Nepal:
Earthquake

Highlights and Key Messages

- The window of opportunity—just weeks before the onset of the monsoon—to deliver life-saving food, shelter and medical supplies is closing rapidly for people living high up in the mountains with no road access. Once the monsoon rains begin, access to the high-lying villages will be seriously curtailed.

- WFP is racing against the clock to deliver food and assist other organisations in delivering shelter materials by helicopter, trucks, tractors and, starting this week, approximately 20,000 local porters who will trek into some of the remotest villages carrying food and shelter on their backs.

- Food assistance is needed in mountainous areas affected by the earthquakes where food stocks were lost and markets have not recovered. In other affected areas, where household food stocks have been partially lost and markets are partially functioning and recovering rapidly, WFP will carry out cash transfers to allow survivors immediate access to their preferred kinds of food.

- The rugged terrain, poor weather conditions, disruption to communications, lack of sufficient helicopters, and bureaucratic snarls are creating backlogs of relief supplies at the humanitarian hubs. WFP is working with the Government of Nepal to decongest the flow of cargo and dispatch relief items as quickly as possible. In addition to the Humanitarian Staging Area (HSA), near the Tribhuvan Airport, five more logistics hubs and a new road corridor from Calcutta, India, are helping to speed up the flow of relief supplies.

- While WFP is grateful for the contributions received for its emergency operations to date, urgent funding is required to sustain the food assistance and two humanitarian common services platforms—Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications, and the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS)—which WFP leads. The provision of common support services is essential to ensure the humanitarian lifeline between relief organisations and the earthquake-affected population.

In numbers

8,604 deaths (total from both earthquakes)
3,834 male, 4,726 female (44 unidentified)
8 million people affected
1.4 million people have received WFP food

Funding

Flash Appeal: US$423 million (17% funded)
Corporate Response EMOP: US$116.6 million (7% funded)
Special Operation Logistics Augmentation and Emergency Telecommunications Cluster: US$25.6 million (18% funded)
Special Operation UNHAS: US$8.5 million (81% funded)
Almost immediately after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal on 25 April, WFP was gearing up its response. The Government of Nepal requested WFP to focus on delivering food to the most heavily affected districts outside of the Kathmandu Valley—initially identifying seven. As more information became available through assessments conducted by WFP and others, four more districts, for a total of 11, were added to WFP’s area of operations. Following the destruction caused by the 12 May earthquake, which measured 7.3 magnitude, the Government has declared additional priority districts and WFP may be asked to expand its response.

**WFP’s Emergency Operation (EMOP)**

As the initial rapid assessment, subsequent household-level assessments, on-the-ground observations, discussions with partners, and Government priorities yield a clearer picture of the devastation and urgent needs of the earthquake-affected populations, WFP has put in place a phased and coordinated response based on the following rationale.

In-kind emergency food is not needed in all areas affected by the earthquake. However, in-kind emergency food rations are urgently needed in high-lying areas, where there has been extensive loss of household food stocks and where markets are either not functioning or are severely impaired. In these areas, even if people have funds through remittances or other sources, they do not have easy access to functioning markets.

In other areas, where there has been partial to high loss of household food stocks, but where markets are partially functioning and recovering more rapidly, cash transfers are the most appropriate response for people with sustainable access to sizeable markets. WFP will closely monitor the markets and quickly adjust for any price hikes due to sudden high demand and limited supply.

With acute malnutrition rates high even before the earthquake, a blanket supplementary feeding programme is critical to prevent a sharp spike in acute malnutrition in the worst-affected areas.

WFP has established a supply chain of specialised foods to operate a two-month blanket programme for children 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women.
WFP is implementing its emergency earthquake response in three phases over six months. The first phase covers the immediate relief to support basic caloric needs of earthquake survivors in the hardest hit seven districts. In the second phase, the relief package will provide a combination of in-kind (rice, pulses and oil) or cash, and nutrition assistance, in the most affected Village District Committees (VDC) of all 11 priority districts based on assessed needs. In the third phase, cash will be the predominant transfer for recovery, using the existing, tried and tested WFP cash transfer platform to ensure transparency and accountability. The most affected seven districts will be targeted for conditional transfers (food and cash) for reconstruction, and a small targeted nutrition intervention in two districts.

