human resource should be organized by establishing the disaster management committee, relief and volunteer committees, emergency fund, emergency relief materials and pre information dissemination to aware the people. Similarly, the retaining walls, spurs, bridges and the road network should be check regularly. Way to livelihood for the poor and the people living in the disaster prone areas should be managed before the disaster incidents.

The relief and volunteer team should be mobilized during the disaster period. Fund should be generated from outer and national levels for the proper support and cure of the displaced and the victims. Immediate relief materials, food, clothes and shelter should be managed to the displaced. Security of lives and property of the people during disaster should be guaranteed.

Similarly, the accurate data of the losses and the destruction need to be collected calculated after the disaster. The crumbled and destroyed structures should be rebuilt. The communities should be prepared to be saved from the recurrent types of disasters by empowering them with means of livelihoods, equipments and making them aware of the possible incidents.

The present law and policy are not suitable according to present period. Law and policy also should be revised according to the time. Present laws have focused on past disaster activities rather than pre disaster activities. Due to which disaster management has not been effective. The local disaster management committees should be made capable

through resources. The policy makers should be decentralized. The planning and the management of the disaster management policy should be made in the local or the prone areas and the central bodies should only monitor them. Calamity management special fund should be managed and the compensation and relief acts should be revised. The local and disaster victim's participation should be guaranteed in the calamity management committee.



Pathetic Condition of the Saptakoshi displaced people  
Photo: Co-Action Nepal

**Monsoon Displacement since 1st July 2007**

Districts	Displaced families
Saptari	10000
Siraha	6000
Mahottari	3700
Bardiya	2500
Dhanusha	2050
Parsa	2000
Rupendehi	2000
Sunsari	1000
Banke	750

Total displacement: 48000 families

Total affected population: Around 4 lakh 72 thousand (as of 30th October, 2007)

**(Monsoon Deaths 2007)**

<b>Districts</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
Baglung	29
Banke	28
Gulmi	19
Rautahat	12
Bajura	11
Bardia	10
Sindhuli	10
Darchula	9
Ramechhap	9
Sindhuli	10
Baitadi	8
Dang	8
Pyuthan	7
Salyan	7
Mahottari	7
Siraha	7
Kailali	6
Kaski	6
Makwanpur	6
Udayapur	5
Jajarkot	5
Kalikot	5
Arghakhachi	5
Saptari	5
Jumla	4
Surkhet	4
Jhapa	4
Chitwan	4
Morang	4
Sunsari	4
Nawalparasi	3
Rukum	3
Dhanusha	3
Achham	3
Khotang	2
Bhojpur	2
Panchthar	2
Sarlahi	2
Parsa	2
Palpa	2
Bara	2
Dhading	2
Rupendehi	2
Bajhang	1
Tanahun	1
Sindhupalchowk	1
Lalitpur	1
Dadeldhura	1

Kavre	1
Mustang	1
Myagdi	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>291</b>

(As of 30th October, 2007)

#### **Cold Fatalities 2008**

<b>Districts</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
Mugu	5
Bajura	5
Siraha	5
Bara	5
Nawalparasi	5
Sunsari	2
Rautahat	2
Kathmandu	1
Dhankuta	1
Sarlahi	1
Saptari	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

**As of 6th February**

#### **Monsoon Deaths 2008**

<b>Districts</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
Kailali	36
Sunsari	36
Bajura	21
Kalikot	16
Saptari	13
Dhading	12
Kanchanpur	12
Jajarkot	10
Bajhang	9
Nuwakot	6
Doti	6
Tanahu	5
Salyan	5
Gulmi	4
Palpa	4
Nawalparasi	4
Rukum	4
Jumla	4
Kaski	4
Siraha	4
Morang	3
Bhojpur	3
Solukhumbu	3
Dang	3
Chitwan	3

Udayapur	3
Banke	3
Dolakha	2
Dailekh	2
Rasuwa	2
Baitadi	2
Rauthat	2
Pyuthan	2
Rupandehi	2
Dolpa	2
Sankhuwashabha	2
Rolpa	2
Darchula	2
Dadeldhura	2
Parsa	1
Jhapa	1
Mahottari	1
Makwanpur	1
Sindhupalchowk	1
Taplejung	1
Gorkha	1
Sindhuli	1
Lamjung	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>

*(As of 3rd November, 2008)*

Feedbacks and comments are heartily welcomed.

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Thank you