



# Sunsari Floods

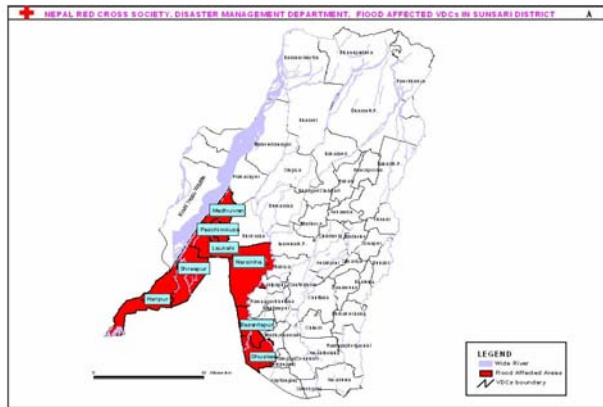
## OCHA Situation Report No.2

Kathmandu, 20 August 2008

This situation report is based on information received from the OCHA Office in Biratnagar, UN Agencies and humanitarian partner organisations

### I. Situation in Sunsari District, Eastern Nepal

- 1) **Breach of Koshi River banks:** On 18 August the Koshi River, Nepal's biggest, broke through an eastern retaining wall roughly 10km north of the East West Highway in Sunsari District of the Eastern Region due to heavy monsoon rains. The waters have flooded significant areas of the following Village Development Committees (VDCs) of Sunsari District: Shreeharipur (colloquially Haripur), Shreepurjavdi (Shripur), Lokahi (Laukihi), Kusahapaschim (Paschim Kushaha). Dhuskighat (Ghuski), Narsigha (Narshing), Bashntapur and Madhuban (Madhuwan) VDCs are also affected, but to a lesser extent. The total population of the affected VDCs is around 50,000.



Map Credit: NRCS

- 2) The floods have caused significant damage to the local infrastructure. The East West Highway, which connects the Koshi and Mechi zones of the Eastern region including Nepal's second largest town Biratnagar with the rest of the country, has been totally damaged at a stretch of 3km and has been impassable due to flood waters at the entrance of Koshi Tapu Wildlife Reserve. Bridges and culverts have collapsed. Land and mobile phone networks have been out of service for two days and are only gradually being repaired. An alternative East West route through India is currently used by Nepal public buses as well as private vehicles. The route follows Biratnagar to Bathanaaha to Birpur to Bahantabari and the trip takes roughly 2.5 hours longer than usual. Drinking water and electricity supplies, schools and public buildings are destroyed and many private houses, property, domestic animals and corpses were swept away.
- 3) **Displacement:** It is estimated that at least 15-20,000 people are displaced due to the flooding. The Ministry of Home Affairs estimates a number of 7,000 affected families, amounting to 35,000 people heavily affected and displaced. Media reports mention even higher figures and have also reported 6 missing persons. Reports on 20 August of a capsized relief boat were dismissed by the

authorities, however. The majority were displaced quickly and moved with limited belongings and supplies.

- 4) By 20 August roughly 7,000 people including those rescued by the police and army were present in shelters in Inaruwa, the district headquarters of Sunsari. According to the Nepal Army 417 people had been airlifted by 9:30 am on 20 August and 2,500 people were rescued by ground on 19 August. It is presumed that the remaining affected/displaced people have moved to extended family or are still to be rescued. A smaller number of people is also assumed to have gone to Saptari district or India.
- 5) It can be assumed that this population will remain displaced for at least 2-4 weeks as the repair of the embankment remains impossible with current water levels. Without this repair, flooded areas will remain so.