WFP will ensure that assistance to vulnerable populations is delivered and utilised in safe, accountable and dignified conditions. Vulnerable groups such as pregnant and lactating women, elderly, disabled, single- and female-headed households will receive unconditional cash transfers, where possible.

An electronic system for project reporting (e-SPR) is in place to assist in gathering data in the programme areas. WFP will have trained monitoring staff in all sites this week. The WFP monitoring system is linked up with the Nepal Food Security Monitoring System. WFP field monitors have convened district food security meetings in almost all damaged areas to prioritise needs for later phases. A further detailed assessment will be undertaken in the coming month to determine infrastructure losses to guide reconstruction efforts.

### PLAN OF OPERATION

**Phase 1: Immediate Relief** (April 26–May 15/30)
- **Total Beneficiaries:** 1.9 million people
- **Partners:** National Red Cross, MSF, ACTED, IOM
  - Reach all affected people in the seven most-affected districts with 10-day food rations.
  - Produce assessments to refine targeting and determine the impact on food security and nutrition status.
  - Purchase and position food needed for the response.
  - Identify partnerships for the second phase.

**Phase 2: Structured Relief** (May 15/30–July 1)
- **Total Beneficiaries:** 1.15 million people
- **Partners:** Nepal Investment Bank Ltd (NIBL) and NMB
  - Reach 11 districts with a package of in-kind (rice, pulses, oil) or conditional/unconditional cash transfers targeted to the most-affected VDCs.
  - Start blanket supplementary feeding (BSFP) for pregnant and lactating mothers and children under two.
  - Start planning for early recovery with food and cash transfer programmes to support reconstruction.

**Phase 3: Early Recovery** (July 1–November 1)
- **Total Beneficiaries:** 938,000 people
- **Partners:** NIBL, NMB, and one I/NGO
  - Ensure that the relief operation transitions into a plan to expedite recovery and rebuild sustainable livelihoods and food security before the autumn harvest.
  - Establish partnerships and community advocacy for food/cash assistance for assets for early recovery in the seven most affected districts.
  - Establish targeted supplementary feeding programme (TSFP) in select districts to treat moderate acute malnutrition in children 6-59 months.
WFP Response

- As of 17 May, WFP has distributed 10-day food rations to over 1.4 million people from 237 Village Development Committees (VDC) in seven of the hardest hit districts: Gorkha, Nawakot, Dhading, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchok, Kavre, and Dolakha. Daily distributions continue in these districts.
- Over 6,200 mt of local rice and 3,220 mt of Indian rice have been purchased for distribution. To date, WFP has also distributed over 25 mt of High Energy Biscuits (HEB)—enough for over 48,000 people—as part of the immediate relief response.
- In addition, 128 mt of Plumpy ’doz have arrived in Calcutta, India, and are currently being prepared for transport by road to Kathmandu in the coming days.
- Road transport is becoming ever more challenging as dry landslides and falling stones continue to cause delays and road closures, even halting distribution in some districts. WFP continues working with the local government authorities to ensure that sections of road that are currently impassable are cleared in the coming days.

Assessments: As of 18 May, joint WFP and partner teams of trained enumerators have completed household-level surveys in 64 sites in 11 districts, as part of the Food Security Cluster’s joint needs assessment. Limited transporation and poor road conditions have slightly delayed the surveys in Dolakha, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchok.

Monitoring: The WFP monitoring team is currently travelling to all seven district offices to train field teams on tools for monitoring on-site distributions and beneficiary outreach. Tablets are being used to collect data through the real-time information management system, eWIN, and then transferred to an online server application. Monitoring findings are used to identify any aspects of the operation that may need to be amended in a timely manner. Field monitors are trained to get feedback from males and females separately in order to allow any safety or protection issues to surface.

