



GENDER EQUALITY

UPDATE 23: MONSOON RESPONSE

SEPTEMBER 18, 2020



Overview

During the monsoon season, Nepal is vulnerable to recurring natural disasters, including floods and landslides. Women, girls and excluded groups already severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are further affected by floods and landslides caused by heavy rainfall.

On July 27, the Gender in Humanitarian Task Team (GiHA TT) organised a virtual meeting on monsoon response with women’s groups, civil society organisations and the Government of Nepal to understand the gendered impacts of the emergency.



Photo Credit: WHR

EMERGING ISSUES IN MOONSOON RESPONSE

Presented during the Gender in Humanitarian Action Task Team Meeting on July 27, 2020

Civil society organisations (CSOs) have raised the need to provide warm clothes, cash, shelter, food and clean water to the communities affected by landslides in Myagdi and Jajarkot. CSOs also reported an increase in unwanted pregnancies and maternal deaths due to

the closure of health centres and abortion services. Dedicated attention to the needs of Dalits living in disaster prone and remote areas is needed to reach communities facing marginalisation and discrimination.

Citizenship documents

CSOs raised the issue of lack of citizenship documents preventing women from opening bank accounts, which is impacting their access to cash-based transfers to support food security. The Social Security Act (2018) allows for cash- to be transferred directly to social security accounts.

However, the lack of guidance and technical knowledge on operationalizing cash-based transfers is therefore preventing women and excluded groups from receiving the cash support necessary to sustain themselves and their families. A combination of cash, in-kind support and re-skilling for livelihood interventions is required to support these groups effectively and sustainably.

Data

The lack of sex-, age-, disability-, and diversity-disaggregated data was also



Photo Credit: WHR

A group photo of the community with the staff of UN Women's implementing partner WHR during the relief distribution efforts.

raised by women's groups as hampering effective response to the most vulnerable groups impacted by the ongoing emergencies (COVID-19 and monsoon flooding). Actively mainstreaming and monitoring gender equality and social inclusion across the humanitarian response efforts is a joint responsibility among humanitarian clusters and its contributing members.



The government has developed and disseminated Emergency Response Plans across all provinces, districts and ward levels. The plans give priority to women, children, senior citizen and persons with disabilities. These groups are prioritized particularly when we carry out search, rescue and relief in disasters.

Murari Wasti, Under Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs



The [Checklist for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Disasters/Emergency Preparedness in the COVID-19 context](#) was prepared by UN Women, drawing on inputs from the GiHA TT and the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IACS) Gender Alter for COVID-19 Outbreak.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM EMERGENCIES

Women's groups shared the following lessons learned from responding to COVID-19 and previous emergencies:



Disaggregated data: The extensive network of women's groups in Nepal can be utilised to obtain disaggregated data on the needs of women and girls.



Diversity of culture and language: Increased knowledge on local cultures and languages is necessary to effectively respond to women and girls' needs during emergencies.



Including women's groups in emergency response: Establishing women-led emergency warehouses to cater to the unique needs of women and girls could provide a more sustainable and effective response and help reaching those left furthest behind.



Capacity development: Women's organisations need preparedness and response training at the local level to effectively fulfil their roles.



Disasters do not affect everyone in the same way. People from marginalized communities, women, children, senior citizens and persons living with disabilities are more affected than others. Even within this group, people from Dalit communities are most affected. And within Dalit communities, Dalit women are most vulnerable.

Kala Swarnakar, Chairperson, Feminist Dalit Organization



Photo Credit: WHR

This Gender and Equality Update has been consolidated by UN Women on behalf of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Task Team (GIHA TT). The Task Team is chaired by UN Women and organized in close cooperation with the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MOWCSC), Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations that includes diverse women and excluded groups and their wider networks.

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