

Emergency and Humanitarian Action (EHA) Unit
Country Office for Nepal, World Health Organization (WHO)

Avalanche and floods in Seti River, Kaski district, Nepal

Highlights

1. On 05 May, 2012, at around 0930 hrs an avalanche in the Annapurna Mountains caused floods in the Seti river, Kaski district of the Western Development Region (WDR) in Nepal.
2. As of 09 May 2012, 26 people have been reported killed, and 44 persons are missing including three Ukrainian tourists. A total of 14 families have been displaced
3. It is reported that 20 houses, two temples, one community building have been swept away by the flood in Tatopani and Machhapuchhre Village Development Committee (VDC) and half of a kilometer of the road section, two suspension bridges, water supply system to the Pokhara valley (which supplies around 60 percent of water supply in the valley) and electric poles have been damaged.
4. District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC) and Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) have provided the immediate cash and Non-Food Item (NFI) to support to the flood affected families and the families of the deceased. Government send emergency rescue, relief and response teams to the disaster sites open command post and provided emergency supplies to the affected communities.
5. WHO team collaborating with the Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD) of the Department of Health services (DoHS), Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) at the central level and supporting the District Public Health Office's (DPHO) ongoing efforts in responding to the emergencies. WHO EHA staff member joined the Government led information verification and assessment team in the affected areas.

Incident Site Mapping



Caption: Security forces (Nepal Army, Nepal Police, and Armed Police Force) and the local community, in coordination with other partners are heavily involved in searching of the missing people

Disaster Information

A landslide near Machhapuchhre Mountain in Kaski district triggered a catastrophic flash flood in Seti River sweeping settlements and breaching the river banks downstream on 05 May 2012 at around 0930 hrs. Kharapani village in Sardikhola Village Development Committee (VDC) and Sadal village in Machhapuchhre VDC are worst hit by the powerful outburst. The level of Seti River was as high as 30 ft at some locations during the time of flooding. The bad hit area is 40 km north from Pokhara valley.

Most of the deceased are pilgrims, people picnicking, locals, tourists and laborers working on sand/stone quarry in the river bank. The affected families in the major two sites in Kaski district are comparatively less than non local residents especially visitors, pilgrims, students having picnic, labors etc.

Causality and Damage

Table showing casualties and damages

Death	Major Injury	Minor Injury	IDPs	Damaged Infrastructures						
				Health Facilities	Houses	Community Building	Temple	School	Suspension bridge	Water supply system
20	NR	NR	14 Families	Nil	20	1	2	nil	2	1

Communication

- No report as yet on whether line phones or mobile phones were affected and present available mode of communication.

Accessibility, Transportation, Supply Chain and Power

- Half of a kilometer of the road section, two suspension bridges were damaged which made accessibility to the other side of the river difficult.
- Access to Annapurna Lower Secondary School, which is in the safe location in other side of the River, has been interrupted due to collapse of the suspension bridge over the Seti River. The school is closed now and around 50-60 children from other side of the river have no access to school.
- Water supply system to the Pokhara valley (which supplies around 60 percent of water supply in the valley) is disrupted.
- Electric poles have been damaged.

Response

Government and Local Organizations' Response

- The National Emergency Operation Centre (NOEC) is continued to be operational and the Security forces (Nepal Army, Nepal Police, and Armed Police Force), in coordination with other partners are heavily involved in searching the missing people using excavators and other heavy equipments along the Seti river banks.
- On 8 May 2012, Government of Nepal (GoN) had mobilized two teams to conduct damage assessment and rapid assessment of the highest hit area which was led by DDRC of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and supported by the UN Agencies and other humanitarian partners.
- The DDRC and the NRCS district chapter provided cash support, non-food items (NFI) and food items to the affected populations.

Health Sector Response

- The DPHO of the Regional Health Directorate (RHD) at the WDR in Kaski is providing free health care services to the affected communities.
- Currently, 10 persons are undergoing treatment in various hospitals/health institutions including Manipal College of Medical Sciences, Pokhara, and Gandaki Hospital in Pokhara. No further injured are reported.
- The DPHO and WDR Regional Hospital in Kaski continued to monitor epidemic prone diseases in Pokhara valley on daily basis and the EDCD staffs are coordinating with WDR Regional Hospital.
- The DPHO deployed an additional staff member to the Health Post located in the affected areas to support the on-going response.
- On 8 May 2012, the DPHO staff member joined the DDRC Kaski led assessment team to the affected areas i.e. Shardikhola (the severe damage area) and Yabang area for verification of information and further assessments.

- The DPHO is providing health promotion messages to the affected communities and the population in Pokhara Valley through television, radio and other media.

WHO's Response

- WHO is continuing its collaboration with the EDCD at the central, WDR RHD at the regional, and the DPHO at Kaski district in supporting the DPHO's ongoing health sector response.
- WHO staff member joined the DDRC Kaski led assessment team to the affected areas i.e. Shardikhola (the severe damage area) area for verification and further assessments.
- WHO/ICRC/IFRC "Management of Dead Bodies after Disasters: a Field Manual for First Responders" was provided to the DPHO, including the one MoHA adapted version.
- The WHO Surveillance Medical Officer (SMO) of Immunization Preventable Diseases (IPD) will continue to represent WHO at the regional and district level coordination meetings.
- WHO as the IASC Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) for Health in Nepal is continuing coordination with the UNOCHA, inter-cluster partners specially WASH cluster and other stakeholders at the central level, district level including the DDRC, DPHO and the UNFCO.

Immediate Needs

- To manage dead bodies and missing persons.
- To monitor the drinking water quality in the affected sites and in Pokhara valley
- To monitor the disease pattern in the affected communities to prevent and control potential outbreaks.
- To rectify the water supply system which supplies the affected areas and 60 percent of city supply in Pokhara valley.

International Support

The GON has not yet appealed for the external support for this incident.

Source of information:

Information is gathered from the following sources. This report is for reference only and should not be quoted since factual accuracy can change.

WHO Country office for Nepal, OCHA Humanitarian Support Unit with direct field observation of UN team, information from District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC), Security Forces, Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) and other humanitarian agencies involved in response activities.

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