Gender: In order to ensure the effective integration of gender programming in the humanitarian response, a Gender Task Force was established, comprising of both UN agencies and non-governmental organisations. WFP works to ensure that the needs of women and children are met, as part of the overall emergency response.

Cash: Whilst focusing on in-kind distributions in the worst hit remote areas, WFP is transitioning to conditional cash transfers in Makawanpur where the markets are functioning. For those people who are unable to work, unconditional cash transfers will be provided. Registration for cash for work in Makawanpur has begun in coordination with the district authorities and
partners to reach a planned 58,000 beneficiaries. Due to a shortage of funding, WFP will not be able to expand its cash-based interventions to more than one additional district. A team is currently reviewing the markets in Ramechhap and Sindhuli following the earthquake of 12 May to determine which district to provide the cash transfers.

**Nutrition:** As WFP prepares to transition into the second phase of its emergency response, partners are being identified and plans are being put in place to distribute Ready-to-Use Supplementary Food (RUSF) through the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP) in up to eight districts targeting 37,000 children 6–23 months. Additionally, 24,000 pregnant and lactating women will receive high-energy biscuits. The nutrition component is part of the coordinated WFP approach and will not be implemented as a standalone intervention.

**Logistics**

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- **Logistics**

- WFP has developed a five-tiered strategy—‘Operation Mountain Express’—to reach people living in the most remote locations. Using up to 20,000 porters managed by the Trekking Association of Nepal and the Nepal Mountaineering Association, WFP will establish a common logistics supply chain to reach approximately 45,000 people living in villages located above the altitude of road access. These highly experienced personnel will carry up to 30kg per person at a time in order to reach all affected communities. Furthermore, the porters and mountaineers leading the interagency response, will be augmented by a number of Mi8 cargo helicopters in unison with four B3 Scout helicopters up to an altitude of 3,500 meters.

- To reach the remote communities based above helicopter access, WFP will use experienced mountaineers and porter teams to communicate to people in need of assistance to descend to collect relief items. This should not require villagers to travel more than a day each way to receive assistance. Approximately 5,000 people in high mountainous areas will be assisted.

- WFP has received 196 Rapid Response Kits, which contain life-saving gear, for immediate distribution to staff assigned to the field or who are going on mission to the heavily affected areas.

- WFP food distributions reach deeper into some of the most isolated mountainous areas, partner organisations are encouraged to combine their relief items with WFP’s food to ensure that deliveries to VDCs are complete with food, shelter and other urgent supplies.

**Security**

- Security risks for trucks carrying relief supplies and food continue to be of concern. On 16 May, trucks carrying food for outlying villages and some WFP vehicles were blocked by approximately 200 people demanding tents and tarpaulins in Chautara. WFP security staff are monitoring the situation closely and working with authorities to ensure the safety of all staff and contracted drivers.

- Vehicle and personal tracking devices are being sourced and will be used to ensure that the whereabouts of WFP staff are accurately communicated in the event of an emergency.

**Clusters**

**Food Security Cluster (FSC)**

- The FSC is now established at sub-national level in the two humanitarian hubs in Gorkha and Sindhupalchok.

- An agriculture working group has also been created to address the immediate need for coordinated seed distributions.

- The cluster continues to advocate with partners for the provision of standardised rations both at national and sub-national level.

- FSC partners are working on the revision of the Flash Appeal due on the 28 May. The results of the ongoing household surveys will feed into the revision process. To date, the FSC section of the Flash Appeal is only 5 percent funded.
**Logistics Cluster**

- There has been an improvement in the flow of cargo from the airport. The nightly backlog was cleared from the tarmac and brought to the HSA for temporary storage.

- The current focus of the Logistics Cluster is on establishing light forward hubs for onward distribution into the most inaccessible areas. The current plan is to position one in Dolakha district (Charikot), one in Rasuwa district (Dunchei), one in Nuwakot district (Bidur) and one in Dhading. Meetings are being held with the TAAN (Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal) and the NMA (Nepal Mountaineering Association) to transport this cargo into otherwise inaccessible areas.