### II. Initial response

- 6) **Assessments and actors on the ground:** OXFAM GB, Caritas, and DEPROSC Nepal are conducting a rapid assessment using the IASC Initial Rapid Assessment Tool (IRA). This assessment began from the evening of 19 August. WFP assessed food needs on 20 August.
- 7) The Government, under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Home Affairs, have mobilized the entire state machinery for the relief effort. The Central Natural Disaster Relief Committee (CNDRC) meeting headed by PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal on 19 August decided to release Rs 16 million through the Finance Ministry and Rs 6 million through the PM's Natural Disaster Relief Fund. The PM visited the area on 20 August.
- 8) The Government of Nepal, WVI, UPCA Nepal, and NRCS have begun providing direct assistance. UNICEF, LWF, ActionAid, British Nepal Medical Trust, UMN, Plan International, Save the Children, Caritas and UNHCR have all sent staff to the area on 19 August. ActionAid focuses on special vulnerable groups like disabled, children, lactating mothers, pregnant women who are neglected during such disasters. DPNET assists in coordination and information sharing with civil society. UNDP can support the transportation of rapid assessment teams, medical team, medicines, search and rescue kits, emergency response items (food and non-food) etc. Additionally, UNDP can also mobilize up to 50,000 USD through RR from a BCPR emergency grant within 24 hours for the above purposes.
- 9) OCHA Nepal upon the request of the Government can mobilize USD 50,000 as emergency grant.
- 10) **Emergency Shelter and NFIs:** All locally available resources have been mobilized to meet NFI needs. See table 1 below for commitments made. The displaced people are taking shelter in Inaruwa Municipality in schools, colleges and public buildings. See table 2 below for shelter locations. By 20 August 18 shelter locations/camps have been designated by the authorities in

Sunsari district. Shelters also exist in Saptari district (Rajbiraj and Hanumannagar). Each shelter has been assigned to a particular organisation. NRCS is assessing each shelter location. Many flood affected persons are however still in the open or have found shelter elsewhere.

- 11) **Food:** Immediate food needs are being met with donations of ready to eat foods from the Government, INGOs, NGOs, UN and local civic organizations. NRCS has distributed food to more than 32,000 by 20 August. The food cluster has met on 20 August in Kathmandu. WFP is conducting an assessment on 20 August and has stated that it has stocks for feeding 20-30,000 people for about two weeks in the country. Security is an issue, as persons who are not direct flood victims also appear to claim support.
- 12) **Water and Sanitation (WASH):** WVI is installing emergency latrines at the shelters and UMN may also get involved. These will take 3-4 days to come operational. WVI is also installing 10 tube wells and has the capacity to install an additional 10. UNICEF will begin training on the use of aquatab on 20 August and will provide aquatab for 600 families.

NFI Commitments as of 6:30pm, 19 August			
Item	Quantity	Remarks	Agency
Aqua tabs.	60,000		UNICEF
Baby pack	125	Blanket and other baby items	Save the Children
Blanket	600		UNICEF
Blanket	245		RRN
<b>Blanket Total</b>	<b>845</b>		
Bucket (10ltr)	600		UNICEF
Bucket (10ltr)	250		ICRC
<b>Bucket Total</b>	<b>850</b>		
First aid kits	12		UNICEF
Hygiene kits	?	requested to Ktm	UNICEF
Cooking Sets (large)	12		Plan International
Latrine Pan (Slab)	10		WVI
Mattress	239		RRN
Mop	600		UNICEF
Mug	600		UNICEF
Plastic sheet	100		UNICEF
Tarpaulin	100		WVI
Tarpaulin	200		Save the Children
Tarpaulin	250		ICRC
Tarpaulin	200		NRCS
Tarpaulin	226		RRN
<b>Tarpaulin Total</b>	<b>976</b>		
Tube well	10	Additional 10 possible	WVI

Table 1

- 13) **Health:** The acting District Health Officer (DHO) has assigned a health team to each shelter. These teams will provide primary care and refer as necessary to the district hospital. The team consists of a health assistant and an auxiliary health worker. In addition, the DHO has created a rapid response team moving with a vehicle. The DHO assures that he has sufficient supplies and drugs for the current case load. UNICEF has provided a first aid kit for

each shelter. Media reports speak of fever and pneumonia among evacuees. The Ministry of Health sent an assessment team with medical supplies, including experts from the Epidemiology and Diseases Control Division (EDCD) to the area on 20 August. WHO EHA handed over emergency medical supplies to the EDCD. A medical doctor from the UNFPA Saptari field office will join EDCD health assessment team. The UNFPA mobile health team in Saptari is also on standby to respond to health needs in the shelters in Hanumannagar and Rajbiraj.