- WFP, as lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, has now made available 20 light vehicles in both Deurali and Chautara for transportation to areas with reduced road capacity. Both of these hubs have four mobile storage units (MSU) in place.

- Total common storage capacity has now reached 7,500 cubic metres, the equivalent of 30 large storage tents. Five additional MSUs have been loaned to partners, and last week WFP donated an MSU to the Nepal Orthopaedic Hospital to serve as an outdoor ward.

- The Logistics Cluster has published an access map that is now available on the website. This map is regularly updated with new information as the situation changes on the ground.

- **Civ-Mil Coordination:** Last week, the US Marines delivered 138 packs of tarpaulin and 397 boxes of HEBs to Charikot on behalf of the humanitarian community over seven rotations.

- The Government has requested foreign militaries to demobilise and by 19 May they will finish their missions. The helicopters and other assets brought with them will no longer be available for the humanitarian response. This reduction in helicopters will have an impact on the already constrained airlift capacity.

- **UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS):** With the increasing need for air capacity, UNHAS continues to scale up its fleet to deliver food and relief items and facilitate assessment missions. A total of 5 Mi8 (2.5 mt capacity) are expected to be operational by the end of next week. One AS350 helicopter continues to be made available for assessment missions and emergency evacuations. Since 29 April, UNHAS has flown a total of 199 sorties on behalf of the Nepal response, which includes flying 76 mt of humanitarian cargo and 275 passengers to 42 destinations.

- **UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD):** To date, 558 mt (worth US$3.5 million) of relief items and equipment have been dispatched from UNHRD depots in Dubai, Subang, and Panama on behalf of 19 humanitarian partners.

- Four members of UNHRD’s Rapid Response Team are on the ground at Kathmandu airport supporting cargo receipt, as well as the set-up of remote storage facilities.

- **Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)**

  - Despite facing challenges in moving equipment into the country and to remote locations, ETC shared internet services are being provided in eight locations to 565 registered users in Kathmandu, Bidur, Deurali and Chautara. Services in Bharatpur, Gorkha and Arughat have also recently started.

  - In Chautara, the site of one of the logistics hubs, connectivity has been sporadic and the equipment has been changed to resolve the problems. Currently all ETC teams are out in the field working to ensure stable communications to and from WFP staff and several NGO partner locations.

- **Staff Deployments**

  - There are currently 110 staff deployed and 11 due to arrive for the earthquake response in addition to the 137 WFP pre-emergency staff.
Resourcing Update

- As of 17 May, the Emergency Operation, valued at US$16.6 million, recently received fresh contributions from Canada, Japan, and more from Private Sector donors. With these contributions, and those from Liechtenstein, Private Sector, and UN CERF, the operation is 7 percent funded. Pledges have been made and contributions are also expected from the United States. Securing additional funding for the Emergency Operation is essential to ensure assistance reaches earthquake affected families in need.

- With a contribution from Japan valued at US$500,000, the US$8.5 million Special Operation for UN Humanitarian Air Services and the contributions from Denmark, the United Kingdom and UN CERF, the operation is now 81 percent funded. New donors continue to pledge their support to the common air services platform.

- The US$25.6 Logistics and Telecommunications Augmentation and Coordination Special Operation received further funding from Canada, Germany, Japan, and the Private Sector. With these contributions, and the already received contributions from other Private Sector donors and from UN CERF, the operation is 18 percent funded. It is in the interest of the entire humanitarian community to have both Special Operations funded as they specifically cater to supporting organisations in their relief efforts.

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Key Links

Operations
- Nepal Emergency Operation
- Nepal SO — Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Augmentation
- Nepal SO — United Nations Air Service (UNHAS)

Clusters
- Emergency Telecommunications (ETC)
- Logistics Cluster
- Food Security Cluster

Latest Media
- http://www.zdf.de/ZDFmediathek#/beitrag/video/2404782/Weitere-Nachbeben
- http://www.zdf.de/ZDFmediathek#/suche/peter%20kunz
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elfUsISXtrA&feature=youtu.be