- 14) UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO are in the process of procuring and transporting hygiene kits, Clean Health Delivery Kits and emergency medical kits.
- 15) **Logistics:** Both landline and mobile connections are not working properly hence satellite phone should be used for communication. The Ministry of Home Affairs has provided rafts and rubber boats, which were flown in from Kathmandu on 19 August by the Nepal Army. Although a good number of food and NFIs are available access and transportation has been an issue due to the disrupted road traffic.

### III. Overall needs

- 16) The Ministry of Home Affairs requested international support for around 2 months for immediate relief as well as support for an eventual rehabilitation program. The Ministry stated that daily food provisions are needed for the displaced, as well as tents, clothes, drinking water and medical aid. Needs will be established following a series of detailed needs assessments on 20 and 21 August.

Shelter location and capacity, as of 19 August				
Nr	Shelter Name	Location	Capacity - individuals (as per NRCS)	Current Pop. (indiv.)
1	Sunsari Multiple Campus	Inaruwa-6	2000	625
2	Bhagwati Sec. School	Inaruwa-1	2000	1,800
3	Gaynodaya Sec. School	Inaruwa-6	300	178
4	Devkota Prim. School	Inaruwa-5	200	122
5	Sharada Higher Sec. School	Balaha	2000	0
6	Rajaji Ramji sec. school	Inaruwa-8	1000	100
7	Balmandir	Inaruwa-7	500	200
8	Janta Sec. school	Madhesa	1000	0
9	Va. Si. Higher Sec. School,	Jhumka	2000	0
10	Chandra kamal sec. School	Dumraha	2000	0
11	Prithivi Narayan School	Bhokraha	400	0
12	Saraswati Sec. School	Babiya-1	2000	300
13	Jamiya Islamiya	Bhokraha		153
<b>Total</b>			<b>15,400</b>	<b>3,478</b>

Table 2

- 17) **Shelter:** NGO sources report that many flood victims are still spending the night in the open or do not have

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adequate shelter facilities. Shelter also needs to be provided for the livestock rescued from the flood waters. The Ministry of Home Affairs requested support through 1,000 tents.

- 18) **Food:** While immediate food needs are being met, there is a need for medium term food assistance. WFP will present the findings of its assessment on 20 August.
- 19) **Protection:** Overall, protection and security concerns need to be carefully monitored, with a particular focus on women and unaccompanied children.
- 20) **Water and Sanitation (WASH):** Water and sanitation at the shelters continues to be a significant need. In particular emergency latrines are in need at the shelters as well as in other locations. There is a continued need for the provision of aquatabs, as well as a need for training on their appropriate use.
- 21) **Recovery:** Agencies and government should start to consider return and reconstruction support.

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#### IV. Coordination

- 22) Coordination meetings have taken place on a daily basis at local, regional and national level. On 20 August, the RC/HC chaired an interagency coordination meeting with the MOHA Joint Secretary in Kathmandu. OCHA's Offices in Kathmandu and Biratnagar continue to collect all relevant information in order to share it with the appropriate bodies. The Sunsari DDRC, which coordinates all relief operations, operates from the District Administration Office in Inaruwa.
- 23) As for 21 August, OCHA will maintain a presence in the CDO's residence in Inaruwa to coordinate assessments as well as response.
- 24) The next coordination meeting will be called in Kathmandu by the RC/HC once the assessments are in and the cluster leads have been able to form themselves a picture of the most urgent requirements. Time and date are to be announced.

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

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# SUNSARI : Flood Affected Areas (20 Aug. 2008)

